



Document Stage: Consultation Draft
25 May 2006

ADB Translation Framework

This draft ADB translation framework is for consultation purposes only and does not necessarily reflect the views of ADB Management or Board of Directors. Comments may be e-mailed to disclosure@adb.org or faxed to 632 636 2640. All comments received by 31 July 2006 will be given serious consideration during revision of the draft.

Asian Development Bank

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
AfDB	–	African Development Bank
CSP	–	country strategy and program
CSPU	–	country strategy and program update
CSP/U	–	country strategy and program or country strategy and program update
DER	–	Department of External Relations
DGT	–	Directorate-General for Translation
EBRD	–	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EU	–	European Union
IDB	–	Inter-American Development Bank
IMF	–	International Monetary Fund
MDB	–	multilateral development bank
NGO	–	nongovernment organization
PCP	–	public communications policy
PPTA	–	project preparatory technical assistance
QA	–	quality assurance
TA	–	technical assistance

NOTE

In this report, "\$" refers to US dollars.

In this report, "€" refers to Euros.

CONTENTS

	Page
Executive Summary	iii
I. INTRODUCTION	1
A. Background	1
B. Framework Development and Contents	1
II. TRANSLATION PRACTICE OF OTHER MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	2
III. TRANSLATION PRACTICE OF ADB	4
A. Overview	4
B. Problem Analysis	6
IV. TRANSLATION FRAMEWORK	6
A. Principles and Assumptions	6
B. Criteria for Determining Whether to Translate a Document	9
C. Types of Documents for Translation to Increase Public Awareness about ADB	9
D. Types of Documents for Translation to Communicate with Affected People	12
V. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRANSLATION FRAMEWORK	14
A. Infrastructure to Implement the Translation Framework	14
B. Translation Coordination	15
C. Quality Assurance	15
D. Responsibilities for Translation Coordination and Quality Assurance	16
VI. NOTE ON RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	17
 APPENDICES	
1. ADB Disclaimer for Translated Documents	
2. Languages for Translation of Documents that Increase Public Awareness or Provide Institutional Information	
3. Translation for Donor Member Countries	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In April 2005, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Board approved a public communications policy (PCP), which seeks to enhance stakeholders' trust in and ability to engage with ADB. In the absence of an ADB policy on translation, the PCP called for the development of a translation framework (framework) to outline the ways in which ADB will expand the extent of information made available in languages other than English, the working language of ADB.

ADB's present practice of translation reflects the commitments made in terms of safeguard policies to make information available to affected people in a language that they can understand. ADB's safeguard policies require that borrower or project sponsors make relevant information on the project's safeguard issues available in a form and languages accessible to affected people.

Beyond these specific commitments, ADB's current approach to translation is demand-driven, based on the need for a particular document at a particular time. Decisions regarding translation at ADB primarily rest with the originator of the document in consultation with each resident mission. Each resident mission reacts to such need independently, deciding whether or not to translate and allocating or identifying funds individually. The result is translation of a mixture of documents into a variety of languages, including but not limited to policies (e.g., anticorruption policy, policy on gender and development); country-specific chapters of the Asian Development Outlook; procurement guidelines; environmental guidelines; and country-specific documents about ADB operations. There is no common set of translated documents across ADB.

A translation framework is needed because the current case-by-case approach misses opportunities for communication. This has meant that limited funds have sometimes been deployed in a manner that is not strategic, depleting resources early on, before potentially more important translation needs emerge. Also, the translation coordination process itself may have been a barrier to translation, because it is arduous and time-consuming, with no facilitating guides, administrative arrangements, or knowledge-sharing from others who have navigated it. Further, there is no specific budget for translation services or staff resource allocation for coordination of translation activities; where there have been limited sources of funding, few staff have been aware of their existence or how to tap into them.

Framework Principles and Assumptions

The translation framework was developed under several key principles and assumptions. Notably, the framework builds upon the commitments made under the safeguard policies and the PCP, particularly in terms of communicating with affected people in a language understandable to them. The language that ADB will translate documents into will depend on the purpose of the document in question and the language(s) spoken by stakeholders it is trying to reach. Since ADB is operating in a resource-constrained environment, allocation decisions regarding translation must be made carefully and strategically.

The framework is a guiding tool, which upholds the flexibility and discretion of the decision-maker. The decision as to whether or not to translate lies in the hands of the document originator or owner.

ADB will not itself translate documents owned by borrowers or project sponsors, but will encourage the document owner to communicate with affected people. Translation decisions in terms of what to translate, when, and into what languages will involve the borrower.

The framework reiterates that English is the working language of ADB, and the English version of all ADB documents will remain the official version. However, ADB will endeavor to produce high quality translations that accurately reflect the meaning in the non-English language.

Since this framework does not establish new operational policy or procedure, the guidance established herein is not subject to compliance review under the ADB accountability mechanism. The framework will be reviewed three years after its approval date to ensure that translation practice at ADB remains appropriate to changing business and linguistic needs.

Criteria for Making Decisions about Translation

The framework offers several criteria to help decision-makers think through different factors that may help them decide whether or not to translate a document, including the nature and purpose of the document; the literacy level of the audience; the number of people who need the information; the life span and length of the document; the time required for translation; and dollar costs and opportunity costs. As appropriate, decision-makers are encouraged to consult with resident missions for input on the local context, which may inform the decision.

New Translation Called for Under Framework

The framework calls for a **new** practice of routinely translating documents that increase public awareness and provide institutional information about ADB, subject to available resources. These are referred to as “awareness-raising documents” and include:

- (i) the country strategy and program and its updates (which ADB had already committed to translating through the PCP);
- (ii) information on ADB, and on ADB and its member countries;
- (iii) basic policies that help external stakeholders to engage with ADB;
- (iv) other institutional/strategy documents; and
- (v) briefing notes on ADB major topics, as they are developed.

In addition, the framework calls for the development of localized websites. The new approach to localized websites will be piloted for ADB’s work in the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the Central Asian Republics—one for the PRC resident mission and a centralized one for the Russian-speaking resident missions in some of the Central Asian Republics.

Existing Commitments to Translation

The framework reiterates ADB’s existing commitments to translation. ADB will continue the current practice of working closely with the borrower or project sponsor, as applicable, to ensure information is provided to affected people as committed to under the ADB safeguard policies on the environment, involuntary resettlement, and indigenous peoples; the accountability mechanism; and PCP paragraph 74.

Infrastructure to Implement the Translation Framework

To support the implementation of the translation framework, ADB's Department of External Relations will lead the development and implementation of additional infrastructure. Some of these tasks include ensuring that rosters of in-country translators are updated and that there is a flexible contracting method for translation in place; developing a glossary of ADB and development terms in target languages that will facilitate the work of translators; and serving as a focal point for coordination of translation activities.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

1. In April 2005, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Board approved a public communications policy (PCP), which seeks to enhance stakeholders' trust in and ability to engage with ADB. The PCP also aims to increase the development impact of ADB operations by promoting:

- (i) awareness and understanding of ADB activities, policies, strategies, objectives, and results among ADB's constituents, other stakeholders, and the general public;
- (ii) sharing and exchange of development knowledge and lessons learned, in order to provide fresh and innovative perspective on development issues;
- (iii) participatory development, ensuring a greater two-way flow of information between ADB and its stakeholders, including affected people; and
- (iv) transparency and accountability in ADB operations.¹

2. The PCP calls for increased information sharing, especially with regarding to operational information. Under the PCP, ADB will proactively share knowledge and information about its work with stakeholders and the public at large, expanding opportunities for those affected by ADB projects² to be informed about, and influence, the decisions that affect their lives. This communication will not be effective if information is conveyed in a language that the target audience cannot understand. Thus, translation of information into languages accessible by the target audiences goes hand in hand with effective communication and disclosure. In fact, the PCP commits ADB staff to ensuring that project affected people receive regular information on projects in an appropriate language and medium.

3. The PCP called for the development of a translation framework to outline the ways in which ADB will expand the extent of information made available in languages other than English, the working language of ADB. Such a framework is needed because translation at ADB has taken place on an as-needed, case-by-case basis that misses opportunities for communication. This has meant that limited funds have sometimes been deployed in a manner that is not strategic, depleting resources early on, before potentially more important translation needs emerge. In several cases, staff have not planned or budgeted for translation, only to encounter a translation need later; they then had to try to find the resources elsewhere, or forego translation. Also, the translation coordination process itself may have been a barrier to translation, because it is arduous and time-consuming, with no facilitating guides, administrative arrangements, or knowledge-sharing from others who have navigated it. Further, there is no specific budget for translation services or staff resource allocation for coordination of translation activities; while there have been limited sources of funding, few staff have been aware of their existence or how to tap into them.

B. Framework Development and Contents

4. **Development.** ADB's translation framework (the framework) was developed through analysis of available data on translation at ADB and current practices of other multilateral

¹ ADB. 2005. *The Public Communications Policy of the Asian Development Bank, Disclosure and Exchange of Information*.

² "Project" in this document refers to ADB-assisted projects and programs financed under loans and grants, including technical assistance projects.

development banks (MDBs) and international institutions. Resident mission staff involved in document translation were consulted, and a working group of representatives from ADB's five regional departments and the Private Sector Operations Department was formed to provide their perspectives.

5. The framework has undergone review by ADB departments and offices. Staff comments have been incorporated into the current draft. Input from external stakeholders is now being solicited.

6. A number of external stakeholders have already voiced opinions on translation through the consultations on the PCP. These suggestions were taken into account in the development of the current translation framework. The recommendations were diverse. For example, some stakeholders said that ADB documents pertaining to ADB operations in a given country should be available in all of the national languages of the country concerned; that all publicly disclosed policy documents should be made available in the language of every country in which ADB operates; and that all publicly disclosed project-related documents should be made available in the language of the country where the project is located. Others suggested that ADB identify "key documents" (such as operational policies) that must be translated into all or a significant number of regional languages, and a second set of documents (e.g., country strategy documents) that require translation into a more limited subset of languages. Project documents could be translated into the language(s) spoken by potentially affected communities.

7. Many stakeholders urged ADB to make a clear commitment to allocating adequate resources for translation and suggested that the cost for translation and provision of documents should be incorporated into budget estimates for each project. Several member country governments also noted that the costs should be shouldered by ADB through grant financing.

8. **Organization of the Paper.** Section II highlights the current translation practices of other MDBs and international institutions. Current translation practice at ADB is described in Section III. Section IV contains the framework itself, including principles and assumptions underlying the translation framework, criteria that may be helpful in deciding whether to translate a document, types of documents to be translated for the purpose of increasing public awareness or providing institutional information, and types of documents to be translated for communication with affected people. Section V outlines implementation of the translation framework, and Section VI discusses resource implications. Three appendices can be found at the end of the paper.

II. TRANSLATION PRACTICE OF OTHER MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

9. The development of the translation framework took into account translation practices of other MDBs and international institutions, looking at their working language(s), language policy if any, staff involved in translation, and budget for translation.

10. **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).** EBRD has four working languages—English, French, German, and Russian. EBRD has six London-based translation and interpretation staff; it outsources a large percentage of its translations. The EBRD Public Information Policy 2003 stated that it would translate, on a pilot basis, future approved country strategies into local languages. It also committed to translate, on a progressive basis, three documents vital to its interaction with the public (the

Public Information Policy, the Independent Recourse Mechanism, and the Environmental Policy).³

11. **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).** IDB's working languages are English and Spanish. All documents submitted to the Board of Governors are produced in all four official languages (English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese). In addition, pursuant to the institution's information disclosure policy, and the related Board mandate, IDB must provide access to information in all its member countries in a manner that enhances transparency. Consequently, documents are produced in the four languages of IDB's borrowing member countries, as needed.

12. IDB has 15 translation staff in Washington, DC, of which eight are translators. Translation expenses for 2004 were approximately \$2.12 million.

13. **African Development Bank (AfDB).** English and French are the official languages of AfDB. Documents are routinely translated into these languages, according to member countries' needs. AfDB also translates information such as consultations, disclosed information, and publications into other languages, depending on its external communication needs. The Vice Presidency for Corporate Management includes the Languages Services Unit, which employs translation and interpretation staff.⁴

14. **International Monetary Fund (IMF).** IMF's working language is English. Since IMF does not have a formal mandate to publish in languages other than English, decisions are based on perceived utility, demand, and cost factors.⁵ Staffed by about 90 people, IMF's Language Services Department handles all translation requests, about half of which are outsourced.⁶

15. **World Bank Group.** The working language of the World Bank Group is English. Until 2003, the World Bank Group did not have a well-articulated policy or approach to document translation. In 2003, it issued a document translation framework that lays out a pragmatic and decentralized approach towards translation. Under this approach, the responsibility for decisions on translation (including what, when, and how) is vested in each document's business sponsor. Each institution within the World Bank Group funds and makes decisions about translation depending on its business needs and the language approach that would allow it to reach the widest relevant audience for its work.

16. The framework provides the following "good practice principles" to guide decision makers as they choose which documents to translate: (i) documents and publications that address the institution's overall business and strategic thinking and that are destined for a wide international audience; (ii) documents provided to an audience for public consultation; and (iii) documents and publications that address country- and project-specific information. The World Bank does not translate documents owned by borrowers.

17. The World Bank is currently preparing a report on progress in implementation of the framework since 2003 and making proposals to refine the translation framework where needed.

³ EBRD. 2003. *Public Information Policy*. Available: <http://www.ebrd.org/about/policies/pip/pip.pdf>

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ IMF. 2003. *A Review of the Fund's External Communications Strategy*. Available: <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/docs/2003/021303.pdf>

⁶ World Bank. 2003. *A Translation framework for the World Bank Group*. Available: <http://www1.worldbank.org/operations/disclosure/documents/TranslationFramework.pdf>

As part of the review, a list of documents that should be routinely translated is being developed. The World Bank also plans to supply a list of recommended document types for translation.

18. **The European Union (EU).** The EU has 20 official languages: Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish, and Swedish. It is required to publish its legislation in all of these languages, which it does through the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation (DGT), the largest translation service in the world. Located in Brussels and Luxembourg, DGT translates written text into and out of all the EU's official languages, exclusively for the European Commission. It has a permanent staff of about 1,650 linguists and 550 support staff, in addition to freelance translators worldwide.⁷

19. The European Commission operates internally in three procedural languages—English, French, and German—and documents for internal Commission use only are drafted in one or more of these and, if necessary, translated only between those three languages. Similarly, incoming documents in a non-procedural language are translated into one of the procedural languages so that they can be generally understood within the Commission, but are not translated into the other official languages.

20. Each EU institution (Commission, Council, European Parliament, European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Court of Justice, and Court of Auditors) has its own translation service, which is responsible for translating the documents issued by that institution.⁸ These individual translation services are supplemented as needed by the shared Translation Centre, staffed by about 90 translators. The Commission and other EU institutions are currently in the process of incorporating the most recently added nine official languages. Once this transition is complete (expected to be at the end of 2006), the cost of translation at all institutions, once they are fully operational, is estimated at €807 million per year including €320 million for DGT. This is out of a total EU budget of €99.8 billion for 2004 and €105.2 billion for 2005.⁹

III. TRANSLATION PRACTICE OF ADB

A. Overview

21. English is the working language of ADB.¹⁰ ADB currently has no comprehensive institutional policy or approach to translation. ADB's present practice of translation reflects the commitments made in terms of safeguard¹¹ policies to make information available to affected people in a language that they can understand. In accordance with these policies, documents and/or information relating to environmental concerns, involuntary resettlement, and indigenous peoples are translated into local languages.

⁷ Directorate-General for Translation of the European Commission. 2005. *Translating for a Multilingual Community*. Available: http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/translation/bookshelf/brochure_en.pdf

⁸ Directorate-General for Translation of the European Commission. 2005. MEMO/05/10, *Translation in the Commission: where do we stand eight months after the enlargement?* Available: <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/10&type=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ ADB. 1966. *The Agreement Establishing the Asian Development Bank*. Article 39.1

¹¹ ADB's safeguard policies include the environment policy and its Operations Manual Section F1; the policy on involuntary resettlement and its Operations Manual Section F2; and the policy on indigenous people and its Operations Manual Section F3.

22. Much like translation at other MDBs and international organizations, ADB's current approach to translation is demand-driven, based on the need for a particular document at a particular time. The decisions regarding translation primarily rest with the originator of the document in consultation with each resident mission. Each resident mission reacts to such need independently, deciding whether or not to translate and allocating or identifying funds individually. The result is translation of a mixture of documents into a variety of languages, including but not limited to policies (e.g., anticorruption policy, policy on gender and development); country-specific chapters of the Asian Development Outlook; procurement guidelines; environmental guidelines; and country-specific documents about ADB operations. ADB's web site currently lists 1,244 translated documents in the following languages: Azeri, Bahasa, Bangla, Chinese, Filipino, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Lao, Mongolian, Nepali, Russian, Thai, Urdu, and Vietnamese. There is no common set of translated documents across ADB.

23. There are two funds at ADB to cover translation costs. The Office of Administrative Services administers a fund of about \$20,000 per year to translate documents from another language into English. About 80% of the requests are for project-related documents needed by project officers. The remainder of requests include: translation of various personal documents of ADB personnel in other languages (medical certificate; birth certificate; marriage certificate; school receipts; death certificate; travel papers) into English to support claims or reimbursement for ADB benefits (sick leave; dependency allowance; education subsidy; emergency travel); non-English language documents needed in English to conduct internal audit investigations; letters to the ADB President written in other languages; articles about senior officers written in non-English languages; and others.

24. The Department of External Relations (DER) administers a fund for translation of documents from English into other languages. Requests for support from this budget, funded at \$50,000 per year, are made for a variety of translation needs, including (i) country-specific documents (such as a country fact sheet); (ii) ADB-wide documents (such as the anticorruption policy); (iii) documents for government counterparts to better understand or interact with ADB (such as procurement guides); and (iv) project-specific documents (such as information on a particular project for affected people). DER handles requests on a first-come, first-served basis and does not currently employ a set of criteria for allocation of funds.

25. The amount spent at ADB for translation is difficult to establish because these figures are not tracked by any central system. In particular, translation costs related to projects are paid for through line items not designated for translation (e.g., "local consultants" or "project management"), so it is not possible to estimate a total amount spent on operations without reviewing individual project budgets. An extremely rough estimate, based on individual responses from regional departments and resident missions for costs from their budgets, is \$140,000 spent on translation in 2004. More than half of this amount covered translation for communication with governments (e.g., government circulars, government policies, project proposals from local government, presentation materials, invitation letters, other correspondence, etc.). This reflects the fact that resident missions or regional offices that rely on translation of documents in order to communicate with counterpart governments plan for translation and include the costs in their annual budgets.

26. Of the estimated total, smaller amounts were spent on (i) translation of government documents in other languages into English for the understanding of ADB staff; (ii) awareness-building documents about ADB (such as a brochure on the accountability mechanism); (iii) personal staff documents needed in English to obtain ADB benefits; (iv) project-specific

documents; (v) country-specific documents (such as the country strategy and program or its update); and (vi) ADB reports into donor member country languages.

27. ADB operates in a complex linguistic environment, with 43 developing member countries. Many developing member countries have more than one official and/or national language. The diversity of languages spoken in these countries makes doing business a challenge.

B. Problem Analysis

28. Flexibility and decision-making discretion are positive attributes of the current system. However, they sometimes lead to a less than strategic use of limited funds—when documents are translated on a “first-come, first-served” basis, funds may be depleted before the end of the fiscal year and before other, potentially more strategic or important, translation needs emerge. Often, translation appears to be an afterthought.

29. Since there is no centralized approach to or knowledge-sharing about translation, ADB staff—at both headquarters and in field offices—must to some extent learn the process “from scratch” when their first translation need arises. The process of identifying translator candidates, hiring a chosen translator through a contracting method, tasking the assignments and answering any questions that arise, and—most time-consuming of all—proofreading and ensuring the quality of the delivered product can be onerous. This arduous process, with no guides or administrative arrangements in place, can serve as a deterrent to translation.

30. The absence of a translation framework at ADB also means that there is no specific budget for translation services or staff resource allocation for coordination of translation activities. Even when there are piecemeal budgets available for translation, such as the regional technical assistance (RETA) for translation in the late 1990s¹² or the \$50,000 translation budget administered by DER, staff are often not aware of these resources. For example, in 2004, only \$18,713 of this budget was expended, and this amount was for translation of documents into Japanese rather than into a language of a developing member country.

31. ADB has carried out considerable translation, through the current ad hoc system, to communicate in a complex linguistic environment with a variety of stakeholders—borrowers and project sponsors, affected people, in-country stakeholders such as nongovernment and civil society organizations, and international audiences in member developing countries and member countries, among others. ADB recognizes the opportunity to communicate more widely by expanding the extent of information made available in languages other than English used in ADB’s developing member countries. This is the purpose of the translation framework.

IV. TRANSLATION FRAMEWORK

A. Principles and Assumptions

32. The translation framework was developed under several guiding principles and assumptions:

¹² RETA 5788: Translation of Asian Development Bank Documents into Local Languages, for \$437,511 approved on 16 April 1998; closed 17 May 2005.

33. **Commitment to Communication.** The purpose of the translation framework is to complement ADB's communication efforts with outside stakeholders by expanding the extent of information made available in languages other than English, the working language of ADB. Making information available in languages other than English will lead to better communication and enhanced understanding of the work that ADB does and supports. As such, the scope of the framework is limited to translation into languages other than English.

34. **Flexibility.** The translation framework is a guiding tool, which upholds the flexibility and discretion of the decision-maker. The responsibility for translation lies in the hands of the document originator or owner. The framework enables greater opportunity to translate needed documents for audiences who do not understand English without taking away the document owner's decision-making discretion.

35. **Working Language.** English is, and will remain, the working language of ADB. The English version of all ADB documents will remain the official version. As such, translated documents should include a disclaimer to this effect, in the translated language. See Appendix 1. However, ADB will do its best to verify the quality of its translated documents.

36. **High-quality Translations.** ADB will endeavor to produce high quality translations that accurately reflect the meaning in the non-English language.

37. **Dissemination of Translated Documents.** When a document is translated, the mode and means of disseminating the document should be considered. Posting the translated document on the web may be insufficient to reach the targeted audience. In those cases, the document will likely need to be printed and distributed.

38. **Languages for Translation.** ADB's approach to translation will be pragmatic and flexible. Rather than routinely translating documents into a prescribed set of national or official languages, ADB will decide, in consultation with the Government where appropriate, which languages to translate documents into based on the purpose of the document in question and the language(s) spoken by stakeholders it is trying to reach. For country- and project-specific documents, for example, consideration could be given to translating them into the national language of the country or local languages used within the country. In addition, as appropriate, project-specific documents could be translated into language(s) understood by the people affected by, or likely to be affected by, the project.

39. **Honoring Commitments.** The framework builds upon the commitments made under the safeguard policies and the PCP, particularly in terms of communicating with affected people in a language understandable to them. Where the PCP specifies that documents or information will be made "publicly available" (i.e., posted on the ADB's website), the framework will assume that this will be the official, English version, and that a translated version is not required. However, if translated versions of any ADB documents exist, document originators or owners are encouraged to post these on the ADB's website.

40. **Translation Needed for Consultation.** Documents should be translated when ADB consults—on its policies and strategies, country and regional strategies and programs, and projects—with external stakeholders who cannot read English. The framework directly supports participatory development practices by encouraging translation of documents used in consultations.

41. **Harmonization with Best Practices.** To the extent possible, the framework will harmonize with the best practice translation approaches of other international financial institutions.
42. **Resource-constrained Environment.** Translation is costly—both in real dollars to pay for professional translators, and in staff time to coordinate translation jobs. ADB is operating in a resource-constrained environment. It will not be financially possible to translate all of the documents that would be helpful to have in other languages. Allocation decisions regarding translation must be made carefully and strategically.
43. **Budgeting for Translation Costs.** For conveying project-specific information to affected people as called for under ADB's existing safeguard policies, ADB and the borrower or project sponsor may wish to include the cost of translation in the budget for the project preparatory technical assistance and/or the loan, as needed. Responsibility for translation of documents, material, or information, as applicable, may be included in the consultants' terms of reference.
44. **Involvement of Borrower or Sponsor in Translation Decisions.** Recognizing the central role of the borrower or project sponsor in the project and their responsibility for communicating with their citizens, ADB encourages borrowers and sponsors to play a key role in translation. Decisions regarding what project-specific documents to translate, when, and into what languages will involve the borrower or sponsor. This preserves country ownership of projects and respects national sovereignty. Where possible, the borrower or sponsor might also assist in verifying the accuracy of translations.
45. **Borrower-owned Documents Not to be Translated by ADB.** ADB will not translate documents owned by borrowers or project sponsors. The borrower provides an English version of such documents to ADB; if the borrower has prepared a version in a local language, ADB should request that version and make it available to the public via the ADB's website along with the English version.
46. **Compliance Review.** The scope of ADB's accountability mechanism¹³ includes all ADB operational policies and procedures as they relate to the formulation, processing, or implementation of the project. As this framework does not establish operational policy or procedure, the guidance established herein is not subject to compliance review under the ADB accountability mechanism.
47. **Framework is Time-bound.** The translation framework will be reviewed within three years after its approval date to ensure that translation practice at ADB remains appropriate to changing business and linguistic needs.
48. **Translation for Donor Member Countries.** The framework focuses on document translation for developing member countries. The translation needs for donor member countries are addressed separately, in Appendix 3.

¹³ ADB. 2003. *The Review of the Inspection Function: Establishment of a New ADB Accountability Mechanism*, 8 May, R79-03.

B. Criteria for Determining Whether to Translate a Document

49. As explained in paragraph 34, the translation framework is a guiding tool, which upholds the flexibility and discretion of the decision-maker. The decision as to whether or not to translate lies in the hands of the document originator or owner. The following list of criteria are meant to aid decision-makers' analysis. They are more subjective than scientific, and are offered without rating or ranking. They are not meant to be prescriptive or restrictive, but are intended to help decision-makers think through different factors that may be relevant to the decision. As appropriate, decision-makers are encouraged to consult with resident missions for input on the local context, which may inform the decision.

50. **Nature and Purpose of the Document.** How does the document fit into ADB's operational priorities? Who are the audiences of this document? Do they understand English? Will the document meet its purpose if it is not translated?

51. **Literacy Level of the Audience Concerned.** Is the audience literate enough to comprehend and make use of the document?

52. **The Number of People Who Need the Information.** Do enough people need the information contained in the document to merit translation?

53. **Life Span of Document.** Will this document be in effect or relevant long enough to merit translation?

54. **Length of Document.** How long is the document? Will this length make it difficult, lengthy, or expensive to translate? Will this length make it unlikely that the audience would read it? Should only a portion of the document (e.g., summary) be translated?

55. **Time Required for Translation.** How much time would it take to translate the document? Would it be available in a timely manner such that the audience could benefit from and make use of the information?

56. **Dollar Costs and Opportunity Costs.** What is the cost of translating the document? Given this cost, does it make sense to translate? Would using funds to translate this document limit ADB's ability to fund other translations of future documents that may be more important, impactful, and/or strategic?

C. Types of Documents for Translation to Increase Public Awareness about ADB

57. Through the translation framework, ADB recognizes the opportunity to increase public awareness about ADB in developing member countries by making available documents (or summary documents) in languages other than English, and by developing, on a pilot basis, localized websites in languages other than English (see paragraph 68.).

58. In an effort to increase awareness of what ADB is and what it does, as well as provide information on the institution's overall business and strategic thinking, ADB has generated a list of document types that it will begin to translate on a more systematic basis, subject to available resources. These are referred to as "awareness-raising documents"¹⁴ and include:

¹⁴ DER will lead the effort to translate approved documents. If translation is needed for draft documents to support meaningful participation and consultation, those developing the documents should budget for the translation.

- (i) the country strategy and program and its updates (which ADB already committed to translating through the PCP);
- (ii) information on ADB, and on ADB and its member countries;
- (iii) basic policies that help external stakeholders to engage with ADB;
- (iv) other institutional/strategy documents; and
- (v) briefing notes on ADB major topics.

59. In terms of priced publications, such as Asian Development Outlook and its country-specific chapters or Key Indicators, ADB will continue its current practice of making these available in languages other than English by working with local publishers. Local publishers purchase the publication's copyright, translate it, print it, and sell it in the local market. This market-driven approach ensures that priced publications are translated into languages for which there is demand.

60. The types of awareness-raising documents outlined in paragraph 58. are all the categories of awareness-raising documents to be translated, based on availability of resources. The document types are further described below. The inclusion of examples does not indicate that each and every document will be translated each year. The volume and pace of translation will depend on availability of funds, resident mission needs, and staff time; DER will propose a list of documents for translation and printing through the annual budgeting exercise. Newly approved awareness-raising documents identified for translation by DER through should be translated within 120 days of the document's approval.

61. The translation of awareness-raising documents, with the exception of the country strategy and program and its updates (CSP/Us), will be led by DER, and supported by resident missions where appropriate. DER will consult with resident missions to determine whether the specific document needs to be translated, and if so, the most appropriate schedule for translation, based on business needs, the availability of funds and staff, and the criteria outlined in paragraphs 50.–56.

1. Country Strategy and Program (CSP) and Updates (CSPUs)

62. ADB has already committed to translating the CSP/Us through the PCP (see PCP paragraph 65). The CSP is an important document because it outlines ADB's medium-term development strategy and operational program as agreed with the developing member country. In countries where English is not widely used (as defined under the approach described in Appendix 2), the PCP commits ADB to translating the CSP/U into a widely understood language within 90 calendar days of its endorsement by the Board. A budget of \$128,000 for translator fees has been approved in the context of the PCP. It is administered by DER; resident missions request these funds when translating their CSP/Us.

2. Information on ADB, and on ADB and Its Member Countries

63. These documents describe ADB as an organization and provide information on ADB activities in different countries as well as its relationship with governments. They include:

- (i) ADB Profile. This brief document provides key information about ADB in a compact format. It should routinely be made available in languages other than English.

- (ii) Country Profiles/Fact Sheets. Translation of each country profile/fact sheet into the language of that country would create an excellent tool for communication with in-country stakeholders.
- (iii) Press Releases. Although it may not be practical to translate every ADB-issued press release, some resident missions may deem certain press releases of particular strategic value in communicating about ADB with non-English-speaking audiences. These press releases should be translated.

3. Basic Policies that Help External Stakeholders Engage with ADB

64. There are a number of basic policies that will help external stakeholders who do not understand English—be they borrowers, implementing agencies, executing agencies, or nongovernment organizations (NGOs)—engage with ADB. Examples of these policies include:

- (i) Safeguards policies: Policy on indigenous peoples; environment policy; policy on involuntary resettlement (after they are updated)
- (ii) Public communications policy
- (iii) Institutional document on ADB-Government-NGO cooperation
- (iv) Environmental assessment guidelines (after they are updated)
- (v) Anticorruption policy
- (vi) Accountability mechanism brochure
- (vii) Policy on gender and development
- (viii) Guidelines and handbooks on procurement and consulting services

65. DER will work with the sponsoring department of the policy or strategy to determine whether that policy or strategy should be translated, in full or as a summary, based on the criteria outlined in paragraphs 50.–56. DER will also consider whether or not a policy or strategy's corresponding handbook or guidelines should be translated as well.

4. Other Institutional/Strategy Documents

66. To communicate ADB's strategic direction, other institutional/strategy documents—or at a minimum, a summary—should be translated as soon as possible after they are developed. Examples of such documents include the Long-Term Strategic Framework, Medium-Term Strategy, and Enhanced Poverty Reduction Strategy.

5. Documents on ADB Major Topics

67. ADB has recently developed 15 concise two-page documents on major development topics that cut across countries and regions, such as clean energy, accountability, Millennium Development Goals, and anticorruption. These documents, to be called "In Brief," should be translated into languages other than English and distributed by resident missions as part of an ADB information kit.

6. Localized Websites

68. Since ADB's working language is English and its website is managed centrally by people who do not understand all of the languages spoken in developing member countries, the ADB's website is in English, but includes translated documents posted as PDF files. However, localized websites are more user-friendly to non-English speakers not only due to language considerations, but also because they are much faster for users to access (since they would be

hosted on local servers) and do not rely on PDF files to share information. Resident missions are encouraged to develop localized websites in other languages, under the umbrella of www.adb.org, requesting the appropriate budget for day-to-day maintenance through the annual budget process. To encourage localized website development, funds should be made available on a pilot basis for sites in the People's Republic of China resident mission and the Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation Unit field office (for development of localized websites for Russian-speaking Central Asian Republic resident missions). DER's Web Team will develop guidelines for the pilot sites, including server and hosting requirements, developing and updating content, approval process, and quality control.

D. Types of Documents for Translation to Communicate with Affected People

69. ADB has already made commitments to ensure that people affected by an ADB project are provided information about the project in a language accessible to them. These commitments have been made through the safeguard policies as well as the PCP. This translation framework does not change those commitments—ADB reiterates and stands by these commitments, and will continue to work closely with the borrower or project sponsor to ensure information is provided to affected people as committed to under the ADB safeguard policies on the environment, involuntary resettlement, and indigenous peoples; the accountability mechanism; and PCP paragraph 74.

1. The Environment

70. ADB affirms its commitment to communicating about environmental impacts with people affected by ADB projects and programs. As outlined under PCP paragraph 78 as well as ADB's environment policy,¹⁵ ADB requires the borrower or project sponsor to make relevant information on the project's environmental issues available to affected people before or during consultations with project-affected groups and local NGOs. For category A projects, the borrower or project sponsor must ensure that such information is available to affected people on two occasions: (i) during the early stages of environmental impact assessment field work; and (ii) when the draft environmental impact assessment report is available, and before appraisal. This information must be in a language accessible to those being consulted.

2. Involuntary Resettlement

71. ADB reiterates its commitment to fully inform and closely consult affected persons on resettlement and compensation options. As stated in PCP paragraph 80, ADB requires the borrower or project sponsor to make available to affected people under Operations Manual section F2/BP on involuntary resettlement:

- (i) before appraisal—a **draft resettlement plan**;
- (ii) after completion of the **final resettlement plan**—such resettlement plan; and
- (iii) following revisions to the resettlement plan as a result of detailed technical design or change in scope in the program or project—the **revised resettlement plan**.

72. The information from these documents can be made available as brochures, leaflets, or booklets in local languages. For non-literate people, other communication methods will be appropriate. Thus, the entire document need not be translated word for word and provided in

¹⁵ ADB. 2002. *The Environment Policy of the Asian Development Bank*, paragraph 63.

document form, but the relevant information may be translated and then made available in an alternative form. Relevant information includes resettlement information on compensation and resettlement options to be made available before the first management review meeting or private sector credit committee meeting; as well as detailed resettlement information including measurement of losses, detailed asset valuations, entitlements and special provisions, grievance procedures, timing of payments, and displacement schedule.¹⁶

3. Indigenous Peoples

73. ADB confirms its commitment to communicating with indigenous peoples affected by ADB projects and programs. As stated in PCP paragraph 83, ADB requires the borrower or project sponsor to make available to affected people who are indigenous peoples/ethnic minorities:

- (i) before appraisal—a **draft indigenous peoples development plan**;
- (ii) after completion of the **final indigenous peoples development plan**—such indigenous peoples development plan; and
- (iii) following revisions to the indigenous peoples plan as a result of detailed technical design or change in scope in the program or project¹⁷—the **revised indigenous peoples development plan**.

74. The information from these documents can be made available as brochures, leaflets, or booklets in local languages. For non-literate people, other communication methods will be appropriate. Thus, the entire document need not be translated word for word and provided in document form, but may focus on relevant information.

4. Basic Project Information (as described in PCP paragraph 74)

75. Paragraph 74 of the PCP states, “information about a public or private sector project or program under preparation (including social and environmental issues) shall be made available to affected people.” Further, it commits that ADB will work closely with the borrower or project sponsor to ensure information is provided, feedback on the proposed project design is sought, and relevant information about any major changes to project scope is also shared with affected people. Under the PCP’s definition of “available to affected people,” this information must be in a language understandable to the people in question. Project mission leaders should plan for the communication of project information to affected people in their respective project budgets.

5. Information for Consultation and Participation

76. For consultation to be meaningful, information should be shared in advance with those participating in the consultation. If the people with whom ADB is consulting do not speak or read English sufficiently, the documents and information materials needed to support consultation and participation should be translated. The sponsoring department of the document should consider what is necessary to translate; for example, appendices may not be needed. The cost of this translation should be included in the budget for the consultation. For guidance on when to consult, please see *Strengthening Participation for Development Results: A Staff Guide to Consultation and Participation* (April 2006).

¹⁶ ADB. 2003. *Operations Manual*. Section F2/OP, paragraph 45.

¹⁷ Per PCP paragraph 83, footnote 21, Dissemination of the plan or framework may be limited to those people affected by the change in scope.

6. Other Project-Specific Documents

77. For project-specific documents, the responsibility for decisions regarding translation (including what, when, and how) rests with each document's owner or originator. The owner or originator should refer to a list of criteria that may be helpful in guiding decisions on translation; these may be found in Chapter V. In addition, the owner or originator is encouraged to consult with resident missions on the decision.

78. Some projects are deemed "high profile" or potentially controversial. In cases such as these, ADB staff have been successful in proactively planning external relations and communication activities to educate and engage in-country stakeholders about the project. In countries where English is not widely understood, translation can play a key part in this process.

79. Communication plans, jointly developed by developing member country governments and ADB, should aid in identifying which documents are candidates for translation and planning for the resources necessary to translate them. Project mission leaders are encouraged to budget for public awareness materials—including costs of development, translation, and printing—in the project preparatory technical assistance and/or loan. As appropriate, the mission leader may need to negotiate this on a case-by-case basis with the borrower or sponsor. Translation of project-specific documents should be paid for by project funds.

80. Increasingly, ADB works with other development partners. When content to be translated is a joint initiative, we will share the obligation for translation with the partners.

81. Under the knowledge management framework, ADB is committed to more systematic capture and dissemination of knowledge. Knowledge gained from studies and assessments produced by ADB should be compiled in a publicly accessible forum. Translation may be needed.

7. Accountability Mechanism

82. In cases when the people submitting a complaint through ADB's accountability mechanism do not understand English, the current practice of the Special Projects Facilitator and the Compliance Review Panel to translate documents and/or information into a language accessible to them should continue.

V. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRANSLATION FRAMEWORK

A. Infrastructure to Implement the Translation Framework

83. To support the implementation of the framework, DER, through its Public Information and Disclosure Unit (InfoUnit), will work with resident missions to develop glossaries, administrative and contracting procedures for translators, and awareness-building among ADB staff, described as follows:

84. **Engagement of Translators.** Most resident missions maintain a roster of translators that they use. Rosters should be developed, where necessary, and maintained. Rather than going through the time-consuming process of awarding an individual contract for each translation job, resident missions may engage translators through a lump sum/yearly contract, based on projected volume of translation for a given year, for an estimated number of working days. Translators may then be quickly deployed on an intermittent basis, as needed. This would

include uniform terms of reference for translators, and would enable users to quickly tap into reputable translators when needed, reduce paperwork and staff time, and potentially improve the quality of translations, as translators conduct repeat ADB assignments and become more familiar with terminology and expectations.

85. Resident missions will take the lead in advising on what should or should not be translated, and can help decision-makers apply the criteria described in paragraphs 50.–56. Staff who are hiring translators should use the resident mission’s roster of translators.

86. **Glossary of Terms.** Many resident missions expressed a need for a glossary of ADB and development terms in their target language that could be shared with translators. This would facilitate greater consistency and clarity across translated ADB documents. DER, in cooperation with the Office of the Secretary, will commission the development of such a glossary.

87. **Awareness-building.** DER will promote awareness among ADB staff of translation services and resources available. DER will support design and production of documents as much as possible, and will promote consistency of the “look and feel” of ADB documents.

88. **Centralized Translation Where Appropriate.** In cases where the same language is widely spoken in multiple developing member countries (e.g., Russian in several Central Asian Republics), it may make sense to centralize translation efforts. For example, DER will investigate with the Central and West Regional Department the feasibility of designating one resident mission as the central coordination point for translation and quality assurance of awareness-raising documents into Russian. This type of centralization would limit the staff time required to coordinate translation tasks; by selecting a location with low cost, high quality translators, real costs may also be controlled.

B. Translation Coordination

89. Coordination of translation activities, whether in HQ or in the resident mission, involves the following tasks:

- (i) **Hiring Translator.** These activities involve finding candidate translators who have the commensurate skills and abilities for the task, determining their availability for and interest in the assignment, choosing a translator, and making sure an appropriate contract method is in place. An administrative assistant in the resident mission may do this work. A roster of translators and a flexible contracting method will aid in this process.
- (ii) **Coordinating Translation.** Translators need a point of contact for queries while carrying out the translation assignment; this contact person should be familiar with the content of the document, such as the project officer.

C. Quality Assurance

90. Once the document translation is completed, either by an internal or external translator, ADB must assure the quality of the product. This is one of the most important aspects of translation, and according to staff, the most time-consuming. Quality is an ongoing concern in terms of translation; ADB users of translation services report that quality is inconsistent within the same translation company and even with the same translator. The document must be proofread to verify the accuracy and quality of the translation, both in terms of language as well

as technical content. Qualified resident mission staff members, usually at the national officer level, may proofread the document for language, and may also take on another duty of quality assurance, which is interfacing with the translator in case additional changes are needed as a result of the proofreading. The document should also be proofread by someone who understands the content of the document, such as the project officer. Since this can be a time-consuming task for project officers who already have many responsibilities, resident missions need to plan accordingly for project officers to be available to perform this work. Although quality assurance should preferably be done by ADB, in some cases, another option could be for the resident mission to plan and budget for a qualified consultant or additional part-time staff person to proofread for grammar and/or technical content.

D. Responsibilities for Translation Coordination and Quality Assurance

91. Responsibilities for the translation activities defined above are described as follows. In any case where ADB staff are responsible for hiring a translator, coordinating translation, quality assurance, and in rare cases, translation itself—their job description and/or workplan should reflect this responsibility.

92. **Department of External Relations.** DER's InfoUnit will serve as focal point for translation activities at ADB. In addition to coordinating the infrastructure development activities described in paragraphs 84.–88., the InfoUnit will manage the translation of awareness-raising documents, including administration of the budget for these translations. For the initial six months of the framework's implementation, the InfoUnit will require consulting services to build the translation infrastructure, develop tools, coordinate translation of awareness-raising documents with resident missions, gather best practice and case study material, and other translation-related tasks.

93. **Project Team Members.** When project-specific translation needs arise during project processing, project personnel and/or consultants ensure that translation coordination and quality assurance tasks outlined in paragraph 90. are undertaken. For the translation of project-specific information (see paragraphs 70.–81.), project team members and/or consultants will ensure that translation takes place and verify the accuracy of the translation. The assistance of project officers in resident missions may be needed during project administration.

94. **Resident Missions.** With the exception of project-specific information that will usually be handled by project teams, the bulk of the tasks described in paragraph 90. will fall on resident mission staff. Tasks related to hiring the translator, coordinating the assignment, and verifying the quality of the end product are carried out by administrative assistants, analysts, and national officers, based on the resident mission's own local staffing balance and the difficulty of the local or national language. Additional supporting staff resources are needed for certain resident missions to cover the increase in document translation as prescribed under this framework. The specific resources needed for each resident mission will be identified by the respective resident mission, the Budget and Management Services Division, and DER during the annual budgeting exercise.

95. Resident missions may have translation needs beyond the scope of this framework, e.g., for communicating with government officials. Each resident mission should plan for such needs and submit a budget request in the annual budgeting process.

VI. NOTE ON RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

96. ADB is currently conducting a budgeting exercise with regional departments, resident missions, DER, and the Budget and Management Services Division to determine the budget and staff resources needed to implement the framework in its first year. We expect the final draft of the framework to include a comprehensive budget.

Appendix 1: ADB Disclaimer for Translated Documents

“This document has been translated from English in order to reach a wider audience. While the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has made efforts to verify the accuracy of the translation, English is the working language of ADB and the English original of this document is the only authentic (that is, official and authoritative) text. Any citations must refer to the English original of this document.”

Appendix 2: Languages for Translation of Awareness-Raising Documents

1. Resident mission staff were asked whether English is not widely used in their country, and if translation of the country and strategy program (CSP) would be required. If they indicated that translation was required, they were also asked to indicate which language the document should be translated into. Since the audience for documents that increase public awareness or provide institutional information is similar to that for the CSP, the same list will be used as a starting point to determine the languages for translation of this set of documents, in addition to other criteria, such as the presence of an ADB office in a particular country. Please note that this list would not be applied to communication with project-affected people, which would vary according to the language needs of the people in question.

2. ADB has 14 Pacific developing member countries with three distinct ethnic groups with enormous diversity of official and working languages. For example, Papua New Guinea alone has over 800 languages while Vanuatu has three official languages. Since English is widely used in 13 of the Pacific developing member countries, no translation is recommended for them. The exception is Timor-Leste, where English is not widely spoken.

	Translation Required	Language for translation
East and Central Asia Regional Department		
Armenia	yes	Armenian
Azerbaijan	yes	Azerbaijani
Kazakhstan	yes	Russian
Kyrgyz Republic	yes	Russian
Mongolia	yes	Mongolian
People's Republic of China	yes	Chinese
Tajikistan	yes	Russian
Turkmenistan	yes	Russian
Uzbekistan	yes	Russian
Mekong Regional Department		
Cambodia	yes	Khmer
Lao People's Democratic Republic	yes	Lao
Myanmar	yes	Burmese
Thailand	yes	Thai
Viet Nam	yes	Vietnamese
South Asia Regional Department		
Afghanistan	yes	Dari
Bangladesh	yes	Bangla
Bhutan	no	
India	yes	Hindi
Maldives	no	
Nepal	yes	Nepali
Pakistan	yes	Urdu
Sri Lanka	yes	Sinhala / Tamil
Southeast Asia Regional Department		

	Translation Required	Language for translation
Indonesia	yes	Bahasa Indonesia
Philippines	no	
Pacific Regional Department		
Cook Islands	no	
Federated States of Micronesia	no	
Fiji Islands	no	
Kiribati	no	
Marshall Islands	no	
Nauru	no	
Palau	no	
Papua New Guinea	no	
Samoa	no	
Solomon Islands	no	
Timor-Leste	yes	Portuguese
Tonga	no	
Tuvalu	no	
Vanuatu	no	

Appendix 3: Translation for Donor Member Countries

1. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) translation framework focuses on document translation for developing member countries. Donor member countries, however, also have translation needs. For example, they need translated information about ADB to build awareness about ADB in the general population, to enhance ADB's profile, and to interact with the media. These should be factored into the work plans and budgets of the European Representative Office, the Japanese Representative Office, and the North American Representative Office.
2. Examples of documents that may be helpful to have translated into donor member countries include the ADB Profile, the Annual Report, and donor country profiles.
3. The estimated cost of translation of donor country profile is approximately \$200 per country/language, and a printing cost of \$0.40 per copy. The estimated cost of translation of the short ADB profile is \$100 per language with a printing cost of \$0.20 per copy. The estimated cost of translating the first chapter of the ADB Annual Report is \$1300 with a printing cost of \$0.52 per copy. Shipping costs from HQ are approximately \$15 for every 100 pages. These figures do not include the cost of staff time to coordinate translation and printing, which may be done through the use of consultants.
4. In order to avoid further increasing overhead costs to developing member countries, translation budgets for donor member countries should be funded separately. This could be done through bilateral contributions.