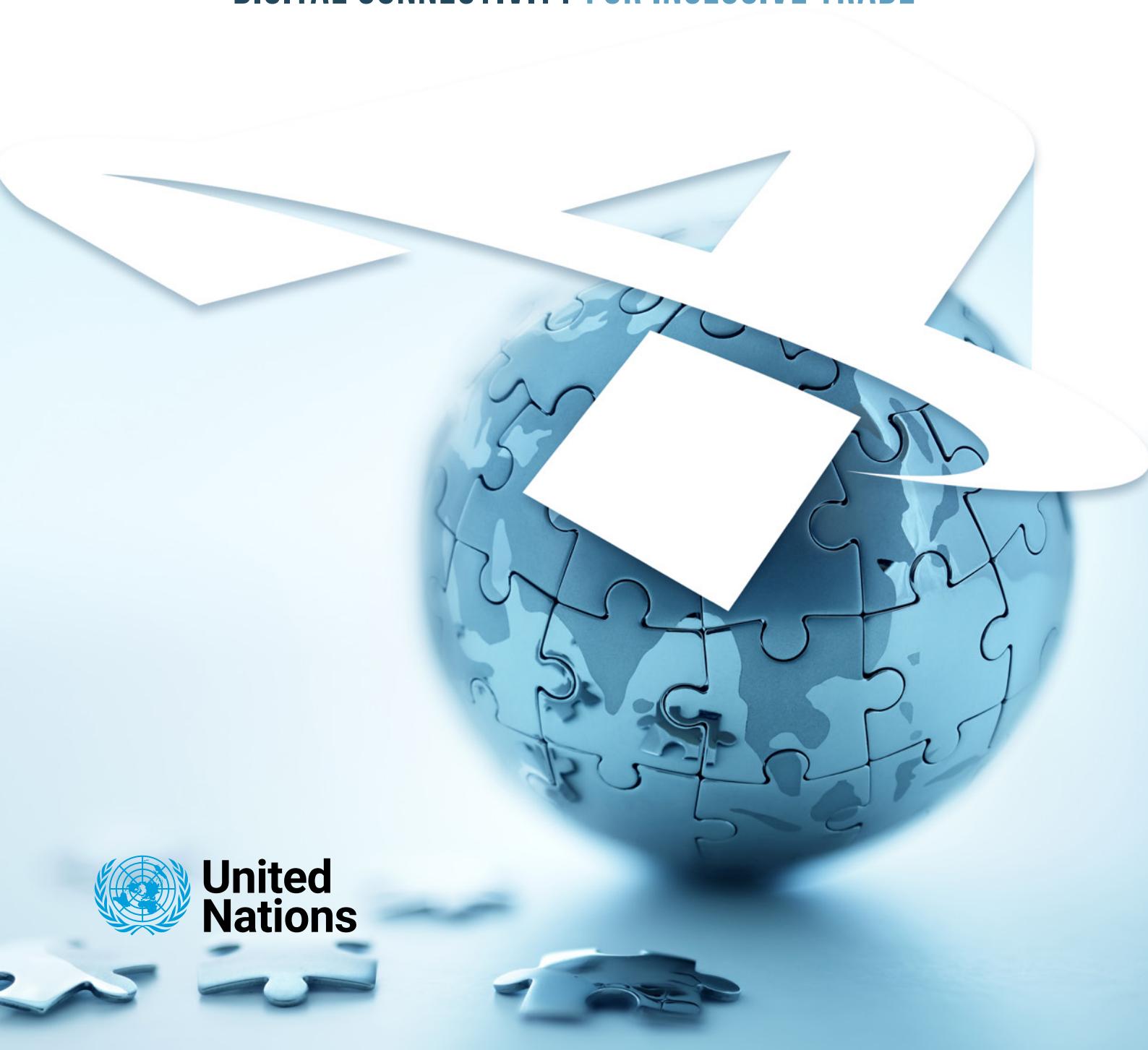
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

ASYCUDA COMPENDIUM 2022

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY FOR INCLUSIVE TRADE



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FOREWORD

UNCTAD held its 15th quadrennial conference in October 2021 under the theme "From inequality and vulnerability to prosperity for all". The conference focused on ensuring that trade works for all and that development remains a global priority, especially considering the new social and economic conjuncture created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The outcome document, The Bridgetown Covenant,[1] called on UNCTAD to reinforce its work to support the implementation of trade facilitation reforms and enhance efforts to reduce trade transaction costs – which is a key outcome of ASYCUDA's technical assistance programme.

ASYCUDA's 2022 Compendium pays special attention to the Programme's work enabling digital connectivity for inclusive trade. It highlights some of the achievements and benefits reported by user-countries thanks to the automated exchange of standardized trade information and data between external systems and ASYCUDA – enhancing communication and coordinated intervention among trade stakeholders, including partner government agencies. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need for digitization of interactions and operations in trade and logistics. In that context and in order to harmonize and facilitate the integration and exchange of trade information in the upcoming years, the ASYCUDA Programme is currently piloting ASYHUB, an open, standardized platform for processing and integrating data between ASYCUDA and third-party systems. This solution will offer a smart framework to efficiently interconnect government systems and applications.

[1] https://unctad.org/webflyer/bridgetown-covenant

This third ASYCUDA compendium shares 22 new case studies prepared in cooperation with customs administrations and partners based in countries that have not, until now, been showcased in a document of this type. It draws upon country experiences during these trying times, demonstrating in real terms how the ASYCUDA Programme helps user countries to grow their international trading activities as they reignite their economies. It showcases how the ASYCUDA Programme empowers LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS to increase transparency and accountability while improving risk management practices. It gives practical examples of ways in which the Programme helps governments to increase customs revenues while also reducing the time and cost of doing so to those engaging in international trade. As such, this document highlights how the ASYCUDA Programme leverages the latest technologies to deliver trade facilitation initiatives that accelerate progress towards multiple SDGs.

The ASYCUDA Programme's work is well appreciated by UNCTAD member States, and particularly by its user countries and territories. This Compendium brings to life the work of the Programme – enabling the reader to visualize its impact on the ground.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all member States that participated in the preparation of these case studies.

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and Logistics (DTL), UNCTAD

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Compendium of case studies was prepared under the overall direction of Shamika Sirimanne, Director, Division of Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD, and under the direct supervision of Fabrice Millet, Chief, ASYCUDA Programme, UNCTAD. Kamal Tahiri, ASYCUDA Programme Management Officer, coordinated the production and drafting of the Compendium. Kamal Tahiri and Richard Warren, Public Information Officer, were contributing authors. The document was proofread by Richard Warren. Pablo Cortizo, ASYCUDA Graphic Designer, was responsible for the overall design and formatting of the publication.

The ASYCUDA Programme would like to acknowledge the participants involved in the preparation of the case studies: customs authorities for their trust and sharing of information and data, and the ASYCUDA project officers and on-site staff for their valuable inputs and insight.

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