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Knowledge and Support Technical Assistance (KSTA)

December 2022

Supporting Innovative Knowledge Solutions in South Asia

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Asian Development Bank

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB - Asian Development Bank
COVID-19 - coronavirus disease
CKP - country knowledge plan
CPS - country partnership strategy
DMC - developing member country
SARD - South Asia Department
TA - technical assistance

NOTE

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

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Development Division, SARD

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KNOWLEDGE AND SUPPORT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AT A GLANCE

		VLEDGE AND SUPPORT TECH			
1.	Basic Data		F_	Project Number	
	Project Name	Supporting Innovative Knowledge Solutions in South Asia	Department/Division	SARD/SAOD-PF	2
	Nature of Activity	Capacity Development, Policy Advice, Research and Development	Executing Agency	Asian Developm	ent Bank
	Modality	Regular			
	Country	REG (BAN, BHU, IND, MLD, NEP, SRI)			
2.	Sector	Subsector(s)	•	ADB Financii	ng (\$ million)
1	Multisector	ADB's corporate management, policy a	and strategy development		1.375
				Total	1.375
3.	Operational Priorities		Climate Change Inform		
✓	OP6: Strengthening of	governance and institutional capacity	GHG Reductions (tons pe		0
			Climate Change impact of	on the Project	Low
			ADB Financing		
			Adaptation (\$ million)		0.000
			Mitigation (\$ million)		0.000
			Cofinancing		
			Adaptation (\$ million)		0.000
			Mitigation (\$ million)		0.000
	Sustainable Develop	ment Goals	Gender Equity and Main	nstreaming	
	SDG 1.4 SDG 16.7		No gender elements (NG	SE)	1
	020		Poverty Targeting		
			General Intervention on	Poverty	1
4.	Risk Categorization	Low		·	
5.	Safeguard Categoriz	ation Safeguard Policy Statement doe	s not apply		
6.	Financing				
	Modality and Source	es		Amount (\$ million)	
	ADB				1.375
	Knowledge and Support Special Fund	pport technical assistance: Technical Ass	istance		1.375
	Cofinancing				0.000
	None				0.000
	Counterpart				0.000
	None				0.000
					1.375

I. INTRODUCTION

- 1. The knowledge and support technical assistance (TA) for Supporting Innovative Knowledge Solutions in South Asia will support formulation, implementation, and dissemination of operationally relevant knowledge solutions for development strategies in South Asia developing member countries (DMCs)—particularly strategies, policies, plans, and other knowledge products and services for a green and resilient post-coronavirus disease (COVID-19) recovery. These knowledge solutions will be carried out through in-depth analysis, stakeholder consultations, and high-level policy advice. The TA will enable the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to undertake operationally relevant analytical studies on key issues and challenges faced by South Asia DMCs, using an integrated, crosscutting, thematic, and multisector approach to development that goes beyond narrow sector approaches.
- 2. The TA is aligned with country knowledge plans (CKPs) of South Asia DMCs. Existing country partnership strategies (CPSs) of South Asia DMCs highlight the importance of knowledge solutions as an integral part of ADB operations. This TA complements TA projects administered by ADB's South Asia Department (SARD) resident missions, as it focuses on supporting multisector knowledge solutions, innovation ecosystems, the digital economy, and promotion of private sector development.¹

II. ISSUES

- 3. **Development challenges.** In South Asia, 24% of the population lives in extreme poverty and 43% lives in poverty, based on the poverty lines used in lower middle-income countries.² South Asia is prone to climate and geological disasters, which are already having adverse regional impacts and are affecting infrastructure, ecosystems, and livelihoods.³ Other development challenges include limited private sector participation in the region and a need for closer regional cooperation and integration. The COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine have added another layer of complexity. Broader inflationary pressures have been increasing, and food insecurity is becoming prevalent. Addressing these development challenges requires integrated, crosscutting, and multisector knowledge solutions.
- 4. Given the rapidly changing development landscape in South Asia and regional DMCs' strong demand for knowledge support for a green and resilient post-COVID-19 recovery, ADB needs to offer holistic and multidisciplinary solutions that go beyond the remit of a single sector or thematic group. ADB must (i) strengthen its role in catalyzing knowledge to deliver well-designed programs and evidence-based policies, (ii) integrate its knowledge work across sectors and themes and the public and private sectors, (iii) facilitate cross-disciplinary problem-solving, and (iv) advance innovation. Further, enhancing client responsiveness requires ADB to shift from a siloed to a more cohesive approach to deliver actionable knowledge to DMCs.
- 5. **ADB support for knowledge solutions.** Beginning in 2017, SARD completed several analytical studies focusing on economic corridors, monetary aspects, and vulnerability and resilience. These studies informed the formulation of policies and projects to overcome development issues in SARD DMCs. For example, analytical work on economic corridors resulted in the processing and implementation of ADB investment projects in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and

¹ The TA first appeared in the business opportunities section of ADB's website on 20 October 2022.

² R. Andres Castaneda Aguilar et al. 2022. Update to the Poverty and Inequality Platform. Global Poverty Monitoring Technical Note Series. No. 24. Washington, DC: World Bank. Pakistan is included in the poverty estimates in South Asia

³ ADB. 2021. <u>Q&A: Kenichi Yokoyama on climate resilient and sustainable infrastructure in South Asia</u>. 16 July.

Nepal.⁴ Other upstream analytical work that ADB is supporting in South Asia relates to transit-oriented development, logistics, and regional cooperation. This knowledge and support TA complements and builds on the ongoing TA for Supporting Knowledge Solutions for New Development Strategies in South Asia, ⁵ which is providing broad assistance to knowledge solutions in South Asia. This TA, on the other hand, aims to bolster support to multisector knowledge solutions, innovation ecosystems, the digital economy, and the promotion of private sector development in the South Asia region. Lessons from implementing the TA for Supporting Knowledge Solutions for New Development Strategies in South Asia have been incorporated into the design of this TA. Such lessons include (i) a need for a coordination mechanism on knowledge management within SARD; (ii) a flexible system for responding to DMCs' knowledge needs; and (iii) emphasis on building capacity of SARD staff to deliver innovative solutions and generate, capture, and disseminate operationally relevant knowledge.

- 6. **Dynamic knowledge programming.** In 2021, ADB approved the Knowledge Management Action Plan, 2021–2025, which aims to improve the impact, quality, and efficiency of ADB's knowledge using a country-differentiated approach. ⁶ Under the Knowledge Management Action Plan, ADB introduced an enhanced CKP approach that involves a rigorous process for assessing country knowledge needs and prioritizing ADB's response. ⁷ The dynamic CKP approach requires (i) regular client consultations on the impact and relevance of past knowledge solutions and new knowledge needs; (ii) better prioritization of knowledge plans to align with ADB's priority and thematic areas, as well as stronger linkages to the objectives of respective CPSs; (iii) collaborative knowledge programming employing the One ADB approach across regional and knowledge departments and sovereign and nonsovereign operations; and (iv) improved responsiveness of current methods of knowledge generation and dissemination.
- 7. **Innovation in ADB operations.** Integrating innovation in SARD knowledge solutions requires setting up mechanisms and systems and establishing an innovation ecosystem. This includes building internal capacity, fostering partnerships with technology providers, piloting accelerators, nurturing communities of practice across disciplines and between resident missions and sector divisions, and providing incentives for innovative and collaborative work. Strengthening support for reforms in SARD DMCs will also require new ways of knowledge generation to support policy-based and results-based lending. To achieve these objectives, a SARD innovation platform will be set up. The innovation platform will support upstream and pipeline knowledge activities, and the capturing of operational improvement practices. One possible broad area for knowledge support, as reflected in the CKPs for SARD DMCs, is identifying and supporting growth pillars that will enable a resilient future in South Asia, including building climate change resilience, supporting digital transformation, promoting regional cooperation, rebalancing supply chains and fostering innovation, and expanding and re-skilling the labor force.

⁴ ADB. 2017. <u>Completion Report: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal: South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation SASEC) Trade Facilitation Program</u>. Manila.

⁶ ADB. 2021. Knowledge Management Action Plan, 2021–2025: Knowledge for a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Asia and the Pacific. Manila.

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⁵ ADB. 2018. <u>Technical Assistance for Supporting Knowledge Solutions for New Development Strategies in South Asia</u>. Manila (TA 9586-REG).

The CKP is an appendix to the CPS that outlines the country's knowledge needs and outcomes during the CPS period. While the knowledge outcomes remain constant for the duration of the CPS, under the enhanced CKP, respective outputs can be revised and updated annually as part of the indicative country pipeline and monitoring report process. This annual update ensures that the CKP is dynamic to meet any emerging and just-in-time knowledge needs from the DMCs within the CPS period. ADB. 2022. Country Knowledge Plan Process Manual: Developing a Dynamic Country Knowledge Plan for ADB Developing Member Countries. Manila.

III. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A. Impact and Outcome

8. The TA is aligned with the following impact: green and resilient post-COVID-19 recovery and inclusive economic growth in SARD DMCs improved and sustained. The TA will have the following outcome: knowledge solutions for green, resilient, and inclusive development adopted by SARD DMCs. The outcome supports ADB's ability to respond quickly to the client countries' demand for knowledge support, identify crucial and immediate investment requirements, and reflect these priorities in ADB lending operations that can contribute to the proposed development impact. These TA undertakings will support resilient and inclusive post-COVID-19 recovery, as well as equip DMCs to face other challenges such as impacts of climate change on the region and consequences of global food inflation and food insecurity.

B. Outputs, Methods, and Activities

- Output 1: Integrated and multidisciplinary approach for strengthening country 9. knowledge programming delivered. This TA will support the CKP and annual indicative country pipeline and monitoring processes across SARD DMCs to facilitate new ways of identifying. designing, and delivering innovative projects. Examples include engaging in future-oriented policy dialogue through futures thinking and foresight workshops that will help clients anticipate future trends better.¹⁰ The TA will support resident mission-led knowledge teams, stronger prioritization in CKPs, and additional One ADB initiatives to support integration of sovereign and nonsovereign operations in South Asia. The TA will also support thematic and analytical studies and dialogue with SARD DMCs about knowledge needs, and will capture tacit operational knowledge (i.e., what has and has not worked) and share this knowledge within ADB and with clients. The TA will strengthen knowledge management and innovation in SARD operations to deliver tailored knowledge and innovative solutions for SARD DMCs and will help enhance DMCs' capacity to address complex development challenges. Lessons identified during TA preparation include the need to (i) ensure a balance between supply- and demand-driven knowledge using the futures thinking and foresight approach; (ii) foster more collaborative relationships among various stakeholders using systems thinking and building communities of practice; (iii) anchor innovation in specific development challenges in DMCs; and (iv) scale up innovative projects, moving from one-off interventions to replication for greater development impact. Results will be captured and disseminated through knowledge products such as policy briefs, working papers, and technical reports, as well as blogs, infographics, videos, and other publications.
- 10. Output 2: Regional and country-level innovative knowledge solutions relating to a digital economy supported. This output will support the setting up of a SARD knowledge innovation hub¹¹ to enable ADB, SARD DMCs, and partners to design innovative solutions to address DMCs' knowledge needs, particularly related to the digital economy. In setting up the hub, the TA will draw from lessons, insights, and experiences of existing hubs such as ADB's

⁹ The design and monitoring framework is in Appendix 1.

⁸ Defined by TA.

¹⁰ Futures thinking (the theory and methods) and foresight (the practical application) are a set of approaches and tools designed to help their users identify emerging issues, negotiate uncertainties, articulate scenarios, develop a common vision of a desired future through wide participation, introduce innovation, and design robust policies and strategies. ADB. 2020. Futures thinking in Asia and the Pacific. Manila.

¹¹ The SARD knowledge and innovation hub aims to support upstream and pipeline knowledge activities, as well as ongoing projects. It aims to develop cross-sector and integrated knowledge solutions, and to pilot innovation incubators. The TA can draw lessons from the existing ADB Innovation Hub.

Innovation Hub, ¹² the Southeast Asia Development Solutions Knowledge and Innovation Platform, ¹³ and the ADB–People's Republic of China Regional Knowledge Sharing Initiative. ¹⁴ The SARD hub will leverage global and regional development knowledge, insights, and technical expertise to maximize the impact of ADB-financed projects. Activities will include peer-to-peer learning events, study tours, technical deep dives, and operational support in the form of customized technical and advisory support and publications. ¹⁵ The TA will support pilots and technology innovation challenges to build DMC capacity to address specific development challenges through partnerships with technology and data providers. To help nurture innovation ecosystems in SARD DMCs, the TA will support pilot innovation incubators or accelerators. Partnerships with development partners, universities, think tanks, the private sector, and regional organizations will be explored to enhance strategic knowledge support for DMCs.

11. **Output 3**: **Knowledge sharing, dissemination, and learning events enhanced.** The TA will support (i) preparation, publication, and dissemination of knowledge products and solutions; (ii) hosting of knowledge events such as webinars, forums and consultation workshops; and (iii) capturing and dissemination of operational improvement practices consisting of internal guides, lessons, knowledge-sharing sessions, and peer learning discussions. The TA will build the capacity of SARD staff to generate, capture, and disseminate knowledge and promote interregional knowledge sharing. External publications will be printed for a specific group of requestors on demand.

C. Cost and Financing

- 12. The TA financing amount is \$1,375,000, which will be financed on a grant basis by ADB's Technical Assistance Special Fund (\$1,000,000 from TASF 7 and \$375,000 from TASF-other sources). The key expenditure items are listed in Appendix 2.
- 13. The governments will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff, and other in-kind contributions.

D. Implementation Arrangements

- 14. ADB will administer the TA. SARD will select, supervise, and evaluate consultants; procure goods; organize workshops; and provide staff to act as resource persons in the workshops.
- 15. SARD has a knowledge network comprising more than 40 knowledge focals from SARD resident missions and sector divisions. The TA will be implemented in consultation with the SARD knowledge network and resident mission-led knowledge teams.
- 16. Implementation arrangements are summarized in the table.

¹² Administered by the Knowledge Advisory Services Center of ADB's Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department.

¹³ ADB. Southeast Asia Development Solutions. https://seads.adb.org/.

¹⁴ ADB-People's Republic of China Regional Knowledge Sharing Initiative. https://rksi.adb.org.

¹⁵ Study tours will be conducted in ADB member countries only.

Implementation Arrangements

Aspects	Arrangements			
Indicative implementation period	January 2023–December 2025			
Executing agency	ADB through its South Asia	a Department		
Consultants	To be selected and engage	ed by ADB		
	Firm: Simplified consultants' qualifications	Integrated solutions	\$200,000	
	selection	Knowledge management	\$100,000	
		Digital transformation	\$200,000	
	Individual: Framework agreement or individual selection	International expertise (24 person-months)	\$376,000	
	Individual: Framework agreement or individual selection	National expertise (66 person- months)	\$171,000	
Procurement	Goods and services to be procured by ADB will follow the ADB Procurement Policy (2017, as amended from time to time).			
Disbursement	Disbursement of TA resources will follow ADB's <i>Technical Assistable Disbursement Handbook</i> (2020, as amended from time to time)			
Asset turnover or disposal arrangement upon TA completion	Assets such as information technology-related equipment will be turned over to beneficiary developing member countries upon TA completion.			

ADB = Asian Development Bank, TA = technical assistance.

Source: ADB estimates.

- 17. **Consulting services.** ADB will engage consultants following the ADB Procurement Policy (2017, as amended from time to time) and its associated staff instructions. ¹⁶ Simplified consultants' qualifications selection will be used if consulting services are engaged through a firm. Experts will be contracted via consulting firms or as individuals, depending on the scope and requirements of the planned activities. Output-based and/or lump-sum contracts will also be considered, and time-based contracts will be used as appropriate.
- 18. **ADB's procurement.** Procurement will follow the ADB Procurement Policy and Procurement Regulations for ADB Borrowers (2017, as amended from time to time).
- 19. **Websites and social media.** SARD, in coordination with ADB's Department of Communications and Information Technology Department, will ensure that the publications are made available on ADB's external website and on the ADB intranet. Reports will be uploaded to ADB.org and partner organization websites, and will be disseminated using the full range of ADB and partner organization social media and outreach resources, and through respective DMC ministry websites as appropriate.

IV. THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION

20. The President, acting under the authority delegated by the Board, has approved the provision of technical assistance not exceeding the equivalent of \$1,375,000 on a grant basis for Supporting Innovative Knowledge Solutions in South Asia, and hereby reports this action to the Board.

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

DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Impact the TA is Aligned with
Green and resilient post-coronavirus disease (COVID-19) recovery and inclusive economic growth in SARD DMCs improved and sustained^a

Results Chain	Performance Indicators	Data Sources and Reporting Mechanisms	Risks and Critical Assumptions
Outcome Knowledge solutions for green, resilient, and inclusive development adopted by SARD DMCs	By 2026: a. At least five innovative approaches or solutions supporting green, resilient, and inclusive development included in project design (2022 baseline: Not applicable) (OP 6.1.2)	a. Project concept papers, ICPM, or country knowledge plan	R: Unanticipated global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and other global events might change government priorities
	b. Upstream analytical support provided for at least two private sector investment opportunities (2021 baseline: 0) (OP 6.1.2)	b. Project concept papers, ICPM, or country knowledge plan	
Outputs 1. Integrated and multidisciplinary approach for strengthening country knowledge programming	By end of 2025: 1a. At least 10 thematic studies on SARD priority areas completed (2022 baseline: Not applicable)	1a. Consultants' reports	R: Incomplete or unavailable data may delay finalization of analytical studies
delivered	1b. At least three analytical assessments on priority topics prepared (2022 baseline: Not applicable)	1b. Consultants' reports	
2. Regional and country-level innovative knowledge solutions relating to a digital economy supported	2a. At least 100 government staff from three DMCs, at least 30% of them women, reported increased knowledge of emerging digital economy and digital transformation issues (2022 baseline: Not applicable) (OP 6.1.1)	2a-2b. Evaluation reports of training workshops, TA reports	
	2b. At least 80% of 50 government officials from three DMCs reported increased knowledge of futures thinking and foresight analysis (2022 baseline: Not applicable) (OP 6.1.1)		
3. Knowledge sharing,	3a. At least 10 knowledge products supporting pipeline and ongoing projects	3a. TA reports, knowledge products	

Results Chain	Performance Indicators	Data Sources and Reporting Mechanisms	Risks and Critical Assumptions
dissemination, and learning events enhanced	developed and disseminated (2022 baseline: Not applicable)		

Key Activities with Milestones

- 1. Integrated and multidisciplinary approach for strengthening country knowledge programming delivered
- 1.1 Set up resident mission-led country knowledge teams involving One ADB initiatives, and support the ICPM process, including dynamic country knowledge programming and knowledge products and services (Q1–Q3 2023).
- 1.2 Conduct futures thinking and foresight workshops involving SARD DMCs (Q2–Q3 2023).
- 1.3 Strengthen resident missions' knowledge management capacity (Q2 2023–Q4 2025).
- 1.4 Conduct upstream analytics and consultation workshops, and develop sector and resident mission knowledge road maps with relevant work units (Q2 2023–Q4 2025).
- 1.5 Identify cross-sector approaches and conduct webinars, conferences, and other knowledge events (Q2 2023–Q4 2025).
- 1.6 Explore new and foster existing partnerships (Q2 2023–Q3 2025).

2. Regional and country-level innovative knowledge solutions relating to digital economy supported

- 2.1 Set up a SARD innovation platform and identify priority areas for innovation and knowledge sharing (Q2–Q3 2023).
- 2.2 Organize peer-to-peer learning events, study tours, technical deep dives (training programs in selected topics), and operational support in the form of customized technical and advisory support (Q2 2023–Q4 2025).
- 2.3 Prepare and disseminate publications reflecting knowledge generated by SARD (Q2 2023–Q4 2025).
- 2.4 Support pilots and technology innovation challenges (Q2 2023–Q4 2025).
- 2.5 Pilot innovation incubators or accelerators in priority areas (Q2 2023–Q4 2024).
- 2.6 Explore new and foster existing partnerships with technology providers for incubators and accelerators (Q2 2023–Q4 2024).
- 2.7 Support the design of innovative projects using the technology innovation challenge approach (Q2 2023–Q4 2024).

3. Knowledge sharing, dissemination, and learning events enhanced

- 3.1 Develop and disseminate knowledge products on innovation through policy briefs, working papers, feature articles, blogs, infographics, and videos (Q2 2023–Q4 2025).
- 3.2 Build capacity of SARD staff to conduct knowledge events, and prepare succinct knowledge pieces such as blogs, op-eds, and videos (Q2 2023–Q4 2025).
- 3.3 Strengthen staff capacity to identify lessons learned and prepare case studies (including replication strategies) for operational improvement purposes (Q2 2023–Q4 2025).

TA Management Activities

Includes reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and hiring consultants (Q1 2023–Q4 2025).

Inputs

ADB: \$1.375 million (Technical Assistance Special Fund: \$1 million from TASF 7 and \$375,000 from TASF-other sources)

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

ADB = Asian Development Bank, COVID-19 = coronavirus disease, DMC = developing member country, ICPM = indicative country pipeline and monitoring report, OP = operational priority, Q = quarter, R = risk, SARD = South Asia Department, TA = technical assistance.

^a Defined by TA.

8

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 Contribution to Strategy 2030 Operational Priorities (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 3). Source: ADB.

COST ESTIMATES AND FINANCING PLAN

(\$'000)

Item	Amount		
Asian Development Bank ^a			
1. Consultants			
a. Remuneration and per diem			
i. International consultants	876.0		
ii. National consultants	209.0		
b. Out-of-pocket expenditures			
i. International and local travel	30.0		
Printed external publications	5.0		
3. Surveys	5.0		
4. Goods (rental or purchase) ^b 5.0			
5. Training, seminars, workshops, forum, and conferences			
a. Facilitators	20.0		
b. Travel cost of Asian Development Bank staff acting as a resource person	20.0		
c. Venue rental and related facilities	20.0		
d. Participants ^c	100.0		
e. Representation ^d	5.0		
6. Miscellaneous technical assistance administration costs ^e	10.0		
7. Contingencies	70.0		
Total	1,375.0		

Note: The technical assistance (TA) is estimated to cost \$1,375,000, of which contributions from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) are presented in the table. The governments will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff and other in-kind contributions.

- ^a Financed by ADB's Technical Assistance Special Fund (\$1,000,000 from TASF 7 and \$375,000 from TASF-other sources).
- b Includes virtual and augmented reality goggles and headsets and other information technology equipment, as well as Office 365 licenses and software purchases. Assets such as information technology-related equipment will be turned over to beneficiary developing member countries (DMCs) upon TA completion.
- c This line item includes airfare, per diems, local transport, and special allowances of DMC officials and representatives participating in TA activities.
- ^d This line item includes ADB-organized meals for DMC officials and representatives participating in TA activities.
- Includes translation, interpretation, subscription to web services, and other administration costs. Source: ADB estimates.

LIST OF LINKED DOCUMENTS
http://www.adb.org/Documents/LinkedDocs/?id=56269-001-TAReport

- 1. Terms of Reference for Consultants
- 2. Contribution to Strategy 2030 Operational Priorities