



D I V I S I O N O N T E C H N O L O G Y A N D L O G I S T I C S

ASYCUDA NEWSLETTER



December 2023

EDITORIAL

English version

Five years ago, UNCTAD's ASYCUDA Programme dedicated its annual newsletter to introducing its national and international staff based at headquarters and in the field. The testimonials highlighted the diversity of ASYCUDA staff through their different geographical, cultural, gender, language, age, academic and professional experiences. In 2023, five years on, ASYCUDA is proud to introduce some of its new staff through this newsletter.

During ASYCUDA's 43 year-long existence, UNCTAD's largest technical cooperation programme has developed strong partnerships with both public and private sectors in the field. In the public sector, ASYCUDA has assisted more than 100 economies – including LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS and transition economies – and their customs administrations with the implementation of ASYCUDAWorld, the Programme's flagship system for customs clearance. With the development of new solutions for trade facilitation such as the ASYCUDA-based electronic Single Window (ASYSW), ASYHUB¹, ASYREC² and eCITES³, the support has now been extended to several Partner Government Agencies (PGAs), including but not limited to Ministries of Finance, Ministries of Health, Ministries of Transport, Ministries of Energy, Port Authorities, cross-border agencies, Chambers of Commerce, Immigration Departments, and

National Disaster Management Authorities. In the private sector, the accelerated and strong adoption of e-commerce required close cooperation with commercial banks to develop and secure an e-payment functionality in all ASYCUDA solutions. Trade associations and economic operators such as importers, exporters, transporters, brokers, declarants, shipping agencies and ship data providers have also benefited from the digitalization of trade and customs clearance services offered by ASYCUDA. Indeed, the Programme streamlines and digitalizes trade processes which improves the efficiency of procedures and boosts international trade. Small businesses and independent entrepreneurs can then access technology and know-how, thanks to their government working in partnership with UNCTAD's technical assistance. For instance, in Afghanistan, in 2022, 46 workshops were conducted by UNCTAD and ASYCUDA which built the capacities of 876 Micro, Small & Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs), 37% of which are led by women. Another example is the partnership between ASYCUDA and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) that led to the development of a module that allows airlines, express operators, freight forwarders and shippers to provide customs authorities with advanced cargo information that is accurate and in line with the standards established by international bodies such as the WCO and United Nations.

¹ <https://www.asyhub.org/>

² <https://www.asyrec.asycuda.org/>

³ <https://www.ecites.org/>

This edition of the ASYCUDA newsletter is also sharing testimonials and experiences of women and men from the private and public sectors around the world who have collaborated with the Programme and used its solutions - namely economic operators, customs and PGAs staff. They all contributed to the successful implementation, enhancement and functioning of ASYCUDA solutions.

For instance, female and male entrepreneurs from the northern region of Afghanistan shared their gratitude to UNCTAD and ASYCUDA for the training sessions that are allowing them to improve their skills in technical proposal writing and international trade. A local NGO director also shared his experience of a 3-hour expedited clearance of relief goods thanks to ASYCUDAWorld. In Timor-Leste, a customs operations manager from a renowned company says ASYCUDAWorld has allowed for a substantive reduction of transaction time and costs. In Burundi, a member of staff from the National Medicines Regulatory Authority compares the old manual procedure for obtaining import authorizations for medicines with the latest automated procedure of the ASYCUDA-based Single Window noting that the process, which used to take more than a week, is now finalized in less than 48 hours. In Sri Lanka, a customs officer remarks that the ASYCUDAWorld “online payment processing and digital signatures have revolutionized coordinated border controls on commodity trade”. The Chief Diplomatic Telecommunications Officer at the U.S. Embassy Colombo, Sri Lanka, and U.S. Mission Maldives, details the cooperation between the Embassy, customs and

ASYCUDA, noting, “now, with ASYCUDA, shipment processing takes 15 to 30 minutes”, compared to 4 to 6 hours before ASYCUDAWorld was deployed.

We also take this opportunity to present some of the 150+ national and international staff from headquarters and in the field, including long-serving IT and customs experts as well as newcomers such as a graphic designer, economist, communications specialist, customs officer and multiple IT professionals.

For those interested, the recent achievements and highlights of the Programme can be found in the ASYCUDA Report 2022/23⁴. Case studies⁵ detailing the economic, social, humanitarian and environmental impact of the Programme are available on the ASYCUDA website. Finally, ASYCUDA in collaboration with the Trade and Logistics Branch of UNCTAD’s Division of Technology and Logistics is publishing, in early 2024, a guide titled “Roadmap for Building a Trade Single Window” which describes and analyzes ASYCUDA’s Single Window implementation methods providing case studies and best practices.

We invite you to send any comments or requests you might have to asycuda@unctad.org. You can also follow us on X (previously twitter): [@AsycudaProgram](https://twitter.com/AsycudaProgram).

ASYCUDA Programme,
Division on Technology and Logistics,
Geneva, Switzerland, December 2023.

⁴ To be published

⁵ <https://asycuda.org/en/case-studies/>

EDITORIAL

Version française

Il y a cinq ans, le programme SYDONIA de la CNUCED consacrait sa lettre d'information annuelle à la présentation de son personnel national et international basé au siège et sur le terrain. Les témoignages soulignaient la diversité du personnel de SYDONIA à travers leurs expériences géographiques, culturelles, de genre, de langue, d'âge, académiques et professionnelles. Cinq ans plus tard, en 2023, SYDONIA est fier de présenter son nouveau personnel par le biais de cette lettre d'information.

Au cours de ses 43 ans d'existence, SYDONIA, le plus grand programme de coopération technique de la CNUCED, a développé des partenariats solides avec les secteurs public et privé sur le terrain. Dans le secteur public, SYDONIA a aidé plus de 100 économies - dont des pays les moins avancés (PMA), des pays enclavés, des petits Etats insulaires en développement (PIED) et des économies en transition - et leurs administrations douanières à mettre en place SYDONIAWorld, le système phare du programme pour le dédouanement. Avec le développement de nouvelles solutions pour la facilitation du commerce telles que le guichet unique électronique basé sur SYDONIA (ASYSW), ASYHUB ⁶, ASYREC ⁷ et eCITES ⁸, l'appui a maintenant été étendu à plusieurs Agences Gouvernementales Partenaires, incluant, entre autres, les ministères des finances, les ministères de la santé, les ministères des transports, les ministères de l'énergie, les autorités portuaires, les agences transfrontalières, les chambres de commerce, les services d'immigration, et les autorités nationales de gestion des catastrophes. Dans le

secteur privé, l'adoption accélérée et massive du e-commerce a nécessité une coopération étroite avec les banques commerciales pour développer et garantir une fonctionnalité de paiement électronique dans toutes les solutions de SYDONIA. Les associations commerciales et les opérateurs économiques tels que les importateurs, les exportateurs, les transporteurs, les courtiers, les déclarants, les agences maritimes et les fournisseurs de données sur les navires ont également bénéficié de la numérisation des services de commerce et de dédouanement offerts par SYDONIA. En effet, le Programme simplifie et numérise les processus commerciaux, ce qui améliore l'efficacité des procédures et stimule le commerce international. Les petites entreprises et les entrepreneurs indépendants peuvent alors accéder à la technologie et au savoir-faire, grâce au partenariat de leur gouvernement avec l'assistance technique de la CNUCED. Par exemple, en Afghanistan, en 2022, 46 ateliers de formation ont été organisés par la CNUCED et SYDONIA, ce qui a permis de renforcer les capacités de 876 micro, petites et moyennes entreprises (PMEs), dont 37 % sont dirigées par des femmes. Un autre exemple est le partenariat entre SYDONIA et l'Association internationale du transport aérien (IATA) qui a conduit au développement d'un module permettant aux compagnies aériennes, aux opérateurs express, aux transitaires et aux expéditeurs de fournir aux autorités douanières des informations avancées sur le fret qui sont précises et conformes aux normes établies par des organismes internationaux tels que l'OMD et les Nations Unies.

⁶ <https://www.asyhub.org/>

⁷ <https://www.asyrec.asycuda.org/>

⁸ <https://www.ecites.org/>

Cette édition de la lettre d'information de SYDONIA, partage également les témoignages et les expériences de femmes et d'hommes des secteurs privé et public du monde entier qui ont collaboré avec le programme et utilisé ses solutions - à savoir les opérateurs économiques, la Douane et le personnel des Agences Gouvernementales Partenaires. Ils ont tous contribué à la réussite de la mise en œuvre, de l'amélioration et du fonctionnement des solutions de SYDONIA.

Par exemple, des entrepreneurs, hommes et femmes, de la région nord de l'Afghanistan ont fait part de leur reconnaissance à la CNUCED et à SYDONIA pour les sessions de formation leur ayant permis d'améliorer leurs compétences en matière de rédaction de propositions techniques et de commerce international. Le directeur d'une ONG locale a également fait part de son expérience d'un dédouanement accéléré de trois heures pour des marchandises de secours grâce à SYDONIAWorld. Au Timor-Leste, un responsable des opérations douanières d'une entreprise renommée affirme que SYDONIA a permis de réduire considérablement les délais et les coûts de transaction. Au Burundi, un membre du personnel de l'Autorité nationale de réglementation des médicaments compare l'ancienne procédure manuelle d'obtention des autorisations d'importation de médicaments à la nouvelle procédure automatisée du guichet unique de SYDONIA, notant que la procédure, qui prenait plus d'une semaine, est désormais finalisée en moins de 48 heures. Au Sri Lanka, un douanier souligne que le traitement des paiements en ligne et les signatures numériques de SYDONIAWorld ont révolutionné les contrôles frontaliers coordonnés sur le commerce des marchandises. Le responsable des télécommunications diplomatiques de l'ambassade des États-Unis à Colombo, au Sri Lanka, et de la mission des États-Unis aux Maldives, décrit la coopération entre l'Ambassade, la Douane et le SYDONIA, notant que "maintenant, avec SYDONIA, le traitement des envois prend 15 à 30 minutes", contre 4 à 6 heures avant le déploiement de SYDONIAWorld.

Nous profitons également de cette occasion pour présenter quelques-uns des plus de 150 employés nationaux et internationaux du Programme travaillant au siège et sur le terrain, y compris des experts en informatique et en douane de longue date ainsi que de nouveaux venus tels qu'un graphiste, un économiste, un spécialiste de la communication, un expert en douane et plusieurs professionnels de l'informatique.

Pour les personnes intéressées, les réalisations récentes et les points forts du programme peuvent être consultés dans le rapport de SYDONIA 2022/23. Des études de cas détaillant l'impact économique, social, humanitaire et environnemental du programme sont disponibles sur le site web de SYDONIA. Enfin, SYDONIA, en collaboration avec le Service du commerce et de la logistique de la Division de la Technologie et de la Logistique de la CNUCED, publiera début 2024 un guide intitulé "Feuille de route pour la création d'un guichet unique commercial" qui décrit et analyse les méthodes de mise en œuvre du guichet unique SYDONIA en fournissant des études de cas et les bonnes pratiques.

Nous vous invitons à nous faire part de vos commentaires ou de vos requêtes à l'adresse suivante : asycuda@unctad.org. Vous pouvez également nous suivre sur X (anciennement twitter) : [@AsycudaProgram](https://twitter.com/AsycudaProgram).

Programme SYDONIA,
Division de la technologie et de la logistique,
Genève, Suisse, décembre 2023.

EDITORIAL

Versión española

Cinco años atrás, el Programa SIDUNEA de la UNCTAD dedicó su boletín anual a presentar a su personal nacional e internacional establecido en la sede y en el terreno. Los testimonios destacaban la diversidad del personal de SIDUNEA a través de sus diferentes experiencias geográficas, culturales, de género, de idioma, de edad, académicas y profesionales. En 2023, cinco años después, SIDUNEA se enorgullece de presentar a su nuevo personal a través de este boletín.

A lo largo de los 43 años de existencia de SIDUNEA, el mayor programa de cooperación técnica de la UNCTAD ha establecido sólidas colaboraciones con los sectores público y privado en el terreno. En el sector público, SIDUNEA ha ayudado a más de 100 economías -entre ellas países menos desarrollados (PMD), Estados sin litoral, Pequeños Estados Insulares en Desarrollo (SIDS) y economías en transición- y a sus administraciones aduaneras a implantar SIDUNEAWorld, el sistema emblemático del Programa para el trámite aduanero. Con el desarrollo de nuevas soluciones para la facilitación del comercio, como la Ventanilla Única Electrónica basada en SIDUNEA (ASYSW), ASYHUB⁹, ASYREC¹⁰ y eCITES¹¹, el apoyo se ha extendido ahora a varias Agencias Gubernamentales Asociadas (AGA), entre las que se incluyen Ministerios de Finanzas, Ministerios de Salud, Ministerios de Transporte, Ministerios de Energía, Autoridades Portuarias, agencias transfronterizas, Cámaras de Comercio, servicios de inmigración y Autoridades Nacionales de Gestión de Desastres. En el sector privado, la aceleración y fuerte adopción del comercio electrónico exigió

una estrecha colaboración con los bancos comerciales para desarrollar y garantizar una funcionalidad de pago electrónico en todas las soluciones SIDUNEA. Las asociaciones comerciales y los operadores económicos, como importadores, exportadores, transportadores, corredores, declarantes, agencias navieras y proveedores de datos de buques, también se han beneficiado de la digitalización de los servicios de comercio y despacho de aduanas que ofrece SIDUNEA. De hecho, el Programa simplifica y digitaliza los procesos comerciales, lo que mejora la eficacia de los procedimientos e impulsa el comercio internacional. Las pequeñas empresas y los empresarios independientes pueden así acceder a la tecnología y a los conocimientos técnicos, gracias a la colaboración de sus gobiernos con la asistencia técnica de la UNCTAD. Por ejemplo, en Afganistán, en 2022, la UNCTAD y SIDUNEA organizaron 46 cursos prácticos que reforzaron las capacidades de 876 microempresas y pequeñas y medianas empresas (MIPYME), el 37% de las cuales están dirigidas por mujeres. Otro ejemplo es la asociación entre SIDUNEA y la Asociación de Transporte Aéreo Internacional (ATAI) que llevó al desarrollo de un módulo que permite a las aerolíneas, operadores exprés, transitarios y cargadores proporcionar a las autoridades aduaneras información avanzada sobre la carga que sea precisa y esté en consonancia con las normas establecidas por organismos internacionales como la Organización Mundial de Aduanas (OMA) y las Naciones Unidas.

Esta edición del boletín SIDUNEA, comparte testimonios y experiencias de mujeres y hombres de los sectores privado y público del

⁹ <https://www.asyhub.org/>

¹⁰ <https://www.asyrec.asycuda.org/>

¹¹ <https://www.ecites.org/>

mundo entero que han colaborado con el Programa y utilizado sus soluciones, es decir, operadores económicos, personal de aduanas y Agencias Gubernamentales Asociadas. Todos ellos han contribuido al éxito de la implantación, mejora y funcionamiento de las soluciones SIDUNEA.

Por ejemplo, empresarios de ambos géneros de la región norte de Afganistán compartieron su reconocimiento a la UNCTAD y a SIDUNEA por las sesiones de formación que les están permitiendo mejorar sus conocimientos en redacción de propuestas técnicas y comercio internacional. El director de una ONG local también compartió su experiencia sobre la aceleración en tres horas del despacho de mercancías de emergencia gracias a SIDUNEAWorld. En Timor Leste, un director de operaciones aduaneras de una empresa de renombre afirma que SIDUNEAWorld ha permitido reducir considerablemente el tiempo y los costes de las transacciones. En Burundi, un miembro del personal de la Autoridad Nacional Reguladora de Medicamentos compara el antiguo procedimiento manual para obtener autorizaciones de importación de medicamentos con el nuevo procedimiento automatizado de la Ventanilla Única basada en SIDUNEA, señalando que el procedimiento, que solía durar más de una semana, se finaliza ahora en menos de 48 horas. En Sri Lanka, un funcionario de aduanas señala que gracias a SIDUNEAWorld "el procesamiento de pagos en línea y las firmas digitales han revolucionado los controles coordinados del comercio de mercancías en las fronteras". El Jefe de Telecomunicaciones Diplomáticas de la Embajada de EE.UU. en Colombo, Sri Lanka, y de la Misión de EE.UU. en Maldivas, detalla la cooperación entre la Embajada, Aduanas y SIDUNEA, señalando que "ahora, con SIDUNEA, la gestión de los envíos

tarda de 15 a 30 minutos", frente a las 4 a 6 horas que tardaba antes de la implantación de SIDUNEAWorld.

También aprovechamos esta oportunidad para presentar a algunos de los más de 150 empleados nacionales e internacionales de la sede y en el terreno, entre los que se incluyen expertos en informática y aduanas con muchos años de servicio, así como recién llegados como un diseñador gráfico, un economista, un especialista en comunicación, un funcionario de aduanas y múltiples informáticos.

Para los interesados, los últimos avances y los aspectos más importantes del Programa pueden consultarse en el Informe 2022/23 del SIDUNEA. En el sitio web de SIDUNEA se pueden consultar estudios de casos que detallan el impacto económico, social, humanitario y medioambiental del Programa. Por último, SIDUNEA, en colaboración con la Subdivisión de Comercio y Logística de la División de Tecnología y Logística de la UNCTAD, publicará a principios de 2024 una guía titulada "Hoja de ruta para la creación de una ventanilla única de comercio", en la que se describen y analizan los métodos de aplicación de la ventanilla única de SIDUNEA y se ofrecen estudios de casos y buenas prácticas.

Le invitamos a enviar sus comentarios o solicitudes a asycuda@unctad.org. También puede seguirnos en X (antes twitter): [@AsycudaProgram](https://twitter.com/AsycudaProgram).

Programa SIDUNEA,
División de Tecnología y Logística,
Ginebra, Suiza, diciembre 2023.

COUNTRY TESTIMONIALS



Afghanistan



Ms. Lema Khurram
Kabul Team Leader
UNCTAD

“Previously, traders had to go through an 18-step process for clearing their consignments at customs. After ASYCUDAWorld implementation, this process was shortened to a 3-step process, and fortunately the clearance time was also decreased from days to hours”.

“More than 50% of MSMEs participants [in UNCTAD and ASYCUDA trainings] were women, which shows the active role and interest of women in the economic growth of their country”



Mr. Mirwais Big Shahi
Entrepreneur, Northern Region

“We learned about exports, processing products for export, marketing, finding customers in national and international markets and so many other things from this workshop”



Sarajudin Shaheen
Local NGO Director

“With ASYCUDA’s simplified exemption processing it now takes around three hours to process and release humanitarian goods”



Burundi



Israël Nimubuma
Head of the Pharmaceutical Establishments Inspection Department
and ASYCUDA Focal Point
National Medicines Regulatory Authority

In order to ensure better traceability and to facilitate import and inspection procedures for medicines and other health products imported into Burundi, to fully dematerialize procedures and to facilitate customs clearance operations for the above-mentioned products, the Ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS through the Burundian Regulatory Authority for Medicines for Human Use and Food (ABREMA), in collaboration with the Burundian Revenue Authority, has aligned with the electronic Single Window environment for Foreign Trade Operations as of 05 July 2021 under TMEA funding and UNCTAD technical assistance.

The main aim of this digitalization is to enable importers of medicines and other health products to apply electronically for import authorization, and to inspect and clear these products through customs.

The manual procedure was difficult. Importers had to physically submit applications for import and inspection of medical products, which cost them a little more in terms of travel expenses, printing of documents to be submitted and other related costs.

Requests for import authorizations could take more than a week to be granted.

The manual procedure was complicated since it had to go through different departments of the Ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS to analyze and validate import authorization requests.

Digitalization has improved the procedure by reducing the number of trips and printouts of needed documents, and even reducing the number of contacts between applicants and ABREMA staff.

Digitalization has also accelerated the validation of inquiries, which can take less than an hour after submission, with a maximum turnaround time of 48 hours. The entire process is handled by a single institution (ABREMA), making it as straightforward as possible.

The ability to generate data and statistics on authorizations and imports at any time and without difficulty is very advantageous in the management of regulated products.

We would like to thank all those who have financially or technically contributed to the implementation of this project.



Chad



Djiho Dehiye Sabane
Customs Officer
Participant in the ASYCUDAWorld Training on Post Clearance Control

“I am very happy with this training because I feel now ready to perform controls post clearance in the field. I would like to thank the Customs Authority for all these reforms”



Georgia



Nino Jincharadze
Head of Service Quality Monitoring Division
Georgian Revenue Service

“The common transit convention, the convention on simplification of formalities in trade in goods and the [ASYCUDA-based] New Computerized Transit System (NCTS) allow the movement of goods between Georgia and 36 contracting states of the convention to be carried out in the most simplified way, by presenting only one customs declaration and one guarantee. Additionally, given that the project significantly increases the predictability and transparency of the transit process, this will contribute to better supply chain planning and allows businesses to improve and manage their operations more efficiently”.



Gia Tsipuria
International Motor Carriers of Georgia
President of the Association

“[ASYCUDA-based] NCTS is a highly modern and flexible system. Let’s start by saying that it is already in use. For the fourth generation, so many updates have been made in such a short time it shows how important the system is.”

 **Jamaica**

Andre Williams
Chief Information Officer, Jamaica Customs Agency
Project Manager, JSWIFT

“JSWIFT [Jamaica Single Window for Trade based on ASYCUDA technology] is a single portal which allows for traders or their agents to submit applications to their respective border regulatory agencies [BRAs]. That is to obtain a certificate, a permit or any sort of approval that is involved in cross-border trade. The JSWIFT system now brings a fully digitalized service where all can be done from the convenience whether it is your home or your office. Also, the services that are being carried out by the respective BRAs can be fulfilled within the same ecosystem and of course the approved permit or certificate can be retrieved electronically. So, there is no more moving in terms of physical dropping off of documents. All of that is being done online.”



Stacy-Ann Binns
Product Analysis Specialist, Jamaica Trade Board

“When our clients submit certificates online, those certificates are automatically assigned to an officer for processing, and what we do is that we log into the system and we retrieve the documents that are assigned to us. We check information for the company that is exporting the products. We also do a check to ensure that all items have been approved by Trade Board Limited, and that these items are really deemed certified for export”.



Deon White
Export Supervisor, AE Parnell & Company
(Customs Brokerage, Shipping and Warehousing Company)

“Feedback from our clients is that it is a preferred method because they are always indicating to us that they want online, not physical, documents to be submitted to them. Our primary clients would submit their documents to us online by email for us to prepare a certificate of origin for various CARICOM countries. What we normally do is prepare the CARICOM invoice, we scan the document online, and then we go to JSWIFT platform and we prepare the certificate of origin. This normally takes about 10 to 15 minutes, after which we submit for payment. Once the document is paid, then it takes about 24 hours for the process to be prepared”.



Mali



Mariam Nientao Coulibaly
Chef of Exploitation Section
Mali Customs

“ASYCUDAWorld is a system designed to manage automatically all customs clearance procedures and it has allowed us to integrate our national requirements and needs with the development of specific modules, automate customs procedures and track the operations of a document. The advantages of the technical assistance of ASYCUDA are the ownership of the source code by the country, the increase in revenue collection, the streamlining of clearance procedures, the generation of reliable trade statistics and the facilitation of trade”.



Nepal



MD. Raheem Ansari
IT Expert, ASYCUDA Staff
7 Years' Experience with ASYCUDA

I am a graduate with a Masters of Computer Engineering who is working in the Department of Customs, Nepal as an IT Expert, ASYCUDA staff. I have had the privilege of playing a pivotal role in facilitating international trade and customs operations. My career in this field has been a journey of continuous learning and dedication to standardizing and optimizing the customs processes through information and technology penetration.

Working as an ASYCUDA staff, I have honed my skills in implementing and customizing the different ASYCUDAWorld modules like Brokers, Selectivity, Gate Entry, Valuation, Bank Guarantee, Cash Deposit, ePayment, LPCO and many other modules. My passion for leveraging technology to streamline customs procedures has led to tangible improvements in efficiency and compliance in the customs processes.

I take pride in my ability to analyze complex customs regulations and transform them into seamless ASYCUDAWorld solutions. These solutions have not only reduced operational costs but have also enhanced transparency and accuracy in customs processes and operations.

What sets me apart in this field is my commitment to staying up-to-date of the latest developments in ASYCUDA and customs automation. I understand that the global trade landscape is dynamic, and I ensure that my department and the concerned stakeholders are always equipped with the most up-to-date eCustoms related solutions.

My dedication to excellence, combined with my deep expertise in the ASYCUDAWorld system, makes me a trusted partner in customs modernization and reform efforts. I look forward to continuing to drive positive change in the realm of customs reform and automation in international trade.



Devaki Nandan Sharma
Customs Agent at Biratnagar Customs

In 2017 ASYCUDAWorld was started. At that time people used to say that it was an unwanted technology, not possible to implement, etc. But after one year this system became user friendly which really changed the working environment to very smooth and comfortable.

After a few years of using ASYCUDAWorld we added customs modules and functionalities which simplified the submission of paperless declarations through the internet. It also controlled risk management, transit monitoring, etc and facilitated trade efficiency and competitiveness by substantially reducing paper transaction time and cost.

I like to thank ASYCUDAWorld software which gave me time to serve the Custom Agents Association as President for the last two years.

In my view, it has protected the country by combating fraud and the illegal trafficking of prohibited and restricted goods. It has provided statistical information of foreign trade transactions, which was really very essential for economic planning and due to its performance, international trade is showing positive signs.

In one sentence, I can say “ASYCUDAWorld has provided a safe and secure environment to us agents and the nation too.”



Arun Paudel
Senior Computer Officer and Customs Expert
Nepal Customs

I am Arun Paudel, an accomplished seasoned Senior Computer Officer and Customs Expert with an impressive track record spanning over 13 years. My expertise lies in customizing and implementing systems across various domains, including the ASYCUDAWorld, Single Window system, customs and revenue management, automated systems, system integration, change management, and business process re-engineering. I am well-versed in utilizing business modeling tools such as Microsoft Visio and Microsoft Project to enhance workflow. My extensive experience, comprehensive skill set, unwavering dedication, and inclusion of system monitoring as part of my responsibilities make me an invaluable asset in the successful implementation and operation of critical customs systems in Nepal. My ability to collaborate effectively and adapt

to complex challenges sets me apart in the field of customs and automation.

I have a Bachelor's Degree in Commerce, complemented by extensive functional and technical training in ASYCUDA, Nepal National Single Window (NNSW), computer hardware, and software. I am self-driven and capable of handling challenging tasks independently, with excellent communication skills, strong problem-solving abilities, and adeptness at working collaboratively in a team.

My role as a Senior Computer Officer extends to various critical functions within Nepal customs, primarily focusing on the coordination and implementation of the ASYCUDAWorld system. I excel in collaborative work, collaborating with fellow customs staff to provide support, alignment, coordination, and training activities. Overseeing daily ASYCUDA functional operations within the customs office is a crucial part of my responsibilities, as is ensuring data security, backup, and confidentiality of customs processed data. I also provide IT Helpdesk support, fulfilling requirements and generating monthly reports for immediate supervisors. Managing and maintaining all ASYCUDA-related hardware, network components, and electrical equipment is essential to ensure professional utilization and prevent damage. Administering and maintaining user profiles is another facet of my role to optimize system performance. Moreover, I take pride in leading the migration process from ASYCUDA++ to ASYCUDAWorld, overseeing the entire transition from initial stages through implementation and post-implementation phases.



Sunita Paudel
Customs Officer
7 Years' Experience

I am Sunita Paudel, working as an officer for seven years under the department of customs and using the ASYCUDA system. During this period, I have got different work experiences in the centre as well as field level offices with different responsibilities.

Recently I have been working as a section officer at the monitoring section of the department of customs. Before, I had worked in the risk management section of this department. During all my postings I have done all work through ASUCUDA to the best of my knowledge. On the basis of my experiences, I am going to say that only the ASYCUDA system can contribute to customs administration effectively and efficiently.

The Nepal department of customs is in the forefront in terms of internal revenue mobilization. Besides revenue collection, customs has the responsibility to promote trade facilitation and pay attention to social security and safety. To fulfill those responsibilities, the ASYCUDA system has been playing a vital role. This system has played a vital role in achieving the objectives of the Harmonized Convention. In our context, we can analyze the system's contributions, especially in revenue collection, trade facilitation and social security and safety.

Beside these, the ASYCUDA system also provides import and export data which can help to analyze trade patterns and helps to formulate economic policy, fiscal policy, etc.

Human resource is a key vehicle for the successful implementation of any system. Competent manpower can run a system productively. Achieving the organization goal, the system can be used effectively. So they are taken as complementary to each other. Accordingly, the ASYCUDA system has modified itself according to its present context and needs. Due to the effectiveness of the system, Nepal customs administration has reached the current stage. Agility, reliability and integrity have become possible in performance by using the ASYCUDA system. I am fully knowledgeable about this automated system and know how to handle the system and analyze the data as well as to successfully find areas of risk.



Ibrahim Souley
ASYCUDA Project Manager for Niger Customs
17 Years' Experience Collaborating with ASYCUDA

I started working for Niger Customs in September 2006 as an IT engineer. Since December 2006, I participated in the migration to ASYCUDA++ of 12 customs offices. In December 2015, I was appointed ASYCUDAWorld migration project manager. Since 2019, I have been ASYCUDA and SIGMAT Interconnection Project Manager for Niger Customs. I am responsible for the management and coordination of the automation of customs services, and digitalization of procedures and documents. I am also in charge of coordinating the automation of transit between Niger and ECOWAS member States.

To this day, ASYCUDAWorld has been deployed in 57 customs offices, which makes Niger Customs one of the most connected agencies in the sub-region.

This migration to ASYCUDAWorld has allowed for the implementation of national transit, the interconnection of the system with the ones of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali and Togo, the development of a customs revenue scorecard and the implementation of notifications by email and SMS. ASYCUDAWorld also exchanges data with the Revenue Authority, the Single Window and commercial banks for the implementation of e-payment”.



Samoa



Senetenari Auelua
IT Officer/Database Manager
Ministry of Customs & Revenue, Samoa
2 Years Working on ASYCUDAWorld

Talofa lava, my name is Senetenari Auelua. Over three years ago, I had the honour of beginning my employment with the Samoan Ministry of Customs and Revenue. One of the fortunate individuals chosen for the ASMP fellowship, I started an amazing trip in 2022 that took me to Fiji for three months. I have devoted myself to this sector for numerous years because of a passion for information technology. My journey began at the Ministry of Customs and Revenue, where I joined as an IT Database Officer. Over these three years, I have honed my skills, tackled various challenges, and contributed to the efficiency of our operations through database management.

When I got the chance to work with the ASYCUDA system, it was one of the turning points in my career. Customs and revenue administration have been changed by ASYCUDA (Automated System for Customs Data), which has streamlined procedures and increased efficiency. My first experience with this method was a pivotal one.

In 2022, I was selected for the ASMP fellowship, a prestigious opportunity to enhance my knowledge and skills in ASYCUDA. The fellowship took me to Fiji for an intensive three-month training programme. Collaborating

with ASYCUDA experts was an invaluable experience. During this period, I delved into various aspects of ASYCUDA, including installation and error troubleshooting. My technical knowledge and perspective both grew as a result of the ASMP fellowship. In my work at the Ministry of Customs and Revenue, I was able to apply the knowledge I received about international customs and revenue management techniques. The fellowship was a life-changing event that deepened my grasp of the ASYCUDA system and its use in customs and revenue management. It has helped both my professional progress and the effectiveness of our customs operations.



Sri Lanka



Thilak Arumapperuma Arachchi
ASYCUDA Expert
Sri Lanka Customs
9 Years' Experience Collaborating with ASYCUDA

I feel truly privileged to have been part of the ASYCUDA implementation team in 1992, early in my career at Sri Lanka Customs as an Assistant Superintendent. Our journey began under the guidance and sponsorship of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) as we embarked on the "Improving Customs Administration through Automation" project.

A pivotal moment came when my colleague, Mr. Jayasri Gunawardene, and I received a year-long UN fellowship in Geneva. We ensured ASYCUDA meets Sri Lanka's needs, ensuring country specific compatibility with ASYCUDA V2.0 and we owe our success to supporters like Mr. William O'Donel (USA), Mr. Jean Francois Baylocq (FR), Ms. Petra Marshall (UK), and many others who were with the ASYCUDA development team.

Upon our return, we joined forces with a dedicated local team: Mr. Ajantha Dias, Mr. Tharaka Seneviratne, Mr. Udayantha Liyanage, Mr. Jayantha Amarasekara, Mr. Chellam Perinpanayagam, and Mr. Brian Fulton. Together, we embarked on the task of computerizing imports, successfully achieving this milestone on the first day of 1994. Despite facing numerous challenges and obstacles, our collective determination propelled us to become ASYCUDA's flagship project globally by 1996.

Since those early days, ASYCUDA has come a long way. Today, ASYCUDAWorld, covers all customs operations, our services are accessible over the Internet, connecting seamlessly with nearly all major border agencies. The online payment processing and digital signatures have revolutionized coordinated border controls on commodity trade in Sri Lanka.

As I write these words, I find myself back with the ICT team, just months away from retirement. It's an immense honor to reflect on this journey and express my deep gratitude to UNCTAD and ASYCUDA. They have not only shaped my career but have also provided countless opportunities to contribute to initiatives that have driven significant change at Sri Lanka Customs. These endeavors have advanced revenue collection, facilitated trade, and bolstered social protection, leaving an enduring impact on my heart and soul.



Brian Hering
Chief Diplomatic Telecommunications Officer
U.S. Embassy Colombo, Sri Lanka, and U.S. Mission Maldives

The United Nations' (UN) Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) system is a resounding successful automation, that all United Nations partner countries should adopt to create global standards. In January 2023, the U.S. Embassy (GSO and IRM) partnered with UNCTAD ASYCUDA specialists and Sri Lankan Customs to implement ASYCUDA. We spent several months testing, and designing process flows to make ASYCUDA operate best for Customs and the United States Embassy in Sri Lanka.

ASYCUDA is a huge success! The automations save enormous time and resources, increased productivity, and improved efficiencies and data integrity. Before ASYCUDA was deployed, shipment processing took 4 to 6 hours (not counting drive times) and entailed physically walking through four steps at the airport that required hard-copy (printed) paperwork at each step. Now, with ASYCUDA, shipment processing takes 15 to 30 minutes on an internet connected workstation at the embassy and requires no printed paper! No more long waits at the airport, no more stamping forms and walking to various offices for clearance, no more empty trucks when shipments didn't process, and no more "guess-timating" the size of the inbound shipments. ASYCUDA enables the embassy to receive advanced notice ("reporting") of each in-bound shipment with freight details, which is processed through the various

offices, then “cleared” through Customs before heading to the airport in the correctly sized vehicle for the load. Out-bound shipments are also processed through ASYCUDA – eliminating a minimum of two trips to the airport and another 4-6 hours of processing (not counting drive times).

Every embassy and airport, in every country worldwide are encouraged to implement and utilize the United Nations’ Automated System for Customs Data system, called ASYCUDA.



Chandrika Manohara
Customs and Shipping Manager
U.S. Embassy Colombo, Sri Lanka, and U.S. Mission Maldives

With a great pleasure I would like to share this testimonial for the success of Automated Systems of Customs Data (ASYCUDA) implementation and successful operation at the Embassy of the United States of America being the first ever diplomatic Mission in Sri Lanka. The implementation of ASYCUDA into the Embassy shipment clearance system was a huge revolution, resolving many custom-made requirements to the diplomatic system, enhancing efficiency, productivity, and overall satisfaction among employees and clients alike.

With a direct connection to the ASYCUDA customs portal, the Embassy now submits information directly to the system. Completely paperless, saving customs declarations preparation costs, condensing numerous stages into one or two steps, and having very minimal time and administrative costs. Ability to keep records in the system, transparent, appropriate approval process, and ability to evaluate CUSDEC performed by other declarants as and when necessary. Thanks to the system, we also have moved to digital signatures, eliminating manual signatures for CUSDECs that are handled by other declarants for Embassy shipments. At the same time, the shipping unit was able to facilitate Embassy Mailroom for the DPO/Dip Pouch and classified pouch shipment clearance within a very short time, eliminating multiple manual operation processes and handling hard copies of paperwork. The time it takes to perform manual operations is reduced from 4-6 hours to 15 minutes using the same platform.

As a result of our work to bring the ASYCUDA customs portal in-house to speed up the clearance process through customs, the IRM mailroom was also able to use the same portal to clear pouch shipments and mail, which has greatly reduced the amount of time and money spent by the U.S.

Embassy in Sri Lanka. Additionally, this initiative will be a smart platform for other diplomatic missions and privileged organization to move on to the paperless operation.



Timor-Leste



Livania de Deus
Head of Section – HS Classification
Customs Authority of Timor-Leste
5 Years' Experience Collaborating with ASYCUDA

I have been working in customs for 11 years. Presently, I am working in the Department of Tax and Regulation, in the HS Classification section. I have been utilizing ASYCUDAWorld system since 2017. I found that the system is very helpful and very good as it does help customs in, reducing cost, reducing time for doing business, reducing the use of papers, increasing government revenue, improving reporting for decision making, better securing our border and controlling target and profiling for company and goods, and also random selectivity.

Ever since we implemented the Timor-Leste Electronic Single Window (TileSW) in early 2021, we have seen multiple benefits experiences by the beneficiaries including the Customs Authority. I remembered that our work processes involved lots of paperwork, but now there is no more papers involved in our business processes. Other government agencies have been easily accessing to our system. I would sum up that the TileSW which is developed on the ASYCUDAWorld platform does make trading easier and faster in Timor-Leste.



Silveiro Freitas
Manager for Investment Promotion
TradInvest Timor-Leste
4 Years' Experience Collaborating with ASYCUDA

I have been serving as a Manager for Investment Promotion at TradInvest Timor-Leste since 2016 up to the present. In addition, I have also been tasked as the National Single Window Officer of the ASYCUDA System at TradInvest Timor-Leste since 2020 up to the present. TradInvest is the first Timor Leste Government Agency that utilized the Timor-Leste Single Window system.

I must say that for TradInvest, the implementation of the Timor-Leste Electronic Single Window is a success story. Discussion for the technical cooperation between TradInvest and the Customs Authority was initiated in February 2020. Though, due to the COVID19 pandemic, the initiative was halted for some time. Despite the intermittent interactions due to the various measures imposed to prevent the spread of virus at workplaces, a Technical Cooperation Agreement was made between the Customs Authority and TradInvest on Thursday, 17 September 2020, whilst the module itself was launched on 1 February 2021.

I was involved in the early phase which was designing the National Single Window model for TradInvest. Details on the National Single Window model for TradInvest mostly rely on the day-to-day activities as per Private Investment Law of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Law number 15/2017.

Main benefits for Tradeinvest have been, amongst others, direct submission and approval of tax exemption, less papers used, provide real time report, and reduction of numbers of visitors attending TradInvest office.



Rogelia Aniceto Lopes
ASYCUDA Unit
Customs Authority of Timor-Leste
8 Years' Experience with ASYCUDA

I have been working for customs since 2011. I started as the secretary for the National Director of Customs. In 2014, I was transferred to the Operations Department. In 2016, I had the opportunity to attend the functionality basic training in Kuala Lumpur. In 2017, I was further

transferred to the Customs Office at the International Airport Nicolao Lobato Dili where I had the chance to experience processing the Single Administrative Document, utilizing ASYCUDA++. In 2021, I was transferred to the Information and Statistics Unit where I had the chance to attend the customs brokers, shipping agents, customs staff, government agency and private sectors.

ASYCUDAWorld has improved our services in our workplace such as saving time, cost and introducing paperless working. It also helps me to work fast, effectively and transparently. In light of its user-friendly features and the benefits it could offer that in less than two years of its implementation, we have seen over ten Partner Government Agencies that have either used ASYCUDAWorld or simply a system-to-system interface with ASYCUDAWorld.

The benefits of utilizing the Single Window have been instrumental; preventing maladministration, improving transparency, also strengthening the relationship of import and export activities.



Zeca Guterres
Customs Operation Manager
Bollore Logistics Timor Unipessoal, Lda

I joined this logistics company in 2002 as a Customs Broker Executive.

Since 2005, I have been holding the position of Customs Operations Manager in this company.

My daily tasks as a customs broker are preparing import and export declaration for inbound and outbound goods in and out of the country, organizing the payment of tax on consignee's behalf and clearing goods entrusted by the clients to us.

As a Customs Broker, I was aware the advantages of using ASYCUDA especially ASYCUDAWorld which includes modernizing customs operations and helping to improve revenue collection, facilitating trade efficiency and competitiveness by substantially reducing transaction time and costs, improving security by streamlining procedure of cargo control, the transit of goods and clearance of goods and promoting sustainable development by cutting down on paper use (paperless) by electronic transactions and documents.

Asides of the above, another is that the system handles both manifests and customs declarations which generate trade data that can be used for statistical economic analysis.

 **Tonga**

Michael Cokanasiga
CEO
Ministry of Revenue and Customs, Tonga

“ASYCUDAWorld has been instrumental in streamlining our clearance processes. It has helped in reducing use of paper, made declaration submission & processing more convenient. We can now rely on self-assessment by traders, who have an online access to the system & other information required for the completion of their Customs Declarations. ASYCUDA has given us better capabilities to facilitate legitimate trade based on risk. The system also allows for the implementation of strong internal controls and audit monitoring in order to maintain the integrity of Customs clearance processes. This has contributed to an increase in total Customs revenue by 13% in fiscal year 2022-23.

Furthermore, implementation of the ASYCUDA Declaration and manifest auto write-off function has enhanced control over the movement of containers and goods in and out of Tonga’s International ports of entry.

We are on a journey of digitalizing of our import & export processes and are looking forward to further advancement through the full implementation of ASYCUDA connecting trade operators and related government regulatory authorities and ministries.”



Mrs. Ofa Tupau
Freight Forwarder

“ASYCUDAWorld has been a game-changer for our business. As a freight forwarder and customs broker, we have to prepare lots of customs declarations for our clients. With ASYCUDAWorld, we can do our work before the vessel arrives. ASYCUDA allows us to submit the manifests and well before time, giving us ample time to prepare the customs declarations. We can start working on the declarations and submit the declaration from our own office even sometimes I submit the documents from home. This is very useful for businesses like ours that have freight forwarding and customs broker operations, we can work from anywhere”.



Ms. Patricia Halatanu
Matavai Moui Customs Broker
Nukuálofa, Tonga

“The new system ASYCUDAWorld has made it easier for businesses like ours. Before the implementation of ASYCUDA, we had to bring our documents to customs for processing, usually lots of paper. Now, we can submit customs entries and documents in ASYCUDA through the internet. This has eliminated the need to travel in heat and rain, making the process more convenient. The new process is easier and saves time. We can access our records anytime and also print them for our clients whenever necessary.”

 **Tuvalu**



Sania Amasone Teisini
Director
Revenue & Customs Department, Tuvalu

It has been a year and a half since I have been working with ASYCUDAWorld when I was appointed as the Director of the newly merged Revenue and Customs Department in February 2022. Prior to the merger, I was the Director for Inland Revenue Department since 2007 of which I lead the tax and customs reforms for the then Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA) in 2009.

During the merger, the ASYCUDAWorld project was nearing the end of its first year of support and 3 months of implementation. On approval, the ASYCUDAWorld project was extended an additional year which I am grateful for as it gave me the opportunity to learn more about this automated system.

The first few months were very challenging for me as I had to quickly learn not only the ASYCUDAWorld system but also understand the roles and objectives of the Customs Department to be able to make sound decisions as the Head. I have only to thank the UNCTAD Technical Advisors and the National Project team for their guidance and support in addition to the UNCTAD/OCO funded trainings or meetings that I attended which greatly increased my understanding and knowledge.

ASYCUDAWorld meant that staff had to be re-organized and this was consistent with our needs as a newly merged department. ASYCUDAWorld was also used as the monitoring tool to strengthen and improve staff conduct and morale as the automated system will now provide a database on staff performance and productivity. This directly had a positive impact on the timeliness and effectiveness of staff service to the public. As a result, revenue collections, needless to say, have increased significantly due to increased efficiency and compliance to customs procedures.

However, there have also been challenges such as internet connectivity, but these have, and will continue to be addressed, one issue at a time.



Uganda



Nakaleya Susan Khisa
Customs Business Analyst / Change Management Champion
IT & Innovation Department of Uganda Revenue Authority (URA)

ASYCUDA software has been used by Uganda Customs for approximately 15 years. Customs clearances, declarations, accounting, and transits, among other things, are managed by the system. The users have the ability to access or generate specific reports, analyze trade data/statistics, and plan effectively.

Partner customs administrations, clearing fraternity, the business community, revenue authorities, ministries and agencies, among others, were impacted by ASYCUDAWorld.

ASYCUDAWorld facilitated the online submission of declarations, thereby reducing waiting time, paper usage, and minimizing administrative costs for clearing agents. The Clearing Agents were able to attach the required documents, receive declaration status, and respond to queries from anywhere.

Customs operations have been transformed by ASYCUDAWorld, URA's digital flagship, making it a benchmarking hub and center of innovation.

The fastest growing international trade environment calls for more technology-savvy officers who can support and develop initiatives that facilitate trade. As a result of implementing various initiatives, many officers have become experts in supporting the implementation of ASYCUDAWorld across the region.

When I reflect back, I am amazed by the strides made by URA, the clearing and forwarding fraternity, the transporters, the business community, and others in navigating the murky, unclear, and expensive cargo clearance journey.

End-to-end simple, customer-centric, automated processes and procedures are necessary for effective trade facilitation.

UNCTAD is acknowledged for consistently providing support and training to customs officers on the system application. TradeMark Africa is recognized for funding the Customs Modernization Agenda, which has enabled URA to achieve its revenue collection mandate and promote trade facilitation.

I'm proud to have championed change for both the Customs Business Systems Enhancement (CBSEP) and Uganda Electronic Single Window Projects.



Vanuatu



Diana Kalsong
Administration Manager
Kava House (Dried Kava Export Company), Vanuatu
3 Years Using ASYCUDAWorld

Halo olgeta!

My Name is Diana Kalsong. I am from Vanuatu. I work at The Kava House Vanuatu (Dried Kava Export Company) as an Administration Manager. The company is locally owned by Mr. Frank King who is also the Director. He is from the same village I come from called Mele Village. It is the biggest village in Vanuatu, on the island of Efate where the capital city Port Vila is located as well as the company. I have been with this company for 5 years and have learned and experienced a lot from my employer.

My responsibility includes looking after the company accounts and preparing documents for exports of dried kava in terms of kava roots, kava chips, and kava powder. We export to places like the USA, Europe, New Caledonia, Australia, New Zealand, China and Kiribati. The company has been exporting for over 12 years.

I was introduced to ASYCUDA in 2020 at the Vanuatu Single Window Office. Since using ASYCUDA, I found out that it has saved us a lot of time and cost. We discovered that less time is spent on paperwork, and transportation (fuel) to and from the quarantine office, and the tasks are completed in less time and with less energy. Everything is done digitally. All I do now is apply, submit, check online, and print out when payment is made. If changes are needed, I just send an email. The system definitely speeds up the process of paperwork.

I want to encourage my Pacific fellow friends to use this ASYCUDA system. It makes work a lot easier and faster.

Tankiu Tumas!

ASYCUDA INTERNATIONAL STAFF TESTIMONIALS



Lola Blandin
Economic Affairs Officer
Geneva, Switzerland

I hold a Masters' degree in engineering from ENSTA Paris and a Masters' degree in environmental economics from Institut Polytechnique de Paris. I recently graduated from Grenoble University and hold a PhD in Applied Economics.

For the last 3 years, I have been working as a researcher in environmental economics at the Grenoble Applied Economic Lab (France) and the Instituto de Estudios Urbanos y Territoriales (Chile). I have been leading and collaborating in four cross-disciplinary research projects and I mainly worked on residential choices and transport challenges at the micro-level. One of these projects aimed at evaluating and characterizing the impacts of new environmental policies on pre-existing transport poverty and vulnerabilities. I have also been working on the development of econometric models to evaluate the role of individual perceptions on transport and residential choices.

I joined the ASYCUDA Programme in October 2023 as an economic affairs officer to analyze the socio-economic impacts associated with the implementation of ASYCUDA tools at the country level. My work aims to develop the statistical and economic aspects to shed light on the great impact of the Programme on the SDGs.



Laure Buisson
Customs Expert
1 Year of Experience with ASYCUDA
13 Years' Overall Experience
Geneva, Switzerland

I have been with the ASYCUDA Programme since June 2022. Before joining UNCTAD, I was a French Customs Officer for 12 years. I worked in the field of customs procedures, functional expertise on national customs clearance software for general cargo, then postal and express consignments. In my last years, I was involved in passenger control at borders, mainly for the overhaul of the travelers' control system.

My joining the ASYCUDA Programme as a customs expert is linked to the strengthening of the automated customs business functions, and to bring in new ideas from my European and French experience. I got off to a flying start, immersing myself in user countries during 3 missions, first to Nepal, then Uganda and finally Jamaica. Based on these results, I take charge of certain functional specifications, work hand in hand with the functional and technical teams and test the developments made.

I particularly appreciate the cross-functional and technical nature of the ASYCUDA Programme. I am grateful for the support I have received in discovering other customs administrations, ASYCUDAWorld itself and, for the rich exchanges with all programme members. Participating in UNCTAD's largest technical cooperation program is an incredible experience which enables me to shed new light on my previous experiences and enrich, day after day, my knowledge of customs that are always evolving.



Pablo Cortizo
Designer
4 Years working with ASYCUDA
25 Years' Overall Experience
Geneva, Switzerland

As a child I would watch my father draw and paint. It is part of my DNA and I've always been motivated by "beautiful design". I was born in Argentina and grew up in Brazil where I started working in the field of advertising in parallel with architecture studies. I worked with some of the best advertising agencies in Goiás for important national clients, but in 2007 I travelled to Europe to explore new horizons and take on new challenges. With 25 years of experience and a wide range of technical ability in using tools such as Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign and being able to work in at least three different languages, I have had the pleasure of serving UNCTAD for 7 years as a graphic designer. My role mainly involves desktop publishing and perfecting the layout, look and feel of reports such as the World Investment Report.

During the past 4 years as temporary staff, I have very much enjoyed being part of the ASYCUDA Programme, diving into the world of customs systems and being responsible for all graphical elements - such as the Programme's new design and brand, including the new logo and its derivatives. I provide support to every region of the world with original and innovative designs such as the ASYCUDA Annual Report and Compendium publication, infographics, leaflets, websites, presentations, and even software interfaces. I am proud to contribute to ASYCUDA's work and bring my visual touch to the conception and improvement of the programme's visibility.



Boulbaba Fehri
Customs Expert
11 Years' Experience with ASYCUDA
Baghdad, Iraq

I have been with the ASYCUDA Programme since March 2012 as a Programme Management Officer. Prior to joining ASYCUDA I have had experience in the field of customs in the General Directorate of Tunisian Customs with a long experience for 25 years. I studied at the National School of French Customs in Neuilly / Seine. I represented Tunisian

Customs in the Computing Subcommittee at the World Customs Organization in Brussels.

Since joining the UNCTAD ASYCUDA Programme, I have been employed in customs administrations to assist the national team of Djibouti, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Yemen, and Iraq for the implementation of the ASYCUDAWorld system. I successfully provided ASYCUDA functional training to Customs Officers of different countries.

My major goal was and still is the contribution to the improvement of trade facilitation through the automation and modernization of customs.



Rakia GAZZAH
Associate Information Systems Officer
Geneva, Switzerland
1 Year with ASYCUDA
5 Years' Total Experience

I am a 2018 graduate in Computer Engineering from Tunisia, driven by a deep passion for technology. My professional journey started as a DevOps engineer in the private sector, allowing me to work on diverse projects across various countries, primarily in cloud-based environments. This hands-on experience has consistently kept me on the cutting edge of modern technology.

In addition to my primary role, I've taken on responsibilities related to system administration and database management. These undertakings have honed my skills in design, development, system setup, and ongoing maintenance. Over time, I've not only earned various technology certifications for personal growth but also to demonstrate my expertise.

Starting in May 2022, I became a part of the ASYCUDA Programme. I take immense pride in being a member of the technical team, and I'm particularly pleased to represent diversity in our field as one of the few women on the team.

I'm delighted to have been involved in the development of the new system from its inception, participating in tasks ranging from drafting the software requirements specifications (SRS) of the modules to writing the initial lines of code. Working with this highly experienced team has been an enriching experience. It's an environment that not only facilitates the growth of technical and functional skills but also fosters a culture of continuous learning and improvement.



Arouna Lengani
IT Expert
19 Years' Experience with ASYCUDA

I am Mr. Arouna Lengani, a 46-year-old professional from Burkina Faso, holding a degree in Computer Science as an Engineer of Design. My journey is marked by a passion for information technology and a series of certifications that have strengthened my expertise, including ITIL, Oracle, Prince2, and PMP.

My career began in the field of public finance informatics after completing my university studies. However, my true adventure began in November 2004 when I joined the remarkable team at UNCTAD within the ASYCUDA Programme.

Over the course of 19 dedicated years at ASYCUDA, I have had the privilege of witnessing the remarkable evolution of this tool, from its version 2 to the ASYCUDAWorld version. I have seen it adapt to the technological advancements of its time while also meeting the critical requirements of the customs sector. It has been an exciting journey to see the system operate from the early Twins Server and Prolog days to HP ProLiant servers with SCO Unixware and, now, on technologies like Oracle, PostgreSQL, Linux, and various database clusters.

My work at UNCTAD has allowed me to modestly contribute to various areas, including computer engineering, fraud prevention, revenue security, trade facilitation, and decision analysis. Through ASYCUDA, I have had the opportunity to collaborate with experts from various fields, including customs officers, economists, statisticians, IT professionals, telecommunications specialists, and project and programme managers.

To date, I have had the honor of working on software implementations in 16 countries, including Burkina Faso, Benin, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Congo, Central African Republic, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Niger, Madagascar, Mauritania, Chad, and Togo. This experience has provided me with a wealth of multicultural exposure, and I can proudly say that ASYCUDA has become my second family.



Dhanushki SAHABANDU
Programme Management Officer

Suva, Fiji

1.5 Years' Experience with ASYCUDA

18+ Years' Total Experience

I'm a project management professional with over 10 years of experience working with the UN in various capacities and am now privileged to be working for the UNCTAD ASYCUDA team. I'm currently based in Suva, Fiji Office, managing a very dynamic and exciting European Union funded project called Improving Pacific Island Customs and Trade (IMPACT). This 10mil EUR project supports 15 pacific island countries to boost and increase intra-regional and international trade.

I've been lucky to have a very exciting and dynamic career, which I started supporting post tsunami recovery work in Sri Lanka and when the conflict escalated in the country, I was thrilled to join UNDP Transitional Early Recovery Programme covering the conflict affected districts on monitoring and reporting, programme design and resource mobilization. Post war, I worked for the British High Commission managing their Conflict Pool programme supporting post war recovery, reconciliation and human rights work. I rejoined UNDP to support the management of their environment cluster with an annual 5mil USD portfolio of projects. I went on to diversify my experience with a think tank where I was involved in various sustainable development related research efforts and also undertook project evaluations across Asia which also included the evaluation of three Peacebuilding Fund projects implemented by UN agencies. I was excited to take on an assignment with the UN Resident Coordinators Office in Fiji supporting development and coordination efforts between UN agencies and the Governments of Republic of the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu just before joining ASYCUDA. In hindsight I realize my strength has been my highly transferable project management skills, being extremely adaptive, a keen learner and as well as my driving desire to serve people in any way possible.

Working for ASYCUDA has been an eye-opening experience in many ways, which I find has been leagues ahead of other UN agencies in reform and digitalizing interventions. I'm keen to use my skills to increase ASYCUDA's field of influence and build more interlinkages between our work and other agencies/ partners, connecting our up-stream interventions with the downstream interventions of other agencies to maximize benefits for everyone.



Richard Warren
Public Information Officer
18 Years' Experience
2.5 Years' Experience with ASYCUDA
Geneva, Switzerland

I am a communications professional with 18 years' experience working with the UN, iNGOs, government and in the private sector - being based in Asia, Europe and North American during this time.

I joined UNCTAD and the ASYCUDA Programme in June 2021, initially being brought in to work on the ASYCUDA Annual Report 2020. Following publication of the report, I was asked to stay on and cover the day-to-day communications activities of the Programme. During this time, I was seconded to work with the main UNCTAD communications team during the quadrennial conference, UNCTAD15, to coordinate media relations activities.

I very much enjoy being part of the ASYCUDA Programme. I appreciate the direct impact that our work has upon economies and societies – advancing global progress towards achieving the SDGs. I also enjoy working in a friendly, efficient, and collaborative environment, where all components work together for the greater good.

This document has not been formally edited.

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