



# VIRTUAL COUNTRY CONSULTATION MEETING ON CAREC FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

7 SEPTEMBER 2021, 13:00 - 15:00 (MANILA TIME)

## AGENDA

Time	Session
	Moderator: Ms. <b>Zulfia Karimova</b> , Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist, Public Management, Financial Sector and Regional Cooperation Division (EAPF), East Asia Department (EARD), ADB
12:30-13:00	Signing up; video/audio connection checks
13:00-13:05	<b>Welcome Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. <b>Emma Fan</b>, Director, EAPF, EARD, ADB</li> </ul>
13:05-13:10	<b>Session 1: Objectives of the workshop</b> <i>The presenter will outline the purpose and agenda of workshop. The session will also introduce the entire team to delegates.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. <b>Zulfia Karimova</b>, ADB</li> </ul>
<b>GROUP PHOTO</b>	
13:10-14:00	<b>Session 2: Key Findings/Results of Inception Report</b> <i>Following the success of the TA inception workshop on 19 May 2021, the experts will disseminate their preliminary findings (i) to seek key country stakeholders' feedback on the Inception Report and (ii) to confirm if the identified FTA priorities in the report are aligned with the national priorities of each CAREC country.</i> <p>Moderator: Mr. <b>Jong Woo Kang</b>, Principal Economist, Regional Cooperation and Integration Division, Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department, ADB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Dealing with Diversity in FTAs: Lessons from ASEAN in RCEP</b>  <i>By drawing on lessons from ASEAN in RCEP, the presentations aims to identify challenges and opportunities for CAREC in moving towards a regional FTA</i>            Mr. <b>Jayant Menon</b>, FTA Expert/Trade Economist and Team Leader</li> <li><b>Proposed Chapter Framework for a CAREC Trade Agreement and Four Priority Areas</b>  <i>The presentation will propose a structure for a CAREC FTA and focus on four priority areas, namely trade in goods; services; SPS measures; and e-commerce and digitalization</i></li> </ul>

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Mr. **Richard Pomfret**, CAREC Regional FTA Expert

- **Scenario Analysis and Metrics for Evidence-based Trade Policy**

*The complexities of today's global economy make evidence-based policy analysis essential to effective decision making. It will discuss trade policy modeling tools being used for knowledge products in TA-5668.*

Mr. **David Roland-Holst**, Global CGE Model Expert

Q and A from country delegates

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**Session 3: Capacity Building Technical Assistance**

*The session will introduce Policy and Management Consulting Group (PMCG) and synergize their capacity-building outputs with the policy research experts.*

Moderator: Mr. **Iskandar Abdullaev**, Deputy Director II, CAREC Institute

**Capacity Building TA to CAREC DMCs**

*The presentation will describe overall objectives of capacity building technical assistance component. It will provide introductory information, list of deliverables and key actions under the TA.*

14:00-14:45

Mr. **Mikheil Janelidze**, Trade and Investment Expert/Capacity Building Expert

**Capacity Building TA to CAREC DMCs**

*The presentation will focus on Capacity Needs Assessment (CNA) activity under TA, the methodology for CNA and its objectives.*

Mr. **Simon Lacey**, Trade Economist/Capacity Development Specialist

Q and A from country delegates

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**Session 4: Wrap-up: Summary and Next steps**

*The session will summarize the team's plans to consult with national counterparts on country-specific information and data relating to priority sectors and assessments.*

14:45-15:00

Moderator: Ms. **Dorothea Lazaro**, Regional Cooperation Specialist, EAPF, ADB

- Mr. **Jayant Menon**, FTA Expert/Trade Economist and Team Leader
  - Mr. **Mikheil Janelidze**, Trade and Investment Expert/Capacity Building Expert
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**Attachment(s):**

- A. Briefing note. Overview of Capacity Building Technical Assistance Work Plan
- B. Presentations

## A. Overview of Capacity Building Technical Assistance (CBTA) Work Plan

1. This Work Plan addresses the capacity building component of TA-6558 REG: Strengthening Knowledge and Capacities for the Design and Implementation of Free Trade Agreements Involving Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Countries.

2. The CBTA will strengthen capacities for designing, negotiating, implementing, and monitoring free trade agreements (FTAs) involving CAREC countries. CAREC countries must build greater analytical and institutional capacities to develop a solid understanding, strategies, and best practices necessary to ensure maximum benefits from FTAs. The CBTA will support capacity building for the crucial skill sets and technical knowledge through three initiatives: (i) national workshops in select CAREC countries; (ii) regional event where countries comparatively more advanced in the implementation of FTAs will share their lessons and best practices; and (iii) regional training of trainers on how to design, negotiate, and implement FTAs. The innovative and effective modes of delivery, including virtual online modules and live clinics will be explored. Examples from CAREC countries as well as other regions, relatively advanced in the implementation of FTAs, will be used to illustrate key principles and concepts. Capacity building will target mid-level officials in relevant ministries, while knowledge dissemination will involve senior officials. Given the diverse range of FTA-related competencies across CAREC countries and emerging needs and priorities, targeted hands-on capacity building support to relevant governments will be provided.

### Outputs

1. **FTA knowledge and capacity needs assessments in CAREC countries.** The capacity needs assessment (CNA) will provide further guidance both on member countries' priorities related to the objective of achieving CAREC wide FTA, and the knowledge and skills gaps that are the most prevalent and that should be prioritized while designing and implementing the capacity building activities under the CBTA. The results of the FTA knowledge and capacity needs assessments in CAREC countries will inform all concurrent and subsequent activities under the CBTA, specifically the CAREC FTA guidelines, at least 3 country specific action plans, the knowledge-sharing and capacity building events, the regional training of trainers, and the targeted capacity development activities in at least four countries. CNA will set the baseline for continuous monitoring and evaluation during the project implementation period as well as assessment of progress in the long-term.
2. **CAREC FTA guidelines.** The CAREC FTA guidelines are to provide information and draw attention to the steps for the design, negotiation of the CAREC FTA including the main steps in establishing the negotiations and needs to arrive at an agreement and to make it enter into force, implementation, and monitoring. It will be developed in a manner enabling it to apply to all CAREC DMCs drawing lessons and best practices from selected case studies and apply the findings of the research conducted by the research team under this TA.
3. **Country-specific FTA action plans.** Following on from the CNA and approved guidelines, country-specific FTA actions plans to improve the institutions', capacities, and practices in participating and implementing FTAs will be developed by the project team for select CAREC countries. The capacity needs assessment, outcomes from discussions and workshops, and the guidelines will lead towards a classification or grouping of countries within 3 or 4 groups according to economic and trade

characteristics, profiles and priorities and capacity, and to the selection of the CAREC countries with a need of country specific action plans. The project team will develop a framework and the format for the country specific action plans to be approved by ADB and the selected CAREC DMCs.

4. **Knowledge-sharing and capacity building events, the regional training of trainers.** The project team, in close coordination with ADB and the CAREC DMCs will explore the best ways of delivering the Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Building events in collaboration with other experts and resource persons and develop a workshop and learning modules design and training materials together with a work plan for the delivery of the events. Based on the CNA results and key findings, research outputs prepared during the CBTA and desk research, materials will be developed for the knowledge sharing events, a regional event to share FTA lessons and best practices and 6 national workshops.
5. **Targeted capacity development activities.** The targeted capacity development activities in at least four countries will be further articulated following the results of the Capacity Needs Assessment and will be conceived and implemented based on where the greatest needs are revealed to be, but also where the greatest impact can be achieved. Following the CNA, the project team will submit its views and recommendations to the ADB for further consultations on both the specific activities and the beneficiary countries. Depending on the results of these consultations the project team will then move forward with the design of these activities, as well as their planning and implementation.