



Technical Assistance Report

Project Number: 54234-001
Knowledge and Support Technical Assistance (KSTA)
October 2021

Strengthening Regional Cooperation on Skills Development under the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program

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Asian Development Bank

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	–	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAREC	–	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation
COVID-19	–	coronavirus disease
CWRC	–	Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division
PRC	–	People's Republic of China
SDG	–	Sustainable Development Goals
TA	–	technical assistance
TVET	–	technical and vocational education and training

NOTE

In this report, "\$" refers to United States dollars.

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KNOWLEDGE AND SUPPORT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AT A GLANCE

1. Basic Data		Project Number: 54234-001	
Project Name	Strengthening Regional Cooperation on Skills Development under the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program	Department/Division	CWRD/CWRC
Nature of Activity	Capacity Development	Executing Agency	Asian Development Bank
Modality	Regular		
Country	Regional		
2. Sector		ADB Financing (\$ million)	
	Subsector(s)	Total	0.00
3. Operational Priorities		Climate Change Information	
✓	Addressing remaining poverty and reducing inequalities	GHG Reductions (tons per annum)	0.000
✓	Accelerating progress in gender equality	Climate Change impact on the Project	Low
✓	Strengthening governance and institutional capacity	ADB Financing	
✓	Fostering regional cooperation and integration	Adaptation (\$ million)	0.00
		Mitigation (\$ million)	0.00
		Cofinancing	
		Adaptation (\$ million)	0.00
		Mitigation (\$ million)	0.00
Sustainable Development Goals		Gender Equity and Mainstreaming	
	SDG 4.3, 4.4	Some gender elements (SGE)	✓
		Poverty Targeting	
		General Intervention on Poverty	✓
4. Risk Categorization		Complex	
5. Safeguard Categorization		Safeguard Policy Statement does not apply	
6. Financing			
Modality and Sources		Amount (\$ million)	
ADB		0.00	
	None	0.00	
Cofinancing		2.00	
	Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (Full ADB Administration)	2.00	
Counterpart		0.00	
	None	0.00	
Total		2.00	
Currency of Financing: US Dollar			

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The knowledge and support technical assistance (TA) aims to strengthen regional cooperation and integration on skills development in higher education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET).¹ Conceptualized by the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Program Secretariat in the Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division (CWRC) of the Central and West Asia Department at the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the TA is part of the human development cluster of the CAREC 2030 strategic framework and built on the CAREC Secretariat's scoping study results on the topic in 2019.² The scoping study recommended strengthening skills development in higher education and TVET in the CAREC region, suggesting a phased approach of establishing, in the short term of less than 3 years, expert groups on themes of regional relevance, such as improving quality standards and harmonization, academic and skill mobility, and labor market information; and of developing in the long term, a sector committee and a strategic framework for regional cooperation and investment financing.

2. Building on the findings of the scoping study, the TA will improve four key areas of (i) standardization and harmonization in higher education, (ii) standardization and harmonization in TVET, (iii) governance and regulation of recruitment systems, and (iv) development of labor market database and information system. The TA's main focus is to improve systems and governances at the country and regional levels, considering global best practices, the countries' diverse backgrounds, and geographical context, as well as the countries' agendas, key stakeholders' requests from the previous consultations, and other previous and ongoing initiatives to ensure strong buy-in and synergy while avoiding duplication.

3. The TA supports the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 4.3 on ensuring equal access for all women and men to affordable quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, and SDG 4.4 on increasing the number of youth and adults with relevant technical and vocational skills for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship. The TA is also aligned with ADB Strategy 2030's operational priorities, specifically operational priority 1 on addressing remaining poverty through education and training, 2 on accelerating progress in gender equality, 6 on strengthening governance and institutional capacity, and 7 on fostering regional cooperation and integration. The TA also supports the CAREC Gender Strategy 2030: Inclusion, Empowerment, and Resilience for All by favoring women in some of its interventions.³

II. ISSUES

4. Higher education and TVET in the CAREC region face significant challenges, reflected in the overall low quality of skills, gaps in skills demand and supply, resource constraints, outdated education and training systems, and weak governance.⁴ As skills development worldwide

¹ The TA first appeared in the business opportunities section of ADB's website on 9 July 2021. Basic or primary level education is an important component for pathways to TVET and higher education to support an integral part of the lifelong learning, but it is excluded in this TA.

² The five clusters of the CAREC 2030 strategic framework are economic and financial stability; trade, tourism, and economic corridors; infrastructure and connectivity; agriculture and water; and human development. CAREC. <https://www.carecprogram.org/>; ADB. 2017. *CAREC 2030: Connecting the Region for Shared and Sustainable Development*. Manila; and ADB. 2019. *Education and Skills Development Under the CAREC Program: A Scoping Study*. Manila.

³ ADB. 2018. *Strategy 2030: Achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Asia and the Pacific*. Manila; and ADB 2021. *CAREC Gender Strategy 2030: Inclusion, Empowerment, and Resilience for All*. Manila.

⁴ ADB. 2015. *Assessment of Higher Education: Kyrgyz Republic*. Manila; and ADB. 2015. *Assessment of Higher Education: Tajikistan*. Manila.

improves fast, there is a risk that the region could be left behind and suffer from a “brain drain” situation as its talented workforce is attracted to work elsewhere. The region needs to improve its skill standards to be more competitive to provide a strong basis for increased foreign direct investments and people-to-people connections.

5. The CAREC countries have significant differences in income level, education tradition, and training system. They are also members of different regional groupings, such as the British Commonwealth (Pakistan), the former Soviet Union (seven countries), Mongolia, and the People’s Republic of China (PRC), which should be treated separately as a resource country because of the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction funding and the PRC’s achievements in the areas covered by the TA. Despite these differences, the CAREC program provides a platform for regional cooperation, integration, and learning among member countries, including on the best practices in higher education and TVET.⁵ The diverse background calls for a multi-pronged and differentiated approach in implementation to promote a participatory approach by emphasizing facilitation and allowing countries to participate whenever they are ready.

6. On improving higher education, models on regional skills development through standardization and harmonization exist already. The Bologna Process in the European Union provides a good example, in which Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Kazakhstan are already part of the Bologna Process, while the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan aspire to join.⁶ This should be complemented by more specific bilateral and/or regional collaborations, such as (i) working with top universities to develop branch campuses, dual and/or joint programs, faculty and/or student exchanges favoring women, and others; (ii) developing bilateral and/or regional qualifications as part of standardization and harmonization; and (iii) establishing a university network in the CAREC region.⁷

7. Improving standardization and harmonization in TVET can be facilitated by establishing institutional networks for standardization and harmonization systems for selected occupations widely demanded by global and regional markets and relevant to the countries’ needs as well as by favoring women workers. Cross-country collaborations in selected occupations can also be developed through institutional twinning arrangements of bilateral and/or regional collaborations. These have been done in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Thailand, and Viet Nam under ADB’s TA implemented in the Greater Mekong Subregion Human Resource Development Strategic Framework and Action Plan (phase 1).⁸ A toolbox for a training manual for tourism professionals, developed for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, could be a model for countries in the CAREC region, in line with an earlier assessment by the CAREC Secretariat.⁹

⁵ ADB. 2019. *Technical Assistance to the People’s Republic of China for Sharing ADB’s Operational Knowledge in Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the People’s Republic of China with CAREC Member Countries*. Manila. This document provides an example of how ADB’s operational knowledge and policy lessons on TVET in the PRC are shared with other countries under the CAREC program.

⁶ The basic framework of the Bologna Process is to: (i) introduce a three-cycle higher education system comprising bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral studies; (ii) ensure the mutual recognition of qualifications and learning periods abroad completed at other universities; and (iii) implement a system of quality assurance to strengthen the quality and relevance of learning and teaching.

⁷ The ASEAN University Network provides a model for a regional university network focusing on academic cooperation, student and staff mobility, and international relations involving 30 participating universities. It was established in November 1995 through the signing of a charter by the ministers of higher education of six ASEAN countries, which has now been expanded to cover all 10 ASEAN countries (ASEAN University Network. <http://www.aunsec.org/>).

⁸ ADB. 2009. *Technical Assistance for Implementing the Greater Mekong Subregion Human Resource Development Strategic Framework and Action Plan (Phase 1)*. Manila.

⁹ ASEAN Secretariat. 2012. *Develop and Update Tourism Industry Knowledge: Trainee Manual*. Jakarta; and ADB. 2019. *Improving Education, Skills, and Employment in Tourism: Almaty–Bishkek Economic Corridor*. Manila.

III. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A. Impact and Outcome

8. The TA is aligned with the following impact: Human development improved through increased quality, mobility, and productivity of the labor force of the CAREC countries.¹⁰ The expected outcome is regional cooperation and integration in the CAREC region strengthened through better utilization and allocation of human resources, in line with the CAREC 2030 Strategy and Strategy 2030 Operational Plan.¹¹ This will be achieved through the development of four key outputs: (i) strengthened standardization and harmonization in higher education, (ii) strengthened standardization and harmonization in TVET, (iii) improved governance and regulation of recruitment systems, and (iv) developed labor market database and information system. In doing so, the TA will use a high-tech and innovative approach and collaborate with existing ADB country-specific TAs that share the same interests. The design and monitoring framework of the TA is in Appendix 1.

B. Outputs, Methods, and Activities

9. **Output 1: Standardization and harmonization in higher education strengthened.** The strengthening of higher education in the CAREC region will be conducted through (i) collaboration between universities in the CAREC region and top leading universities in Japan and/or the rest of the world, including through encouraging faculty and student exchanges comprising both women and men, and by incorporating distance or e-learning modality;¹² (ii) setting up a regional university network initiative; (iii) establishing a cross-country interagency working group comprising of women and men professionals in higher education; and (iv) developing bilateral and/or regional higher education standardization and harmonization frameworks.¹³

10. **Output 2: Standardization and harmonization in TVET strengthened.** This will be conducted through developing (i) collaborations with Japanese and/or top global leading institutions, including through encouraging faculty, student, and trainee exchanges comprising both women and men, and incorporating distance learning; (ii) a toolbox of training manuals for specific occupations such as tourism professionals and other occupations favoring women; (iii) a cross-country interagency working group comprising of women and men professionals in TVET; (iv) bilateral and/or regional TVET standardization and harmonization frameworks; and (v) bilateral and/or regional agreements for institutional collaborations for selected occupations.

11. **Output 3: Governance and regulation of recruitment systems improved.** To improve skills mobility in the region, the TA will conduct comprehensive assessments of the cross-border recruitment rules and regulations of the private recruitment agencies, government-to-government, and business-to-business schemes for more efficient and transparent labor mobility in the region

¹⁰ In line with the CAREC Strategy 2030 and individual country partnership strategies.

¹¹ ADB. 2017. *CAREC 2030: Connecting the Region for Shared and Sustainable Development*. Manila; and ADB. 2019. *Strategy 2030 Operational Plans*. Manila

¹² Two models for collaboration at bilateral and/or multi-country and regional levels are being considered. First is a collaboration with the ASEAN University Network and 10 Japanese universities: Chiba University, Kanazawa University, Keio University, Kumamoto University, Kyoto University, Nagasaki University, Niigata University, Okayama University, Tokyo Institute of Technology, and Waseda University in the area of subject or program-specific to promote common interests among two or more countries. Second is fostering bilateral partnerships such as between Tsukuba University in Japan and Oguz Khan University in Turkmenistan as suggested by the Japanese Embassy in Turkmenistan and the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

¹³ Given the diverse backgrounds, the stage of developing such a framework could follow a bottom-up approach starting from a bilateral and/or sub-regional to a CAREC level framework.

and beyond. This is to facilitate more “brain circulation” (i.e., more cross-country mobility of skilled workers) and reduce “brain drain”. The TA will consider the impact of external risks, such as from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on recruitment systems, which are critical, because the region remains an important source of global migrant workers.¹⁴

12. **Output 4: Labor market database and information system developed.** The system is to facilitate regular and comprehensive assessments on job and labor market issues including on social protection and skill mobility to contribute to the evidence-based decision-making process by providing key labor market information and labor characteristics across countries. To maximize the project’s impact and to make it long-lasting, the system will introduce non-traditional innovative indicators, such as employment by skills and qualifications with their projections, to be able to assess skill gap and skill mismatch. The system will also be made user-friendly and available online by maximizing advanced information technology application to attract wider users from the government institutions, think tanks, and academia, among others.¹⁵

C. Cost and Financing

13. The TA is estimated to cost \$2,000,000, which will be financed on a grant basis by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction and administered by ADB. The key expenditure items allowable under the fund are listed in Appendix 2.

D. Implementation Arrangements

14. ADB will be the executing agency and CWRC will implement the TA. The TA will collaborate with the CAREC Institute, related ADB resident missions, the Social Sector Division of the Central and West Asia Department, the East Asia Department, the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, and other regional and knowledge departments. The main counterparts in the TA implementation will be focal point institutions, universities and TVET centers, civil society organizations of professional groups, training institutes, think tanks, and other related institutions in the region. The project counterparts will also be supported by experts from Japan and/or other countries. The TA will build strong synergies with the governments and private sector institutions related to higher education and TVET to strengthen the project impacts and countries’ ownerships.

15. The TA will be implemented over 36 months (October 2021–September 2024) in a flexible manner so that the terms of references, duration, and schedule of TA inputs will be adjusted to meet the capacity building needs of the participating countries and to ensure that TA funds are used in a cost-effective manner.

16. Implementation arrangements are summarized in the table.

¹⁴ In 2017, there were about 21 million emigrants from the CAREC member countries, excluding the PRC. Russia remains an important destination, hosting 30% of them, followed by Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. Other popular destinations are Germany, India, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, and the United Kingdom. World Bank. [Migration and Remittances Data](#).

¹⁵ After the TA is closed, the CAREC Institute, ADB Institute, Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division, and other interested parties can host and maintain the database and information system for their different purposes as part of utilizing a public good.

Implementation Arrangements

Aspects	Arrangements
Indicative implementation period	October 2021–September 2024 ^a
Executing agency	ADB
Implementing agency	CWRC

Consultants ^b	To be selected and engaged by ADB.		
	Firm: Quality-Based Selection	International (66 person-months)	\$554,400
	Individual: Individual selection	International (48 person-months)	\$305,200
	Individual: Resource persons	International (35 person-months)	\$175,000
	Individual: Individual selection	National (168 person-months)	\$523,700
Procurement ^c	To be procured by ADB as described in linked document 3 in Appendix 3.		
	Request for quotations	3 contracts ^d	\$25,000
Disbursement	Disbursement of TA resources will follow ADB's <i>Technical Assistance Disbursement Handbook</i> (2020, as amended from time to time).		
Monitoring and evaluation	CWRC will administer TA implementation, including monitoring accomplishments of TA objectives and enhancing knowledge capture, and dissemination.		

ADB = Asian Development Bank, COVID-19 = coronavirus disease, CWRC = Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division, TA = technical assistance.

^a Overall scheduling will be adjusted considering the COVID-19 situation.

^b Estimated cost.

^c Procurement Plan is accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 3. Equipment such as software, subscriptions or IT devices can be procured for the TA as needed. Procurement of data, equipment, and software will be in accordance with the ADB's Procurement Policy (2017, as amended from time to time). For equipment, a certificate of equipment turnover or disposal will be submitted at the end of the TA implementation.

^d Estimated. The CWRC will consult ADB's Information Technology Department for the procurement of equipment and/or software.

Source: Asian Development Bank.

17. **Consulting services.** A total of 317 person-months, including from an international firm (66 person-months) using quality-based selection and for individual consulting services (83 person-months of international consultants and 168 person-months of national consultants), will be recruited using time-based and lump sum or output-based contracts. International and national consultants may include researchers and data analysts; experts in education, training, and information technology; publications and/or website developers; and event organizers. ADB will also engage international and national experts, which may include ADB staff, as resource persons to make presentations and/or to facilitate discussions at workshops, trainings, focus group discussions, seminars, conferences, and other events. ADB will engage individual consultants and an international firm following the ADB Procurement Policy (2017, as amended from time to time) and its associated staff instructions.¹⁶

18. **Knowledge partnerships.** Any knowledge partnership agreements of an intellectual and/or advisory nature with international organizations and academic and other institutions will

¹⁶ Outline Terms of Reference for Consultants is accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 3.

follow the staff instruction on business processes for knowledge partnerships under technical assistance operations. The partnership agreements will clearly delineate roles and disbursements.

19. **ADB's procurement.** The purchase of software, data, and equipment will follow ADB Procurement Policy (2017, as amended from time to time). The TA will coordinate with ADB's Procurement, Portfolio, and Financial Management Department and the Office of the General Counsel before purchasing datasets and signing data use agreements with partner agencies and third parties.

20. **Social media and websites.** The CWRC will upload online courses, training, and other project materials on its website following ADB's Guidelines on Social Media and the Branding Tool Kit. The CWRC will maintain the site in coordination with the Department of Communications and the Information Technology Department, including after the TA completion date.

21. As part of additional monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination of results, all knowledge products produced under the TA will be disseminated as widely as possible, ensuring Japanese visibility in line with Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction guidelines. This includes sharing progress, milestones, and outcomes of the TA with the Japan International Cooperation Agency and other Japanese counterparts.

IV. THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION

22. The President, acting under the authority delegated by the Board, has approved the Asian Development Bank administering technical assistance not exceeding the equivalent of \$2,000,000 to be financed on a grant basis by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction for Strengthening Regional Cooperation on Skills Development under the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program, and hereby reports this action to the Board.

DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Impact the TA is aligned with			
Human development improved through increased quality, mobility, and productivity of the labor force of the CAREC countries ^a			
Results Chain	Performance Indicators with Targets and Baselines	Data Sources and Reporting Mechanisms	Risks and Critical Assumptions
<p>Outcome Regional cooperation and integration in the CAREC region strengthened through better utilization and allocation of human resources in line with the CAREC 2030 and Strategy 2030 Operational Plan ^b</p>	<p>By 2024 a. At least 2 strategic agreements among participating countries and/or institutions resulting from the improved collaborations in higher education and TVET established (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 1.1.1, OP 1.3.3, OP 6.1.1, OP 7.3.3) b. Understanding reached between CAREC countries, or sub-groups of CAREC countries, to improve, harmonize and standardize selected aspects of higher education and TVET systems. (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 1.3.3)</p>	<p>a. Government and other key institutions' reports b. Citation or adoption of TA results by key stakeholders c. Online data from web analytics and other sources d. MOU or official exchange of letters on the common understanding reached</p>	<p>R: Lack of (i) timely delivery of inputs and commitments to adopt from counterparts, and (ii) synergy and coordination among key related institutions R: Security and other related issues are not conducive for the project's implementation and results</p>
<p>Outputs 1. Standardization and harmonization in higher education strengthened</p>	<p>By 2024 1a. A project agreement between two or more regional universities for degree, faculty or student exchange and/or qualification standardization program signed (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 1.3.3, OP 7.3.3) 1b. Initial CAREC university network established (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 1.1.1, OP 1.3.3, OP 6.1.1, OP 7.3.3) 1c. A cross-country interagency working group comprising of women and men professionals in higher education standardization and harmonization established (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 1.3.3, OP 6.1.1, OP 7.3.3) 1d. Bilateral and/or regional framework on higher education standardization and harmonization prepared (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 1.3.3, OP 7.3.3)</p>	<p>1a.-1d. Primary data from focus group discussions and consultations with CAREC university networks. Administrative data and country reports related to educational systems which have already been collected by a third party, such as a government, academic institutions, international organization, or civil society organization</p>	<p>R: Weak support of key government agencies to the project because of lack of understanding, commitment, and coordination R: Stakeholders cannot understand and embrace the benefits of skills development for various reasons R: Delays in the implementation because of lack of support and relevant inputs as well as capacity</p>

<p>2. Standardization and harmonization in TVET strengthened</p>	<p>2a. Toolbox for training tourism professionals and another occupation developed (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 1.1.1, OP 1.3.3, OP 2.1.1, OP 6.1.1, OP 7.3.3)</p> <p>2b. A cross-country interagency working group comprising of women and men professionals in TVET established (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 1.3.3, OP 2.1.1, OP 7.3.3)</p> <p>2c. Bilateral and/or regional TVET standardization and harmonization framework developed (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 1.3.3, OP 7.3.3)</p> <p>2d. Bilateral and/or regional agreement for institutional collaborations for a selected occupation signed (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 1.3.3, OP 7.3.3)</p>	<p>2a.–2d. Consultations with stakeholders, CAREC Institute and CWRC websites, publications and reports related to TVET training guidelines and frameworks</p>	<p>R: Policy discontinuity because of political and other changes</p> <p>R: Delays in decision making at national and other levels</p> <p>R: Lack of good quality inputs from the key stakeholders</p>
<p>3. Governance and regulation of recruitment systems improved</p>	<p>3a. Assessment on rules and regulations of private recruitment agency, government-to-government, and business-to-business recruitment systems conducted (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 6.1.1, OP 7.3.4)</p>	<p>3a. Consultations and advice from panel experts, CAREC Institute and CWRC websites, publications and reports related to recruitment systems</p>	
<p>4. Labor market database and information system developed</p>	<p>4a. Database and information system of the CAREC labor market and mobility developed (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 1.3.3, OP 6.1.1, OP 7.3.4)</p> <p>4b. Assessments of the CAREC skills situation conducted (2020 baseline: 0) (OP 1.3.3, OP 7.3.4)</p>	<p>4a.–4b. Consultations with software developers and engineers in designing the database, CAREC Institute and CWRC websites, publications and reports related to infrastructure of skills mobility database</p>	

Key Activities with Milestones

1. Standardization and harmonization in higher education strengthened

- 1.1 Collaborate with top universities, including from Japan, for various programs (Q3 2021–Q2 2024)
- 1.2 Establish an interagency working group on higher education standardization and harmonization (Q3 2021–Q2 2024)

1.3 Initiate the establishment of the university network in the CAREC region (Q4 2021–Q2 2024)

2. Standardization and harmonization in technical and vocational education and training strengthened

2.1 Develop toolboxes for tourism professionals and another selected occupation (Q4 2021–Q4 2023)

2.2 Establish TVET institutions' networks and bilateral and/or regional standardization system for a selected occupation (Q4 2021–Q2 2024)

2.3 Undertake institutional arrangements through a bilateral and/or regional framework agreement (Q4 2021–Q2 2024)

3. Governance and regulation of recruitment systems improved

3.1 Assess laws and regulations governing the private recruitment agency, government-to-government and business-to-business schemes, including highlighting some case studies for their improvement going forward (Q4 2021–Q2 2024)

4. Labor market database and information system developed

4.1 Conduct comprehensive assessments or policy analyses on the job and labor market in the region covering labor market and mobility, recruitment policies, and social protection. (Q4 2021–Q2 2024)

Note: There will be a series of meetings, workshop seminars, and conferences as part of facilitating the collaboration, development, and result disseminations to generate strong buy-in and institutionalization of the TA results. All these will be conducted in close collaboration with the key counterparts from the governments and other institutions. Along these lines, the TA will maximize the regular events conducted under the CAREC Program, such as the National Focal Point Consultation, Senior Officials' Meeting, and the Ministerial Meeting to make the project's implementation more effective and efficient, as well as to strengthen the CAREC countries' ownership.

Inputs

Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction: \$2,000,000

Note: The governments will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff time and office, office supplies and secretarial assistance, and other in-kind contributions.

Assumptions for Partner Financing

Cofinancing of mutually needed activities will be explored, especially with the ADB's ongoing technical assistance for Preparing the Research University Sector Development Program in Mongolia and the report on Reaping the Benefits of Industry 4.0 Through Skills Development in selected Central Asian countries.^c

CAREC = Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation, CWRC = Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division, OP = operational priority, Q = quarter, R = risk, SDCC = Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, TA = technical assistance, TVET = technical and vocational education and training.

^a In line with the CAREC Strategy 2030 (ADB. 2017. [CAREC 2030: Connecting the Region for Shared and Sustainable Development](#). Manila) and individual country partnership strategies.

^b ADB. 2017. [CAREC 2030: Connecting the Region for Shared and Sustainable Development](#). Manila; and ADB. 2019. [Strategy 2030 Operational Plans Overview](#). Manila.

^c ADB. 2018. *Technical Assistance to Mongolia for Preparing the Research University Sector Development Program*. Manila; and ADB. 2021. *Reaping the Benefits of Industry 4.0 Through Skills Development in the Philippines*. Manila.

Contribution to Strategy 2030 Operational Priorities:

The expected values and methodological details for all OP indicators to which this TA will contribute are detailed in Contribution to Strategy 2030 Operational Priorities (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 3).

Source: Asian Development Bank.

COST ESTIMATES AND FINANCING PLAN
(\$'000)

Item	Amount
Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction ^a	
1. Consultants	
a. Remuneration	
i. International consultants	945.1
ii. National consultants	423.0
b. Out-of-pocket expenditures ^b	
i. International and local travel	165.0
ii. Per diem and miscellaneous travel expenses ^c	7.2
2. Contribution to knowledge partners	166.7
3. Printed external publications ^d	20.0
4. Surveys ^e	30.0
5. Goods ^f	25.0
6. Miscellaneous technical assistance administration cost ^g	18.0
7. Training, seminars, and conferences ^h	
a. Facilitators	10.0
b. Travel cost of ADB staff acting as resource persons ⁱ	20.0
c. Venue rental and related facilities	35.0
d. Participants	35.0
8. Contingency (≈5%)	100.0
TOTAL	2,000.0

Note: The technical assistance (TA) is estimated to cost \$2,000,000, of which contributions from the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction are presented in the table.

^a Administered by the Asian Development Bank.

^b Includes air fare and miscellaneous travel expenses and shall be implemented in accordance with the memo on "Travel expenses of consultants under TA and Government Officials in connection with Non-member countries". ADB (Strategy and Policy Department). 2013. Actions to Improve the Quality of Report and Recommendation of the President. Memorandum. 14 October (internal).

^c Includes visa, in-city transportation expenses, and other incidental expenses.

^d Includes copyediting, proofreading, and other publishing-related activities. All materials intended for the general public, regional, and on-site workshops and trainings will be determined based on the number of participants and shall also be disseminated as an electronic document (e.g., HTML and/or PDF) by default (Para 19 of [Attachment 1 of the staff instruction on the business processes for knowledge and support TA](#)).

^e Includes cost of data purchase, field surveys, and other data collection.

^f Includes procurement of information-technology-related hardware, equipment, software acquisition, survey purchase, and data support in accordance with Administrative Order (AO) 4.07. Upon completion of the TA, the TA Supervising Unit will follow the disposal procedure indicated in AO 4.02 Asset Management and Inventory Control in consultation with Office of Administrative Services.

^g Includes translation and/or interpretation services, internet and telecommunication services, Microsoft Office 365E software license, and other operational expenses as necessary.

^h Regional workshops, trainings, and conferences will support the participation of at least 100 officials, researchers, and/or academics from the participating CAREC member countries.

ⁱ ADB (Budget, Personnel, and Management Systems Department; and Strategy and Policy Department). 2013. Use of Bank Resources: Regional Technical Assistance and Technical Assistance vs. Internal Administrative Expenses Budget. Memorandum. 26 June (internal).

Source: Asian Development Bank estimates.

LIST OF LINKED DOCUMENTS

<http://www.adb.org/Documents/LinkedDocs/?id=54234-001-TARreport>

1. Terms of Reference for Consultants
2. Contribution to Strategy 2030 Operational Priorities
3. Procurement Plan