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Technical Assistance Report

Project Number: 55121-001
Knowledge and Support Technical Assistance (KSTA)
October 2021

Promoting Gender Equality in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Region

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Asian Development Bank

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
CAREC	–	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation
COVID-19	–	coronavirus disease
CWRD	–	Central and West Asia Department
SDG	–	Sustainable Development Goal
TA	–	technical assistance

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: 55121-001
Project Name	Promoting Gender Equality in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Region	Department/Division CWRD/CWRC
Nature of Activity	Capacity Development, Research and Development	Executing Agency Asian Development Bank
Modality	Regular	
Country	REG (AZE, GEO, KAZ, KGZ, MON, PAK, PRC, TAJ, TKM, UZB)	
2. Sector	Subsector(s)	ADB Financing (\$ million)
✓ Public sector management	Social protection initiatives	1.00
	Total	1.00
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
✓ Fostering regional cooperation and integration		ADB Financing
		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 1.b		Gender Equity (GEN) ✓
SDG 5.a		
SDG 10.2		Poverty Targeting
SDG 16.7		General Intervention on Poverty ✓
4. Risk Categorization	Low	
5. Safeguard Categorization	Safeguard Policy Statement does not apply	
6. Financing		
Modality and Sources		Amount (\$ million)
ADB		1.00
Knowledge and Support technical assistance: Regional Cooperation and Integration Fund		0.70
Knowledge and Support technical assistance: Technical Assistance Special Fund		0.30
Cofinancing		0.00
None		0.00
Counterpart		0.00
None		0.00
Total		1.00
Currency of ADB Financing: US Dollar		

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The knowledge and support technical assistance (TA) will initiate the implementation of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Gender Strategy 2030¹ and promote gender equality measures and people-to-people contacts (linked to objective 3 of the CAREC Gender Strategy 2030) under the CAREC Program.² The TA will apply lessons from other gender mainstreaming efforts by the Central and West Asia Department (CWRD).³

II. ISSUES

2. CAREC countries face common challenges to improving the quality of life for women. In most CAREC countries, women and men have equal rights under the law, including equal access to social services. However, gender-based disparities persist across multiple indexes⁴ in all CAREC countries, particularly in economic empowerment and political representation. These disparities include (i) limited access to quality employment, as women tend to be employed in lower-paid and informal economic activities; (ii) challenges in implementing national policies that promote decent work and fair labor standards for women; and (iii) difficult access to finance for women entrepreneurs. Moreover, the digital divide in and between member countries disproportionately affects women, and women tend to have less access to technology and the internet than men. Many CAREC countries fare poorly in terms of the proportion of women in managerial positions—for example, less than 10% of firms in Pakistan and Tajikistan have a female top manager.⁵ Women’s political participation at the national level in CAREC countries falls below the 33.3% advocated by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.⁶

3. In the CAREC region, women often have been disproportionately affected by external shocks. Not only are they expected to undertake primary care responsibility, but pre-existing structural disadvantages also lead to inequality, discrimination, and the exclusion of women from decision-making. This affects their ability to withstand shocks and stresses and leads to much poorer outcomes than for men. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has had a greater impact on women than men in the CAREC region. Women often work in insecure labor markets or the informal economy, increasing their vulnerability to economic shocks. Meanwhile, women’s unpaid care and domestic work have increased significantly during the pandemic.

4. CAREC countries are committed to meeting the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on gender equality (SDG 5)⁷ and key international gender equality agreements while implementing the CAREC Gender Strategy 2030. They can learn from each other to strengthen their national approaches to gender mainstreaming and adopt a transformative gender agenda. In addition,

¹ ADB. 2021. [CAREC Gender Strategy 2030: Inclusion, Empowerment, and Resilience for All](#). Manila.

² The TA first appeared in the business opportunities section of ADB’s website on 17 August 2021.

³ ADB. 2016. [Technical Assistance for Strengthening Gender-Inclusive Growth in Central and West Asia](#). Manila; ADB. 2020. [Technical Assistance for Monitoring and Achieving Gender Targets in Central and West Asia Operations](#). Manila; and ADB. 2020. [Technical Assistance for Preparing and Implementing Gender-Inclusive Projects in Central and West Asia](#). Manila; and ADB. 2017. [Technical Assistance for Strengthening Institutions for Localizing Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development](#). Manila.

⁴ These include the United Nations Development Programme’s Gender Inequality Index, United Nations Development Programme’s Gender Development Index, and the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Index.

⁵ Azerbaijan (16.5%); Georgia (16.5%); Pakistan (6%); Kazakhstan (26%); Kyrgyz Republic (32.9%); Mongolia (38.9%); People’s Republic of China (17.5%); Tajikistan (6.6%); Turkmenistan (data not available); Uzbekistan (12.4%). World Bank. [World Bank Enterprise Surveys \(accessed 22 September 2021\)](#).

⁶ Endorsed at the United Nations’ fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 and considered as a comprehensive global policy framework for the rights of women. United Nations. 1995. [Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action](#). New York.

⁷ SDG 5: “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.”

opportunities have been missed to mainstream gender across CAREC projects. Analysis indicates scarce regional networking among female entrepreneurs. Few mechanisms adequately support mainstreaming national and regional gender equality measures and dialogue or regional investment projects to uplift women. The CAREC cross-border community collaboration scoping study also identified opportunities to address problems faced by women, especially in the border regions, through enhanced people-to-people cooperation.⁸

5. A regional approach to gender mainstreaming taken through the CAREC Gender Strategy 2030, approved at the 19th Ministerial Conference in 2020, can complement national actions and existing programs to support women's empowerment in the region. The CAREC Gender Strategy 2030 identifies key gender issues, potential strategic directions, and entry points for gender mainstreaming throughout CAREC's five operational clusters. The strategy has four objectives: (i) promote women's access to economic opportunities, (ii) contribute to women's social empowerment, (iii) support women's regional networks and policy reform for women's economic empowerment, and (iv) enhance women's access to information and communication technology. This TA will primarily contribute to promoting women's access to economic opportunities and supporting women's regional networks.

6. In addition to the SDGs, the TA is aligned with three of the operational priorities of Strategy 2030 of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).⁹ For Operational Priority 7 (Fostering Regional Cooperation and Integration), this TA will strengthen the CAREC Program's role as a regional platform to better align gender activities through enhanced women's regional networks by promoting people-to-people contacts and policy coordination. It will also address Operational Priority 2 (Accelerating Progress in Gender Equality) by enhancing gender equality in decision-making and promoting women's economic empowerment. For Operational Priority 1 (Addressing Remaining Poverty and Reducing Inequalities), this TA will contribute to creating a more inclusive business environment for women business groups and female entrepreneurs.

III. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A. Impact and Outcome

7. The TA is aligned with the following impact: inclusive regional economic growth in the CAREC region enhanced.¹⁰ The TA will have the following outcome: gender equality and women's economic empowerment improved in the CAREC region.¹¹ The outcome indicators are (i) two new regional mechanisms made operational for knowledge and experience sharing among CAREC countries on mainstreaming gender and enhancing women's economic empowerment by 2025; (ii) 90% of CAREC countries committed to implementing the newly developed regional gender action plan on women's empowerment and participation in the selected CAREC operational clusters by 2025; and (iii) 50% of newly committed CAREC projects categorized as *gender equity theme, effective gender mainstreaming, or some gender elements* by 2025.

⁸ ADB. 2020. [Strengthening Cross-Border Community Collaboration in the CAREC Region: A Scoping Study](#). Manila.

⁹ ADB. 2018. [Strategy 2030: Achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Asia and the Pacific](#). Manila; ADB. 2019. [Strategy 2030 Operational Plan for Priority 2: Accelerating Progress in Gender Equality, 2019–2024](#). Manila; ADB. 2019. [Strategy 2030 Operational Plan for Priority 7: Fostering Regional Cooperation and Integration, 2019–2024](#). Manila; and ADB. 2019. [Strategy 2030 Operational Plan for Priority 1: Addressing Remaining Poverty and Reducing Inequalities, 2019–2024](#). Manila.

¹⁰ TA defined based on ADB. 2017. [CAREC 2030: Connecting the Region for Shared and Sustainable Development](#). Manila; and ADB. 2021. [CAREC Gender Strategy 2030: Inclusion, Empowerment, and Resilience for All](#). Manila.

¹¹ The design and monitoring framework is in Appendix 1.

B. Outputs, Methods, and Activities

8. Output 1: Operational mechanisms for CAREC Gender Strategy 2030 developed.

The TA will support the establishment of the following four operational mechanisms: (i) a regional gender expert group¹² to provide strategic guidance on the CAREC Gender Strategy 2030's effective implementation and inputs for gender mainstreaming in the development and implementation of CAREC-related projects; (ii) one or more regional gender action plans to enhance women's empowerment and participation in the selected CAREC operational clusters; (iii) enhanced collaboration on advancing gender equality between the CAREC Secretariat, member countries, development partners, and the CAREC Institute by promoting knowledge sharing and mutual learning; and (iv) a monitoring and evaluation mechanism, which will facilitate tracking and communication of the strategy's implementation across the region. A gender database—one of the monitoring and evaluation tools—will be developed and used to track and monitor the results of the CAREC Gender Strategy 2030, inform the gender-sensitive and gender-responsive design of CAREC investments, and help countries improve their policies and strategies for gender equality and women's empowerment. The database will be managed and maintained by the CAREC Secretariat. These mechanisms will be supported by improved networking and collaboration among government agencies, development partners, the private sector, country-level women's business groups, nongovernment organizations, and civil society organizations through a series of workshops, policy dialogues, and knowledge events.

9. Output 2: Regional cooperation and integration projects for women's economic empowerment in the CAREC region developed.

The TA aims to generate investment opportunities for women and women-led businesses by identifying economic opportunities, generating innovative ideas, piloting activities, and developing regional cooperation and integration projects focusing on women's economic empowerment. The projects can include (i) support for regulatory reforms¹³ by setting harmonized employment standards for increased access to decent work¹⁴ for women and men in the selected CAREC sector such as transport, energy,¹⁵ agriculture and water, human capital development, and trade or tourism; (ii) promoting women's participation in regional and cross-border projects and activities; (iii) increasing women entrepreneurs' access to relevant business training and trade finance; and (iv) improving women's access to digital technologies and e-commerce platforms. The TA will conduct several consultations with gender experts, women and men engaged in the relevant businesses, and policymakers. The TA will also conduct a study on selected operational clusters of the CAREC Program, which will help design concrete and targeted regional cooperation and integration projects for women's economic empowerment. This output will contribute to increasing women's access to jobs and business opportunities in CAREC sectors. A free electronic version of the TA knowledge outputs will be available to the public and will only be printed if requested by key stakeholders.

¹² The regional gender expert group will comprise representatives from all CAREC member countries, interested development partners, representatives from national and international civil society and international nongovernment organizations.

¹³ Regional and/or country-level policies, institutional arrangements can be reviewed and considered.

¹⁴ The International Labor Organization defines decent work as “productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity” ([International Labor Organization. 2012. Gender Equality and Decent Work. Geneva.](#)). Decent work is also linked with SDG 8: “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.”

¹⁵ The CAREC Energy Strategy 2030 has a strong focus on gender and foresees the establishment of a dedicated Women in Energy Program to make women more employable and improve their career opportunities in the sector. ADB. 2019. [CAREC Energy Strategy 2030: Common Borders. Common Solutions. Common Energy Future.](#) Manila.

10. **Output 3: CAREC People’s Forum conducted.** The TA will support the establishment of a CAREC People’s Forum—virtual and physical, when possible—to foster regional networks for women’s economic empowerment and to enhance business-to-business contacts, support entrepreneurship, and harness business opportunities. The aim is for the forum to become an effective mechanism to engage various actors and strengthen their role in economic empowerment of women in CAREC countries. These actors may include national chambers of commerce; other civil society organizations; micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises; startups led by women; and country-level women’s machineries¹⁶. Moreover, it will provide an open space for the participants, particularly women entrepreneurs and women-led businesses, to network with peers, development partners, governments, and other stakeholders in various formats such as job fairs and regional expos—providing participants with the opportunity for education, business opportunities, and mentorship. This forum will kickstart the implementation of the CAREC Gender Strategy 2030 by supporting its objectives 1 and 3, and will thereafter include other issues of relevance. After the TA completion, the CAREC Secretariat will maintain and continue operating this platform.

C. Cost and Financing

11. The TA is estimated to cost \$1,000,000, of which (i) \$300,000 will be financed on a grant basis by ADB's Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF 7), and (ii) \$700,000 will be financed on a grant basis by the Regional Cooperation and Integration Fund.¹⁷ The key expenditure items are listed in Appendix 2.

D. Implementation Arrangements

12. ADB will administer the TA. The Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division of CWRD will implement the TA in close coordination with the Portfolio, Results, Safeguards and Gender Unit and its country network will provide expertise on gender issues for the effective delivery of the outputs of this TA, as well as sector divisions and resident missions of CWRD and the East Asia Department, the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department’s Gender Thematic Group, and government counterparts. The CAREC Secretariat in the Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division will provide operational and programmatic coordination for TA implementation and create synergies with other relevant TA projects and activities.¹⁸

¹⁶ National Women’s Machineries are key institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women and play a critical role in promoting and ensuring implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action at the national level. UN Women. 2016. [National women’s Machineries on Strengthening CEDAW Implementation, Monitoring and Accountability Proceedings](#). Bangkok.

¹⁷ Established by ADB. Financing partner: the Government of Japan

¹⁸ For example, Women Leaders’ Dialogue in Central Asia (United Nations Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia) and Women’s Entrepreneurship Expo (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women).

13. Implementation arrangements are summarized in the table.

Implementation Arrangements			
Aspects	Arrangements		
Indicative implementation period	October 2021–December 2024		
Executing agency	ADB		
Implementing agency	CWRC, CWRD		
Consultants (including resource persons)	To be selected and engaged by ADB		
	Individual: Individual selection	International expertise (18 person-months)	\$201,800
	Individual: Individual selection	National expertise (53 person-months)	\$174,900
Procurement ^a	To be procured by ADB		
	RFQ	7 contracts	\$81,400
Disbursement	Disbursement of TA resources will follow ADB's <i>Technical Assistance Disbursement Handbook</i> (2020, as amended from time to time). RCIF cofinancing will be frontloaded.		
Asset turnover or disposal arrangement upon TA completion	The procured equipment will be turned over to relevant government entities at the end of the project.		

ADB = Asian Development Bank, CWRC = Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division, CWRD = Central and West Asia Department, RCIF = Regional Cooperation and Integration Fund, RFQ = Request for Quotation, TA = technical assistance.

^a Procurement Plan (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 3).

Source: Asian Development Bank.

14. **Consulting services.** ADB will engage the consultants following the ADB Procurement Policy (2017, as amended from time to time) and its associated project administration instructions and/or staff instructions.¹⁹

15. **ADB's procurement.** The purchase of information communication technology-related equipment, supplies, software, application and/or data subscriptions, and engagement of website developers will follow the ADB Procurement Policy (2017, as amended from time to time) with clearance from ADB's Information Technology Department if necessary.²⁰ A certificate of equipment turnover or disposal will be submitted at the end of the TA implementation.

16. **Social media and websites.** Social media will be used to communicate relevant information with networks such as women entrepreneurs and other women-led groups. The maintenance of social media and websites will be included in the development of the project communication plan. The TA knowledge products and materials (including the gender database) will be made available on the CAREC and/or CAREC Institute websites.

IV. THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION

17. The President, acting under the authority delegated by the Board, has approved the provision of technical assistance not exceeding the equivalent of \$1,000,000 on a grant basis for Promoting Gender Equality in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Region, and hereby reports this action to the Board.

¹⁹ Terms of Reference for Consultants (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 3).

²⁰ Procurement Plan (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 3).

DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Impact the TA is Aligned with Inclusive regional economic growth in the CAREC region enhanced ^a			
Results Chain	Performance Indicators	Data Sources and Reporting Mechanisms	Risks and Critical Assumptions
Outcome Gender equality and women's economic empowerment improved in the CAREC region	a. Two new regional mechanisms made operational for knowledge and experience sharing among CAREC countries on mainstreaming gender and enhancing women's economic empowerment by 2025 (baseline 2021: 0) (OP 7.2.4) b. 90% of CAREC countries committed to implementing the newly developed regional gender action plan ^b on women's empowerment and participation in the selected CAREC operational clusters by 2025 (baseline 2021:0) (OP 2.3.2) c. 50% of newly committed CAREC projects categorized as GEN, EGM, or SGE by 2025 (baseline 2021: 35%) (OP 7.2.4)	a. Annual progress reports and CAREC website b. Annual progress reports and CAREC website c. Annual progress reports and CAREC website	A: All CAREC members and partners are committed to advancing gender equality and people-to-people contact A: All CAREC members endorse the newly developed regional gender action plan R: Insufficient translation of commitments toward gender equality and people-to-people contact into practice and operations
Outputs 1. Operational mechanisms for CAREC Gender Strategy 2030 developed	1a. RGEG established by 2022 (baseline 2021: 0) (OP 2.3.2; OP 7.2.4) ^c 1b. An online CAREC gender database developed and functional by 2023 ^d (baseline 2021: 0) (OP 2.3.2) 1c. At least one regional gender action plan on women's empowerment and participation in the selected CAREC operational clusters developed by 2023 (baseline 2021: 0) (OP 2.3.2)	1a. RGEG TOR, list of experts, annual progress reports, and CAREC website 1b. Annual progress reports and CAREC website 1c. Annual progress reports and CAREC website	A: Regional gender experts are identified from the CAREC member countries A: People in the CAREC countries are willing to utilize opportunities to interact with each other R: Limited national capacities to collect and manage gender-related data

Results Chain	Performance Indicators	Data Sources and Reporting Mechanisms	Risks and Critical Assumptions
	1d. At least one regional knowledge exchange dialogue ^e on gender mainstreaming/advancing gender equality on country-level operations per year by 2024 (baseline 2021: 0) (OP 7.2.4)	1d. Annual progress reports and CAREC website	R: Unforeseen changes in the schedule of the development and implementation of the project
2. Regional cooperation and integration projects for women's economic empowerment in the CAREC region developed	<p>2a. At least two activities piloted by 2023 (baseline 2021: 0) (OP 7.2.4)</p> <p>2b. At least two concepts for regional or national projects^f on promoting women's economic empowerment in the CAREC region identified and developed by 2024 (baseline 2021: 0) (OP 7.2.4)</p> <p>2c. At least three knowledge products^g on enhancing women's economic empowerment and advancing gender equality in the selected CAREC operational clusters developed and disseminated by 2023 (baseline 2021: 4)^h (OP 7.2.4)</p>	<p>2a. Activity reports, annual progress reports, and CAREC website</p> <p>2b. Annual progress reports and CAREC website</p> <p>2c. Annual progress reports and CAREC websites</p>	A: CAREC member countries have common challenges and bottlenecks to improving women's economic empowerment
3. CAREC People's Forum conducted	<p>3a. A virtual (and possibly in-person) information and knowledge sharing platform facilitated and functional by 2022 (baseline 2021: 0) (OP 7.2.4)ⁱ</p> <p>3b. At least 3 CAREC People's Forum dialogues facilitated by 2024 (baseline 2021: 0) (OP 7.2.4)</p> <p>3c. 80% of participants of the forum indicating commitment to developing closer people-to-people ties in the CAREC region by 2024 (baseline 2021: 0) (OP 7.2.4) (Disaggregated by sex, nationality, and affiliation)</p>	<p>3a. Annual progress reports and CAREC website</p> <p>3b. Post-forum summary or survey</p> <p>3c. Post-forum summary or survey</p>	<p>A: Both women and men of member countries are willing to interact with other stakeholders to connect people and business opportunities</p> <p>A: Travel restrictions are lifted and eased to enable in-person knowledge sharing activities</p> <p>R: Unforeseen changes in the schedule of the development and implementation of the project</p>

Key Activities with Milestones (Indicative)**1. Operational mechanisms for CAREC Gender Strategy 2030 developed**

- 1.1 Develop the RGEG TORs and an operationalization plan for the CAREC Gender Strategy 2030, including a monitoring and evaluation mechanism by Q4 2021
- 1.2 Establish the RGEG with finalized TORs and the list of experts by Q2 2022
- 1.3 Facilitate the RGEG until Q3 2024
- 1.4 Develop and launch a CAREC gender database including a user guide by Q4 2023
- 1.5 Operate the CAREC gender database with capacity development activities by Q3 2024
- 1.6 Develop a regional plan for women's economic empowerment and participation in the selected CAREC operational cluster by Q4 2023
- 1.7 Convene regional knowledge exchange dialogues by Q3 2024 (member countries, development partners, and other subregional programs will be invited)

2. Regional cooperation and integration projects for women's economic empowerment in the CAREC region developed

- 2.1 Facilitate consultations with gender experts (linked with activity numbers. 1.7 and 3.4 in this section on Key Activities with Milestones) by Q3 2024
- 2.2 Conduct studies on improving gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the selected CAREC operational cluster(s) or sector(s) and disseminate them at regional dialogues by Q4 2023
- 2.3 Pilot activities and develop two concepts of regional or national projects for women's economic empowerment and participation in the selected CAREC operational cluster by Q1 2023
- 2.4 Produce, disseminate, and discuss the knowledge products as planned by Q3 2024

3. CAREC People's Forum conducted

- 3.1 Develop a concept for the establishment of a CAREC People's Forum equipped with a virtual and/or in-person information and knowledge sharing platform by Q4 2021
- 3.2 Prepare implementation plans including activities, timeline, budget, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting plans by Q1 2022
- 3.3 Pilot activities in support of the implementation of a People's Forum. Start operating the information and knowledge sharing platform in Q2 2022
- 3.4 Convene, monitor, and report on CAREC People's Forum dialogues by Q3 2024

TA Management Activities

Engagement of international and national consultants and resource persons to support the CAREC Secretariat in implementing activities. (Q4 2021–Q3 2024)
 Internal midterm review (Q2 2023)
 TA completion report (Q1 2025)

Inputs

ADB: \$300,000 (TASF 7)
 Regional Cooperation and Integration Fund: \$700,000

Note: The governments of CAREC countries will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff, office space and supplies, data and information, and other in-kind contributions.

A = assumption, ADB = Asian Development Bank, CAREC = Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation, EGM = effective gender mainstreaming, GEN = gender equity theme, OP = operational priority, Q= quarter, R = risk, RGEG = regional gender expert group, SGE = some gender elements, TA = technical assistance, TASF = Technical Assistance Special Fund; TOR = terms of reference.

^a TA defined based on ADB. 2017. *CAREC 2030: Connecting the Region for Shared and Sustainable Development*. Manila; and ADB. 2020. *CAREC Gender Strategy 2030*. Manila.

^b Regional gender action plan will be informed by regional and cross-country policy dialogue and knowledge products, which will provide policy recommendations to promote policy reforms that remove structural impediments to women's participation in economic activities.

^c The RGEG will consist of men and women experts pursuing gender balance to ensure representation of both male and female stakeholders.

- ^d The database will be developed based on the data collected from existing sources such as the CAREC gender assessment. More country-specific data will be collected throughout the implementation of the TA, including data relevant to women's economic empowerment in CAREC's operational clusters.
- ^e Regional knowledge exchange dialogues will be linked to five operational pillars of the CAREC Gender Strategy 2030. Integration of a transformative gender agenda can be considered for the dialogues in consultation with the RGEN.
- ^f Pilot activities (2a) are small scale projects identified by RGEN that support the entry points outlined in the CAREC Gender Strategy 2030. Results and lessons learned from pilot activities will inform design of the concepts for regional or national projects. These concepts will propose interventions related to selected operational clusters of CAREC Strategy 2030 determined in consultation with the RGEN. More concepts can be considered according to the needs identified throughout the TA implementation.
- ^g A knowledge product will be developed for a selected operational cluster or a sector of the CAREC Program, which will help in designing targeted CAREC-financed projects for women's empowerment. The focus will be determined based on consultations with the RGEN.
- ^h ADB. 2021. [CAREC Gender Assessment](#). Manila; ADB. 2021. [CAREC Gender Strategy 2030](#). Manila; United Nations Development Programme. 2020. [Gender Equality in Public Administration—Snapshot of Eastern Europe and Central Asia](#). Istanbul; and ADB. 2019. [Gender in Infrastructure: Lessons from Central and West Asia](#). Manila.
- ⁱ Potential users include various actors such as national chambers of commerce, civil society organizations, small- and medium-sized enterprises, startups led by women, and country-level women's machineries. Targeted users include women entrepreneurs and women-led business groups. The platform will provide opportunities for target users to network and exchange ideas with their peers, development partners, government delegations, and other stakeholders.

Contribution to Strategy 2030 Operational Priorities:

The expected values and methodological details for all OP indicators to which this TA will contribute results are detailed in the Contribution to Strategy 2030 Operational Priorities (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 3). In addition to the OP indicators tagged in the DMF, this TA will contribute results for (i) OP 1.2.1: Business environment for entrepreneurs, companies, SMEs and inclusive business improved, (ii) OP 2.1.3: Women's entrepreneurship supported, and (iii) OP 7.3.4: Subregional and/or intersubregional DMC coordination mechanisms on regional public goods established and functioning.

Source: Asian Development Bank.

COST ESTIMATES AND FINANCING PLAN
(\$'000)

Item	Amount
A. Asian Development Bank^a	
1. Surveys	5.0
2. Goods (rental or purchase) ^b	5.0
3. Training, seminars, workshops, forum, and conferences ^c	275.0
4. Miscellaneous technical assistance administration costs ^d	5.0
5. Contingencies	10.0
Subtotal (A)	300.0
B. Regional Cooperation and Integration Fund^e	
1. Consultants	
a. Remuneration and per diem	
i. International consultants	171.0
ii. National consultants	174.9
iii. Resource persons	30.8
b. Out-of-pocket expenditures	
i. International and local travel	50.0
ii. Reports and communications	5.0
iii. Others ^f	10.0
2. Surveys	20.0
3. Goods (rental or purchase) ^b	21.4
4. Training, seminars, workshops, forum, and conferences ^c	126.9
5. Miscellaneous technical assistance administration costs ^d	50.0
6. Contingencies	40.0
Subtotal (B)	700.0
Total	1,000.0

Note: The technical assistance is estimated to cost \$1,000,000, of which contributions from the Asian Development Bank and the Regional Cooperation and Integration Fund are presented in the table. The Regional Cooperation and Integration Fund contribution will be frontloaded.

^a Financed by the Asian Development Bank's Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF 7).

^b Including purchase of equipment, supplies, software, and app/data subscription.

^c Including financing for pilot activities and ADB staff travel supporting the TA implementation activities. 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).

^d Includes translation costs and printing costs for requested printed copies of knowledge products, and Office 365 licenses, engagement of website developers, etc.

^e Established by the Asian Development Bank. Financing Partner: the Government of Japan.

^f Including purchase of equipment or software/apps, and other computer-related items.

Source: Asian Development Bank estimates.

LIST OF LINKED DOCUMENTS

<http://www.adb.org/Documents/LinkedDocs/?id=55121-001-TARreport>

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