

## *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

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There is a pressing need for the countries in the Asia-Pacific region to establish their own sustainable mechanism to monitor the effectiveness of trade and transport facilitation reforms and measures and identify solutions to streamline and optimize trade and transport process. Although existing global trade facilitation performance surveys and databases provide useful information on benchmarking and raise awareness, they do not provide sufficiently detailed information to develop or update national trade and transport facilitation action plans. At the national level, most trade and transport facilitation monitoring efforts have been ad-hoc, expensive and dependent on external, rather than national, human and financial resources. Consequently, countries often do not have adequate data or information to support evidence-based policy making and reforms.

In this context, this publication aims to provide guidance to the countries on establishing a sustainable trade and transport facilitation monitoring mechanism (TTFMM). The key functions of the TTFMM are two-fold: (1) to formulate/update and prioritize recommendations for advancing trade facilitation; and (2) to measure and assess progress in trade facilitation. It is emphasized that TTFMM should be anchored with national trade and transport facilitation committee (or an equivalent institution) and rely upon national resources to make it sustainable and affordable. Underpinning TTFMM is the methodology called Business Process Analysis Plus (BPA+) which is built on the Business Process Analysis methodology, supplemented by Time Release Studies (TRS) and Time-Cost-Distance (TCD) methodologies. It is envisaged that establishment of TTFMM would enable the countries to monitor and enhance trade facilitation on a continuous basis and in a sustainable manner.

Although TTFMM was initially designed to cater for the needs from the countries in the Asia-Pacific region, it is also applicable for any countries in the world, considering the fact that monitoring and improvement of trade and transport facilitation are always non-stop activities for not only developing countries but also developed countries.