

Acknowledgments

The Office of Regional Economic Integration (OREI) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has conducted training courses in free trade agreements (FTAs) for mid-level government officials in Asia since October 2006. Starting with the second program in July 2007, we expanded participation to all ADB developing member countries to meet the growing demand for FTA training in the region. Around 100 government officials from all over Asia participated in the training.

From the outset, we felt a need for a reference book on FTA for the training course. Drafting a structured text material for the courses was the main objective of this project. But this book serves other purposes as well. Government officials who are or will be involved in FTA negotiations can get background knowledge and guidelines on practical issues from this reference book. The general public, including the academe and students who are interested in practical aspects of FTA, can also benefit from this. It avoids excessively academic or technical terms and is written in language that is accessible to everyone with basic, common-sense ideas about economics, international trade, and FTAs.

Negotiating free trade agreements: a guide, prepared by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, was the benchmark for this project. Nevertheless, we have tried to cover a wider scope of issues ranging from fundamental theories to actual components and practical issues related to FTAs.

Jong Woo Kang, Economist, OREI, organized this project and coordinated the overall production of the publication. Michael Plummer of Johns Hopkins University was overall editor of the project.

A group of international experts, ADB professional staff, and consultants contributed to this reference book. Michael Plummer of Johns Hopkins University and Ganeshan Wignaraja, Jong Woo Kang, and Rosechin Olfindo (staff consultant) of ADB wrote Part I: Economics of a Free Trade Agreement.

Several academics and experts contributed to Part II: Coverage of a Free Trade Agreement. Rachel MacCulloch of Brandeis University wrote on trade in goods and on environmental and labor standards; William James of ADB, on rules of origin; Christopher Findlay of Adelaide University, on trade in services (with substantial contribution from Aik Lim Hoe of the World Trade Organization); Arthur Appleton of Appleton Luff Inc., on intellectual property, dispute settlement mechanisms, sanitary and phytosanitary standards, and technical barriers to trade; Siow Yue Chia of the Singapore Institute of International Affairs, on investment and FTA-plus issues, including government procurement and competition policy; and

Dorothea Lazaro, ADB consultant on trade facilitation.

Finally, Part III: Negotiating, Implementing, and Evaluating Free Trade Agreements was written by Jong Woo Kang and Dorothea Lazaro of ADB.

Special thanks go to those who responded to our FTA questionnaire and to the resource persons and participants who gave valuable comments on Part III during the FTA training courses.



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