



Regional: Advancing Artificial Intelligence Readiness through Infrastructure, Solutions, and Enabling Skills (AI RISE)

Project Name

Advancing Artificial Intelligence Readiness through Infrastructure, Solutions, and Enabling Skills (AI RISE)

Project Number

60315-001

Country / Economy

- Regional
- Azerbaijan
- Bangladesh
- Indonesia
- Kazakhstan
- Mongolia
- Nepal
- Pakistan
- Philippines
- Papua New Guinea
- Tajikistan
- Uzbekistan
- Viet Nam

Project Status

Proposed

Project Type / Modality of Assistance

- Technical Assistance

Source of Funding / Amount

Sustainable Development Goals

- SDG 9.b

Sector / Subsector

- Multisector /

Gender

Some gender elements

Description

The technical assistance (TA) aims to support developing member countries (DMCs) to strengthen AI-ready infrastructure, accelerate adoption of high-impact AI solutions, and build institutional capabilities needed for responsible, scalable, and sustainable AI-enabled development. The TA will support DMCs and ADB operations through an integrated approach spanning three pillars: (i) AI-ready digital infrastructure and data ecosystem diagnostics and investment planning; (ii) design and piloting of applied AI solutions embedded within ADB-supported digital platforms and sector operations; and (iii) institutional capacity building and regional knowledge exchange to strengthen implementation readiness and ecosystem development. Collectively, these activities are intended to facilitate the development of a pipeline of AI-enabled sovereign and nonsovereign investments across sectors by translating identified opportunities and validated use cases into investment-ready concepts and projects.

Project Rationale and Linkage to Country/Regional Strategy

Despite rapid progress in digital transformation across Asia and the Pacific, many DMCs still face significant barriers to adopting AI at scale. Key constraints include gaps in compute and cloud infrastructure, fragmented data ecosystems, limited interoperability, evolving governance and cybersecurity frameworks, and shortages in institutional capacity and digital skills needed to implement AI effectively and responsibly.

The proposed TA will support and anchor on the activities of the Center for AI Innovation and Development (CAID), ADB's regional platform for advancing responsible and inclusive AI adoption across DMCs through technical advisory, institutional capacity building, and deployment of high-impact AI solutions across sectors. The TA will also contribute to the objectives of the Digital Sector Office's flagship initiative, the Asia Pacific Digital Highway, which seeks to strengthen the region's foundational digital infrastructure through

enhanced connectivity, cloud and data center ecosystems, and interoperable digital platforms that can support AI adoption.

Building on these initiatives, the TA will help DMCs address challenges in responsible and sustainable AI adoption through an integrated approach that combines diagnostics, practical pilots, and ecosystem strengthening. The proposed TA responds to growing demand from DMCs for support in AI infrastructure planning, applied AI adoption, and institutional readiness, while aligning with ADB's Operational Approach for Digital Transformation 2026/2030 (forthcoming) and Strategy 2030 priorities.

Gender equality and inclusion will be integrated throughout the TA by promoting equitable access to digital infrastructure and skills, supporting inclusive AI design, and expanding opportunities for women and underserved groups to participate in emerging AI ecosystems.

Without addressing these foundational gaps, AI initiatives risk remaining fragmented, difficult to scale, and potentially widening existing digital divides. Experience across ADB operations shows that successful AI adoption depends not only on innovative use cases, but also on strong enabling foundations, trusted data systems, resilient digital infrastructure, sound governance frameworks, and institutions with the capacity to manage implementation and oversight.

The TA is aligned with the following impact: Responsible and inclusive AI-enabled digital transformation across DMCs strengthened. This will be achieved by advancing AI-ready infrastructure, strengthening data ecosystems and governance foundations, and accelerating deployment of practical AI applications that improve public service delivery and productivity. It will also strengthen institutional capacity for inclusive and responsible AI adoption.

ADB Value Added

The TA positions AI readiness as a foundational development agenda that links digital infrastructure (e.g., compute, cloud, and data ecosystems), applied solutions, and institutional capacity into an integrated pathway for sustainable AI adoption. The TA complements ongoing ADB digital transformation initiatives by translating upstream diagnostics into investable opportunities, supporting practical pilots embedded in sovereign operations, and generating shared methodologies, standards, and knowledge products that can be replicated across DMCs. The complexity of AI infrastructure planning, responsible AI governance, and ecosystem development, combined with the need for convening power and rapid access to specialized expertise, makes ADB execution essential.

Impact

Outcome

Outputs

Geographical Location

Regional

Poverty Reduction and Inclusion

Poverty Reduction and Inclusion Classification

Summary Poverty and Social Analysis

Indirect effect on poor and vulnerable groups. The DMF has no design features aimed to benefit these groups.

Environment and Social Requirements

Risk Classification

Applicable Environment and Social Standards

Summary of Environmental and Social Aspects

Project Participation and Engagement

During Project Design

During Project Implementation

Contact

Responsible ADB Officer

Kong, Byeongjo

Responsible ADB Department

Sectors Department 2

Responsible ADB Division

Timetable

Concept Clearance
02 Jul 2026
Fact Finding
09 Jun 2026 to 09 Jun 2026
MRM
-
Approval
-
Last Review Mission
-
Last PDS Update
02 Jul 2026

Funding

Project Page	https://www.adb.org/projects/60315-001/main
Request for Information	http://www.adb.org/forms/request-information-form?subject=60315-001
Date Generated	04 August 2026

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