



**Unleashing E-Commerce  
for South Asian  
Integration**

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WORLD BANK GROUP

# Report Launch

## Unleashing E-Commerce for South Asian Integration

**16** Monday  
December, 2019

14.00-16.00 hour  
Tamarind Hall,  
India Habitat Centre  
Lodi Road, New Delhi

### PANEL DISCUSSION

#### MODERATOR



**Bipul Chatterjee**  
Executive Director  
CUTS International

#### PRESENTATION ON THE REPORT'S FINDINGS



**Sanjay Kathuria**  
Lead Economist and Coordinator  
South Asia Regional Integration  
Macroeconomics, Trade &  
Investment Global Practice  
The World Bank Group

#### PANELLISTS



**Anup Wadhawan**  
Secretary, Department of Commerce  
Ministry of Commerce and Industry, GoI



**Junaid Kamal Ahmad**  
India Country Director  
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**Rajnish Wahi**  
Senior Vice President - Corporate  
Affairs and Communication  
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**Joyeeta Bhattacharjee**  
Senior Fellow  
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**Pritam Banerjee**  
Logistics Sector Specialist  
India Resident Mission  
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**E**-commerce is dramatically changing the way goods and services are transacted nationally, regionally and globally. It facilitates international trade by reducing the cost of distance and remoteness and can be more inclusive of underrepresented groups such as women, small businesses and rural entrepreneurs. Intra-regional trade in South Asia is still below its potential, and the region lags behind other parts of the world in activating the potential benefits from e-commerce.

Adopting a novel yet practical approach, this report explores how e-commerce can be boosted to deepen intra-regional trade in South Asia. It examines the main transacting models in the digital space and the channels through which e-commerce helps reduce transactions costs for firms and consumers. It considers the regulations, as well as the regulatory gaps, affecting private sector participation in e-commerce, focusing on data privacy, consumer protection, delivery, cyber-security, market-access regulations and digital payments. Finally, the report presents recommendations for regulatory reforms that could enhance e-trade, especially in a regional context and as a possible platform for greater global engagement by South Asian firms.

The scale of these recommendations ranges from the modest, such as allowing cross-border payments and streamlining the customs regime, to the more ambitious, such as allowing the operation of regional e-commerce platforms and liberalizing related cross-border logistics services.