

Evaluation Approach Paper

Corporate Evaluation: ADB's Technical Assistance Operations, 2014–2023 September 2023

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A. Introduction and Rationale

1. **This paper sets out the approach and methodology for a corporate evaluation of the Asian Development Bank's (ADB's) technical assistance (TA) operations.** ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. TA has been one of ADB's main instruments to help its developing member countries (DMCs) achieve this in addition to policy dialogue, loans, grants, equity investments, and guarantees.

2. **The purpose of TA is to facilitate ADB's financial assistance to DMCs and improve their capacity.** Under the Agreement Establishing the ADB (the Charter), ADB provides TA for preparing, financing, and executing development projects and programs; coordinating DMCs' development policies and plans; achieving better use of DMCs' resources, making their economies more complementary; and promoting the orderly expansion of their foreign trade, particularly intra-regional trade. The purposes of TA operations include facilitating the channeling of ADB's financial assistance to DMCs and improving the capacity of DMCs to absorb external assistance and further their economic development. TA operates in various ways to achieve its purposes, which include (i) preparing projects for ADB financing and possible cofinancing by other development partners; (ii) improving technical, managerial, and administrative capabilities of entities within DMCs that may not be directly linked to ADB-financed projects; (iii) preparing studies that may or may not relate to specific projects which could benefit one or more DMCs; (iv) promoting technical cooperation among DMCs; and (v) giving specific attention to the needs of least developed countries and constraints on project development and implementation capacity.¹ TA is intended to help inform DMC stakeholders, so that policies and projects are improved and also to allow ADB to work regionally across not only DMCs at the department level, but also cross-departmentally, and inter-sub regionally.

3. **The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of ADB's TA in supporting Strategy 2030 objectives and the DMCs' needs.** The evaluation will also assess TA performance considering the TA reforms that took place over the 2015–2017 period and will complement the 2021 TA Review performed by ADB management. In addition, the evaluation will undertake the assessment of ADB TA operations utilizing findings from Independent Evaluation Department's (IED) TA completion report validation (TCRV) system, which has now been mainstreamed. Through this assessment, relevant lessons and recommendations will be identified to inform future directions which will support updating and streamlining the TA policies, especially in the context of ADB's New Operating Model (NOM).

¹ ADB. 2022. [Operations Manual Section D12 Technical Assistance](#). Manila.

B. ADB's Technical Assistance Operations: Background

4. **ADB changed the classification of TA several times since it started employing the instrument.** It originally distinguished between three main types: project preparatory TA (PPTA), advisory TA, and regional TA (RETA). The findings from IED's previous evaluation study on the performance of TA in 2007² provided a basis for ADB's TA policy in 2008 which introduced a four-way classification of TA: (i) PPTA, (ii) capacity development TA (CDTA), (iii) policy and advisory TA (PATA), and (iv) research and development TA (RDTA). This was done to match purposes to expected outcomes, and encourage more use of TA clusters, to promote longer-term engagement and approaches. The use of the country-specific and regional distinctions was maintained as a further classification of TA operations.

5. **IED's evaluation of the role of TA in 2014 paid special attention to the TA reforms of 2008 and found that improvements could be made to several types of TA operations.**³ The evaluation did not observe major problems with the new four-way TA classification as part of the 2008 reform but for RETA operations and RDTA, the alignment with corporate and country program goals needed further improvement. It was also found that a new TA facility instrument had not been used much and the share of TA operations for fragile and conflict affected situations (FCAS) remained largely unchanged. IED's evaluation suggested improving the strategic use of TA business processes and the use of consultants for TA needs, increasing programmatic TA with a broader set of TA instruments, and increasing DMC involvement at all stages of the TA project cycle.

6. **ADB issued a policy paper in 2015 related to enhancing operational efficiency,⁴ and implemented additional TA reform measures in 2017.** The 2015 policy paper included several measures related to TA operations, such as clarifying the permissible scope and implementation arrangements of the pilot testing of TA operations, enhancements in the efficiency of the TA cluster approach, the raising of the ceiling for the delegation of TA approval authority; and the development of a better knowledge partnership agreement. Also, most notable amongst the 2017 reform measure was the change in the TA classification⁵ which was simplified into transaction TA (TRTA), and knowledge and support TA (KSTA) from the previous four TA types. TRTA directly supported a project being financed or to be financed by ADB while KSTA comprised all TA operations other than TRTA. Other reform measures focused on (i) improving the strategic alignment of TA with country programming; (ii) increasing programmatic TA with a broader set of TA instruments; (iii) streamlining TA business processes; (iv) enhancing learning from TA; and (v) addressing past limitations in TA operations. A new TA facility was also introduced as part of the 2017 TA reform, which supported the preparation of multiple projects, even across DMCs.

7. **ADB management conducted a Technical Assistance Review in 2021 and identified the areas for improvement.**⁶ It found that the 2017 TA reforms generally enhanced the quality, speed, and relevance of TA operations. The review also identified areas for improving fund mobilization and allocation; business processes; quality and use of knowledge products and services, and lessons generated from TA; systems for monitoring and reporting and introducing an alert system for TA showing slow disbursement progress. The review investigated the areas

² Operations Evaluation Department. 2007. [Special Evaluation Study on the Performance of Technical Assistance](#). Manila: ADB.

³ IED. 2014. [Corporate Evaluation Study: Role of Technical Assistance in ADB Operations](#). Manila: ADB.

⁴ ADB. 2015. [Enhancing Operational Efficiency of ADB](#). Manila.

⁵ ADB. 2017. [Technical Assistance Reforms—Improving the Speed, Relevance, and Quality of Technical Assistance Operations](#). Manila.

⁶ ADB. 2021. [Technical Assistance Review](#). Manila.

for rebalancing ADB's workforce to respond to DMCs' needs. Other measures were encouraged, such as the piloting of reimbursable TA projects, a principle-based framework for the Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF) allocation and cost recovery, and the use of project readiness financing and small expenditure financing facility to prepare projects. There were further reforms related to TA business processes following the 2021 TA review recommendations. After the NOM implementation (30 June 2023), the distinction between KSTA and TRTA was removed.⁷

8. **In consultation with ADB Management, IED established a TA completion report (TCR) validation system in 2020 which was mainstreamed to full coverage TCRV from July 2021.** ADB's Board of Directors had assigned IED to establish a TCRV system to capture lessons learned from completed TA operations and to improve accountability for achieving results, the quality of completion reports, and the independence of project ratings. The system validated a sample of TCRs in 2020 and transitioned to full validation of TCRs for a number of categories from July 2021 onwards.⁸

C. ADB's Technical Assistance Portfolio

9. **From 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2022, ADB committed 2,131 TA projects totaling \$3.26 billion.** Since 2014, the number of TA commitments decreased toward the lowest in 2022 while the amount of TA commitments peaked in 2020 as depicted in Figure 1. In terms of the average approval size of TAs committed, it steadily increased over the period 2014–2022 from \$1.08 million over 2014–2016 to \$1.82 million over 2017–2022 while the average approval size of TA operations committed per year dropped from 276 over 2014–2016 to 217 over 2017–2022.⁹ The proportion of TA operations to loan and grant operations has remained rather stable between 1.6% and 2.4% over the period 2014–2022 with no significant trend up or downwards, and 1.9% on average (Attachment 1, Figure A1-1).

10. **TA commitments show an increasing proportion of TA operations being supported by TASF after 2017.** During 2014–2022, TASF supported 56% of TA operations while trust funds and TA project-specific cofinancing (PSC) supported 41%. Trust funds and PSC contributed 47% to total TA financing over 2014–2016, and 39% over 2017–2022. The breakdown of commitment by funding source (Attachment 1, Figure A1-2).

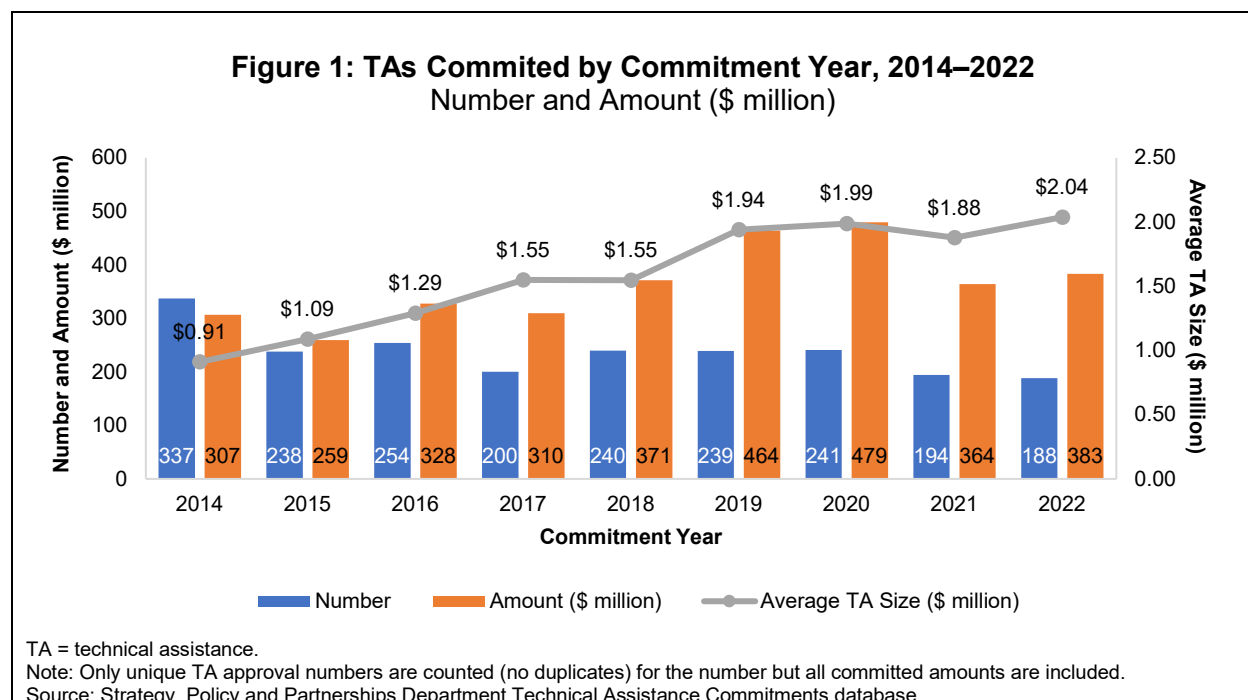
11. **The committed amount for KSTA (54.6%) was higher compared to that of TRTA (45.4%) over 2017–2022 when the TA was classified into TRTA and KSTA as part of the 2017 reform.** TRTA declined from around 52.0% over 2017–2019 to around 40.0% over 2020–2022, indicating growing predominance of KSTA in recent years. The annually committed amount for these two types of TA operations has fluctuated annually (Attachment 1, Figure A1-3). By

⁷ Under the new staff instruction on business process for TA issued on 30 June 2023, the classification of TA into KSTA and TRTA has been removed while that of TA activities into the previous four categories (CDTA, PATA, PPTA, RDTA) continues.

⁸ According to the TCRV guidelines, excluded are PPTAs that led to projects, and furthermore: (i) TRTA that resulted in a loan, including TRTA projects for implementation purposes (e.g., TA attached to a loan); (ii) all TA operations that are mainly used by ADB departments to engage TA consultants every year or used mainly for ADB staff expenditure in support of ADB publications along with development purposes for DMCs; (iii) TA operations that support logistics and travel expenditures for the conduct of conferences and workshops, aimed at raising awareness, consultation or dissemination; (iv) TA operations to fulfill ADB's legal or membership (including subscription, software license) obligations; and (v) TA operations amounting to less than \$225,000.

⁹ "Approval size of TAs committed" refers to the total TA commitment amount divided by the number of TAs committed with unique TA approval numbers (no duplicates) and is not based on the approval amount.

nature of TA activity, CDTA accounted for 56.3% of the TA operations followed by PPTA (25.8%), PATA (11.4%), and RDTA (6.5%) over 2017–2022 (Attachment 1, Figure A1-4).¹⁰



12. **The committed amount for KSTA (54.6%) was higher compared to that of TRTA (45.4%) over 2017–2022 when the TA was classified into TRTA and KSTA as part of the 2017 reform.** TRTA declined from around 52.0% over 2017–2019 to around 40.0% over 2020–2022, indicating growing predominance of KSTA in recent years. The annually committed amount for these two types of TA operations has fluctuated annually (Attachment 1, Figure A1-3). By nature of TA activity, CDTA accounted for 56.3% of the TA operations followed by PPTA (25.8%), PATA (11.4%), and RDTA (6.5%) over 2017–2022 (Attachment 1, Figure A1-4).¹¹

13. **The sector distribution of TA commitments during 2014–2022 showed that six of the 11 primary sectors have more than 10% of the TA portfolio, and together occupy three quarters of operations (75.1%).** These sectors were public sector management (PSM, 17.1%), transport (TRA, 12.2%), energy (ENE, 12.1%), water and other urban infrastructure and services (WUS, 11.6%), agriculture and natural resources (ANR, 11.3%), and finance (FIN, 10.8%) (Attachment 1, Figure A1-5).

14. **The five regional departments accounted for over 70% of all TA operations committed (\$2,325 million) during 2014–2022.** Nonregional departments with large TA commitments included Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department (SDCC)¹² (15%), Private Sector Operations Department (PSOD) (4%), Office of Public-Private Partnership (OPPP) (3%), and Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department (ERCD) (3%).

¹⁰ TRTA included CDTA, PATA, and PPTA nature of activities while KSTA included CDTA, PATA and RDTA nature of activities.

¹¹ TRTA included CDTA, PATA, and PPTA nature of activities while KSTA included CDTA, PATA and RDTA nature of activities.

¹² As part of ADB's New Operating Model (NOM), SDCC was renamed Climate Change and Sustainable Development Department.

Attachment 1, Figure A1-6 depicts the details. Overall, 47% of TA commitments included country-specific support and 53% included regional coverage support, i.e., TA covering multiple DMCs.

D. Evaluation Scope, Key Questions and Theory of Change

15. **Scope.** The evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of ADB's TA in supporting Strategy 2030 objectives and the DMCs' needs. For this purpose, the evaluation will cover the TA operations approved and committed during 2014–2023.¹³ The TA portfolio approved and committed between 2014 and 2016 will be assessed to capture the operations prior to the 2017 reform while the TA operations approved and committed post 2016 will be assessed to capture the effects of the 2017 reforms. The results from the TCRVs will also be compared for TA operations completed prior to and post 2017 reforms. The TA portfolios will be assessed by DMCs, regions, country classification (A, B C and FCAS and/or SIDS), TA types, sectors, themes, or operational priorities, nature of activity, funding source and country-specific versus regional TA operations. This will also allow an assessment of the influence of Strategy 2030.

16. **Overarching Question.** Has ADB's TA been relevant, effective, and efficient in supporting ADB's strategic objectives and the DMCs' needs, after the updated TA policy (2015), and the TA reform (2017)?

17. **Specific Questions.** The overarching questions will be underpinned by the following sub-questions and the detailed evaluation design matrix is in Attachment 3:

- (i) How relevant and coherent has ADB's TA support been in meeting ADB's priorities, and the needs of DMCs?
- (ii) How effective has ADB's TA support been and what are the effectiveness factors for different nature of TA activities?
- (iii) How efficient have ADB's processes related to TA operations been and how do changes in internal ADB and external DMC context affect efficiency?

18. **The theory of change (TOC) used for this evaluation highlights the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of ADB's TA operations.** Inputs are ADB's TRTA and KSTA operations, which lead to (i) project preparatory support; (ii) capacity development and knowledge generation and dissemination; (iii) policy and strategy analysis and advisory services; and (iv) research and development activities related to special topics. The evaluation will analyze TA portfolio and performance by the nature of their activities. The TOC is illustrated in Attachment 2.

19. **ADB's TA support intended to deliver one or more of the four main outputs:** (i) efficient project and/or program design and implementation; (ii) capacity development and knowledge; (iii) policy and program advice and regional cooperation initiatives; and (iv) economic, sector, thematic studies relevant to DMCs and/or region.

20. **The TA outputs intended to enable four main outcomes:** (i) investment projects in DMCs and their results improved; (ii) DMC institutions and clients' functions and performance improved; (iii) Improved application of policies, strategies, and reforms; and (iv) knowledge applied and innovative solutions adopted by DMCs.

¹³ The TA portfolios will be assessed over the period prior to the New Operating Model (NOM) implementation (30 June 2023).

E. Evaluation Methodology

21. **The evaluation will apply various methods to gather evidence to address the evaluation questions.** This includes (i) an ADB TA policy, procedures, and practices review; (ii) an ADB TA portfolio review; (iii) country case assessments; (iv) an assessment of ADB's internal organization for delivery; (v) a comparator review with other MDBs; and (vi) surveys of ADB staff, stakeholders, and TA consultants. Below is a general description of each of these methods.

22. **ADB TA policy, procedures, and practices review.** This will be a desk examination of existing TA policies, procedures, and practices. This exercise will involve but will not be limited to (i) a review of the adequacy and consistency of all applicable TA policies, staff instructions, guidelines, and strategies developed for ADB TA operations; and (ii) interviews of ADB staff from relevant departments engaged with TA operations. Procedures and practices for TA operations in or for the private sector, and the role of OPPP and PSOD, will also be reviewed.

23. **ADB TA portfolio review.** The review will include an analysis of the TA databases maintained by SPD and PPFD, which compile features of the TA portfolio approved and committed from 2014–2016 and from 2017–2023 to assess whether the 2015–2017 TA reforms and Strategy 2030 had a significant effect on TA operations. It will also assess TA processing efficiency and timelines based on PPFD data. In addition, the review will include the assessment of ADB TA operations utilizing the findings from IED's TCRV system to assess the performance of TA operations in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency in contributing toward achieving the four main outcomes of TA identified.¹⁴ The evaluation will assess TA performance by regions, DMCs, sectors, themes, or operational priorities, TA type, nature of activity and funding source. The effect of COVID-19 pandemic and ADB's COVID-19 support on the TA portfolio will also be assessed. The review will furthermore include a qualitative, checklist-based review of TA related documents, TCRs, and TCRVs to check lessons and identify success and failure factors.¹⁵

24. **Country case assessments.** The assessment will include four in-person country (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Uzbekistan) missions to identify how country-specific TA operations (KSTA and TRTA) have supported the country's development and ADB's country program with a focus on the primary sector. A desk review is planned for the People's Republic of China given that it has the highest number of TCRVs available to date for one country. The in-person missions will be supplemented by five virtual missions (India, Fiji, Mongolia, Pakistan, and the Philippines), which will selectively focus on how TA and RETA operations have supported country and regional programs. As part of the process for identifying the potential country case assessments for the TA evaluation, the following factors were applied: (i) the DMCs in each of the five regions with the higher TA commitments (by number and amount) and higher number of TCRs that were completed and validated; (ii) DMCs in each region with significant regional TA; (iii) a mix of country TA portfolios that cover the main TA sectors and main types of TA support;¹⁶ and (iv) a balance of country selections with higher and lower income level. The four in-person country missions were selected especially considering the higher number of TCRs that were completed and validated for these countries. Additional virtual meetings to complement

¹⁴ As of 30 June 2023, there were 145 validated TCRs for TA operations approved before the 2017 TA reforms and 117 TCRs for TA operations approved post 2017 TA reforms.

¹⁵ These include executing agency (EA) involvement, knowledge partnership agreements, quality of indicators used in DMFs, the use of consultants and consulting firms, surveys, report dissemination plans, ADB's operational priorities, Country partnership alignment, and TA objectives.

¹⁶ Main type of TA support includes private sector TA, reimbursable TA, facility TA, cluster TA, small scale TA and regional TA next to CDTA, PPTA, PATA and RETA.

missions will be considered on a selective basis. The evaluation will also analyze TA portfolio and performance by the nature of TA activities. Details are reflected in Attachment 4.

25. **ADB's organization for delivery.** The evaluation will review the institutional arrangements within ADB in terms of TA processing and delivery, especially considering the recent changes in ADB's internal organization, the NOM. Considering that there are limited TA operations approved post NOM implementation with no TCRs, the discussion would be based on the lessons learned from previous reforms, early experiences with NOM implementation from key stakeholders, and its implications. Interviews and document reviews will be used for this purpose.

26. **Comparator review.** This section will compare ADB's TA set up and operations with those of comparable institutions and multilateral development banks that provide significant TA support in the region, primarily the World Bank Group and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Some other relevant development agencies with significant TA operations and experience will be reviewed as well. The review will aim to identify lessons on policies, procedures, and practices. The review will be performed through interviews with relevant staff and a review of relevant documents and best practices from other multilateral development banks (MDBs).

27. **Surveys of ADB staff and ADB clients.** The evaluation team will conduct questionnaire surveys of ADB staff, government staff, and TA consultants where appropriate to obtain input regarding TA operations in terms of supplier and beneficiary perspectives. Questionnaire surveys will be utilized to seek input which will require support from ADB management to increase the level of responses. Also, consultation meetings with major donors of the selected trust funds will be considered as appropriate.

28. **Limitations.** TA operations to be evaluated are limited to those administered by the five regional departments, OPPI, PSOD, and SDCC which comprise 90% of the total number of approved TA operations and 94% of the total committed amount during the evaluation period of 2014–2023. TA operations conducted by other departments will be excluded. Also, given limited time and resources, a selective review of the results of over 2,000 TA operations approved since 2014 will be completed. Therefore, the evidence available to assess the effectiveness of TAs in delivering the four outcomes of the TOC will be based on the selected sample. The database of validated TCRs, mainstreamed in 2020, will inform the analysis along with country assessments. Consequently, there will be a focus on learning and understanding the trends before and after the 2017 TA reforms and approval of Strategy 2030, with respect to the use and performance of different TA types and operational priorities in different contexts.¹⁷

F. Dissemination Plan

29. The evaluation findings will be disseminated within ADB and externally in the region. The final report and the management response will be posted on the IED website after the Development Effectiveness Committee (DEC) discussion. Afterward, knowledge sharing and learning activities will be held, including dissemination seminars and presentations at relevant conferences when appropriate. An event in one of the case assessment countries will be considered to disseminate findings and lessons with country stakeholders. Also, a video capturing

¹⁷ TA portfolios for Afghanistan and Myanmar will be included as part of the assessment but a country mission or virtual interviews will not be possible due to these DMCs' current circumstances.

experiences and results in the field with key stakeholders and beneficiaries will be prepared. A detailed evaluation communication matrix is in Attachment 5.

G. Resource Requirements

30. The evaluation will be carried out by an IED team: Sung Shin, Senior Evaluation Specialist and Team Leader; Garrett Kilroy, Principal Evaluation Specialist; Arjun Guha, Evaluation Specialist; Franklin D. De Guzman, Senior Evaluation Officer; Jerome Z. Jovellanos, Associate Evaluation Officer; Caren Joy S. Mongcopa, Associate Evaluation Officer; Charity Gay Ramos-Galacgac, Evaluation Officer; and Bryan Noel B. Lazaro, Senior Evaluation Assistant, under the supervision of Nathan Subramanian, Director, IESP. The team will also be supported by Benjamin M. Graham, Advisor; and Renato D. Lumin, Senior Evaluation Officer; who will prepare a set of case studies of the transformational capacity development operations supported by ADB's TA.

31. The team will be assisted by international and national consultants recruited in accordance with ADB Procurement Policy (2017) and associated procurement staff instructions. The proposed approach paper will also be peer reviewed by internal and external reviewers who are experts in ADB's TA operations.

H. Tentative Evaluation Schedule

32. The evaluation is expected to commence in September 2023 and be completed with the final report submitted to the DEC in the fourth quarter of 2024. A tentative implementation timetable is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Proposed Timeline

| Activity | Tentative Schedule |
|--|---------------------------|
| Approval of Approach Paper | Sep 2023 |
| Desk Reviews | Sep–Oct 2023 |
| Interviews with ADB staff and Virtual Missions | Oct–Dec 2023 |
| Country Missions | Nov 2023–Feb 2024 |
| Interdepartmental circulation | Jul 2024 |
| IED Director General Approval | Sep 2024 |
| Board Circulation | Sep 2024 |
| DEC meeting | Nov 2024 |

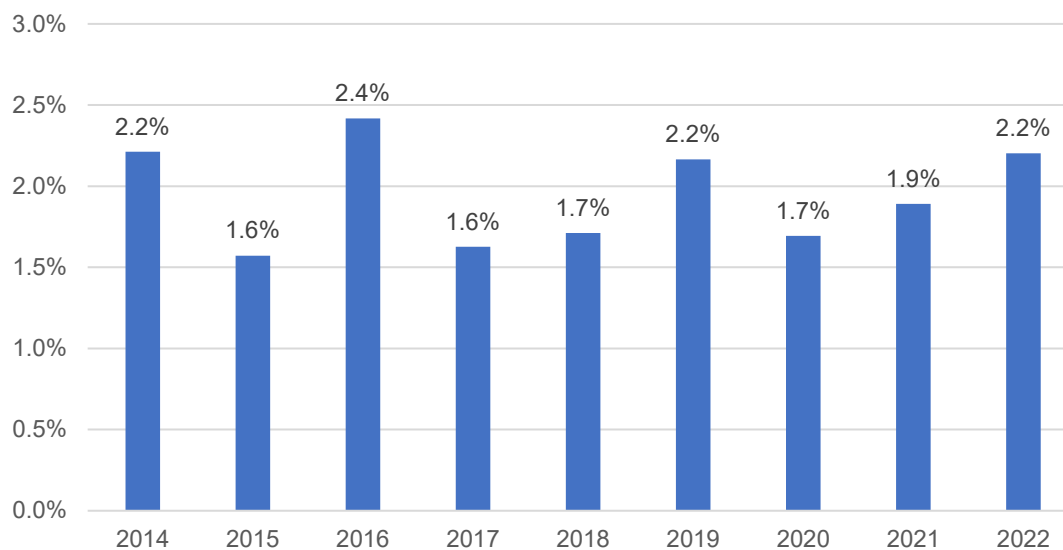
DEC = Development Effectiveness Committee, IED = Independent Evaluation Department.
Source: Asian Development Bank (Independent Evaluation Department).

Attachments:

1. Technical Assistance Portfolio Summary
2. Proposed Theory of Change for the Evaluation of ADB's TA Operations
3. Evaluation Design Matrix
4. Country Case Developing Member Country Selection Matrix
5. Evaluation Communication Matrix

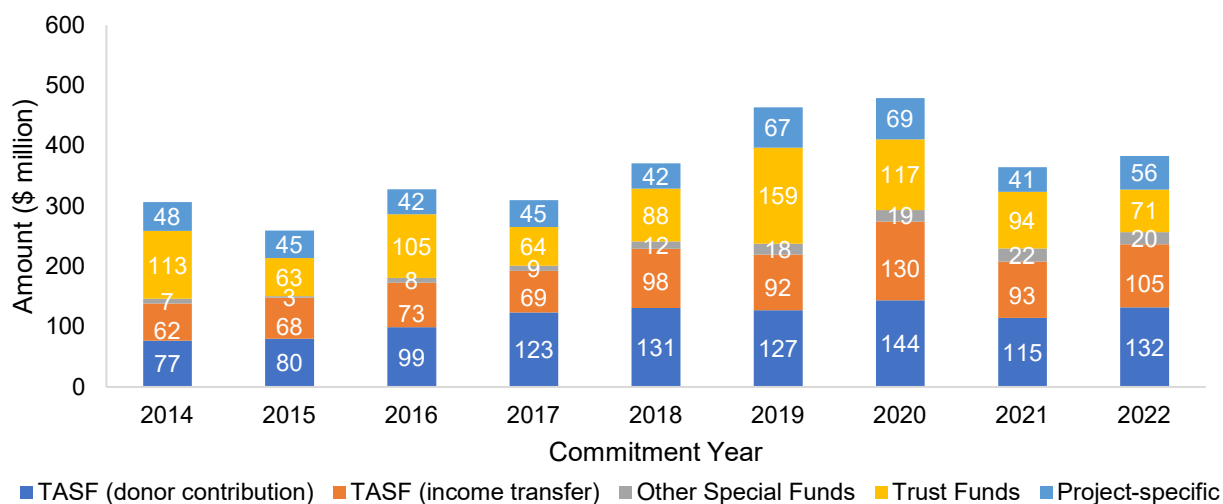
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PORTFOLIO SUMMARY

Figure A1-1: TA Committed Amount as Percentage of Loans and Grants Committed Annually



Source: Procurement, Portfolio and Financial Management Department Loan and Grant Commitments Database

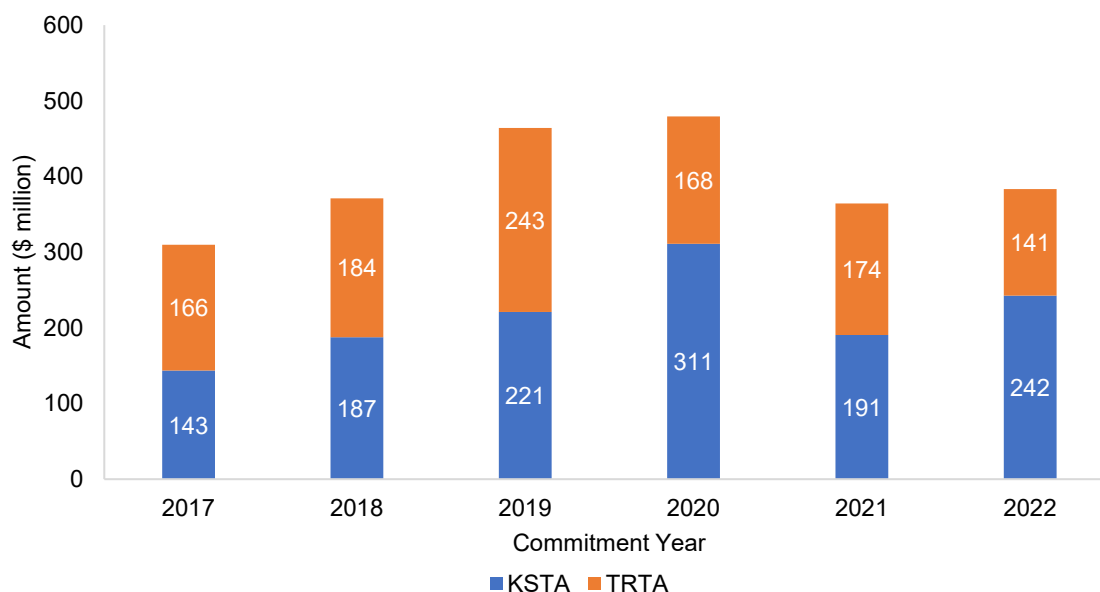
Figure A1-2: TAs Committed by Funding Source, 2014–2022
(Amount in \$ million)



TA = technical assistance.

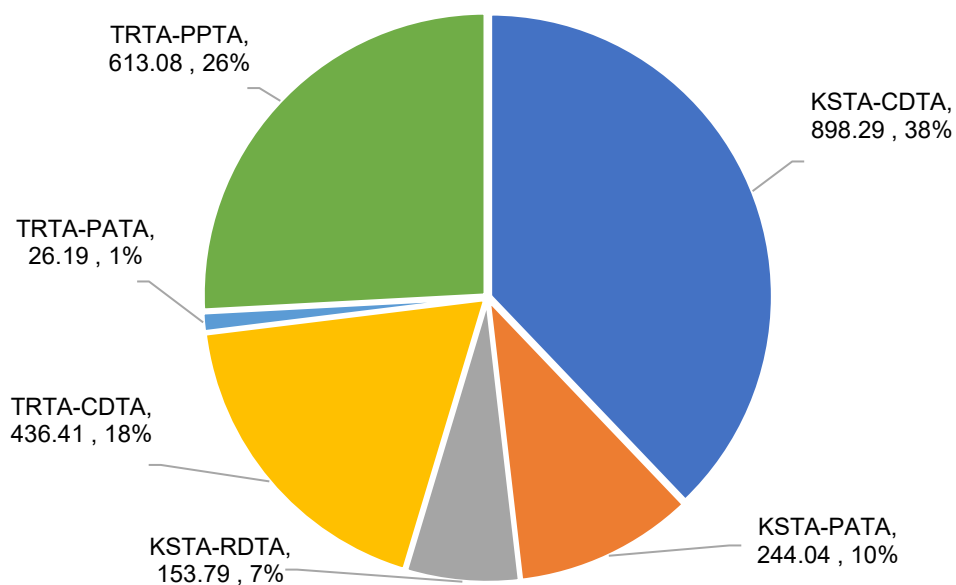
Source: Strategy, Policy and Partnerships Department Technical Assistance Commitments Database.

Figure A1-3: TAs Committed Amount by TA Type, 2017–2022
(Amount in \$ million)



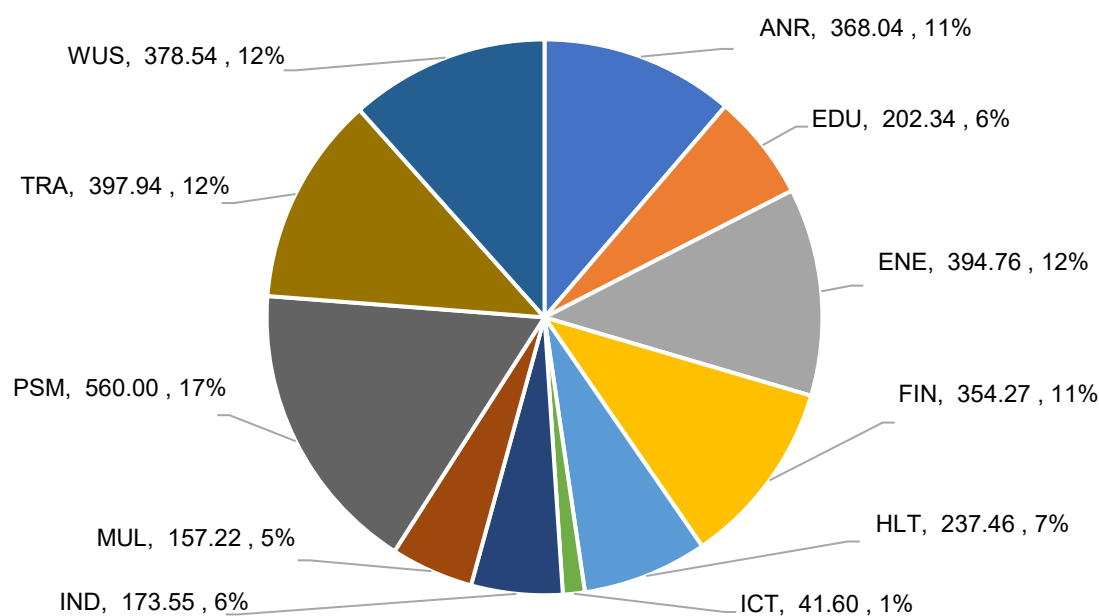
KSTA = knowledge and support technical assistance, TA = technical assistance, TRTA = transaction technical assistance.
Note: The new TA types, i.e., KSTA and TRTA started in 2017.
Source: Strategy, Policy and Partnerships Department Technical Assistance Commitments database.

Figure A1-4: TAs Committed by TA Type and Nature of Activity, 2017–2022
(Amount in \$ million and share in %)



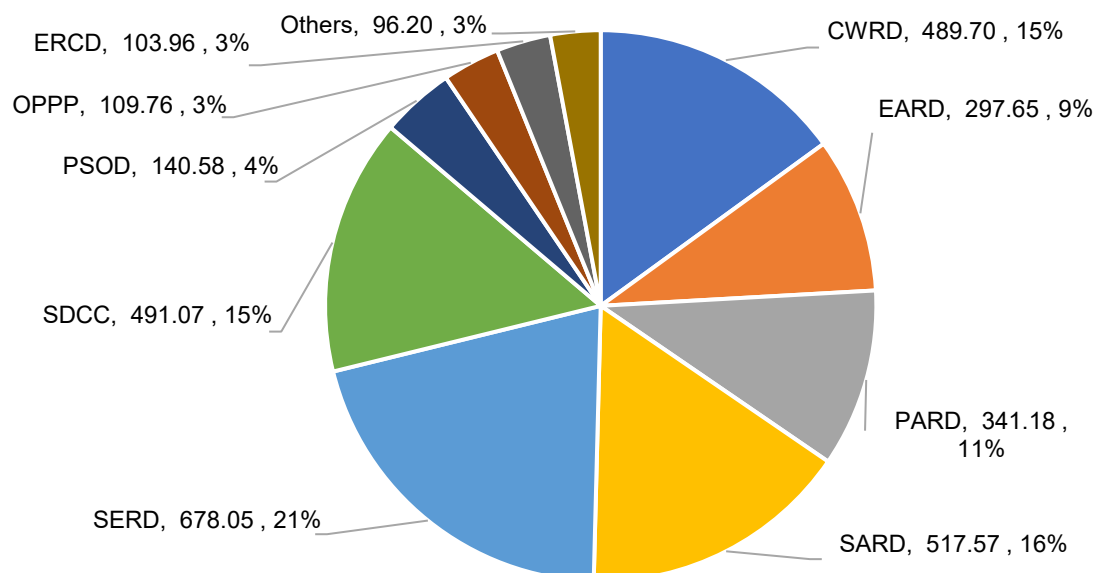
CDTA = capacity development technical assistance, KSTA = knowledge and support technical assistance, PATA = policy and advisory technical assistance, PPTA = project preparatory technical assistance, RDTA = research and development technical assistance, TA = technical assistance, TRTA = transaction technical assistance.
Source: Strategy, Policy and Partnerships Department Technical Assistance Commitments database.

Figure A1-5: TAs Committed by Primary Sector, 2014–2022
(Amount in \$ million and share in %)



ANR = agriculture, natural resources and rural development, EDU = education, ENE = energy, FIN = finance, HLT = health, ICT = information and communication technology, IND = industry and trade, MUL = multisector; PSM = public sector management, TA = technical assistance, TRA = transport, WUS = water and other urban infrastructure and services.
Source: Strategy, Policy and Partnerships Department Technical Assistance Commitments database.

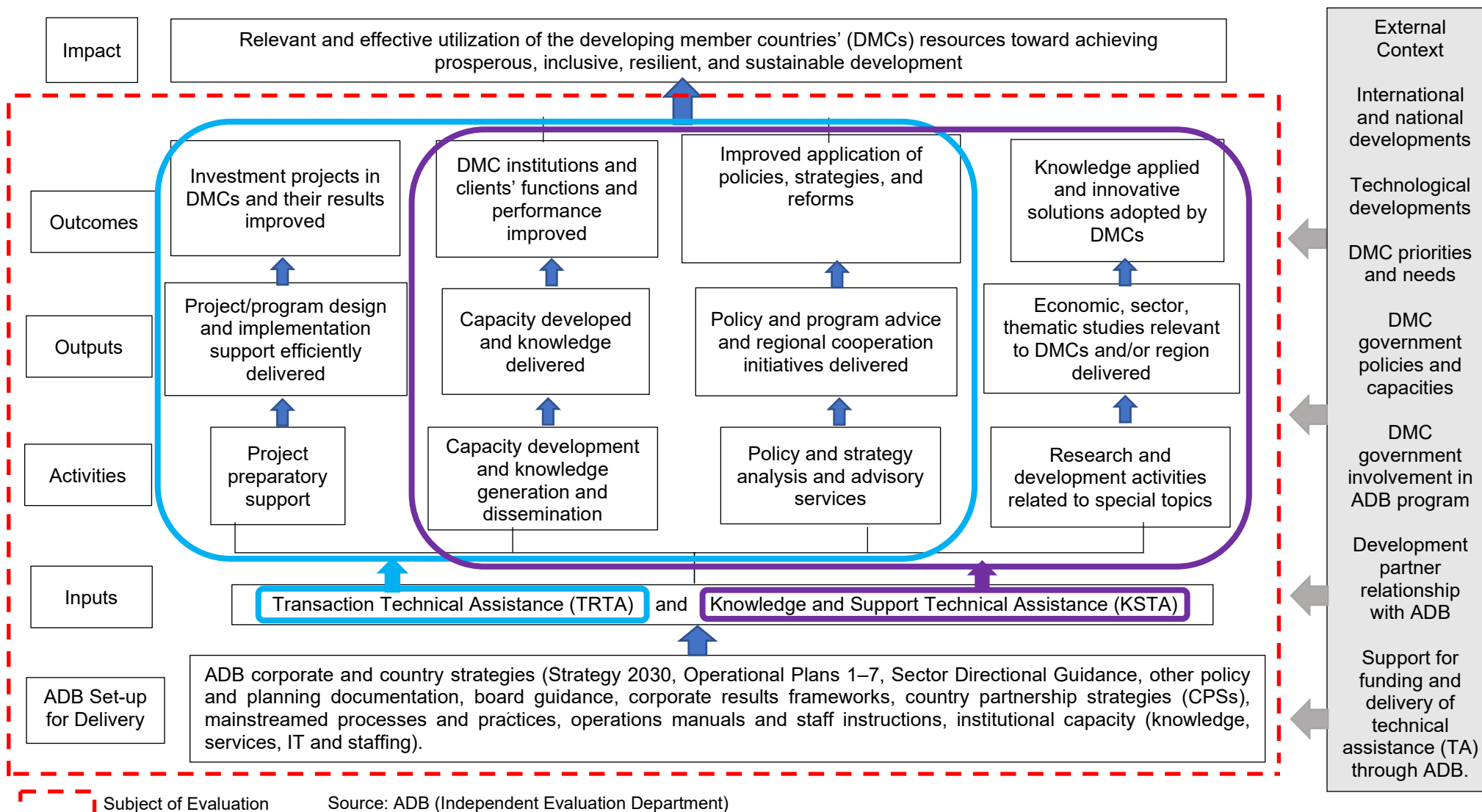
Figure A1-6: TAs Committed by Department, 2014–2022
(Amount in \$ million and share in %)



CWRD = Central and West Asia Department, EARD = East Asia Department, ERCD = Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department, OPPP = Office of Public-Private Partnership, PARD = Pacific Department, PSOD = Private Sector Operations Department, SARD = South Asia Department, SERD = Southeast Asia Department, SDCC = Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department.

Source: Strategy, Policy and Partnerships Department Technical Assistance Commitments database.

PROPOSED THEORY OF CHANGE FOR THE EVALUATION OF ADB'S TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPERATIONS



Assumptions: (i) DMCs are appropriately staffed to ensure continued ownership of the CPS and government priorities; (ii) DMCs provide an appropriate and enabling environment to allow for improved institutional function and performance; (iii) DMCs have adequate resources and commitment to utilize TA findings and recommendations in a sustainable manner; (iv) Project preparatory support is timely and relevant at the time of detailed project/program design; (v) Capacity development is in line with the required skills to be delivered; (vi) Policy and strategy services appropriately delivered for use by DMC strategic and policy level leadership; (vii) Research studies and other development topics analyzed adequately toward the DMC needs.

EVALUATION DESIGN MATRIX

Evaluation Context and Objectives: The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of ADB's technical assistance (TA) in supporting Strategy 2030 objectives and the developing member countries' (DMCs') needs. Through this assessment, relevant lessons and recommendations will be identified to inform future directions to further improve development effectiveness.

Main Evaluation Question: Has ADB's TA operations been relevant, effective, and efficient in supporting ADB's strategic objectives and the DMCs' needs especially after the updated TA policy (2015) and the TA reform (2017)?

| | Question/Topic | Policy and Supporting Documentation Review | | | | Portfolio Review and Case Assessments | | Interviews and Surveys | | | |
|----------|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|--|-------------------------|---|---------|
| | | TA Policy Papers | Operating Manual and Staff Instructions | 2017 TA reform and 2021 TA review | Other external document reviews | Portfolio review and data analyses | Case assessments | DMC officials and other key informant interviews | ADB Internal interviews | ADB partners and other externals interviews | Surveys |
| 1 | Subquestion 1 – How relevant and coherent has ADB's TA support been in meeting ADB's priorities, and the needs of DMCs? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 1.1 | How adequate has ADB's TA support been in responding to the 2015–2017 TA reforms and Strategy 2030 priorities? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 1.2 | How well has ADB's TA support been responding to CPS and country demand for TA? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| 1.3 | How coherent are ADB's TA policies/practices internally, and with ADB's project and consultant policies/practices? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 1.4 | How coherent have ADB's TA policies and practices been with those of other MDBs, donor agencies; and with the supporting partnership strategies? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | |

| Main Evaluation Question: Has ADB's TA operations been relevant, effective, and efficient in supporting ADB's strategic objectives and the DMCs' needs especially after the updated TA policy (2015) and the TA reform (2017)? | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|--|-------------------------|---|---------|
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| | | TA Policy Papers | Operating Manual and Staff Instructions | 2017 TA reform and 2021 TA review | Other external document reviews | Portfolio review and data analyses | Case assessments | DMC officials and other key informant interviews | ADB Internal interviews | ADB partners and other externals interviews | Surveys |
| 2 | Subquestion 2 - How effective has ADB's TA support been and what are the effectiveness factors for different nature of TA activities? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 2.1 | How effective has project preparatory support been in delivering project and/or program implementation support and improving the investment project results? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 2.2 | How effective have capacity development and training support been, short and long term in improving collaboration and knowledge products of knowledge institutions and functions? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 2.3 | How effective have policy advisory services been especially for governance and policy based operations leading to improved governance and reforms? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 2.4 | How effective have research and development activities been in adopting innovative solutions and applying knowledge? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |

| Main Evaluation Question: Has ADB's TA operations been relevant, effective, and efficient in supporting ADB's strategic objectives and the DMCs' needs especially after the updated TA policy (2015) and the TA reform (2017)? | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|--|-------------------------|---|---------|
| | Question/Topic | Policy and Supporting Documentation Review | | | | Portfolio Review and Case Assessments | | Interviews and Surveys | | | |
| | | TA Policy Papers | Operating Manual and Staff Instructions | 2017 TA reform and 2021 TA review | Other external document reviews | Portfolio review and data analyses | Case assessments | DMC officials and other key informant interviews | ADB Internal interviews | ADB partners and other externals interviews | Surveys |
| 3 | Subquestion 3 - How efficient have ADB's processes related to TA operations been and how do changes in internal ADB and external DMC context affect efficiency? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 3.1 | How well have the internal and external resources for ADB's TA operations been generated, budgeted, and planned including the operations of reimbursable and cofinanced TAs and what are likely changes in light of New Operating Model (NOM) and partner changes? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 3.2 | How efficient have the changes to the TA processing been, including those related to TA consultants and what are likely efficiency changes in light of NOM? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 3.3 | How satisfactory has the ADB management of TA operations been including the quality control and what are likely changes due to NOM? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 3.4 | How satisfactory are classification, monitoring and evaluation practices of TA operations, also in the context of DMC change, and what can be learned from other MDBs on this? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

COUNTRY CASE DEVELOPING MEMBER COUNTRY SELECTION MATRIX

| Nature of the TA Activities Supported with the TCR Validation Evidence | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| Region | Country Case Methodology | DMC | Project preparatory support | Capacity development and knowledge generation and dissemination | Policy and strategy analysis and advisory services | Research and development activities related to special topics | Selection Basis and Comments |
| EARD | Desk review | PRC | Included | Included | Included | Included | Highest number and committed amount of TA portfolio in EARD. The highest number of TCRVs to be drawn from the documentation evidence |
| | Virtual mission | MON | Included | Included | Included | Included | Support through Regional TAs higher than PRC |
| CWRD | In-person country mission | UZB | Included | Included | Included | Included | Highest commitment amount of TAs after PAK. Highest commitment amount of TCRs validated in terms of CDTAs and overall commitment amount |
| | Virtual mission | PAK | Included | Included | Included | Included | Highest number and committed amount of TA portfolio in CWRD |
| PARD | In-person country mission | PNG | | Included | | | Highest number and committed amount of TA portfolio in PARD |
| | Virtual mission | Regional | | Included | Included | Included | Multiple PARD countries received similar magnitude of committed amount of Regional TA support. Virtual mission supplemented with FIJ. |

| Nature of the TA Activities Supported with the TCR Validation Evidence | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| Region | Country Case Methodology | DMC | Project preparatory support | Capacity development and knowledge generation and dissemination | Policy and strategy analysis and advisory services | Research and development activities related to special topics | Selection Basis and Comments |
| SARD | In-person country mission | BAN | Included | Included | Included | | Highest committed amount of TA portfolio validated in SARD |
| | Virtual mission | IND | Included | Included | Included | | Highest number and committed amount of TA portfolio in SARD |
| SERD | In-person country mission | INO | Included | Included | Included | | Highest number and committed amount of TA portfolio in SERD |
| | Virtual mission | Regional | Included | Included | | | The highest committed amount of regional TAs among the five regions. PHI has the highest proportion of regional TA in SERD |

BAN = Bangladesh, CDTA = capacity development technical assistance, CWRD = Central and West Asia Department, EARD = East Asia Department, FIJ = Fiji, INO = Indonesia, MON = Mongolia, PAK = Pakistan, PARD = Pacific Department, PATA = policy and advisory technical assistance, PHI = Philippines, PNG = Papua New Guinea, PPTA = project preparatory technical assistance, PRC = People's Republic of China, RDTA = research and development technical assistance, SARD = South Asia Department, SERD = Southeast Asia Department, TA = technical assistance, TCRV = technical assistance completion report validation, UZB = Uzbekistan.

Source: Asian Development Bank (Independent Evaluation Department).

EVALUATION COMMUNICATIONS MATRIX

| Communications Goal: To disseminate the findings of the evaluation to internal and external stakeholders. | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Audience | Messages | Activity | Channels or Tools | Timeline | Resources | Expected Outcomes |
| Internal | | | | | | |
| Board Management and Staff | Has ADB's Technical Assistance been relevant, efficient, and effective in supporting strategic objectives and the Developing Member Countries' needs? | Board circulation of the approved report | Evaluation Report | October 2024 | Evaluation Team | The Board, Management, and staff will be informed of the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of ADB's TA operations which will help them make informed decisions in identifying the additional measure to further improve ADB's TA operations. Lessons and recommendations will be drawn from the (i) analysis before and after the TA reform measures were in effect, and (ii) the success factors identified for different categories of TA. |
| | How relevant and coherent has ADB's TA support been in meeting ADB's priorities, and the needs of DMCs? | DEC Discussion | DEC Video Presentation | October 2024 | 8 Hours: 1 consultant 1 staff | |
| | How effective has ADB's TA support been after the 2015–2017 TA reforms and what are effectiveness factors for some important categories of TA? | Dissemination of lessons and recommendations | What Works and Why (HQ) | Within 30 days of DEC presentation | 40 Hours: 1 Consultant 2 Staff | |
| | How efficient have ADB's processes on TA operations been after the TA reforms and how do changes in internal ADB and external DMC context affect efficiency? | | | | | |
| External | | | | | | |
| ADB Member Countries | How relevant and coherent has ADB's TA support been in meeting the needs of DMCs? How effective has ADB's TA support been for the DMCs and what are the effectiveness | Publication of evaluation report | Evaluation report | October 2024 | Evaluation Team | Lessons and recommendations will be drawn from the analysis of (i) TA operations for the DMC specific and regional TAs, and (ii) available evaluation evidence |

| Communications Goal: To disseminate the findings of the evaluation to internal and external stakeholders. | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---------------------------|--|------------------|---|
| Audience | Messages | Activity | Channels or Tools | Timeline | Resources | Expected Outcomes |
| | <p>factors for some important categories of TA?</p> <p>How efficient have ADB's processes on TA operations been after the TA reforms and how do changes in DMC context affect efficiency?</p> | | | | | <p>used to assess how the ADB's TA support has been responding to CPS and country demand for TA.</p> <p>Application of these findings is anticipated to further strengthen the DMC support.</p> |
| Other MDBs and FIs | Findings of the comparative review | <p>Dissemination of lessons and recommendations</p> <p>Dissemination seminars and presentations in evaluation conferences</p> | Copy of evaluation report | <p>October 2024</p> <p>As opportunities arise.</p> | Evaluation Team | <p>Lessons and recommendations will be drawn and applied which is expected to further strengthen ADB's collaboration with other development partners.</p> |

ADB = Asian Development Bank, CPS = country partnership strategy, DEC = Development Effectiveness Committee, DMC = developing member country, HQ = headquarters, MDB = multilateral development bank, TA = technical assistance.