



Asia - Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade Newsletter



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"I believe ARTNeT can become an effective regional link between trade researchers and policy makers. I welcome support from donor countries and international organizations to join in this new initiative in order to achieve ARTNeT long-term goal of enabling policy makers to formulate trade policies that can more effectively contribute to the achievement of the millenium development goals in the region." Kim Hak-Su, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

From The ARTNeT Coordinator

ARTNeT was launched on 28 October 2004, with the support of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. To achieve the long-term goal outlined by the UNESCAP Executive Secretary, ARTNeT has adopted a strategy combining (1) regional trade research projects, (2) enhanced research dissemination mechanisms, and (3) capacity building activities catering to researchers from developing countries.

The three lines that forms the A of the ARTNeT logo are the symbol of this three-pronged strategy. These lines also link together the research institutions (outer circle) with the policy makers (inner circle), a key feature of this specialized regional network.

ARTNeT team research projects and capacity building activities have already begun. With the help of our growing number of members and partners, we hope to expand research and training activities, but also to start working on improving the dissemination of members research to policy makers and other interested stakeholders.

First ARTNeT Capacity Building Workshop on Trade Research, 22-25 March 2005



Nineteen junior researchers from 14 research and academic institutions in the region participated in the First ARTNeT Capacity Building Workshop organized by UNESCAP in cooperation with UNCTAD and the WTO. The objective of the workshop was to network junior researchers from the region and to provide them with practical tools and information on how to conduct research in the area of international trade, with a focus on agricultural trade policy analysis. [Continued on page 3]

ARTNeT Research Programme 2004-2007

The ARTNeT Research Programme was approved during the First Consultative Meeting of Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade (ARTNeT), held at The United Nations in Bangkok in October 2004. Policy makers and researchers from 15 developing countries of the region were brought together to discuss and approve the programme to ensure that ARTNeT's research activities would respond to the needs of policy makers. [Continued on page 2]

ARTNeT Research Programme 2004-07

[Continued from page 1] The ARTNeT Research Programme will guide the ARTNeT Secretariat (UNESCAP Trade and Investment Division) in its selection of research projects. The main features of the 3-year programme are:

- One 3-year thematic research project entitled "Trade Facilitation – WTO Negotiations and Beyond". As a direct result of the 1 August 2004 decision of the General Council of the WTO to commence negotiations on trade facilitation, participating policy makers identified the need to analyze the issues at hand and the possible impact of different commitments in this area during the Doha Round.
- Two 12-month regional studies on a topic of common interest to the ESCAP region, particularly LDCs from South, Southeast, and East Asia. The first regional study will focus on agricultural trade liberalization trends at the bilateral, regional, and global level.

- A series of short-term studies, of which three are to be conducted in 2005. Research areas approved by policy makers and researchers for the 2004-05 period included (1) supply-side constraints to exports, (2) GATS Mode 4 trade liberalization, (3), Special and differential treatment, and (4) Structural adjustment in the textile and clothing sectors.

Implementation of the research programme is already well under way (see below for details), with eight research institutions directly involved in its implementation.

In order to reflect the evolving needs of trade policy makers in the region, the ARTNeT research programme and its implementation will be reviewed and updated during the annual consultative meetings of ARTNeT research institutions and policy makers. The 2005 Consultative meeting is expected to take place in October/November in Bangkok.

ARTNeT Research Programme: Implementation Update

Thematic Research Project on Trade Facilitation

Under the theme of '*Trade Facilitation – WTO Negotiations and Beyond*', the first year of research will focus on evaluating the *need for and cost of implementing relevant trade facilitation measures in selected Asian developing countries in the context of the on-going WTO negotiations on trade facilitation*. The study is expected to provide a better understanding of the needs and priorities of developing Asian countries, as well as to provide quantitative and qualitative information on the cost of selected trade facilitation measures related to Article V, VIII, and X of GATT 94. Ultimately, the study will lead to policy and negotiation recommendations in term of (a) special and differential treatment; (b) capacity building needs; (c) binding commitments; (d) priorities of selected trade facilitation measures for Asian developing countries. The team of researchers working on the project include Debapriya Batthacharya (CPD, Bangladesh), Sachin Chaturvedi (RIS, India), Yose Damuri (CSIS, Indonesia), and Chen Wenjing (CAITEC, China).

Regional Study on Agricultural Trade Liberalization in Asia and the Pacific and Policy Implications

The objective of the study is to map and analyze existing trade agreements in the region and their product coverage, with a focus on agricultural products and associated tariff and non-tariff barriers to derive implications and recommendations / guidelines for trade policy and negotiations. The study is led by Saman Kelegama, Institute of Policy Studies (IPS, Sri Lanka). Team members include Parakrama Samaratinga (IPS) and Jay Bandaralage (Griffith University, Australia). Other researchers and institutions are expected to join the team once the review of the literature and available secondary data is completed.

Short-Term Research Studies

ARTNeT has already approved and funded one short term research study entitled '*Explaining Supply Side Constraints to Export-Led Growth in the Pacific Island Countries*' from the University of South Pacific, Fiji. The objective of the study is to understand the supply side constraints to export-led growth of the Melanesian group of the Pacific Island Countries (PICs), namely Fiji Islands, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Papua New Guinea (PNG). At least two more short-term studies are expected to be funded in the coming months.

ARTNeT Capacity Building Workshop on Trade Research

Organized by UNESCAP in Cooperation with UNCTAD and the WTO, 22-25
March 2005, Bangkok, Thailand

[Continued from page 1] Mr. Ravi Ratnayake, ARTNeT Coordinator and Director, Trade and investment Division (TID), UNESCAP, opened the meeting, followed by a presentation by Mr. Evan Due, Senior Regional Programme Specialist, Office for Southeast and East Asia, IDRC, on its programme and opportunities for international trade research.

Mr. Patrick Low, Director, Research and Statistics Division, WTO, kicked off the first session of the workshop by explaining the importance of research for international trade policy making and negotiations. He then presented the state-of-play of the WTO negotiations and related research needs. Ms. Roberta Piermartini, also from the Research and Statistics Division, WTO, presented an overview of several analytical techniques used for trade policy research in session 2. Remaining sessions of the first days were dedicated to computer-based exercises and applications.



Mr. Hing Vutha, one of two participants from the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI), presents case study recommendations to other participants

The second day of the workshop focused on sources of trade data and statistics, and issues related to use and access of trade databases. The consolidated tariff schedules database (CTS), the integrated database system (IDB), and the world integrated trade solution (WITS) were presented.

In the afternoon, Ms. Mia Mikic, Economic Affairs Officer, Trade Policy Section, Trade and Investment Division, UNESCAP, discussed how trade data could be used to calculate trade integration and trade performance indicators.

On the third day, the training focused on agricultural trade issues, starting with Mr. Pirzada Wajid's presentation of a Perspective from Pakistan on Agricultural Trade Liberalization and Research Needs. Mr. Ralf Peters, International Trade in Goods and Services Division, UNCTAD, then introduced participants to the agricultural market access database (AMAD) and agricultural trade policy simulation model (ATPSM), followed by computer-based applications and exercises using WITS and ATPSM.

On the last day, Mr. Yann Duval, Deputy ARTNeT Coordinator and Economic Affairs Officer, Trade Policy Section, Trade and Investment Division, UNESCAP, highlighted the importance of primary data collection for policy-relevant trade research and presented best practices for survey design.

Welcome to New Members

Three research institutions joined the network since the beginning of the year.

The Philippines Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) was the first to join in 2005. Established by Presidential Decree in 1977 to respond to the growing need for research for policy formulation, trade policy has been one of PIDS main research thrusts.

The Economic Research Institute for Trade (ERIT), Lao PDR, established under the Ministry of Commerce of that country, has also joined the network. One junior researcher from ERIT participated in the first ARTNeT capacity building workshop in March.

Griffith University, Australia, is the first institution from a developed country to join the network. Some of the researchers from the Griffith Business School Department of Economics are already actively contributing to ARTNeT research efforts.

Opportunities for Researchers

- **Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP) - 2005 Visiting Research Fellows Program-Center for Northeast Asian Economic Cooperation**

http://www.kiep.go.kr/eng/e_sub04/sub01_1.asp?sort=03&seq=20040116831329&p=1&keytype=&keyword

This program invites qualified researchers and scholars from all over the world to conduct research in Korea. It is designed to provide external researchers with opportunity to exchange views, research data and participating in the CNAEC research project. This center is interested in researchers with interest and experience in trade, investment, finance and other areas related to North-East Asia economic cooperation.

- **Research and Information System for the Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries (RIS) - Training and Visiting Fellowships**

http://www.ris.org.in/training_and_visiting_fellowship.htm

The fellowships are open to researchers working at the research institutes/ Universities or academic institutions and government officials dealing with international economic issues in developing countries. The candidates should have preferably a PhD or five years of research or work experience in dealing with international economic relations.

- **International Development Research Centre (IDRC) - Internship Awards**

http://web.idrc.ca/ev.php?URL_ID=24327&URL_O=DO_TOPIC

These awards provide exposure to research for international development through a program of training in research management and grant administration under the guidance of IDRC program staff. The intern will undertake a program of research on the topic submitted when competing for the internship and will be trained in the techniques of research management through hands-on experience. The program is aimed at candidates who, through demonstrated achievements in academic studies, work or research, have shown interest in the creation and utilization of knowledge from an international perspective. Candidates can be Canadians (or permanent residents) or citizens of developing countries, and should have had some training at the Master's level.

ARTNeT Opportunities

- **Call for Short Term Research Proposals**

Researchers and/or research teams should submit proposals no later than 25 April 2005. The topic areas include developing supply-side capacity, mode 4 trade liberalization, special and differential treatment, structural adjustment in the textile and clothing sectors, and services negotiations and business process outsourcing.

***Important note:** ARTNeT Partner institutions have expressed interest in funding additional research papers on WTO Special & Differential Treatment (S&DT) to explore alternative mechanisms and indicators that could be used to determine which country would qualify for S&DT. Short research proposals for up to \$6,000 may be forwarded to the Secretariat for funding consideration on a first-come first-served basis (no deadline).*

- **Research Fellowships**

Funding for junior researchers from ARTNeT member research institutions to stay three months in one other research or partner institution doing research on an agreed topic under the supervision of a qualified mentor. The amount of funding is up to \$5,500 depending on location. Application for research fellowships may be made in conjunction with a short term research proposal.

- **Call for Policy Briefs**

Senior trade researchers from research and academic institutions in the region are invited to submit policy briefs to the ARTNeT Secretariat for consideration. Researchers whose policy briefs are selected for publications will receive up to \$800 upon acceptance. Research-based policy briefs will be published as ARTNeT policy briefs under the name of their authors and affiliated institutions.

For more information, please visit:

www.unescap.org/tid/artnet.asp

- **Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) – FDI Research Meeting**

<http://www.unescap.org/apbf>

UNESCAP and IDRC are jointly organizing a meeting on "Foreign Direct Investment and Policy Challenges: Areas for New Research" as a side event to the Asia-Pacific Business Forum on May 12-13, 2005, in Bangkok. Participation is on invitation only. Interested senior FDI researchers/experts who would like to participate are welcome to contact Mr. Cho (email: choj@un.org) as soon as possible for more information.