

GLOSSARY

Activity Diagram – a graphical representation that describes the flow of activities carried out by stakeholders involved in a particular business process. The activity diagram is a type of diagram that uses a set of notations defined by the Unified Modeling Language (UML).

Automation – the application of information and communication technologies to facilitate the manual operation of business processes.

Business Process – a logical series of related transactions that converts input to results or output. A business process considered within the frame of trade facilitation in this paper can be defined as “a chain of logically connected activities to move goods and related information across borders from buyer to seller and to provide related services”.

Business Process Model – a graphical representation of a business process. It illustrates (i) activities performed and decision points, (ii) actors who perform those activities, (iii) activities’ input and output, (iv) alternate routes of activities subject to different business rules and conditions, and (v) criteria for entering and exiting the business process. The process model also demonstrates how the various actors relate to one another and how the information flows throughout the business process. The process model has become increasingly important in the area of *trade facilitation*. It serves as an organizational blueprint that facilitates the identification of bottlenecks, the prioritization of areas for improvement and improvement strategies, and the design of automated systems to promote paperless trade. It also enables the benchmarking of process improvement after implementing the improvement initiatives.

Business Process Modeling – a technique for documenting business processes where each element of the business process is represented by graphical notations. Unified Modeling Language (UML) provides graphical notations for business process modeling that are accepted and widely used not only among practitioners in business community but also those in information technology and software industry. Business process modeling can be achieved by a simple drawing with paper and pencil or a software tool.

Harmonization – the effort to align procedural, regulatory, and/or documentary requirements with relevant standards.

Business Process Analysis – a systematic examination of business processes in order to gain better understanding and to develop improvement strategies.

Simplification – the effort to reduce complexity, in our context, of the trade and transport facilitation processes and documentary requirements.

Single Window – a facility that allows parties involved in trade and transport to lodge standardized information and documents with a Single Window entry point to fulfil all import, export and transit-related regulatory requirements. If information is electronic, then individual data should only be submitted once. UN/CEFACT Recommendation No. 33 and Case Studies on Implementing a Single Window can be found at:
http://www.unece.org/cefact/single_window/welcome.htm/.

Time-Procedure Chart – a chart illustrating relationships between each business process and time (normally in days) required to complete each business process in the business domain of interest.

While each bar on the x axis represents a business process (procedure), the height of the bar associated with the time scale on the y axis represents the average total time required to complete that particular business process.

Trade Facilitation – measures used to simplify and harmonize procedural, regulatory, and/or documentary requirements associated with the international supply chain.

UN/CEFACT Recommendations – a series of more than 30 recommendations developed and maintained by the United Nations Center for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT). These recommendations are used worldwide as an international best practice to simplify and harmonize trade procedures and information flow.

Unified Modeling Language – a standardized visual specification language for business process and information modeling.

Use Case – a UML notation representing a business process.

Use Case Diagram – a graphical representation that illustrates major elements of the business domain which includes relevant business processes and their stakeholders.