



Technical Assistance Report

Project Number: 51012-004
Transaction Technical Assistance (TRTA)
April 2019

Republic of Uzbekistan: Preparing the Skills Development for a Modern Economy Project

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Asian Development Bank

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(as of 1 April 2019)

Currency unit	–	sum (SUM)
SUM1.00	=	\$0.000119
\$1.00	=	SUM8,389.97

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
CBT	–	competency-based training
COBP	–	Country Operations Business Plan
IFS	–	investment feasibility study
MOELR	–	Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations
MOHSSE	–	Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education
PPP	–	Public-private partnership
PTC	–	professional training center
TRTA	–	transaction technical assistance
TVET	–	technical and vocational education and training
TVETC	–	technical and vocational education and training college

NOTES

- (i) The fiscal year of the Government of Uzbekistan ends on 31 December.
- (ii) In this report, "\$" refers to United States dollars.

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CONTENTS

	Page
TRANSACTION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AT A GLANCE	
I. THE ENSUING PROJECT	1
II. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	1
A. Justification	1
B. Outputs and Activities	1
C. Cost and Financing	2
D. Implementation Arrangements	3
E. Governance	4
APPENDIXES	
1. Cost Estimates and Financing Plan	5
2. List of Linked Documents	6
3. Terms of Rererence for Consultants	7

TRANSACTION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AT A GLANCE

TRANSACTION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AT A GLANCE			
1. Basic Data		Project Number: 51012-004	
Project Name	Preparing the Skills Development for a Modern Economy Project	Department/Division	CWRD/CWSS
Nature of Activity	Project Preparation	Executing Agency	Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations
Modality	Regular		
Country	Uzbekistan		
2. Sector		ADB Financing (\$ million)	
✓ Education	Technical and vocational education and training		0.50
		Total	0.50
3. Strategic Agenda		Subcomponents	
Inclusive economic growth (IEG)	Pillar 2: Access to economic opportunities, including jobs, made more inclusive Pillar 3: Extreme deprivation prevented and effects of shocks reduced (Social Protection)	Climate Change Information	
		Climate Change impact on the Project Low	
4. Drivers of Change		Components	
Governance and capacity development (GCD)	Institutional development Organizational development	Gender Equity and Mainstreaming	
Knowledge solutions (KNS)	Application and use of new knowledge solutions in key operational areas Knowledge sharing activities	Gender equity (GEN) ✓	
5. Poverty and SDG Targeting		Location Impact	
Geographic Targeting	No	Nation-wide High	
Household Targeting	No		
SDG Targeting	Yes		
SDG Goals	SDG4, SDG8, SDG10		
6. Risk Categorization		Low	
7. Safeguard Categorization		Safeguard Policy Statement does not apply	
8. Financing			
Modality and Sources		Amount (\$ million)	
ADB		0.50	
Transaction technical assistance: Technical Assistance Special Fund		0.50	
Cofinancing		0.00	
None		0.00	
Counterpart		0.00	
None		0.00	
Total		0.50	
Currency of ADB Financing: USD			

I. THE ENSUING PROJECT

1. The proposed project will aim at increasing employment of the population, particularly for youth. The project will provide investment finance for market-driven skills to be learned by students and jobseekers through (i) improving employment and workforce development services; (ii) enhancing quality and relevance of skills development; and (iii) strengthening sector governance and management. The project is estimated to cost \$137 million. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will finance \$100 million from its ordinary capital resources (concessional loan), the European Union will cofinance the proposed project with a \$17 million grant, and the Government of Uzbekistan will provide \$20 million in counterpart financing. The ensuing loan is listed in the Country Operations Business Plan (COBP, 2019–2021) and will be carried over in the forthcoming COBP (2020–2022).¹ The Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations (MOELR) is proposed as the executing agency, and the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education (MOHSSE) as the implementing agency for the ensuing project.

II. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A. Justification

2. The transaction technical assistance (TRTA)² will help the government prepare the Skills Development for a Modern Economy Project. Particularly, the TRTA will support (i) preparing the investment feasibility study (IFS), (ii) increasing awareness of key implementing entities on international good practices in competency-based training (CBT) and workforce development, and (iii) loan processing and implementation startup.

B. Outputs and Activities

3. **Output 1: The investment feasibility study prepared.** The IFS will cover, but not be limited to, the following:³ (i) assessment of training institutions' need for equipment upgrades under the priority economic sectors covered by the project and proposal for a list of specifications of the equipment and training tools to be procured by the project; (ii) review of the curriculum and teaching-learning materials and proposal for introducing CBT and also e-materials; (iii) review of the in-service teacher training program in the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system, and proposal for revision to update pedagogy, assessment, and practical training in line with the CBT requirement and for e-training platform; (iv) assessment of the industrial partners and proposal for active industrial collaboration in skills development from defining competency requirements and performing in assessment, to providing workplace training and even placement opportunities; (v) assessment of private sector training providers or non-government organizations and proposal for engaging non-public entities in providing training and/or entrepreneurship development services for disadvantaged people, especially those in remote areas; (vi) review of the assessment and certification process and proposal for establishing an autonomous assessment and certification agency fitting in the CBT framework;

¹ ADB. 2018. *Country Operations Business Plan: Uzbekistan, 2019–2021*. Manila.

² The TA first appeared in the business opportunities section of ADB's website on 15 March 2019.

³ The IFS will also cover (a) the assessment of the needs for upgrading civil works of the selected training institutions and the public employment service centers and the proposal for the upgrades; (b) analysis for the key professions to be prioritized under the priority economic sectors to be covered by the project for developing national occupations standards and guiding competency requirements; (c) procurement assessment of the proposed executing agency and implementing agency and the prescription of a procurement plan with details for the first 18 months; (d) gender analysis and proposal for gender action plan. These will be supported by the ADB's ongoing TA9256. ADB. 2016. *Technical Assistance for Skills Strategies for Industrial Modernization and Inclusive Growth (Uzbekistan)*. Manila.

(vii) review of the job description of the public employment service (PES) centers and proposal for updates and training to strengthen the capacity of PES centers in job-matching, career guidance, and referral for reskilling of unemployed jobseekers; (viii) assessment of capacity of National Scientific Center for Employment and Labor Protection and proposal for capacity improvement in monitoring, analyzing and reporting on labor market dynamics; (ix) proposal of strengthening collaboration between PES centers and training institutions for delivering market-oriented training programs; (x) financial management assessment of the proposed executing agency and implementing agency for the project; (xi) economic and financial analysis of the project; and (xii) safeguards assessment (environmental and social) and other project-specific due diligence.

4. The consultants will deliver the following reports: (i) inception report; (ii) draft final report; and (iii) final report.

5. **Output 2: Key implementation entities' awareness of international good practices on competency-based training and workforce development increased.** A short international study tour will be organized for selected government officials and representatives of training institutions, public employment service centers and assessment and certification agency(ies). The study tour aims to share international good practices in TVET and workforce development, which will complement the knowledge and experience acquired by the key entities from other sources supported by other development partners.⁴ The key entities' increased awareness of international good practices will result in more informed decision-making on the design of the project.⁵

6. **Output 3: Loan processing and implementation startup assisted.** Additional consultants and/or additional inputs by consultants mentioned under output 1 may be required for the design and startup activities to continue and undertake the following tasks: (i) address critical technical gaps including collaborating with relevant government agencies in the areas of education quality assurance and sectoral data system for monitoring and reporting, harmonizing the technical and/or financial inputs from key stakeholders relevant to the priority economic sectors covered by the project, and detailing the implementation arrangements of the project, among others during the loan processing stage; (ii) assist with the revisions and comments by the government agencies on the IFS report as a technical back-up; and (iii) provide implementation startup support. These activities are to ensure that (i) the IFS report is harmonized and technically consistent with government requirements, and (ii) loan disbursement is expedited. The inputs for these consultants and possible additional experts to carry out the above-mentioned tasks will be determined by the loan fact-finding mission to ensure practical and cost-effective use of resources.

C. Cost and Financing

7. The TRTA is estimated to cost \$550,000, of which \$500,000 is financed on a grant basis by ADB's Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF 6). Key expenditure items are listed in Appendix 1.

⁴ For example, Korean International Cooperation Agency and Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ, German Agency for International Cooperation) are active in skills development and TVET in the country and have taken efforts in introducing good experiences from Korea and Germany. Singapore is identified as the destination for the study tour to be financed by the TRTA, with proposed institutions including Nanyang Polytechnic International, Institute of Technical Education, and Workforce Singapore Agency.

⁵ The related areas covered by the study tour are proposed as CBT training (such as curriculum and assessment), teacher development, entrepreneurship development, and labor market and public employment services (such as labor market monitoring, job matching and career guidance services).

8. The government will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff, office accommodation, data and information access, facilitation of liaison with stakeholders during project preparation and other in-kind contributions. The government was informed that approval of the TRTA does not commit ADB to finance any ensuing project.

D. Implementation Arrangements

9. ADB will administer the TRTA. MOELR will be the executing agency for the TRTA. ADB's Social Sector Division of the Central and West Asia Department will act as the focal point and coordinator of consulting inputs and activities. The proposed TRTA will be implemented for 12 months, from April 2019 to April 2020. The implementation arrangements are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Implementation Arrangements

Aspects	Arrangements		
Indicative implementation period	April 2019 – April 2020		
Executing agency	Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations		
Implementing agency	Social Sector Division of Central and West Asia Department		
Consultants	To be selected and engaged by ADB		
	ICS	International 24 person-months, national 34 person-months	\$454,500
Disbursement	The TRTA resources will be disbursed following ADB's <i>Technical Assistance Disbursement Handbook</i> (2010, as amended from time to time).		

ADB = Asian Development Bank, ICS = individual consultant selection, TRTA = transaction technical assistance.
Sources: Asian Development Bank.

10. **Consulting services.** The TRTA will require consulting services of 21 individual consultants to prepare and finalize the IFS and support loan processing (outputs 1 and 3) in coordination with the consultants hired under TA9256: (i) equipment specialists (international and national); (ii) industrial sector specialists (4 nationals); (iii) competency-based training specialists (international and national); (iv) teacher development specialists (international and national); (v) education technology specialist (international); (vi) entrepreneurship development specialist (international); (vii) public-private partnership specialist (international); (viii) monitoring and evaluation specialists (international and national); (ix) environmental safeguard specialists (international and national); (x) social safeguard specialists (international and national); (xi) financial management specialists (international and national); (xii) costing specialist (international); (xiii) economist (national) and (ix) project implementation specialist (national). An international study tour will be organized for the selected beneficiaries with well-established skills development institute(s) and workforce development entity(ies) under output 2.⁶ Some of the consultants in output 1 and additional expertise such as from proposed project implementation specialist (national) will be required for implementation startup support (output 3).⁷

11. The consultants hired under the TRTA will work in cooperation with the consultants under the ongoing TA9256 (see footnote 3). The international TVET specialist / team leader of the TA9256 will also serve as the team leader for the consultants hired under the TRTA. The project management specialist of the TA9256 will also coordinate the TRTA consultants during their dialogues and consultations with the government and other key stakeholders, and also coordinate

⁶ See footnote 4 about the targeted international institutions.

⁷ Additional resources may be requested for the TRTA to support the project implementation startup, if needed.

the inputs in fiduciary due diligence aspects. TRTA consultants on CBT, industrial collaboration, and entrepreneurship development will also work closely with the TA9256 consultants on labor market, to support the project preparation in the areas of bridging the PES with the skills development services.

12. ADB will engage consultants following the ADB Procurement Policy (2017, as amended from time to time) and its associated project administration instructions and/or staff instructions.⁸ The indicative expertise and corresponding person-months are in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Indicative Consulting Services Requirement

Positions	International (person-months)	National (person-months)
1. Output 1 – The investment feasibility study prepared^a		
1.1 Equipment specialist	3	3
1.2 Industrial sector specialists (four individuals)		8
1.3 Competency-based training specialist	4	4
1.4 Teacher development specialist	3	3
1.5 Education technology specialist	2	
1.6 Entrepreneurship development specialist	2	
1.7 Public-private-partnership specialist	2	
1.8 Monitoring and evaluation specialist	3	3
1.10 Environmental safeguard specialist	1	3
1.11 Social safeguard specialist	0.5	2
1.12 Financial management specialist	1.5	3
1.13 Costing specialist	2	
1.14 Economist		2
2. Output 2 - Key implementation entities' awareness of international good practices on competency-based training and workforce development increased		
2.1 An international study tour organized ^b	/	/
3. Output 3 - Loan processing and implementation startup assisted		
3.1 Project implementation specialist		3

^a The international TVET specialist/team leader of the consultant team under TA9256 will serve as also the team leader for coordinating the TRTA consultants. TA9256 also provides a labor economist (international), a TVET and labor specialist (national), civil works specialists (international and national), procurement specialists (international and national), a gender specialist (national), and a project management specialist (international).

^b The planned expenses will mainly comprise the remuneration for the study tour facilitator, introduction materials, food and tokens, and trainee expenses including per-diem, flights, local travel costs, communication costs, and insurance, etc. The international study tour will cover 4 working days for 5 beneficiaries.

Source: Asian Development Bank.

E. Governance

13. The TRTA will help conduct the due diligence for the ensuing project including the financial management assessment, financial evaluation, economic and financial analysis, risk assessment and risk management plan.⁹ The TRTA will undertake safeguard screening and categorization results, assess the EA capacity and prepare safeguard documents on environment, involuntary resettlement and indigenous peoples. The due diligence will be conducted in accordance with the respective ADB guidelines and requirements.

⁸ Terms of Reference for Consultants (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2).

⁹ Procurement capacity assessment will be conducted under the support by TA9256 (see footnote 3).

COST ESTIMATES AND FINANCING PLAN

(\$'000)

Item	Amount
Asian Development Bank^a	
1. Consultants	
a. Remuneration and per diem	
i. International consultants	296.8
ii. National consultants	95.0
b. Out-of-pocket expenditures	
i. International and local travel	56.2
ii. Surveys	4.5
iii. Reports and communications	2.0
2. Training, seminars, and conferences	
a. Facilitators	5.0
b. Venue rental and related facilities	2.0
c. Participants	11.5
d. Representation	2.0
3. Contingencies	25.0
Total	500.0

Note: The technical assistance (TA) is estimated to cost \$550,000, of which contributions from the Asian Development Bank are presented in the table. The government will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff, office space, data and information access, facilitation of liaisons with stakeholders and other in-kind contributions. The value of the government contribution is estimated to account for \$50,000 of the total TA cost.

^a Financed by the Asian Development Bank's Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF 6).

Source: Asian Development Bank estimates.

LIST OF LINKED DOCUMENTS

<http://www.adb.org/Documents/LinkedDocs/?id=51012-004-TARreport>

1. Terms of Reference for Consultants

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANTS

A. Output 1 – The Investment Feasibility Study Prepared

1. The investment feasibility study (IFS) will be undertaken by the following consultants:
 - Under the ongoing TA9256: a consulting firm comprised of the international technical and vocational education and training (TVET) specialist / team leader, the international labor specialist, the international project management specialist, the national TVET and labor specialist, the civil works specialists (international and national), the procurement consultants (international and national), and the gender consultant (national); and
 - Under the proposed Transaction Technical Assistance (TRTA): the proposed individual consultants including equipment specialists (international and national), industrial sector specialists (national), competency-based training (CBT) specialists (international and national), teacher development specialists (international and national), education technology specialist (international), entrepreneurship development specialist (international), public-private partnership specialist (PPP, international), monitoring and evaluation specialists (international and national), financial management specialists (international and national), environmental safeguard specialists (international and national), social safeguard specialists (international and national), costing specialist (international or national), and economist (national).
2. 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. The terms of reference for individual consultants to be engaged under the proposed TRTA are detailed hereunder.
3. **Equipment specialists** (international, 3 person-months; national, 3 person-months): The international equipment specialist will provide standards and prototype specifications of the equipment that align with the international industrial practices. The national consultant, in cooperation with industrial sector specialists, will assess 5 representative professional training centers and 14 representative TVET colleges (TVETCs) in different regions on their equipment status (e.g., mechanics, electronics, digital, etc.). The assessment will be used to develop the plan for equipment upgradation for these centers and colleges, including the prescription of specifications and quantities for the needed equipment in each priority trade.
4. **Industrial sector specialists** (4 nationals, 2 person-months each – from the project's 4 priority sectors): The consultants will cooperate with the equipment specialists to develop the equipment upgradation plan for the representative centers and colleges. They will also support the curriculum specialists in linking with the industrial needs and requirements and support the PPP specialist in consulting with chamber of commerce and key industrial companies to develop the prototype of industrial partnership arrangement, covering the elements including inputs to curriculum, training material, students and teachers training and assessment, and job placement. They will support the TVET specialists and assessment and certification specialists in proposing the setup of sector skills councils, and in proposing the industrial cooperation in improving assessment and certification capacity.
5. **CBT specialists** (international, 4 person-months; national, 4 person-months): The CBT specialists will review the existing curricula in the priority sectors for short-term and longer-term training. The consultants will compare the relevant international practices for CBT to propose the

applicability in the country context. By cooperating with the industrial sector specialists, and in line with the critical competencies identified as per selected example occupation(s), he/she will develop the guidelines for developing modular-based training programs (at the project preparation stage, in the absence of national occupational standards, relevant international standards can be used for alignment). The consultants will review the existing assessment and certification arrangements and processes in the country on TVET and reskilling training. They will propose ways for improvement to enhance quality assurance in skills development. The options to be assessed by the consultants include: (i) different institutional arrangements for assuring the quality of the assessment and certification; (ii) different modalities of industry collaboration in guiding and supporting assessment; and (iii) different feedback mechanisms from the results of assessment to the improvement of training. As a summary, a roadmap on introduction and implementation of CBT will be developed by the consultant.

6. **Teacher development specialists** (international, 3 person-months; national, 3 person-months): The consultants will review the existing pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher training programs for TVET sector. The consultants will analyze the constraints of teacher development under the current segregations between “(academic) teachers” and “(practice) masters”. By linking with the roadmap for introducing CBT as above, the consultants will propose plans and measures for improving teacher development, including strengthening the qualification, training and assessment of teachers. Meanwhile, to improve training-of-trainers, the consultants will propose the feasible modalities of linking with industries for increasing and updating workplace experience for teachers.

7. **Education technology specialist** (international, 2 person-months): The consultant will review the market-available training e-platform, websites, or Apps for TVET, and propose the way to develop (or to customize from the market-available e-platform) the e-platform for teacher training in TVET sector. The e-platform shall include the functions such as self-assessment, assessment modules, e-training material, and peer-learning channels. The consultant will consult MOHSSE on its pilot of an e-platform for teacher training that is being developed by a German company.

8. **Entrepreneurship development specialist** (international, 2 person-months): The consultant will assess the existing business incubation and business advisory services, and individuals and micro enterprises’ financial accessibility in the country. The consultant will assess the existing entrepreneurship training programs offered as supported by certain development partner(s), especially in their curriculum and the delivery modality. The consultant will propose the entrepreneurship development programs by linking to the outsourced incubation, business advisory service, linkage to market and to supply and value chain, and access to finance (including microfinance, and innovative financing sources such as impact investors).

9. **PPP specialist** (international, 2 person-months): The consultant will review the landscape for private sector training providers in the country and propose suitable incentives and modalities to encourage PPP with private sector training providers (international and national) in the project’s priority sectors. The consultant will develop a doable prototype of PPP arrangement or memorandum.

10. **Monitoring and evaluation specialists** (international, 3 person-months; national, 3 person-months): The consultants, in alignment with the Education Sector Plan (2019–2023), will review the existing M&E system for the skills sector, including for MOELR and MOHSSE. The consultants, by detecting the gap between the existing system and the requirement by SDG (such as the enrolment rate, employment rate especially for youth, sex-disaggregated data, data for

disadvantaged people, etc.), will propose the required improvements institutionally and technically. The consultants will ensure that the project design and monitoring framework (DMF) can be monitored and reported under the improved M&E system. The consultants will review the interlink between the IAs and other government authorities in reporting (such as State Committee for Statistics), in the areas of data collection, tracking, review, and validation. For monitoring indicators where data are not available, the consultants will propose the way forward to develop the data collection during project implementation.

11. **Environmental safeguard specialists** (international, 1 person-months; national, 3 person-months): The consultants will firstly assess the capacity of the executing agency and implementing agency in planning, implementing, and monitoring environmental safeguards. The consultants will conduct field visit to PTCs and TVETCs in different regions to assess their environmental impact of civil work activities and training activities (equipment noise, wastes, work safety, etc.), although all civil works are expected as brown field. The consultants will develop the initial environmental examination (IEE), which will include the environmental management plan (EMP) for the project. The consultants will summarize the environmental risks and mitigation measures.

12. **Social safeguard specialists** (international, 0.5 person-months; national, 2 person-months): The consultants will firstly assess the capacity of the executing agency and implementing agencies in planning, implementing, and monitoring social safeguards including indigenous peoples and (involuntary) resettlement, although all civil works are expected as brown field. The consultants will conduct field visits to PTCs and TVETCs in different regions to assess their social impact of training activities (for possible impact on [involuntary] resettlement, and on indigenous peoples, etc.). The consultants will design the safeguard management framework and if needed, the resettlement plan for the project. The consultant will summarize the social safeguard risks and mitigation measures.

13. **Financial management specialists** (international, 1.5 person-months; national, 3 person-months): The consultants will firstly assess the sector public financial management system to identify gaps, if any, for the government's counterpart financing supported areas (such as employment fund). The consultants will assess the financial management (FM) capacity of the executing agency and implementing agencies at central and regional level. At PTC and TVETC level, the assessment will be conducted on the use and management of the institution-level fund. At the implementing partner level (such as the NGO to be engaged in business incubation service, and/or in providing microfinance), the consultants will assess their FM capacity and internal control in using the project-provided funding. The consultants will summarize the FM risks and mitigation measures, and develop the FM strengthening plan and actions for project implementation. The consultants will also support the design of funds flow, accounting, auditing and financial reporting arrangements. The consultants should have Chartered Accountant (CA) or Certified Public Accountant (CPA) qualification and necessary experience in multilateral development bank(s)-financed project(s).

14. **Costing specialist** (international or national, 2 person-months): The consultant will prepare detailed cost estimates and financing plan for the project, by exploring the unit costs for civil works, equipment, per student training costs, teacher payroll, operational costs, etc. The consultant will follow the ADB's cost estimates requirements, including examining customs and taxation issues related to import of equipment and consulting services, etc.

15. **Economist** (national, 2 person-months): The consultant will develop the economic and financial analyses (i.e., financial viability) for the proposed project.

B. Output 2 – Key implementation entities’ awareness of international good practices in CBT and workforce development increased.

16. **International study tour:** In total 5 beneficiaries are targeted from Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations, Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education (Center for Vocational Education), representatives of the TVETCs and PTCs that will be built into centers of excellence. In total a 4-working day study tour is planned to the selected internationally well-established TVET institutions and workforce development entity(ies) in Singapore.¹ The study tour will be organized on CBT, teacher development, industrial collaboration, entrepreneurship development, assessment and certification, labor market monitoring and public employment services, etc.

C. Output 3 – Loan processing and implementation startup assisted.

17. **Project implementation specialist** (national, 3 person-months): The project implementation specialist will assist with the draft, revisions, comments and finalization by the government agencies on the investment feasibility report by collaborating with and incorporating the inputs from the consultants in output 1 and in TA9256, and provide implementation startup support. These activities are to ensure that (i) the IFS is harmonized and technically consistent with the government requirements (to ensure it is ready for government’s approval before the loan negotiations); and (ii) loan disbursement is expedited. For the latter, the project implementation specialist will support the government in the early stage project setup such as establishing the PIU and inter-ministerial steering committee and facilitating the procurement bidding procedures of advanced actions, if any.

¹ The proposed institutions include Nanyang Polytechnic International, Institute of Technical Education, and Workforce Singapore Agency.