

ASYCUDA++ Migration Project

September 2003

UPDATE

Issue No. 4

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 1999 the Bangladesh Export Diversification Project (BDXDP) was formulated to focus on strengthening the economy of the country by increasing the export trade of Bangladesh. An important sub-project under BDXDP is the Customs Administration Modernization (CAM-1) project, which is designed to streamline Customs procedures and facilitate trade by making use of modern techniques and information technology. Under the auspice of the CAM-1 project the ASYCUDA++ Migration Project was designed to introduce the ASYCUDA++ computer system at five Customs ports in Bangladesh: ICD Kamalapur, Dhaka, Chittagong, Benapole and Mongla and at the Customs headquarters of NBR.

In June 2001 the ASYCUDA++ project commenced with the setup of the ASYCUDA National Team. The team consists of 8 national team members from Customs plus one international advisor from UNCTAD. The team is located at NBR offices where it has been working on system implementation at NBR and at the project sites. So far ASYCUDA++ has been fully installed at the pilot site of ICD and is operational at both Dhaka and Chittagong Custom Houses. More recent information on the project's activities can be found overleaf.



Inauguration Ceremony of ASYCUDA++ Direct Trader Input (DTI) at Chittagong Custom House, 3 September 2003.

DTI AT CHITTAGONG

In a formal ceremony attended by Bangladesh's leading business associations and Chairman of the National Board of Revenue, ASYCUDA++'s local Direct Trader Input (DTI) facility was launched at the country's largest port on September 3, 2003. Totally funded and operated by the Chittagong C&F Agents Association, the DTI facility is housed at the Agents premises and has led to the full automation of export declaration processing under ASYCUDA++. This has reduced export clearance times and is providing accurate export trade information previously unobtainable.

THE ASYCUDA++ SYSTEM

The ASYCUDA system is a computerized customs management system, which covers most foreign trade procedures. Developed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the system handles manifests and customs declarations, accounting procedures, risk management, warehousing and suspense procedures. It generates detailed information about foreign trade transactions, which can be used for economic analysis and planning. The ASYCUDA programme is the single largest technical cooperation programme of UNCTAD and more than 90 countries worldwide have introduced the ASYCUDA system with more than 30 using ASYCUDA++, the latest release.

ASYCUDA++ benefits from a suite of integrated software modules that can improve the effectiveness of Customs operations. In the first phase of the Migration Project the customs headquarters and branch modules, together with payment, statistical and selectivity modules are to be introduced. Combined, these modules will fully automate the processing of declarations, and have already contributed to the creation of a national database on trade and revenue information and also allowed for the first stages of electronic submission of Customs declarations by the trading community.

Project Partners



World Bank

PROJECT NEWS

Spurred on by the delivery of long-awaited computer equipment, in recent months the project has vigorously been pursuing the achievement of its key objectives. At the end of July the ICD pilot site was finalised with the full automation of assessment groups under ASYCUDA++, at Chittagong Custom House, not only was DTI launched on trial basis in June (with official launching in September), but also the full automation of export processing was completed, with 100% of all export entries now being prepared at the Agents DTI facility. As the project now moves into its critical closing phase, the national project team looks forward to completing the automation of Chittagong Custom House import groups, commencing the automation at Dhaka with introduction of its own DTI facilities and beginning its work at Benapole and Mongla ports in the latter months of 2003.

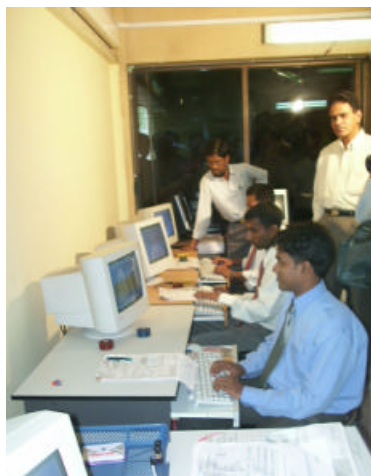
PROCESS IMPROVEMENT AT ICD

ASYCUDA++ has been operational at ICD since February 2002, and now with the recent delivery of computer equipment has been fully installed, automating the entire process of import, export and bond clearances. Progress has continued to be made at ICD in a number of

areas and it is expected that ASYCUDA++ will soon be moved to the cargo shed and gate area for further improvement of cargo clearance control.

ASYCUDA++ AT CHITTAGONG

Commencing with trials of local Direct Trader Input (DTI) for general export entries in June 2003, the DTI facility has been steadily expanded over July and August to incorporate all export processing under ASYCUDA++.



Chittagong C&F Agent's ASYCUDA++ Local DTI facility

The Agent's DTI facility presently prepares in excess of 500 export entries per day and it is envisaged that it will soon be expanded to cover the preparation of up to a further 600 import entries daily as import groups of the Customs house come under ASYCUDA++ processing. Leading the systems introduction, Commissioner of Chittagong Customs House, *Dr. Rashidul Ahsan Chowdhury*, has forged a partnership between the Customs and business associations of Chittagong to deliver a better service to the trading community as a whole. This partnership was highlighted at the inauguration ceremony of

ASYCUDA++ DTI where local and national business associations including the Chittagong C&F Agents Association, the Chittagong Chambers of Commerce, BGMEA and the FBCCI all supported the activities of the Customs House to improve the working environment and standards of service.

BONDED WAREHOUSE INFORMATION

In conjunction with the Bond Commissionerate, the ASYCUDA project has been working towards the capture of Bonded Warehouse licensing numbers on all import and export Bonded entries. Already introduced at ICD and Dhaka Custom House in June and July 2003, this initiative will lead to faster and more accurate reconciliation of warehoused goods at the Bond office.

ASYCUDA++ MANAGERS TRAINING

Identifying the need to improve awareness of ASYCUDA++ functionality and its application throughout Customs and related departments, the ASYCUDA project conducted six separate week-long training programmes for 58 Customs managers of Assistant Commissioner level and above in June and July 2003. In addition, a further trainers course was conducted for 9 participants to develop Customs' own internal capacity to conduct future ASYCUDA training programmes.

Check out the ASYCUDA web site:

www.asycuda.org

for links and information on the Bangladesh project, the ASYCUDA programme and Customs reform.

For more information on ASYCUDA in Bangladesh contact:

ASYCUDA Migration Project
National Board of Revenue
Phone. (02) 8318120 x260
Fax. (02) 9346821

Email: asycuda@nbr-bd.org