

# ASYCUDA Newsletter

## UNCTAD Division on Technology and Logistics



**December 2013**



## NOTE

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## Editorial

The December 2013 edition of the ASYCUDA Newsletter is being issued at an important juncture for the international trading community. The WTO Ministerial Conference in Bali finally agreed on a new package to liberalize global trade. The agreement focuses on three angles – agriculture, development aid and reduction of bureaucracy at borders. Trade facilitation lies at the heart of the agreement and will facilitate international business by reducing the cost of moving goods and improving the efficiency of procedures, in particular customs.

For UNCTAD it has also been a period of change. The new Secretary General of UNCTAD Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi started his official duties on the 1st of September 2013. Dr. Kituyi praised the ASYCUDA Programme's achievements and called on the ASYCUDA team to continue its important technical assistance to member states, particularly African countries and LDCs.

In the second half of 2013 the ASYCUDA Programme continued its dedicated work on the ground through active projects in Afghanistan, Liberia, Zambia, the DRC, Surinam, Mali, Uganda, Bangladesh and in several countries of the Caribbean and Pacific regions.

During this period the ASYCUDA IT experts have also been working on enhancing the system's functions and assisting national teams to integrate these into their ASYCUDA environment to facilitate the implementation of a Single Window platform. These enhanced ASYCUDA functionalities have been implemented in Rwanda, Jordan and Gibraltar.

The new ASYCUDA-based electronic phytosanitary certification system – named ASYCER, was presented at a side event of the Bali WTO Ministerial Conference by the Netherlands government and UNCTAD. The SG of UNCTAD personally attended this event organized at the initiative of the Dutch government.

The newest version of ASYCUDA was presented at the UNCTAD's Multiyear Expert Meeting on Transport and Trade Facilitation held in Geneva in November 2013. ASYCUDA representatives have also taken part in a number of regional conferences and seminars, in particular in the Second Trade and Transport Facilitation Conference in Aqaba, Jordan. Such events, which attract a large audience, help to increase awareness to government agencies and the business community of the benefits of ASYCUDA and its opportunities for strengthening trade facilitation worldwide.

The UNCTAD ASYCUDA Programme is constantly enhancing its collaboration with international organizations. Memorandums of Understanding have already been agreed with the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Others are currently being negotiated. Tangible results are already visible for the Performance Indicators Project in Liberia. Other agreements with regional economic entities are currently being studied.

The European Union continued its support to the ASYCUDA Programme. In December 2013 the European Commission approved the ASYCUDA project in Bosnia and Herzegovina which will facilitate the preparation of the B&H for EU accession.

With a new year approaching, we would like to welcome four new countries, Jamaica, Lesotho, Solomon Islands and St. Kitts & Nevis and one British Overseas Territory, Saint Helena, which have decided to adopt ASYCUDA as their customs processing system.

Happy New Year!

Division on Technology and Logistics, ASYCUDA Programme, Geneva, June 2013.



L'édition de la lettre d'information semestrielle de SYDONIA de décembre 2013 survient à une date importante pour la communauté du commerce international. La Conférence Ministérielle de l'Organisation Mondiale du Commerce (OMC) qui s'est tenue à Bali, Indonésie, a finalement conclu un accord sur la libéralisation des échanges commerciaux. L'accord porte sur trois volets: l'agriculture, l'aide au développement et la réduction de la bureaucratie aux frontières. La libéralisation des échanges, au cœur de l'accord de Bali, permettra de faciliter le commerce international, en réduisant les coûts associés aux mouvements des marchandises et en améliorant l'efficacité des procédures, en particulier douanières.

Pour la CNUCED, le deuxième semestre 2013 fut également une période exceptionnelle. Le nouveau Secrétaire Général, Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, est entré en fonction le 1er septembre 2013. Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi a immédiatement souligné l'importance des réalisations de SYDONIA et a demandé à l'équipe du Programme de continuer à développer une assistance technique de grande qualité pour les Etats Membres, en particulier pour les pays africains et les PMAs.

Ce dernier semestre, le programme SYDONIA a travaillé sur de nombreux projets nationaux, à Genève et sur le terrain, et en particulier en Afghanistan, au Liberia, en Zambie, en RDC, au Surinam, au Mali, en Uganda, au Bangladesh, et dans de nombreux pays des Caraïbes et du Pacifique.

Dans la même période, les experts techniques des équipes SYDONIA ont contribué à développer la fonctionnalité du système et à l'intégrer avec les équipes nationales aux systèmes existants pour faciliter la mise en place de Guichets Uniques du commerce. Ces fonctionnalités sont d'ores et déjà en test ou utilisées en Rwanda, Jordanie ou Gibraltar.

Le nouveau certificat phytosanitaire électronique - nommé ASYCER, a été conjointement présenté lors d'un événement parallèle à la Conférence Ministérielle de l'OMC, par le Gouvernement des Pays Bas et la CUNCED. Le Secrétaire Général de

la CNUCED a personnellement participé à cet événement.

En novembre 2013, la dernière version de SYDONIA a été présentée à la Réunion du Groupe d'Experts sur le transport et la facilitation du commerce. Le Programme a également participé au cours de ces derniers mois à plusieurs conférences, réunions et ateliers régionaux, et en particulier à la Seconde Conférence sur le Transport et La Facilitation du Commerce organisée par le Centre d'Excellence d'Aqaba en Jordanie. A chaque fois, les interventions du Programme attirent une audience importante, ce qui démontre l'intérêt des agences gouvernementales et du secteur privé pour les bénéfices et les opportunités résultants des projets SYDONIA.

Aujourd'hui, le Programme SYDONIA souhaite accentuer sa coopération avec les autres organisations partenaires du commerce international. Des accords de coopérations ont déjà été conclus avec l'OMD et avec IATA à cet effet. D'autres accords sont en cours de négociation. Certains résultats pratiques sont déjà visibles: formation et tests d'indicateurs de performance au Libéria. D'autres accords avec des communautés économiques régionales sont actuellement à l'étude.

L'Union Européenne continue son support au Programme SYDONIA. En décembre 2013, la Commission Européenne a approuvé un nouveau projet SYDONIA en Bosnie Herzégovine qui facilitera la préparation à l'accession européenne.

Enfin, à l'aube de cette nouvelle année souhaitons la bienvenue à quatre nouveaux pays, la Jamaïque, le Lesotho, les Îles Salomon et St Kitts et Nevis, et le territoire d'outre-mer du Royaume-Uni Sainte Hélène, qui ont décidé d'adopter SYDONIA pour automatiser leurs opérations de dédouanement.

Bonne année à tous!

Division de la Technologie et de la Logistique, Equipe du Programme SYDONIA, Genève, juin 2013.



La edición del boletín informativo semestral de SIDUNEA de diciembre 2013 aparece en un momento importante para la comunidad de comercio internacional. La Conferencia Ministerial de la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC), celebrada en Bali, Indonesia, ha llegado finalmente a un acuerdo sobre la liberalización del comercio. El acuerdo abarca tres áreas: la agricultura, la ayuda al desarrollo y la reducción de la burocracia en las fronteras. La liberalización de los intercambios comerciales, elemento más importante del acuerdo de Bali, facilitará el comercio internacional mediante la reducción de los costes asociados a la circulación de mercancías y la mejora de la eficacia de los procedimientos, en particular los aduaneros.

La segunda mitad de 2013 también fue un período excepcional para la UNCTAD. El nuevo Secretario General, el Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, asumió el cargo el 1 de septiembre de 2013. El Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi destacó de inmediato la importancia de los logros de SIDUNEA y pidió al equipo del Programa continuar con el desarrollo de una excelente asistencia técnica a los Estados miembros, en particular los países africanos y los PMAs.

En este último semestre, SIDUNEA ha trabajado en numerosos proyectos nacionales, en Ginebra y en el terreno, en particular en Afganistán, Liberia, Zambia, República Democrática del Congo, Surinam, Mali, Uganda, Bangladesh y en muchos países del Caribe y el Pacífico.

En el mismo período, los expertos técnicos de los equipos de SIDUNEA han contribuido a mejorar las funciones del sistema e integrarlas con los equipos nacionales a los sistemas existentes para facilitar la aplicación del comercio de Ventanilla Única. Estas funciones se utilizan ya o están en período de prueba en Ruanda, Jordania o Gibraltar.

El nuevo certificado fitosanitario electrónico, llamado ASYCER, se presentó conjuntamente por el Gobierno de los Países Bajos y la UNCTAD en un evento paralelo en la Conferencia Ministerial de la OMC. El Secretario General de la UNCTAD participó personalmente en este evento.

En noviembre de 2013 se presentó la última versión de SIDUNEA en la Reunión del Grupo de Expertos sobre transporte y facilitación del comercio. El programa también ha participado en los últimos meses en diversas conferencias, reuniones y talleres regionales, y en particular en la Segunda Conferencia sobre Transporte y Facilitación del Comercio, organizada por el Centro de Excelencia de Aqaba en Jordania. Continuamente las intervenciones del programa atraen a una gran audiencia, lo que demuestra el interés de las agencias gubernamentales y del sector privado en los beneficios y las oportunidades derivadas de los proyectos SIDUNEA.

Hoy en día, el Programa SIDUNEA desea aumentar su cooperación con otras organizaciones asociadas al comercio internacional. Se han firmado acuerdos de cooperación con la OMD e IATA para este propósito. Se están negociando otros acuerdos. Algunos resultados prácticos ya son perceptibles: la formación y pruebas de los indicadores de eficacia en Liberia. Otros acuerdos con comunidades económicas regionales están actualmente en curso.

La Unión Europea continúa su apoyo al Programa SIDUNEA. En diciembre de 2013, la Comisión Europea aprobó un nuevo proyecto SIDUNEA en Bosnia y Herzegovina que facilitará la preparación para la adhesión a la UE.

Por último, nos gustaría, en el inicio de este nuevo año, dar la bienvenida a cuatro nuevos países, Jamaica, Lesoto, Islas Salomón y San Cristóbal y Nevis, y al Territorio británico de ultramar de Santa Elena, que han decidido adoptar SIDUNEA para automatizar el despacho de aduanas.

Feliz Año Nuevo a todos!

División de Tecnología y Logística, equipo del programa SIDUNEA, Ginebra, junio 2013.

## New Secretary General of UNCTAD meets ASYCUDA team



**Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, new Secretary General of UNCTAD meets ASYCUDA team**

On 1 September 2013, Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, started his term as Secretary General of UNCTAD. Dr. Kituyi spent his first week meeting staff. He expressed his pleasure through an e-mail: "It is a pleasure and a privilege to join you as the next SG of UNCTAD. I have long been an admirer of the organization's work, and a strong believer in its cause. As such, I am both humbled and inspired by the opportunity to contribute to its rich traditions and to shape its future"

Meeting with UNCTAD's directors and services chiefs on his first day, Dr. Kituyi said he wants to increase the "intellectual firepower" of the organization. He stressed the importance of focusing on research, consensus-building, and technical cooperation activities so that the agency

becomes "the nexus where social efforts such as follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals are linked to the economic realities of trade, finance, investment and technology."

Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi appreciated the achievements of the ASYCUDA Programme in many countries and regions. He noted that the Geneva-based international community considered ASYCUDA as one of UNCTAD's best services within the technical cooperation pillar. DTL and ASYCUDA management do their best to remain a de facto leader in customs modernization and to provide high quality technical assistance to beneficiary countries.

## "It always seems impossible until it's done" Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)

Those were the words that Roberto Azevedo, quoting Nelson Mandela, used in his closing speech as Director General of the WTO on Saturday 7th December at the 9th Ministerial Conference held in Bali. "We made it! For the first time in our history, the WTO has truly delivered," he said<sup>1</sup>. Twelve years after adopting the Doha Declaration, WTO Members found in Bali a consensus in the so called Bali Package. The WTO Trade Facilitation

Agreement (TFA) is a major component of the Bali package and the first agreement ever adopted by the WTO.<sup>23</sup>

It is worth recalling that UNCTAD has, since 2002, been a faithful partner for all WTO Members, in

<sup>1</sup> The whole closing session may be watched at: [http://www.wtmc9.org/mc9\\_webcast\\_e.php](http://www.wtmc9.org/mc9_webcast_e.php)

<sup>2</sup> The text of the Bali Package including the Trade Facilitation agreement may be consulted at:

<https://mc9.wto.org/draft-bali-ministerial-declaration>

<sup>3</sup> Extracted from Transport Newsletter No. 60 - Fourth Quarter 2013

particular developing country members, in supporting the negotiations pivotal to the successful conclusion leading to the adoption of a WTO trade facilitation agreement. UNCTAD - which has more than 40 years of strong expertise in this field - has been acknowledged by both donors and developing countries alike. The high quality research, consensus building and technical assistance activities carried out by the Trade Logistics Branch have contributed to two outstanding outcomes: 1) innovative mechanisms for the implementation of Special and Differential Treatment, as reflected in the Section II of the new agreement; and 2) the active participation of developing countries in the negotiations.



9<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference, 7 December 2013, Closing Ceremony

Let's take this opportunity to congratulate WTO Members for this fundamental new agreement. The UNCTAD Trade Logistics Branch and the ASYCUDA Programme stand ready to support the post Bali implementation programme in trade facilitation with the same determination and enthusiasm of the pre-Bali package years.

Starting in 2014, UNCTAD ASYCUDA Programme will plan for activities focusing on how to support the actual implementation of the new WTO agreement. It will focus, in particular in partnering with its Customs Administrations using the system, to take advantage of the technical functionalities of the system which allow full compliance with the TFA provisions. A more detailed analysis of current and future functionalities of the system compared to compliance needs of WTO members for the TFA, will soon be made available.

## ASYCER presented at the WTO Ministerial Conference in Bali

During the WTO Conference in Bali the UNCTAD's high level team presented a new trade facilitation instrument, the ASYCER electronic phytosanitary certification system, based on the ASYCUDA technology and developed in collaboration with the Dutch Government. The special e-certification workshop, organized at the Netherlands' initiative in the margins of the Bali summit, was attended by delegates from many WTO member states.

UNCTAD Secretary-General Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi and Ms. Lilianne Ploumen, Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, opened the event. Dr Kituyi termed the event as belonging to a promising new era of post Bali. He highlighted the long history of UNCTAD's work in the area of trade facilitation originating long before the notion of "post Bali" had been coined. Ms. Ploumen stated "The e-certification is faster and less error-prone, and it saves exporters from extra red tape"

The Head of UNCTAD's Trade Logistics Branch Mr. José Maria Rubiato presented the innovative

ASYCER system. During this event, China also presented its national e-certification experience.



Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary General of UNCTAD

The Netherlands and UNCTAD are keen to share their knowledge with developing countries, which stand to benefit especially from online export certification. Any trader needing to export agricultural goods requires a veterinary or phytosanitary certificate. This will assure the importing country that the goods comply with all

applicable regulations for protecting health in humans, animals and plants.

On the eve of the Bali Summit, the ASYCER national stocktaking workshop took place in Addis Ababa. Following its successful piloting experience, the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture is considering integrating 100 exporting companies into the e-certification process. This project was supported by the Ethiopian Revenue and Customs Authority (ERCA), the ASYCUDA++ beneficiary, and the national horticulture producers and exporters association (EHPEA)



ASYCER Portal in Ethiopia

## ASYCUDA Regional Workshop in Livingstone



Participants of "The Peer to Peer Learning event on the implementation of ASYCUDA World", Livingstone, Zambia June 2013

In mid-June 2013 the ASYCUDA Programme participated in the "The Peer to Peer Learning Event on the implementation of ASYCUDA", organized by the International Finance Cooperation (World Bank Group / IFC) in partnership with Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) and UNCTAD in Livingstone, Zambia.

The event featured the UNCTAD ASYCUDA Programme, IFC, ZRA and delegates from Zimbabwe Revenue Authority, Rwanda Revenue Authority, Uganda Revenue Authority, Liberian Customs and Excise, Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority, Jordan Customs and Grenada Customs and Excise Department.

The seminar focused on the implementation of electronic customs-centric single windows with several customs authorities presenting their methodology for their current single windows based on ASYCUDA. Sessions were held for the different delegations to share their experiences of ASYCUDA with an emphasis on Other

Governmental Agency (OGA) cooperation and the different challenges that were encountered.



Panel of moderators - UNCTAD and World Bank/IFC

The event led to the recommendation for the setting up of a Regional Steering Committee on Customs and Border Modernization. Participants expressed the need for an international forum to encourage



and facilitate bilateral and regional collaboration and to share solutions, ideas and offer learning opportunities on a wide range of customs' modernization-related issues. This includes

technical expertise and ICT requirements, project management aspects, legislation requirements, management and training support.

## Aqaba Centre of Excellence hosts the Single Window Conference



**Mr. Fabrice Millet, Chief ASYCUDA Programme, Prof. Dr. Kamel O. Mahadin, Chief Commissioner ASEZA, Mrs. Lina Shbeeb, Minister of Transport, Kingdom of Jordan, Mr. Munther Assaf, Director General, Jordan Customs, during opening ceremony of the second edition of the Trade and Transport Facilitation Conference, Aqaba, 3-5 September 2013**

Since 2011 the Aqaba Centre of Excellence (ACE) has been providing a unique platform to the beneficiaries of the ASYCUDA Programme, government agencies, private companies and international organizations to share best practices in the area of trade facilitation and e-government.

After the success of the first edition and with the active support of the ASYCUDA Programme and Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), the ACE organized the second edition of the Trade and Transport Facilitation Conference from 3-5 September 2013. The conference was focused on the single-window concept. The event was held under the patronage of the ASEZA Chief Commissioner Kamel Mahadin, and with the cooperation of Transport Minister Ms. Lina Shbeeb and Chief of the ASYCUDA Programme Mr. Fabrice Millet.

Mr. Mahadin noted that the event which attracted participants from over 17 countries presented the

golden opportunity for exchanging experience in the field of transportation and logistics, and the single window that is becoming essential for trade facilitation worldwide. He added that the Aqaba zone had become a unique hub for trade and logistics services with its multi-model transportation facilities and competitive business environment. Minister Shbeeb said that trade facilitation in line with international standards was of vital importance to attract investments and enhance the Jordanian economy.

Participants exchanged experiences and presented success stories of countries applying the single-window approach to facilitate transportation and trade. Experiences from Rwanda, Kenya and Uganda, the Caribbean and Mediterranean countries as well as the ASYCUDA-based Aqaba warehouse system were presented. Experts recommended the use of ASYCUDA as a core system for building an electronic single window system for international trade.

## Suriname Customs migrate to ASYCUDA

The Government of Suriname undertook the first Customs automation project in 1995 by implementing ASYCUDA 2.7. Facing the modern realities of international trade and emerging challenges the Government of Suriname and in particular the Customs management realized the need to improve its services to the trade community and to enhance customs controls. They therefore decided to undertake a new modernization program and in 2012 embarked on the system's migration to last version of ASYCUDA.



**Mr. A. Van Hamme, Comptroller of Customs and Excise**

The main objectives of the project were the implementation of simpler customs procedures and achieving a balance for trade facilitation and efficient and effective controls.

The Project activities commenced in August 2012. The ASYCUDA experts and the National Project Team had to work very intensively to overcome technological constraints and to ensure ASYCUDA implementation in accordance to the master plan.

The procedures and processes were redesigned in order to provide better service to internal and

external users, comply with international regulations and to enhance customs controls.

Electronic manifest was implemented at Nieuw Haven in August 2013 and in Nieuw Nickerie by November 2013, allowing waybills to be written off automatically at assessment of declarations and to reduce goods clearance time at Paramaribo.



**Port of Paramaribo**

The second phase includes the implementation of transits from Paramaribo to Nieuw Nickerie and Direct Trader Input (DTI) at Nieuw Nickerie (Pilot site) scheduled to take place in December 2013. The implementation of electronic transit will provide customs administration with a tool for a more effective and efficient control for goods arriving in Nieuw Haven in transit to a third country such as Guyana and also for goods in-transit to inland customs offices.

The final phase involves the roll-out of the system to all customs offices throughout the country.

## Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a multi-island state comprising 34 islands and cays. There are customs offices in five (5) of these islands namely Saint Vincent, Bequia, Mustique, Canouan and Union Island. Saint Vincent is the largest and accounts for over 85% of the trade in the country.

The ASYCUDA system was introduced in 1993 in the Department of Customs and Excise (CED) of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in order to automate its customs clearance, duty accounting

and collection, and foreign trade statistics. The implementation was completed in 1994 with a version 2.7 operational at the Long Room in the main customs office in Kingstown, handling all import and export declarations coming from the three main ports of entry in St. Vincent (Kingstown Wharf, Campden Park and E.T. Joshua International Airport). This system was then successfully updated to ASYCUDA++ in 2007. Subsequent to the successful implementation of ASYCUDA++ and in their quest to migrate to

UNCTAD's latest version of ASYCUDA, the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines signed a contribution agreement with the European Community in February 2013. The execution of the project was subject to stringent timeframes with very little room for manoeuvre. In an expeditious manner, UNCTAD executed most activities that were directly under the control of the staff and experts appointed to the project. According to the initial plan, the implementation and go-live of the last version of ASYCUDA should have started in August 2013. Unfortunately, some critical information technology infrastructure was not completed on time, hence the relocation of staff to the new Customs House building had to be delayed. Thus, it was not until October 14 2013 that ASYCUDA became fully operational in Saint Vincent.

operational. During the first month, about 600 manifest were registered, over 3000 customs declarations were assessed with the last version of ASYCUDA and other transactions such as payments, risk assessment, etc. were also processed. After only a few weeks of operation of the system, CED could see the benefits and advantages that the new version of the system brought to customs and the trading community.



Mr. Grenville A. John, Comptroller of Customs & Excise

The former ASYCUDA++ application server and database were stopped and made inaccessible to the public allowing the new system to become



New Customs House building

The ASYCUDA system in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Customs Brokers, importers and exporters, or other users do not need to wait for regular working hours to lodge their declarations to Customs and trace. They can do it electronically from their businesses or any location through an Internet access point.

In the very short duration of its implementation, ASYCUDA has helped the CED to re-assess customs operating procedures and make strides in embracing trade facilitation.

## SYDONIA en République Démocratique du Congo



Inauguration de SYDONIA au bureau de douane de l'aéroport International de Kinshasa

La République Démocratique du Congo est, et en raison de sa grande superficie, de sa localisation au centre de l'Afrique, de ses énormes richesses naturelles et de son importante population, l'un des "géants" de l'Afrique.

La RDC a connu durant les 20 dernières années un certain nombre de conflits armés internes et régionaux. Depuis plusieurs années, grâce à la pacification soutenue des conflits, la collaboration accrue et de plus en plus étroite du Gouvernement avec les organisations internationales et le support des institutions financières internationales plusieurs réformes institutionnelles, réglementaires, fiscales et économiques ont eu lieu.

C'est dans ce cadre qu'a été lancé en avril 2011 un projet de mise en place de SYDONIA, financé par l'Union Européenne. Ce projet s'inscrit dans le cadre du plan stratégique pour la réforme des Finances Publiques dans lequel figure la mobilisation des recettes fiscales et douanières comme volet principal de la stratégie. De plus, le projet fait partie intégrante du programme économique du Gouvernement conclu avec les services du FMI sous le cadre du Facilité Elargi de Crédit et constitue la deuxième composante du Programme Aide au Commerce de l'Union Européenne.

L'exécution planifiée du projet s'est déroulée en quatre phases: Mise en place de SYDONIA++ dans 25 bureaux de douane, la mise en place d'un prototype de la dernière version du système SYDONIA à la DGDA et formation d'une équipe nationale, le déploiement de SYDONIA dans les principaux bureaux de douanes; et enfin l'interconnexion avec d'autres administrations et partenaires économiques de la douane.



**Formation SYDONIA aux opérateurs économiques**

Un certain nombre de réalisations ont été complétées:

- 37 sites douaniers, correspondant à 27 bureaux ont été automatisés avec SYDONIA++. Ceci

représente près de 95% des échanges et commerciaux de la RDC et plus de 90% des recettes collectées par la DGDA.

- La DGDA dispose de son propre prototype SYDONIA, incorporant dans le système toute la réglementation et les règles de taxation.
- Un projet national SYDONIA a été mis en place à la DGDA, permettant la constitution de trois équipes de la douane, formées sur place et à l'extérieur du pays. L'une technique, composée de 9 membres; une fonctionnelle composée de 6 membres ainsi qu'une équipe de formateurs SYDONIA, composée de plus de 30 membres assurant, avec les 2 premières équipes, les formations des cadres et agents de la DGDA et de ses partenaires, nécessaires à l'implémentation du système dans les bureaux de douane de tout le territoire national.

En mars 2013, le système a été lancé, en premier lieu dans un site pilote au bureau SEP Ville, bureau de douane des Sociétés et Entreprises Pétrolières à Kinshasa. Ce lancement a permis le peaufinage du prototype et son amélioration. Suite à quoi, et dans le cadre du lancement du Guichet Unique Douanier de l'Aéroport International N'djili de Kinshasa, une inauguration officielle de l'implémentation du système a eu lieu en septembre 2013, sous l'autorité de M. le Ministre Délégué aux Finances, M. Patrice KITEBI qui a déclaré : "SYDONIA permet de moderniser les processus de dédouanement, simplifier et automatiser les procédures, améliorer le climat des affaires en créant une plus grande transparence des opérations de dédouanement, diminuer la corruption et accroître les recettes douanières, source importante de revenus pour l'Etat Congolais"; et en présence du Directeur Général de la DGDA, M. Déo RUGWIZA MAGERA qui, lui-même a déclaré: "SYDONIA apporte, par ailleurs, plusieurs avantages allant de l'amélioration de la perception des recettes à celle du climat d'affaires en passant par la réduction de la corruption et le renforcement de la transparence"; de l'Ambassadeur, Chef de la Délégation de l'Union Européenne en RDC, M. Jean-Michel DUMOND et du Directeur Pays du PNUD-RDC, Dr. Adama COULIBALY, en représentations de la CNUCED.

Depuis, SYDONIA a été lancé dans 2 autres bureaux de douane kinois, soit le Guichet Unique Intégré Douanier de Kinshasa Ville et le port fluvial de Kinshasa: Beach Ngobila, totalisant ainsi 4 bureaux et plus de 80% des recettes et du trafic commercial de Kinshasa.

Pour le premier semestre de 2014, le projet SYDONIA prévoit le démarrage de 3 autres bureaux à Kinshasa, automatisant ainsi tous les bureaux douanier de la capitale ; et le démarrage de 6 bureaux au Bas-Congo, dont le port de Matadi, principale porte d'entrée et de sortie des biens et marchandises en RDC et les 9 bureaux de la province minière du Katanga.

Un certain nombre d'administrations et de partenaires économiques ont été choisis, en

concertation avec la DGDA et le Ministère des Finances, pour être interconnectés à SYDONIA courant 2014. Il s'agit de l'Office Congolais de Contrôle, la Société Commerciale des Transports et des Ports, le Ministère de la Santé Publique, le Centre d'expertise d'évaluation et de Certification des Substances Minérales Précieuses, l'Office De Gestion de Gestion du Fret Maritime.

## SYDONIA au Mali



C'est sur recommandation des États membres de la CEDEAO et grâce au concours financier de la France, que le Mali a pu bénéficier en 1980 de la mise en oeuvre du système SYDONIA dans le but de permettre la simplification et l'harmonisation des formalités douanières dans les échanges entre d'une part les pays membres de la communauté et d'autre part les États tiers.

La douane malienne s'est rapidement appropriée le système SYDONIA dans ses différentes versions, permettant ainsi l'uniformisation des codifications à caractères statistiques ou réglementaires et l'informatisation des formulaires pour faciliter l'élaboration des statistiques du commerce extérieur.

Le programme a permis l'installation d'un réseau informatique couvrant la Direction Générale et les différents services situés à Faladié afin d'accueillir le système SYDONIA. Il a aussi permis l'extension du réseau à d'autres bureaux de Bamako (aéroport, gare ferroviaire, etc.) et aux directions régionales de Koulikoro et du District de Bamako. La troisième phase a permis de couvrir des directions régionales, les bureaux frontaliers et les antennes de la douane malienne à Dakar et Abidjan.

Le projet de mise en Œuvre de SYDONIA++ a contribué à accélérer les dédouanements et à simplifier les procédures (Réduction du temps pour l'importation de 47%, et du temps pour l'exportation de 59%), avec des coûts moindres pour les entreprises et des délais réduits pour le traitement des dossiers. Le système est également avantageux pour le Mali car il a permis des contrôles douaniers plus efficaces, des recettes accrues et la disponibilité rapide d'informations statistiques fiables.

Capitalisant ainsi sur plus de 30 ans d'expérience et de maîtrise des versions précédentes du système et des retombées bénéfiques. La douane Malienne a décidé en 2011 de migrer de SYDONIA++ à la dernière version du système.

Ce projet permet à la douane de bénéficier d'un système reposant sur les dernières avancées technologiques tout en conservant toutes les applications spécifiques développées sous SYDONIA++ notamment pour la lutte contre la fraude et le suivi des acquits, les tableaux de bord et le suivi de l'activité des services, la documentation, le traitement et le contrôle des exonérations douanières et enfin le suivi des recettes et du recouvrement.

Une première phase de conception d'un prototype installé au QG des douanes à Bamako et de formation technique et fonctionnelle a été initiée dans un contexte difficile: en effet l'économie malienne a été soumise depuis 2011, à de nombreux chocs, tels l'instabilité au nord du pays et les conflits armés dans cette région, qui ont provoqué l'arrêt temporaire du projet de mise en œuvre de SYDONIA.

En Septembre 2013, les douanes maliennes, en collaboration avec les douanes françaises et des parties prenantes du secteur privé, ont demandé au programme SYDONIA d'assister les douanes maliennes afin de réactiver le projet. Surmontant les difficultés logistiques et les contraintes sécuritaires l'équipe centrale de Genève a pu installer SYDONIA sur un serveur situé au quartier général des Douanes à Bamako.

Fort de son expérience dans les pays post-conflit (Afghanistan, Bosnie-Herzégovine...), le programme SYDONIA continuera d'apporter son assistance technique aux douanes maliennes dans le

cadre de projet d'implémentation de SYDONIA, caractérisé par un contexte de reconstruction et de modernisation des institutions du pays.

## ASYCUDA National Rollout in Uganda



The National rollout of ASYCUDA in Uganda is being implemented in 4 phases. The first two phases were finalised from April to August 2013. The official launch of ASYCUDA was graced by the Commissioner General of Uganda Revenue Authority Mrs. Allen Kagina.

than 3100 users have been trained in the use of ASYCUDA. This number includes Customs Staff, Customs Brokers, Airline Cargo Handlers, Bonded warehouse owners and Other Government Agencies.



**National Project Team with Commissioner of Customs, Mr. Richard Kamajugo**



Phase Three of the National rollout was the big bang of the year and it involved rolling out the system to Kampala customs office in September 2013. Kampala Customs Office is the largest customs station in Uganda processing approximately 58% of all customs declarations by volume and collects the second highest in terms of revenue collection. Being the biggest station in the country, the rollout at Kampala involved lots of marketing activities and materials. The marketing activities included TV and radio talk-shows, newspaper adverts, seminars, etc.



**Inauguration of ASYCUDA by the Commissioner General of Uganda Revenue Authority, Mrs. Allen Kagina**

The last phase of the national rollout involving major border stations in Uganda commenced in November 2013 and is expected to continue until June 2014, until all 34 Customs stations are implemented with ASYCUDA.

The successful implementation of ASYCUDA at URA customs is largely attributed to the support and commitment of URA Management and particularly Customs Management. The system was generally embraced by the trading community which is looking forward to the simplification of customs procedures and the reduction in clearance time. Lastly, the commitment and motivation of the National Project Team is essential for the fast-paced implementation.

Since the implementation of ASYCUDA started in November 2012, 95% of all customs declarations are being processed using the new system. More

## ASYCUDA in the Indirect Taxation Authority of Bosnia and Herzegovina



UNCTAD will soon commence activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) assisting the Indirect Taxation Authority (ITA) to upgrade its ASYCUDA++ system to the latest web-based version of the system. The two year project is funded by the European Union and will be based at the ITA headquarters in Banja Luka.



**Dr. M. Dzakula, Director General of ITA**

The Dayton Peace Accord, drawn up in 1995 when the country emerged from several years of conflict, divided the nation into three distinct Entities, each run by its own government. In 1999, the first BiH ASYCUDA++ project was initiated by CAFAO (EU Customs & Fiscal Assistance Office) and a large local project team, consisting of six team members from each entity, was gathered together in the capital – Sarajevo - with the aim of building a national ASYCUDA system to BiH requirements. It took CAFAO many months to formulate the project strategy, since whatever was decided by one Entity team was vigorously opposed by the other two teams.

UNCTAD was not engaged with the project until eighteen months later and shortly afterwards, in December 2000, the project teams were withdrawn back to their own Entities. The UNCTAD experts found themselves working on separate projects in the three different Entities. Interestingly, when they not forced together, the teams cooperated better with each other and by the end of the project they were socialising and enjoyed friendly relations with one another.

The project lifespan was extended and gradually, throughout 2001, three systems were built and translated into the three languages and two scripts of the country. Soon the first pilot operations in Sarajevo, Mostar and Brcko were implemented and a roll-out plan was instigated – it took only six months to cover some 120 offices. However, this roll-out was too rapid; the hardware procured by CAFAO was badly undersized and many unresolved issues were left behind that had to be painstakingly resolved by the teams with the assistance of the UNCTAD experts. The most contentious issue was that the Customs Authorities had insufficient time to properly adapt to the new EU style procedures associated with ASYCUDA.



**ASYCUDA operational in ITA since 2000**

By 2003, the decision was taken to merge the three Customs Authorities into an Indirect Taxation Authority (ITA) and this required that the three ASYCUDA systems should be merged into one single national system. During this time CAFAO was encouraging the ITA to close small and inefficient offices and, together with UNCTAD, was delivering training to the ITA personnel concerning the operation of EU style procedures.

A few months after the creation of the ITA, Mrs. S. Perkovic was appointed as Director of the IT Department at ITA. Under her excellent supervision the new IT team was able to make rapid progress: funding was obtained to upgrade the

inadequate hardware; timely statistical outputs were properly produced; the three Entity systems were merged together and a full national communications system was installed based upon the ITA headquarters; a national transit system was completed and the accounting system was upgraded to ensure that all revenues were paid into a new national Single Revenue Account rather than into a multitude of separate accounts located in the Entities.

As the ITA personnel became familiar with EU procedures, they soon realised the advantages of ASYCUDA and became enthusiastic about the system. The ITA officially informed the European Commission that they would wish to upgrade to the latest version of ASYCUDA as part of the process of alignment to the EU standards.

## ASYCUDA in Bangladesh

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) and the ASYCUDA National Project Team (NPT) have been busy over the last few months introducing ASYCUDA – the most recent Automated System for Customs Data software developed by UNCTAD – to provide complete web-based and paperless services to the traders and all related internal and external stakeholders.

ASYCUDA is operated centrally from Dhaka, with a backup in Chittagong which is the largest port in terms of both volume and revenue. When fully implemented it will cover the operations of all customs houses and land customs stations in a harmonized and uniform manner. The customs offices across Bangladesh are linked with the data

center in Dhaka through fiber-optic connectivity - NBRNET.

The system has now been in live operations in Chittagong since 1st September 2013 for the manifest; 1st October 2013 for one export and one import sections; 14th November 2013 for a second import section, and 21st November 2013 for a third import section. The system has also been deployed live in ICD since 21st November for the Manifest, and on 24th November for Export. The project management has scheduled live operations in Mongla in December as soon as the telecommunication link is established there.



**Opening Session of the Mobilization Seminar on Deployment of ASYCUDA World and Single Window, Dhaka, 23 June 2013**



## UNCTAD ASYCUDA signs the MoU with IATA



UNCTAD has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) in November 2013.

This MOU sets a framework for the implementation of IATA XML messages structures for the transmission of electronic manifests. This formalizes a long-standing informal cooperation between the two organisations regarding the submission of electronic manifests by carriers, transporters and airlines to customs. IATA released a set of standardized XML message structures for all documents related to air transport including flight manifests and air waybills. The aim of this

cooperation is to enhance ASYCUDA to be able to integrate electronic manifests and waybills in IATA format for customs processing. Several ASYCUDA countries already receive data related to air transport in IATA's previous standard message structures namely Cargo-IMP.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is the trade association for the world's airlines, representing some 240 airlines or 84% of total air traffic. The Association supports many areas of aviation activity and helps formulate industry policy on critical aviation issues.

## ASYCUDA presented at UNCTAD's Multi-Year Expert Meeting



The first session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting (MYEM) on Transport, Trade Logistics and Trade Facilitation, whose theme was "Transport and logistics innovation towards the view of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2014", was held from 22 to 24 October 2013 in Geneva, pursuant to the decision by the twenty-seventh special session of UNCTAD Trade and Development Board.

The meeting provided a forum to discuss some specific transport services issues faced by landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) when attempting to connect with global markets. Experts came from trade and transport ministries, customs authorities, private sector representatives, academia, and international and regional organizations.

Participants of the MYEM appreciated the presentation of the ASYCUDA system modern features, in particular on the control and monitoring of national and regional customs transit as well as the customs-centric Single Window development. It was noted that for the recent years ASYCUDA team made the good progress in the technological upgrade of the system in line with up to date ICT technologies and modern trends in the customs sector.

Experts from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Azerbaijan, Tanzania,

Cameroon, Paraguay and other countries interactively discussed the ways of maximizing benefits of ASYCUDA system for UNCTAD member states. In this respect experts recommended to continue awareness sessions among the present and potential beneficiaries, explaining new opportunities of the ASYCUDA system. It was also recommended to further expand functionalities of the system, in particular web-services, e-signature, multiagency risk management and regional transit.



## Integrity and Trade Facilitation through Customs Performance Measurement with Agility



Further to the signing in March 2013 of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of cooperation on performance measurement between UNCTAD and the WCO and to the June 2013 Geneva Workshop on the implementation of the MoU, development of the ASYCUDA Performance Indicators Module (ASYPM) started last July. This latest development by the ASYCUDA Geneva Central Team follows the Agile software development paradigm, which requires capable individuals from the relevant business area (Customs and ICT) with a high degree of stakeholder involvement (WCO, UNCTAD, pilot country) and input. The main difference between Agile and classical methods is that the Agile method completes small portions of the deliverables in each delivery cycle (called 'sprint') while in other methods entire sets of deliverables progress over time, completing them only towards the end of the assignment. This Agile method works well in a change-driven environment such as that of ASYCUDA. The cross-organisational and functional internationally located Team meets every 3-4 weeks using teleconferencing (from Geneva to Brussels and to Cameroon) as the means to review the sprint's deliverables and the progress of the assignment, and to set the date for end of the next 'sprint' and its deliverables. During the 'sprint' period, regularly and briefly (not more than 10-15 minutes a day), parts of the Team meet (these sessions are called 'scrums') to discuss development options, review progress, decide on development priorities, and discuss development and/or implementation strategies. So far the development has required the Team to have six 'sprints' and two international 'scrums' via teleconferencing (5 hours

and 18 minutes in total), and many local scrums, in addition to using the ASYCUDA Forum and emails when necessary. We are not there yet, but the Agile method allows to deliver an end product that best meets the customer needs with minimal costs and a shorter "go to market" time.



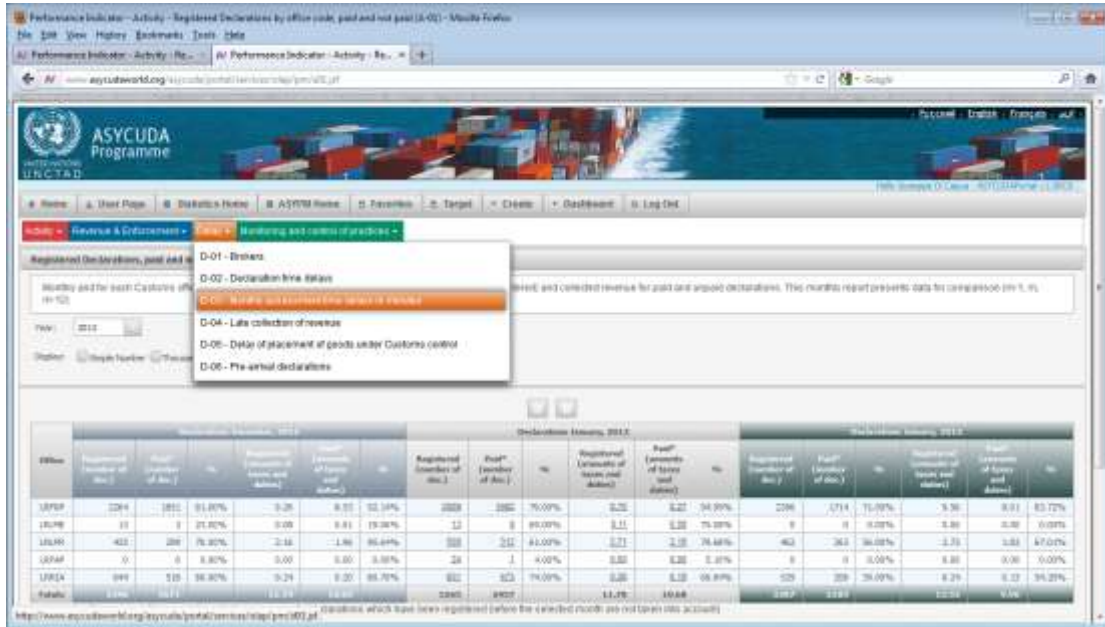
The initial WCO-UNCTAD Team, June 2013, Villa Bocage, Geneva



WCO-UNCTAD workshop on the implementation of the MoU, June 2013, Villa Bocage, Geneva

The ASYPM Module developed is composed of a statistical warehouse and of performance indicators which, in turn, have a SQL query part and a visual presentation part. As a result, the module makes the database interrogation and data mining task of Customs (staff belonging to post-clearance audit, risk management and statistics units) much easier.

The initially foreseen 19 indicators, are now presently 23 in the pilot version. The final version is planned to contain 33 indicators, however, as mentioned above, in the agile development environment being used, the final number of indicators could be reduced.



**ASYCUDA Performance Indicators Module (ASYPM)**

Within the framework of the WCO-UNCTAD MoU and of a NORAD funded WCO umbrella project, containing a sub-project to support the promotion of integrity in the Liberia Customs, a joint awareness mission took place in Liberia from 8-18 November. The WCO/UNCTAD mission made a presentation of the background of the project requested by Liberia Customs in 2011 which sees performance measurement as a way to increase efficiency and reduce bad practices. A second presentation to senior technical staff focusing on the indicators themselves and the information that could be drawn from them was made by Mr. Djeuwo who also shared the experience of Cameroon Customs in implementing a similar project. Finally, a third session took place in the form of a Review Workshop, during which a selected number of participants (from Compliance and Enforcement, Post Clearance Audit, Risk Management and Statistics Units of Liberian Bureau of Customs & Excise) discussed with the facilitation of Mr Djeuwo and Mr Di Capua, each of the 19 indicators, exchanging views on the usefulness for one Unit or another, and for different functions of Customs, such as the Collector, or the Wharfinger. The mission concluded with a briefing of the Commissioner of Customs on the findings and pre-requisites to move to the next phase.



**WCO-UNCTAD Team and Assistant Commissioner Buku in Liberia, November 2013, Ministry of Finance, Monrovia (Liberia)**

The next phase of the implementation strategy is that of an 'installation' mission which is foreseen to take place at the end of January 2014. The pre-requisites to the phase are the appointment of Liberian Team Leader, the appointment of a Liberian Team, the availability of a separate server from the production server on which ASYCUDA is installed with the necessary software, and the installation of this hardware and software before arrival of the mission.

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