



Completion Report

Project Number: 48242-001
TA Cluster Number: 0014
June 2017

Knowledge for Solutions

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TA Cluster No., Country and Name TA 0014-REG: Knowledge for Solutions			Amount Approved: US\$1,500,000	
			Revised Amount: Not Applicable	
Executing Agency ADB		Source of Funding Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF-V)	Amount Undisbursed: US\$ 175,531.00 (as of 31 Jan 2017)	Amount Utilized: US\$ 1,324,469.00 (as of 31 Jan 2017)
TA Approval Date:	TA Effective Date:	Fielding of First Consultant:	TA Completion Date Original:	TA Completion Date Actual:
TA 8827 08 Dec 2014	08 Dec 2014	17 Apr 2015	31 Aug 2016	31 Aug 2016
TA 8831 08 Dec 2014	08 Dec 2014	18 Jan 2016	31 Aug 2016	15 Nov 2016
TA 8833 08 Dec 2014	08 Dec 2014	17 Jun 2015	31 Aug 2016	15 Nov 2016
			Account Closing Date Original:	Actual:
			TA 8827-31 Aug 2016	22 Nov 2016
			TA 8831-31 Aug 2016	31 Jan 2017
			TA 8833-31 Aug 2016	31 Dec 2016

Description. The TA fostered an enabling platform to work as “One ADB” in providing knowledge solutions for DMCs by creating structures and systems to better link ADB knowledge and operations, as well as staff, with DMC practitioners and development partners. The cluster approach created significant potential synergies.

Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs. The expected impact was the adoption by DMC participants of knowledge solutions to address priority needs in Asia and the Pacific. The expected outcome was the delivery by ADB of knowledge solutions that support priorities identified in country knowledge plans. The Cluster TA had 3 outputs: (i) partnerships with Centers of Excellence (COE) that actively provide ideas to solve development problems in DMCs; (ii) a system supporting South-South knowledge sharing (SSKS); and (iii) a knowledge-sharing portal (k-Portal, subsequently renamed Development Asia) for exchanging development knowledge. The Cluster TA design was relevant in focusing on knowledge needs, and identifying knowledge partners and other organizations, to co-develop materials to respond to these needs. The TA was formulated in close consultation with operation departments and OIST, SPD, OCO and DER to reassess the DMC knowledge needs and existing gaps in responding to DMC knowledge needs in timely manner, and developed practical approaches to promote easier and wider dissemination of knowledge solutions.

Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities. ADB implemented the Cluster TA through the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department (SDCC). ADB’s performance as an executing agency for this TA was satisfactory as the subprojects were implemented in consultation and close collaboration with various ADB regional departments, Sector and Thematic Groups (STGs), the Department of External Relations, and the Office of Information Systems and Technology. The Cluster TA was implemented from 8 December 2014 to 31 January 2017. Minor changes in scope were made for TA 8831 to accommodate a delay in conducting an event in India, and for TA 8833 to allow content screening and editing for Development Asia. The completion date for these two projects was extended to 15 November 2016. A total of 25 individual consultants (10 international and 15 national) were recruited under the Cluster TA. International consultants assessed outputs carried out through knowledge partnerships and analyzed various South-South activities; developed an information architecture and performed top task analysis and site testing; created a content strategy; developed a basic taxonomy; and formulated guidelines, standards, and indicators for Development Asia. National consultants were engaged to coordinate the Cluster TA’s projects, convert lessons from knowledge exchanges into sharable forms, create and develop content, prepare graphics, carry out web design, and develop the site and database. These individuals who were engaged based on the Guidelines on the Use of Consultants and with terms of references aligned to the Cluster TA’s objectives, were rated either excellent or satisfactory.

The Cluster TA budget utilized 88% of \$1.5M, with a breakdown of TA 8827 on COE (94% of \$0.53M), TA 8831 on SSKS (82% of \$0.41M); and TA 8833 on k-Portal (88% of \$0.56M). TA utilization varied depending on the nature of each subprojects: for TA 8827 on COE, 21% was used to engage consultants and raise awareness on new ways to engage knowledge partners, while 72% was used to engage knowledge partners; for TA 8831 on SSKS, pilot activities accounted for 62% of the TA and case study preparation by consultants used up 20%; and for TA 8833 on Development Asia. Consultants hired to design and build up Development Asia accounted for 87% of the budget. Although 12% of the TA budget was unutilized, the outcome and outputs were achieved, demonstrating the highly efficient use of TA funds.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome. The Cluster TA achieved a considerable majority of the performance targets and indicators in the design and monitoring framework for the 3 outputs.

Output 1. The COE TA funded 3 knowledge partnerships. This is fewer than the target of 8 partnerships because the cost for each partnership ranged between \$100,000 to \$150,000, as against the budget of \$50,000 per partnership. Although the COE TA funded a smaller than targeted number of partnerships, these were concentrated in high impact areas, such as the Future Cities Program, and aligned closely with the work programs of the Sector and Thematic groups (STGs). Knowledge outputs were produced on urban development, one with the World Resources Institute (WRI), and another with the Cooperative Research Center for Water Sensitive Cities. In addition, a pre-partnership activity on digital health was organized with the Asia eHealth Information Network. Among the diagnostic studies carried out through the ADB-WRI partnership was one examining the combination of mass transit and technology for the city of Bandung, and another co-produced with CRCWSC that resulted in an urban densification masterplan for the City of Mandalay under the future cities program. The project also funded the Asia Think Tank Summit during the Knowledge Partnership Week held in May 2015. During this week, ADB signed its first ever knowledge partnership agreement (KPA) with WRI. This KPA stimulated numerous discussions on developing other KPAs in various sectoral and thematic areas.

Output 2. The SSKS targeted and supported 9 knowledge sharing activities, led largely by the STGs as well as the Regional Knowledge Sharing Initiative (RKSII) and the Independent Evaluation Department. These activities engaged DMC officials and ADB staff in enhancing co-learning on state-owned enterprise (SOE) performance reforms, public asset management, flood risk management, and various applications of high-level technology in areas such as energy efficiency, renewable energy, GIS, and food security. The seminar on SOE Performance Benchmarking — considered by the Pacific Department as a flagship event — contributed to the introduction of reforms in the Jamaican Government. Client satisfaction across these knowledge sharing events averaged over 70%, based on post-event surveys. Further, these events generated 18 case studies for uploading on to Development Asia.

Output 3. To ensure usability of the k-Portal, the project team carried out a top task survey¹ in 2015 to determine what stakeholders really want from ADB. The top task results were used as the basis for taking a more strategic approach to knowledge sharing efforts, knowledge packaging and dissemination, and shaping ADB's online presence. The top task survey revealed stakeholders' preference for easy-to-find knowledge, prompting the TA team to explore a digital first approach to producing content. Several knowledge content types and their associated templates were developed, and Development Asia went live in mid-2016. Upon closing of the Cluster TA, it featured about 60 pieces of content (derived from reports, interviews, and events) that were developed as case studies, policy briefs, explainers, insights, e-learning courses, and summaries. The team worked with several STGs (Transport, Gender, Water, Education, Health, Energy, Governance, and Finance), as well as Regional Departments, to explore new approaches to sharing content online. A basic indicator of rating the level of satisfaction was put in place to determine usefulness. The site was also tested with officials in the Philippine Government. Content uploaded on Development Asia rose by 1,867% from 3 pieces in 2015 to 59 pieces by end-2016, drawing close to 3,000 unique visits with no advertising.

The Cluster TA's three projects complemented in delivering knowledge solutions to DMCs. TA resource was utilized very efficiently in terms of its budget allocations to produce targeted outputs of the three projects respectively. Though not completely aligned with country knowledge plans, several pieces of content produced for Development Asia responded to knowledge needs identified in the country knowledge plans, for instance on public sector management and human capital development (Myanmar), infrastructure services (Indonesia) and social development and protection and climate change (Philippines). Seven knowledge partnerships were signed in 2016 with Singapore ETH, University of the Philippines, International Health Policy Program, International Rice Research Institute, Head Foundation in Singapore, ITB-Lemigas of Indonesia, and the Institute of Global Finance, University of New South Wales. The TA is therefore effective in delivering outputs and achieving the outcome.

Overall Assessment and Rating

The Cluster TA is rated successful based on resource use and alignment with DMC needs reflected in the work program of the STGs and, in part, in selected country knowledge plans. All projects operated within budget, with a slight delay in completion but without incurring any major change in scope. For instance, diagnostic studies done through the ADB-WRI partnership recommended combining mass transit and technology for the city of Bandung, and research co-produced with CRCWSC proposed an urban densification masterplan for the City of Mandalay under the future cities program. Demand from STGs for knowledge partnerships and flexible ways to engage them were evident and grew substantially. The KPA was institutionalized through the conversion of the KPA guide into staff instructions.² The k-portal project successfully delivered a proof of concept for a stakeholder-focused, digital first approach content

¹ ADB Top Task Results. March 2015. Available [\[https://lnadbg1.adb.org/oer0012p.nsf/0/EE3203CD2B8DB2FF48257EA70081E43B/\\$file/TopTasksResults-ADB-May29-2015.pdf\]](https://lnadbg1.adb.org/oer0012p.nsf/0/EE3203CD2B8DB2FF48257EA70081E43B/$file/TopTasksResults-ADB-May29-2015.pdf)

² Staff Instructions on Business Process for Knowledge Partnership under Technical Assistance Operations [Available at: <https://lnadbg6.adb.org/spd0026p.nsf/#/>]

creation and sharing. The project explored processes to make it easier for DMC officials, development partners and ADB staff to collaborate around knowledge solutions. The TA is assessed to be most likely sustainable given the increasing need in the DMCs for just-in-time knowledge responses and quick responses provided as short form content and complemented by content from ADB's knowledge partners. Moreover, as more DMCs become middle income countries, they have more experiences and knowledge to share with each other in solving problems.

Major Lessons

The Cluster TA demonstrated alternative ways of responding to the knowledge that DMCs seek. Besides deriving answers from knowledge shared through publication and events, easier-to-prepare and read formats can improve the response to DMC knowledge needs. Engaging knowledge partners more flexibly allows a more creative and responsive approach to bridging knowledge gaps through joint work programs that deliver concrete knowledge outputs. Experience in implementing the Cluster TA generated these lessons:

a) support for ADB's knowledge base through an easily accessible, common online platform to broker effective and sustainable country-to-country knowledge sharing was demonstrated through the Top-Task survey; b) a standing financial facility to respond to just-in-time knowledge demands of DMCs, especially for cross sub-regional and cross regional knowledge sharing, would be of great value; c) the co-learning component of knowledge sharing events and programs should be strengthened to benefit both ADB and DMCs, including engaging DMC officials in STG training programs; d) knowledge content from the conferences and workshops can be captured and shared in an easy-to-access form for wider dissemination after the events; e) practical know-how and short-form of knowledge content are generally preferred by DMC practitioners over lengthy and jargon-filled academic and scholarly works - and are more easily translated; and f) templates and guidelines can greatly facilitate knowledge sharing.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

- a) **Create a database of knowledge partnerships.** A database is being built for staff to use to quickly identify and engage with knowledge partners.
- b) **Create digital first content.** The digital first approach makes it easier for staff and partners to create, find and use - as well as translate - content. Applying digital first across ADB's content will help create an enabling environment to collaborate and transition to the more modern IT environment to be implemented by ADB in 2017 and 2018.
- c) **Sustaining Development Asia.** Evidence-based knowledge indicators, marketing initiatives, online community building, and e-newsletter creation efforts have commenced to promote Development.Asia. KSSC is processing a new KSTA to expand the site's functionality and add substantially more digital first content. Development.Asia aims to host country-specific development experiences, including links to datasets; serve as the sustained platform for content from sector and thematic RETA-funded websites; and support regional knowledge sharing platforms. The site will help to broaden knowledge sharing, take advantage of synergies, and build ADB's brand around its technical knowledge in numerous areas.

Prepared by: Mary Jane Carangal-San Jose, Senior Knowledge Sharing and Services Officer, SDCC-KS
Young Uck Kang, Knowledge Sharing and Services Specialist, SDCC-KS
Carolyn Dedolph Cabrera, Principal Knowledge Sharing and Services Specialist, SDCC-KS

Overall Assessment

Criterion	Weight (%)	Definition	Rating Description	Rating (Weighted Rating)
1. Relevance	25	The TA design was relevant in focusing on knowledge needs and identifying knowledge partners and other organizations to co-develop materials to respond to these needs. It was also formulated in consultation with ODs and relevant departments in accessing knowledge needs of DMCs.	2.5 Relevant	0.625
2. Effectiveness	25	Though not fully aligned with the country knowledge plans (CKPs), materials in Development Asia respond to some knowledge needs identified for CKPs in Indonesia, Myanmar and the Philippines. The knowledge sharing done through partnerships aligned closely with the work priorities of the sector and thematic groups	2 Effective	0.5
3. Efficiency	25	88% of budget was utilized to deliver relevant knowledge sharing events. There were only minor changes in scope and the extension of the TA by 4 months did not affect the delivery of the outputs.	2.75 Highly Efficient	0.688
4. Sustainability	25	The TA is assessed to be most likely sustainable given the increasing need in the DMCs for just-in-time knowledge responses and quick responses that may be provided in short form content and complemented with content from ADB's knowledge partners shared through Development Asia. Institutionalization of knowledge partnership agreements will facilitate engagement of partners to contribute digital content for sharing knowledge. Also, the increasing number of DMCs who have graduated to middle income levels have more experiences and knowledge to share in terms of addressing development problems.	3 Most likely Sustainable	0.688
Overall Assessment (weighted average of above criteria)		<u>Successful</u>		2.5