

# ASYCUDA – AUTOMATED SYSTEM FOR CUSTOMS DATA STREAMLINING CUSTOMS MANAGEMENT



## GLOBAL CONTEXT

Long waiting times at borders, inappropriate fees and cumbersome formalities are all serious obstacles to trade and adversely affect investment and employment. An efficient and effective customs administration is essential to the welfare of any country. It benefits the national economy in various ways: by collecting revenue; by assisting the Government to promote cross-border trade; and by combating fraud and illegal trafficking of prohibited and restricted goods. It further provides the statistical information on foreign trade transactions essential for economic planning and encourages international trade. The automatic calculation of duties speeds up and simplifies the clearance process and increases State revenues.

ASYCUDA is an ICT-based customs management system targeted at reforming the customs clearance processes of developing and middle-income countries. It computerizes and simplifies procedures. ASYCUDA has a major impact on electronic business and government transactions, making international trade simpler and cheaper, and international markets more accessible to enterprises from developing countries. In more and more countries, ASYCUDA constitutes the core system for building a single window for international trade, trade portals, port management training and the implementation of transit and corridor management.



## HOW CAN CUSTOMS PROCEDURES BE IMPROVED?

The UNCTAD ASYCUDA software is installed at the request of Governments and adapted to suit the national characteristics of individual customs regimes, national tariffs and legislation.

The ASYCUDA Programme itself is implemented in three phases. A preparation phase identifies the areas needing reforms, such as simplification of clearance procedures, alignment of forms to international standards and modernization of the national customs law.

During the implementation phase, ASYCUDA is configured to incorporate national specificities, that is, the coding of tariffs and related regulations and legislation, data entry of the control tables and preparation of valuation systems. A large training and capacity-building programme is associated with this phase for the transfer of skills and know-how.

In the roll-out phase, various national sites are equipped with the human, logistical and technical skills to autonomously implement and manage the ASYCUDA project.



## PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

**Scope:** All regions

**Start date:** 1981

**Countries and territories benefited:** 113

**Ongoing activities:** 5–8 projects under negotiation; 45–50 active projects

**Countries using latest ASYCUDA version (2015–2016):** 77

**New ASYCUDA projects or addendums signed (2015–2016):** 19

**Website:** [unctad.org/ASYCUDA](http://unctad.org/ASYCUDA)



**Sustainable Development Goals addressed:**

**Directly:** 9

The ASYCUDA software suite ensures that what gets measured, gets done, and that what gets measured, gets managed. A new module, the ASYCUDA System for Performance Measurement, is a tool that allows customs management to measure its performance, through the provision of dynamic graphs, diagrams and tables based on live and accurate information on all customs operations, which enable management to detect inefficient practices and increase its efficiency.

- Inter-agency cooperation improved through information-sharing facilitated by use of ASYCUDA World, which streamlined work and reduced need for multiple verifications of the same consignment.



## RESULTS AND IMPACT AT A GLANCE

In Afghanistan, in the last eight years, customs revenues have increased from around \$50 million in 2003 to over \$950 million in 2011 – an increase of around 2,000 per cent. In addition, the waiting time for trucks at major border crossings has decreased. At Torkham, the border with Pakistan, over 90 per cent of trucks are now cleared in less than 1.5 hours, down from 18 hours in 2003.

In Rwanda, a \$3.3 million electronic single window system recorded the following results:

- Time taken to clear goods decreased from 11 days in 2010 to 34 hours in 2014, and volumes of cargo inspected increased from 14 per cent in 2012 to 42 per cent in 2014;
- Cost of clearance reduced by more than 85 per cent in one-year period (2013–2014);



## DONORS/ FUNDING SOURCE

**Current:** Beneficiary countries (91.3 per cent financed by recipient Governments in 2015–2016), development banks (3.3 per cent) and others (5.4 per cent)

**Past:** France, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, European Commission and World Bank

## ASYCUDA technical assistance projects, 2017

In 2017, 40 least developed countries, 24 landlocked developing countries and 20 small island developing States benefited from ASYCUDA programme support

