



PROJECT BRIEF



ASYCUDA ELECTRONIC SINGLE WINDOW FOR TRADE IN JAMAICA

BACKGROUND

Jamaica's Vision 2030 is a strategic road map to guide the country towards achieving its goals of sustainable development and prosperity under a competitive and enabling business environment that supports economic growth and development, and having efficient and transparent public institutions with reduced transaction costs for businesses.

As part of this effort, the Government of Jamaica through the Jamaica Customs Agency (JCA), has been improving and streamlining its import/export processes through the implementation of the ASYCUDA World system. The implementation of ASYCUDA in Jamaica has produced significant improvements and, in particular, it has reduced cost and clearance times, increased revenue collection and provided accurate and timely international trade statistics.

The government is focused on drastically improving Jamaica's global competitiveness rankings. Delays caused by the lack of connectivity and collaboration between trade agencies, redundancies and overlapping processes, high fees and excessive inspection have been identified as the root causes for underperformance in Jamaica's trade competitiveness. Consequently, the Government has decided to establish a trade facilitation single window to provide a single-entry point for all import, export and transit related regulatory requirements, as a means of improving connectivity between Customs, the port and terminal operators, other regulatory agencies and traders, and improving coordination between all border and regulatory agencies.

The ESW will be a single point for electronic submission of data in order to facilitate the transmission of standardized information to fulfill all regulatory requirements for imports, exports, transits and any other trade-related procedure through a single electronic gateway instead of submitting the same information multiple times to different government agencies.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of this project is to implement the ESW creating conditions to grant: a) Efficiency: through streamlined processes and procedures, costs savings and better use of resources; b) Transparency: through the availability of accurate, reliable and timely information available on-line; and c) Competitiveness: through improved conditions of doing business, capacity building and use of technology.

The immediate objectives set for the project are:

1. Establish the ESW technical requirements to support the development and rollout of the new integrated system in Jamaica.
2. Establishing an enabling legal framework and operational architecture to support and facilitate the development and implementation of ESW.
3. Implement the ESW in a paperless environment, facilitating trade through the introduction of a modern integrated computerized system, consistent with the Single Window concept, international standards and best practices.
4. Build capacity within the Government of Jamaica, to maintain and continue developing the ESW, and to involve more agencies to facilitate the ways of doing business.

The main expected outputs resulting from the project are listed below:

- a. Enhanced legislative framework enabling full use of electronic transactions and the introduction of trade facilitation measures
- b. Simplified processing of licenses, permits and certificates required for importation and exportation of goods in conformity with international standards and best practices
- c. State-of-the-art ICT infrastructure for the successful and continuous operation of the ESW
- d. Rationalized service charges and fees structure on trade transactions based on the Trade Facilitation Agreement principle
- e. Standardized electronic data interchange mechanisms and enhanced security protocols facilitating the introduction of paperless processes
- f. Informed policy and decision-making through the use of business intelligence and data analytics tools
- g. Improved business climate for traders experiencing an efficient, transparent, predictable and risk-based working environment

- h. Robust Governance structure established for the operation, service delivery, data sharing and inter-operability within the ESW
- i. Capacity built at the ESW Operator to expand the outreach of the single window and effectively manage, operate and maintain operational the installed ICT infrastructure

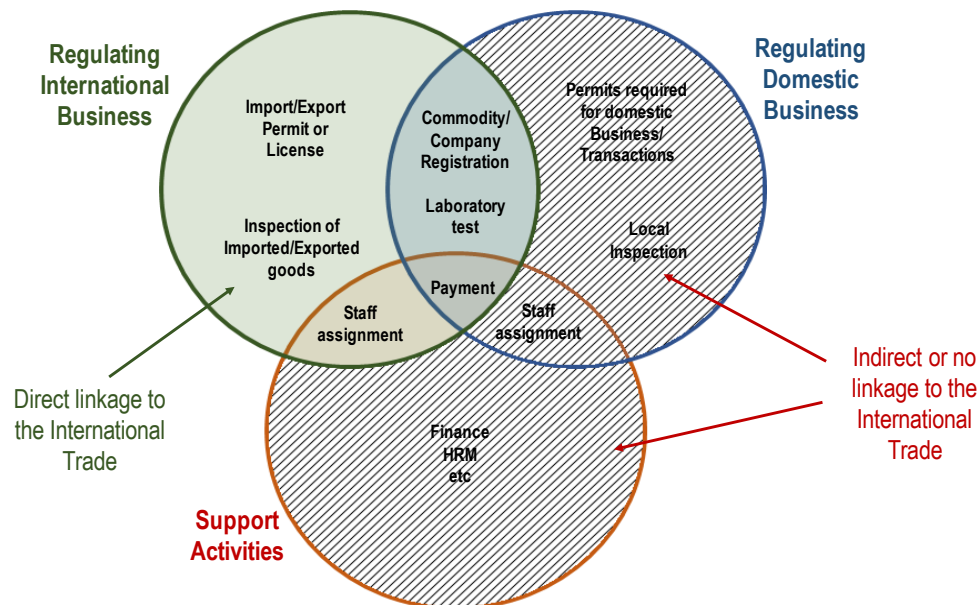
PROJECT STRATEGY

The ASYCUDA Electronic Single Window for Trade (ESW) project is envisaged to build a facility to allow for electronic transactions among traders, trade operators and agents, and trade-related government agencies, as well as facilitating data exchange and interoperability among government agencies in the processing and issuance of trade related licenses, permits, certificates and customs declarations.

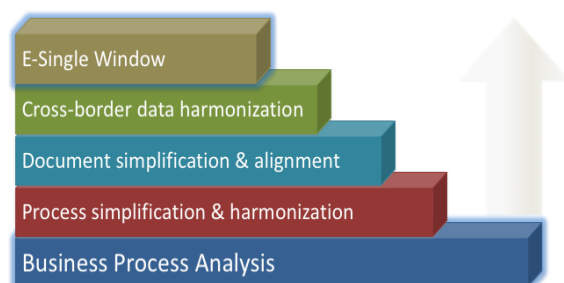
The ESW Project will be implemented in 36 months and will be divided into two stages. It is proposed that a minimum of twenty trade-related government agencies will constitute the single window environment during the implementation of this project. While initially eight agencies were selected to be of top priority, the remaining twelve agencies will be selected during the first six months of the project.

During the first stage, the project will conduct activities to ensure that eight selected agencies become operational under the Single Window. The project will identify the priority areas and services of these selected agencies to be linked to ESW. In the second stage, the project will carry out similar activities as those executed under Stage 1 to ensure that the second group of agencies successfully joins the operational Single Window.

Trade transactions can either have direct, indirect or no linkages with international trade. The Single Window for the International Trade shall basically cover those transactions that have direct linkage to the international trade. Therefore, the scope of the coverage can be summarized on the following diagram:



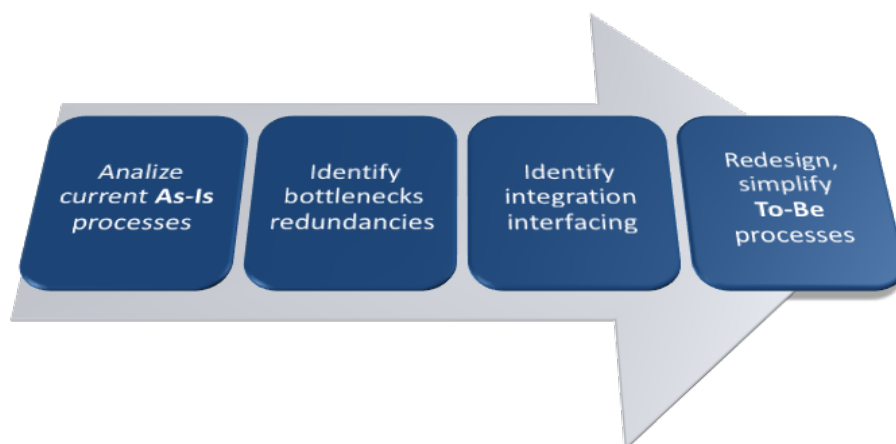
An electronic Single Window environment requires an appropriate enabling and up-to-date legislative framework, which incorporates contemporary administrative functions under an automated environment, fully supportive of risk management and post clearance auditing schemes, as well as integrated and coordinated border management amongst border agencies. As such, the project will review legislation and recommend the necessary amendments to facilitate establishing the ESW.



Business processes have a significant impact on the organization's overall performance; consequently, the project will analyze each selected BRA trade related process and propose improvements in order to eliminate possible redundancies, overlaps and paper-driven procedures. Part of this exercise involves simplifying documents and processes, as well as achieving harmonization.

During the development phase, there will be a need for data harmonization and standardization across all involved agencies in order to keep information required from traders to be consistent and simple, therefore adhering to the single submission principle.

For each of the selected agencies, the project will conduct the following activities:



UNCTAD follows international standards and builds on experience from implementing similar projects in other countries. There are developed implementation guidelines for establishing an electronic Single Window system that will be used by the project implementation team.

A major objective of the project is capacity building of the national experts with the view to establishing a sense of ownership of the system and to ensure its technical self-sufficiency and independence from external technical assistance in the further enhancement and operation of the system. The system should be fully sustainable after the end of the project operating under a well-established governance structure and operational/functional model.

THE SINGLE WINDOW ENVIRONMENT

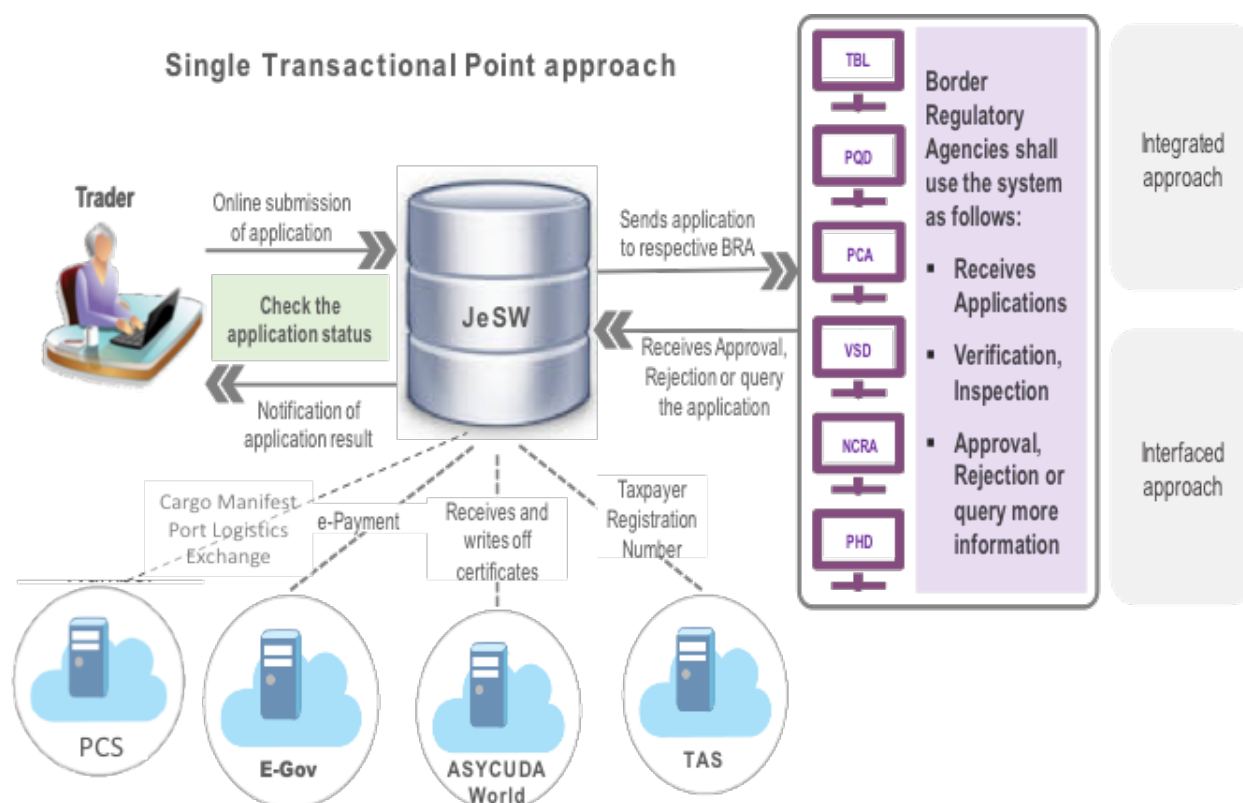
Single Window is a philosophy of governance in which traditional structures of government are transformed into new arrangements that best serve the needs of citizens and businesses. By its very nature, Single Window implies significant changes to the ways in which government agencies interact with each other, with the common purpose to promote and facilitate business.

Establishing the Jamaica Electronic Single Window for Trade (ESW) as shown in the graphical representation below, requires the introduction of various efficiencies such as enabling legislation, streamlining operations, reducing costs, improving agencies' collaboration and minimising intrusive interventions.

The proposed single window environment will allow stakeholders to interact and satisfy trade formalities in an electronic environment to fulfil all cross-border and regulatory requirements.

UNCTAD proposed single window is based in the following key principles outlined below:

- Single entry point
- Single submission of data
- Single and synchronous processing of data
- Single decision-making point for clearance
- Single payment



The operating environment will be based on the principles of single submission of data and single processing of requests where traders will furnish all relevant and required data once along with their ancillary documentation. It is envisaged that after receipt of a trader's data, the single window engine will seamlessly channel the necessary information to each involved Government agency in order to obtain a single response relating to processing all licensing, certification and/or permit approvals. The ESW system will create internal electronic tasks to communicate and contact all necessary agencies, looking for their action to ultimately answer the user's request. Clearance will be granted and communicated to the trader after all cross-border and regulatory agencies formalities have been completed.

PROJECT'S GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The success of this project is dependent on the strong collaborative relationships and consistent stakeholder participation and engagement if objectives are to be achieved.

OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY

The Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture & Fisheries (MICAF) is primarily responsible to Cabinet for the successful implementation of the Trade Facilitation Programme. The Ministry of Finance and the Public Services (MoF&P), is a key collaborator for the implementation of this project and will provide support to the MICAF through joint reporting and submissions to Cabinet.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION OVERSIGHT

Having regard to its mandate and the deliverables of the Single Window as an outcome of the Trade Facilitation Programme, the Task Force is responsible to ensure the successful completion of the ESW project. It will also be monitoring each deliverable with a view to ensuring that they are achieved within the stipulated timelines. Where necessary, the Task Force should be made aware of any resource constraints and/or any other constraints that may potentially affect the delivery of the Single Window within the stipulated timeline.

NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE

The National Steering Committee (NSC) is responsible for providing policy coordination and oversight to the development and implementation of the project. It is to provide direction and approve strategies to address implementation issues which cut across components of the project and affect multiple stakeholders.

LEAD AGENCY

The Jamaica Customs Agency (JCA) will host the Project Management Office (PMO) including the core team of UNCTAD experts that are to develop and implement the Single Window. As the lead agency, the JCA will also be responsible for operating the Single Window and working with the PMO and the UNCTAD experts to ensure that the Single Window is sustainable, available and reliable.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

The PMO will be the Single Window's Secretariat. It takes responsibility for the project coordination and management and is to coordinate activities to ensure the achievement of the project's objectives. The Secretariat will facilitate the work by managing mechanisms such as Technical Working Groups or Sub-Committees within which the various activities under the project are to be implemented. The PMO will be working closely with the UNCTAD experts to provide administrative and technical support in the delivery of the activities under the project.

From time to time, Technical Working Groups or Sub-Committees will be engaged by the PMO to provide guidance, resolve issues and report on project implementation progress. Where teams already exist and are actively working on implementation of various related project activities, these will also report into and receive guidance from the PMO.