

**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**  
Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation**First session**

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**Advancing public-private partnerships and private sector networks to accelerate climate action and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development****Strengthening infrastructure financing and public-private partnerships in Asia and the Pacific\*\****Summary*

*The Infrastructure Financing and Public-Private Partnerships Network of Asia and the Pacific (the Network) was established in 2018 at the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development, to provide policy and technical support on Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and support its member States in their infrastructure financing efforts, including through regional cooperation, knowledge sharing and capacity building activities. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)'s comparative advantage in promoting the use of infrastructure financing and PPP in the region due to its unique role as the regional think tank and most representative intergovernmental body for Asia and the Pacific for the exchange of best practices and policy advocacy. The Network aims to enhance the capacity of member States to accelerate PPP implementation for inclusive, sustainable and resilient infrastructure development to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.*

**I. Regional Capacity Building Event and Opportunities for Infrastructure Project Transaction**

1. To support enhanced engagement between target financial stakeholders and PPP units in connecting and matching proposed infrastructure investments, ESCAP has successfully hosted Seven regional Network meetings and six thematic workshops since its establishment of Network. These events offered greater opportunities for member States to present their infrastructure project proposals to potential investors. Collectively, these were co-hosted with the Governments of China, the Philippines, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea, and Thailand in chronological order, mostly with the corresponding Ministries of Finance, Economy and Planning with the objectives of advancing dialogues from preceding meetings, further engaging the members' recommendations on the role of this Network and strengthen regional and subregional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific through sustainable infrastructure investment.

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2. The impact of these meetings directly contributes to and aligns with several countries' national development plans, as noted during their respective presentations. For example, the latest Seventh Meeting showcased Kyrgyzstan's use of PPP mechanism in their National Development Program of 2022 to 2026, Lao People's Democratic Republic's decree on PPP in 2021, and Cambodia's PPP law as enacted by the Royal Code in 2021. Another highly appreciated aspect of these Network meetings as indicated by participants in the surveys, were well received site visits of infrastructure projects and networking elements of the platform. This has directly resulted in the significant achievement of the respective Indicators of Achievements. ESCAP is pleased to have received 68 infrastructure projects from 12 member States that were showcased at the Network Events and the InfraPPPnet Web Portal. The total investment of those projects is over 4.5 trillion USD.

3. In terms of target beneficiaries, these regional meetings gathered a total of 1,083 participants on-site and online from 53 countries from Asia and the Pacific and beyond, including heads of PPP units, infrastructure financing specialists and capital market experts from Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Europe, and North America. As a result of the Network's strong engagement, these meetings have directly contributed to SDG targets 17.3 on mobilizing additional financial resources for developing countries and 17.17 on encouraging and promoting effective public-private partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships. This was the result of careful consideration and extensive consultation between stakeholders of the Network during the design and preparatory phases of every meeting to ensure that the topics presented will be relevant to the needs of member States and, at the same time, will showcase the best practices from around the globe in preparing bankable infrastructure projects to secure the investment interest of the international private sector.

## **II. Thematic Workshops under Increase Demand during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)**

4. Given the time constraint posed by virtual meetings in comparison to physical meetings, ESCAP launched and organized a series of six thematic capacity-building workshops to supplement and deepen the broader regional dialogues during the Network meetings by offering in-depth discussions and technical support to increase the operational capacity of member States PPP units on practical issues related to PPP project implementation. These include PPP regulatory framework, PPP unit establishment and operation and PPP project implementation in selected priority sectors or subsectors according to the preferences of the member States.

5. To address the growing interest and request and interest of the member States, these workshops offered concrete deliverables and direct support to the member states through the provision of detailed technical presentations by PPP experts to introduce project case studies on selected themes and improved opportunities for interactions through lengthened Q&A sessions between participants and presenters.

6. The impact of these workshops has a direct contribution towards SDG 17, given its focus on partnerships to synergize and accelerate actions between Governments, development partners and the international private sectors towards preparing green projects. The private sector is an important strategic partner in achieving the SDGs and a central actor in addressing climate change. At the same time, the private sector is unable to act alone. Governments are needed to foster an enabling regulatory environment to reduce associated risks and incentivize private sector participation. The resulting outcome of these thematic workshops is a strengthened partnership that recognizes the need for a more systematic and coordinated approach to turn ambition into action towards practical solutions for an effective and inclusive green transition.

### **III. Infrastructure Project Pipeline and InfraPPPnet Web Portal Upgrading**

7. As one of the primary objectives of the Network, ESCAP has successfully prioritized the development and launch of the InfraPPPnet web portal during the virtual Fourth Meeting of the Network on 15 October 2020. This web-based initiative proved timely, given the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which served as a digital sharing platform to consolidate information on PPP institutions, commercially viable project preparation techniques, regional project pipelines and knowledge products. Since then, ESCAP continuously upgrades and updates the InfraPPPnet web portal based on registered users' latest information and feedback on their accessibility and ability to upload suitable materials from their respective units. To this end, and in recognition of the critical role the web portal serves in connecting members of the Network during these times of restricted movement, ESCAP is undertaking a major update of the InfraPPPnet web portal to streamline functionality and ease the facilitation of project transactions. This would be in line with the Memorandum of Understanding between ESCAP and China Public-Private Partnerships Center (CPPPC) that supports this Network by strengthening the connectivity of the PPP information platforms to enable the sharing of regional PPP policies, experiences and projects. In addition, ESCAP has developed a dedicated ESCAP Project Website to better consolidate events and official information of the Network for its stakeholders.

### **IV. Partnerships and Technical Assistance**

8. As a result of the Network's robust engagement with member States through the web portal development and capacity-building events, ESCAP is pleased to continuously receive strong interest and requests from member States to develop and strengthen public-private partnerships, capital market development, and related infrastructure financing knowledge products. In this connection, ESCAP has successfully delivered eight technical assistance requests to eight different member States of the Network as part of this project and continues to work directly with the governments of Bhutan, India, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka and Tajikistan. The strategic partnerships forged during this delivery effort reflect the strong interest and active participation of member States and development partners of the Network to foster the exchange of experience and capacity building that continues well beyond the project's completion. ESCAP is pleased to confirm that government representatives under relevant line ministries from 53 member States across the globe have joined the Network to date.

## V. Gender Analysis and Mainstreaming

9. Gender consideration is a critical component of the PPP Network with the goal of enhancing gender responsiveness by developing various inclusive and sustainable finance instruments for social infrastructure development. A comprehensive gender-sensitive approach was established during its implementation. The following criteria are considered and incorporated into the Network activities: (a) engaging with companies that disclose gender-sensitive information; (b) encouraging women representation at the highest decision-making level to engagement during the stakeholder consultations and scoping missions; (c) disaggregating all data collection by gender; (d) promoting women representation as part of the research staff and team composition; (e) ensuring representation from women entrepreneurs association or equivalent networks related to socio-economic infrastructure development to better support gender considerations during the project transaction process; and (f) including the promotion of infrastructure projects that mainstream gender considerations, promote women's empowerment and addresses poverty, especially for women and rural populations.

10. ESCAP is progressively mainstreaming gender consideration into this Network to foster contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment in the infrastructure development space. ESCAP has been actively addressing and emphasizing gender equality themes through Network events, which include Network Meetings, Thematic Workshops, and Sustainable Infrastructure Promotion Roadshows. ESCAP also requests member States to identify gender issues of concern that can be discussed at the Network events and encourage the nomination of female representatives from members of the Network to participate and speak at the Network events. This is in addition to the routine disaggregation of data by gender that the Network has done since its inception in 2018. The female participation rate significantly increased from 19 per cent (the First Network Meeting in 2018) to 48 per cent, and the female government focal point rate reached 41 per cent.