

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

TAR:OTH 37483

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

FOR THE

GREATER SILK ROAD INITIATIVE 2005

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
CACO	–	Central Asia Cooperation Organization
CAR	–	Central Asian republic
CAREC	–	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation
OIF	–	overall institutional framework
PRC	–	People's Republic of China
RCSP	–	regional cooperation strategy and program
SCC	–	sectoral coordinating committee
SCO	–	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
TA	–	technical assistance

NOTES

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

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At the second and third Ministerial Conferences on Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) held in November 2003 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan; and in November 2004 in Astana, Kazakhstan, respectively, the ministers of the seven CAREC countries—Azerbaijan, the People's Republic of China (PRC), Mongolia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan—reiterated their strong commitment to regional economic cooperation as a means to realizing a shared vision of a region where people live in harmony and prosperity, with free movement of goods, people, and ideas. The ministers also acknowledged a multitude of problems and challenges that require even greater cooperation if CAREC countries are to successfully integrate with world markets and achieve sustained economic growth and poverty reduction. In this context, the ministers requested the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to continue to support the CAREC program by strengthening the role of the overall institutional framework (OIF),¹ identifying feasible regional projects, continuing to mobilize or provide financial resources, and further enhancing donor coordination and cooperation with neighboring countries. The regional technical assistance (TA) is included in the CAREC Member Countries Regional Cooperation Strategy and Program 2005–2007 (RCSP). The TA framework is in Appendix 1.²

II. ISSUES

2. ADB's CAREC program began modestly in 1997 with poverty reduction as its goal. The CAREC program has strategically focused on improving infrastructure and policy environments in the priority areas of transport, trade facilitation, and energy to (i) lessen the region's geographic disadvantages, (ii) promote trade and transit within and beyond the region, and (iii) enhance the efficient and sustainable use of vital natural resources such as energy and water. The program has followed a practical and results-oriented operational approach, achieving tangible progress toward longer-term strategic objectives. This strategic focus and operational approach has been strongly supported by CAREC countries as reflected in the joint statements of the ministerial conferences in 2003 and 2004.

3. Much has been accomplished under the CAREC program. Five investment and program projects in priority sectors totaling \$224.1 million are being implemented with cofinancing of \$135.2 million from other donors. A substantial amount of grant assistance in priority areas amounting to \$14.8 million has been provided for policy support, analytical studies, and capacity building. The OIF, established in 2002 to guide the CAREC program, has proven effective in planning, coordinating, and implementing the regional cooperation projects and activities. In May 2003, several multilateral institutions—the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank—joined the framework to closely coordinate their support for regional cooperation under the aegis of the CAREC with ADB serving as the secretariat. These steps highlight the fact that the CAREC program has developed into a fully-fledged regional cooperation mechanism with ownership on the part of member countries and effective coordination among development partners.

¹ The overall institutional framework consists of an annual ministerial conference, senior officials meetings, sector committees, and project-specific working groups.

² The TA first appeared in *ADB Business Opportunities* (Internet edition) on 30 July 2004.

4. The progress made under the CAREC program is partly attributable to neutral and open exchange of ideas it creates through its meetings, forums, and working groups for CAREC countries and multilateral institutions. These meetings have built trust and mutual respect. Lessons learned from ADB's experience in supporting regional cooperation include the following: (i) strong and sustained political will continues to be important because regional cooperation is a long-term process; (ii) consensus among member countries should be a working principle in promoting the regional cooperation agenda; (iii) strong support from stakeholders on regional cooperation is important; and (v) continued support for capacity building at the national and regional levels remains critical for successful regional cooperation.

5. At the ministerial conferences in November 2003 and in November 2004, ministers noted with satisfaction the progress made to date under the CAREC program and at the same time, recognized formidable challenges to advancing regional cooperation. These challenges include (i) reducing economic distance for restoring the region's historical role as a land bridge; (ii) increasing trade and integration with large markets, both globally and in the region's proximity; (iii) improving supplies of energy and other resources; and (iv) in the longer term, tackling potentially negative externalities such as environmental degradation and the spread of communicable diseases. The ministers therefore agreed to continue progress made under the CAREC program by (i) strengthening the OIF; (ii) further supporting key regional projects; (iii) closely coordinating and cooperating with development partners, other regional initiatives, and private sectors; and (iv) exploring cooperation prospects with neighboring countries beyond current members. The CAREC member countries have requested ADB to continue to provide necessary support.

6. Keeping in mind the lessons learned from previous experiences for regional cooperation and CAREC ministers' request for support, ADB as the catalyst for the CAREC program should be in a position to deliver timely, carefully targeted support for the program. At the same time, the support should be also clearly aligned with the strategic thrusts of the RCSP. First, to deepen political will and trust as a foundation for cooperation, and to enhance strategic and implementation aspects of the CAREC program, OIF components such as the ministerial conferences, senior officers' meetings, sector committees, and national focal points will have to be substantially strengthened. Given the ever-increasing need for institutional support for important regional issues, this should be addressed as a matter of priority. Furthermore, strategic cooperation with important regional organizations such as Central Asia Cooperation Organization (CACO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) needs to be explored and synergies exploited.

7. Second, CAREC needs to focus more on identifying, preparing, and implementing feasible regional projects in priority sectors that would show tangible benefits and serve as champions and catalysts for further cooperation. In doing so, it will be useful to expand projects to include larger neighbors, thus ensuring better access to larger markets and more secure supplies of natural resources. Because scarce financial resources have emerged as a binding constraint to building and maintaining infrastructure, consultations with multilateral and bilateral development partners—as well as with private sectors, both internal and external—to mobilize financing for regional projects should be further strengthened.

8. Third, the CAREC program should endeavor to build a conducive environment for regional cooperation in general, and for the program in particular. The relative lack of such an environment explains in part why regional cooperation has not reached its potential despite commitment from leaders and indigenous efforts by governments. Efforts are ongoing in this

regard, and they include capacity building for regional cooperation³ and information exchange through the CAREC web site. The cooperative environment needs to be further strengthened by (i) building constituencies among the business community, the academic community, and nongovernment organizations (NGOs) to support regional cooperation by providing diverse perspectives and peer pressures; (ii) further information-sharing and dissemination on positive outcomes of regional projects and events; and (iii) in-depth analytical studies on regional cooperation that quantify specific costs and benefits and provide regional poverty data.

III. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A. Purpose and Output

9. The purpose of the TA is to strengthen the CAREC program in line with the strategic thrusts of the RCSP for CAREC countries. The main outputs and outcomes envisaged from the TA are (i) forums for continued dialogue among member countries and multilateral institutions under the CAREC mechanism; (ii) sector road maps and new regional projects, particularly in priority areas of transport, energy, trade facilitation and trade policy; (iii) analytical studies on regional cooperation; (iv) strong and effective constituencies for regional cooperation; and (v) expanded networks for information exchange and dissemination.

B. Methodology and Key Activities

10. As an umbrella TA for the CAREC program, the TA will support activities to be guided by the ministerial conferences under the OIF. Close consultation will be conducted with the senior officials' meetings, national focal points, sector coordinating committees, and multilateral institutions coordination group throughout TA implementation. Specifically, the TA will support the activities described below.

11. **Enhancing an Environment for Dialogue for Regional Cooperation.** Building on the lessons learned from previous TAs, the TA will continue to create and support an environment for open and frank dialogue on regional cooperation issues as a means to building mutual trust and understanding. The TA will prepare the CAREC ministerial conferences, senior officials' meetings, meetings of sector coordinating committees⁴ and working groups, and other preparatory meetings under the OIF. These meetings will be more closely linked to the strategic thrusts identified in the joint ministerial statements and RCSP in close consultation with the respective national focal points and line ministries. The TA will also support close coordination with other development partners and regional organizations to ensure complementarities and synergy in support of regional cooperation.

12. **Identifying Windows of Opportunity for Regional Cooperation.** The TA will support efforts to prepare and implement sector road maps and new regional projects, particularly in the priority sectors of transport, energy, trade facilitation, and trade policy. Regional projects that engage larger neighbors will be explored in close collaboration with the ongoing TA⁵ to yield enhanced results. Possible projects include transport corridors that connect Russia and the PRC to warm-water ports in the Arabian Sea through the CARs, and hydrocarbon energy pipelines from the CARs to neighboring energy-deficit countries. Given the continuing financing

³ ADB. 2003. *Technical Assistance for Capacity Building for Regional Cooperation in Central Asia*. Manila (TA 6158 for \$950,000 approved on 18 December 2003).

⁴ The TA will complement another TA to support activities under the Customs Cooperation Committee.

⁵ ADB. 2003. *Technical Assistance for Subregional Economic Cooperation in South and Central Asia*. Manila (TA 6156 for \$600,000 approved on 18 December 2003).

gaps, resource mobilization will be further intensified for regional projects that have needs and prospects for cofinancing from other development partners.

13. **Undertaking Analytical Studies.** Quality economic sector work is essential in seizing opportunities for regional cooperation. Analysis would reduce uncertainty about costs and benefits, thus enhancing the willingness of the countries to cooperate. In this context, the TA supports the following analytical work: (i) a study on the strategic direction of the CAREC program in a changing environment, focusing on coordination and cooperation with other regional initiatives such as CACO, SCO, and Central and South Asia Transport and Trade Forum; (ii) a regional database on income and nonincome poverty indicators as a foundation for collaborative regional efforts of poverty reduction; and (iii) further economic and sector work in priority areas in coordination with ongoing studies on trade, transport, and transit,⁶ as appropriate.

14. **Building Strong Constituencies for Regional Cooperation.** As a first step toward building strong constituencies for regional cooperation, the TA will support organizing a regional business roundtable, as requested by member countries.⁷ Private sectors will play a larger role in driving regional cooperation, domestically and regionally, and thus the roundtable will provide a valuable opportunity to shape the regional cooperation agenda and offer a feedback mechanism for determining its effectiveness and impact. Given the relatively low degree of private-sector development in the region, the roundtable will be organized on a pilot basis in conjunction with other events such as the CAREC ministerial conferences and/or senior officials' meetings. Close coordination and cooperation with existing initiatives in this area, with institutions that have expertise, and with ADB's South Asia Department will be necessary to ensure the success of the event. The possibility of holding forums on regional cooperation for academics and/or NGOs will be also explored as appropriate.

15. **Furthering Information Dissemination.** This component aims to generate a greater awareness to the CAREC program and regional activities and to facilitate information exchange and dissemination among stakeholders. In close cooperation with ADB's Office of External Relations, the TA will significantly improve current CAREC web site in terms of its style, contents, coverage, and translation into Russian. The TA will also facilitate the preparation and wide circulation of the quarterly regional newsletter. New methods of disseminating information about the CAREC program, such as publications and articles, will be also explored.

C. Cost and Financing

16. The TA is estimated to cost \$1 million equivalent. ADB will finance \$900,000 equivalent on a grant basis by ADB's TA funding program. The participating governments will provide remaining \$100,000, equal to the imputed value of staff time and use of government facilities conducting activities under the TA. Detailed cost estimates are given in Appendix 2.

D. Implementation Arrangements

17. ADB will be the Executing Agency for the TA. ADB's CAREC unit will be responsible for overall guidance and implementation of TA activities. The national focal points under the CAREC mechanism will continue to coordinate regional activities in each member country

⁶ ADB. 2004. *Technical Assistance for Central Asia Regional Cooperation in Trade, Transport, and Trade*. Manila (TA 6184 for \$350,000 approved on 20 August 2004).

⁷ At the senior officials' meeting held on 15–16 April 2004 in Almaty, Kazakhstan, the member countries requested that ADB explore the possibility of having a CAREC business forum.

throughout the TA. TA activities will be closely coordinated with those of other multilateral institutions and regional organizations that are concerned with regional cooperation, as well as with ADB resident missions in the region, to ensure effective implementation.

18. TA implementation will require 7 person-months of international consulting services and 76 person-months of domestic consulting. A core group of consultants will provide advisory, technical, and administrative support services to assist in the overall management of the CAREC program. In addition to the core group of consultants, consultants for regional cooperation, private-sector development, and media and publication affairs shall also be engaged. All consultants will be selected as individuals in accordance with the *Guidelines on the Use of Consultants by Asian Development Bank and Its Borrowers* and other arrangements satisfactory to ADB for the engagement of domestic consultants. An outline of the terms of reference for consultants is in Appendix 4.

19. The TA will be implemented over a period of 18 months, from 1 January 2005 to 30 June 2006. Conference and meeting proceedings, as well as studies and reports, will be published and posted on the updated CAREC web site and quarterly regional newsletters as appropriate.

IV. THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION

20. The President, acting under the authority delegated by the Board, has approved the provision of technical assistance not exceeding the equivalent of \$900,000 on a grant basis for the Greater Silk Road Initiative 2005, and hereby reports this action to the Board.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK

Design Summary	Performance Indicators/Targets	Monitoring Mechanisms	Assumptions and Risks
<p>Goal</p> <p>Economic growth and poverty reduction through enhanced cooperation in the Central Asia Region Economic Cooperation (CAREC) region</p>	<p>Increase in average annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate</p> <p>Increase in GDP per capita</p> <p>Decrease in the number of poor in the region</p> <p>Increase in trade turnover within the region</p>	<p>Asian Development Outlook</p> <p>Direction of trade statistics by International Monetary Fund</p>	<p>.</p>
<p>Purpose</p> <p>The CAREC program strengthened in line with strategic thrusts of the CAREC member countries' Regional Cooperation Strategy and Program (RCSP) 2005–2007</p>	<p>Country ownership of the CAREC program strengthened</p> <p>Regional assistance pipeline developed</p> <p>Performance benchmarks for sectors/institutional side developed.</p> <p>Donor coordination in support of regional cooperation strengthened under the CAREC framework</p> <p>Stakeholders' active participation in the CAREC program and constituencies created</p> <p>Flow of information on regional activities significantly enhanced</p>	<p>Progress reports to senior officials' meetings and ministerial conferences</p> <p>RCSP updates</p> <p>Survey of the CAREC program for countries' sector and/or project reports</p> <p>Regular donor meeting reports</p> <p>Survey or feedbacks from stakeholders</p> <p>Statistics of newsletters circulation and traffic of CAREC web site</p>	<p>(A) Macroeconomic and political stability in the region</p> <p>(A) Governments' continued strong commitment to regional economic cooperation</p> <p>(R) Major external shock to economy that would negatively influence regional cooperation</p>
<p>Outputs</p> <p>1. Forums for continued dialogue on regional</p>	<p>Forums convened: ministerial conferences,</p>	<p>Meeting reports and feedback from</p>	<p>(A) Governments' willingness to actively</p>

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Design Summary	Performance Indicators/Targets	Monitoring Mechanisms	Assumptions and Risks
<p>cooperation at policy and project levels under the overall institutional framework (OIF)</p> <p>2. Sector road maps and lists of possible regional projects in priority sectors</p> <p>3. Analytical studies on regional cooperation</p> <p>4. Strong and efficient constituencies for regional cooperation</p> <p>5. Expanded information network on regional cooperation</p>	<p>senior officials' meetings, meetings for sector committees and working groups, and donor coordination meetings, more closely linked to the strategic thrusts of the CAREC program</p> <p>Indicative regional assistance pipeline in priority sectors</p> <p>A study on a strategic direction for the CAREC program in a changing environment, a regional poverty database, further economic and sector work as needed</p> <p>Regional business roundtable in conjunction with the ministerial conference on a pilot basis</p> <p>Other forums for academics and nongovernment organizations (NGOs) may be explored</p> <p>CAREC web site significantly improved in terms of style, content, and coverage</p> <p>Russian version of CAREC web site launched</p> <p>Quarterly newsletter published and widely distributed</p>	<p>meeting participants</p> <p>RCSP update, sector progress reports, ADB mission reports</p> <p>Consultants and ADB reports</p> <p>Feedback from users of regional poverty database</p> <p>Report on regional business roundtable and completion report ADB mission reports</p> <p>Statistics of web site traffic</p> <p>Survey or feedback from users</p>	<p>participate in the forums</p> <p>(A) Governments' commitment to sector development at the regional level</p> <p>(A) Timely preparation and sharing of quality reports and</p> <p>(A) Willingness of private sector, academia and NGOs to participate and contribute</p> <p>(R) Less commitment from governments and development partners to sharing information</p>
<p>Activities</p> <p>1. Discussing policy and project issues at the CAREC forums</p>	<p>Agreements on agenda, issues, and main outcomes before the meetings</p> <p>CAREC forums:</p>	<p>ADB mission reports</p> <p>Meeting completion reports</p>	<p>(A) Timely preparation of background materials and logistics for forums and enough consultation</p>

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Design Summary	Performance Indicators/Targets	Monitoring Mechanisms	Assumptions and Risks
<p>2.1. Undertaking consultations with government officials and development partners undertaken on sector road maps and a list of regional projects</p> <p>2.2. Supporting meetings of sector coordinating committees and working groups</p> <p>3. Undertaking analytical studies</p> <p>4.1. Consultations with governments, private sector, business community, academia and NGOs</p> <p>4.2. Holding a regional business roundtable</p> <p>5.1. Improving the CAREC web site</p>	<p>ministerial conference: 1 senior officials' meetings: 2 donor meetings: many</p> <p>Indicative regional assistance pipeline in priority sectors updated annually</p> <p>Sector meetings: transport, trade facilitation, trade policy, and energy meetings convened once or twice a year to discuss sector issues</p> <p>A study on a strategic direction of the CAREC program completed by June 2005</p> <p>Regional poverty database: completed by December 2005</p> <p>Other studies: afterward</p> <p>Agreements on agenda, participants, scope of work, and possibly future action plans for regional business roundtable</p> <p>Basic understanding on the necessity of forums for academics and NGOs</p> <p>Regional business roundtable at the ministerial conference in 2005</p> <p>An improving plan prepared: month 1 Works for design/inputs prepared: month 4 Uploaded: month 5 Russian version prepared and launched: month 8 Maintenance: ongoing</p>	<p>ADB consultation reports RCSP update</p> <p>Sector progress reports</p> <p>Consultants' reports</p> <p>ADB and consultant reports</p> <p>Consultants' reports</p> <p>Feedbacks from private sectors, academics, and NGOs</p> <p>ADB mission reports</p> <p>Meeting preparation and completion reports</p> <p>Traffic statistics of the CAREC web site</p> <p>Regular feedbacks from users</p>	<p>(A) Timely preparation of background materials and logistics for sector meetings</p> <p>(A) Availability of qualified consultants</p> <p>(A) Efficient organization of consultation and roundtable in a participatory manner</p> <p>(A) Quality and timely provision of inputs from member countries and development partners</p>

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COST ESTIMATES AND FINANCING PLAN
(\$'000)

Item	Foreign Exchange	Local Currency	Total Cost
A. Asian Development Bank (ADB) Financing^a			
1. Consultants	371.0	0.0	371.0
a. Remuneration and Per Diem	330.0	0.0	330.0
i. International Consultants	178.0	0.0	178.0
ii. Domestic Consultants	152.0	0.0	152.0
b. International and Local Travel	41.0	0.0	41.0
2. Conference/Meetings^a	420.0	0.0	420.0
3. Administrative Support	20.0	0.0	20.0
a. Support Staff for Project Secretariat	8.0	0.0	8.0
b. Publications and Web Site Development and Maintenance	6.0	0.0	6.0
c. Administrative Expenses ^b	6.0	0.0	6.0
4. Contingencies	89.0	0.0	89.0
Subtotal (A)	900.0	0.0	900.0
B. Government Financing^b			
1. Counterpart Staff	0.0	40.0	40.0
2. Conferences/Meetings	0.0	50.0	50.0
3. Reports, Local Communication, and Other Support Services	0.0	10.0	10.0
Subtotal (B)	0.0	100.0	100.0
Total	900.0	100.0	1,000.0

^a This includes airfare, hotel, subsistence allowances of participants, and other costs. Financed by ADB's technical assistance funding program.

^b Includes office supplies, communications, translation, and other miscellaneous expenses.
Source: ADB Staff Estimates.

OUTLINE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANTS

A. Introduction

1. A total of 7 person-months of international and 76 person-months of domestic consulting services will be required under the proposed technical assistance (TA). Given that the TA will support a range of activities of the Greater Silk Road Initiative under the CAREC program, some of which are still being planned, detailed terms of reference for specific tasks may be revised and supplemented at a later stage as appropriate.

B. Core Group Consultants

1. **Advisor: Regional Cooperation Specialist** (5 person-months)
 2. An internationally recruited consultant will be engaged as advisor to
 - (i) help coordinate, integrate, and monitor the various activities under the TA;
 - (ii) assist the head of Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Unit (CARECU) in planning, preparing for, and implementing conferences and meetings for the initiative, including the preparation of resource papers;
 - (iii) provide support for identifying and preparing new regional projects covering participating and neighboring countries;
 - (iv) provide support to promote private-sector participation in the CAREC program, including a regional business roundtable;
 - (v) provide support to promote participation of other stakeholders such as academics and NGOs;
 - (vi) oversee improvements to the CAREC web site and regional newsletter, and provide necessary input;
 - (vii) perform analytical studies on regional cooperation particularly in priority sectors of transport, energy, and trade facilitation as required;
 - (viii) participate in consultation with participating governments and development partners, as required, on particular issues related to the CAREC program;
 - (ix) help identify and assess possible areas of focus in the CAREC program; and
 - (x) provide other technical, administrative, and coordinating support to the overall institutional framework (OIF) of the CAREC program, as required.
 2. **Development Economist** (18 person-months)
3. A domestically recruited consultant will be engaged as a development economist to
 - (i) assist the secretariat to the OIF;
 - (ii) assist in organizing ministerial conferences, senior officials' meetings, and other meetings and workshops; prepare resource papers for these meetings; and perform other follow up activities;
 - (iii) prepare quarterly monitoring reports on TA implementation, which covers status of proposed activities under the TA and related activities, and outstanding issues and slippages for the attention of the head of CARECU;
 - (iv) maintain and upgrade a database of relevant indicators for the CAREC program, which covers (a) implementation status of regional projects, (b) activities of

- various regional initiatives, and (c) publications and analytical studies on regional cooperation;
- (v) help prepare project profiles for regional projects; and
- (vi) help implement the TA, including (a) the monitoring of budget disbursements, consultant recruitment, and contract variations; and (b) the procurement of other inputs.

3. **In-Country Regional Cooperation Specialists** (48 person-months)

4. One domestically recruited specialist in each participating country will be engaged to serve as an expert with the following primary responsibilities:

- (i) be the "national focal point" on regional economic cooperation, coordinating with other national focal points, ADB secretariat in headquarters, and the resident mission;
- (ii) establish and maintain, through regular, day-to-day contact and consultation, long-term working relationships with key government agencies responsible for regional economic cooperation;
- (iii) ensure the implementation of the regional work program in the country;
- (iv) help identify and develop potential new areas of the initiative;
- (v) monitor programs and initiatives of the Government and regional organizations on regional economic cooperation; identify, evaluate, and recommend potential areas for ADB assistance;
- (vi) monitor programs of other stakeholders, especially of external funding agencies operating in the country; identify, evaluate, and recommend potential areas of cooperation;
- (vii) participate in relevant ADB missions;
- (viii) report on all activities monthly; and
- (ix) perform other ADB-related tasks as assigned by the resident representative, when time allows and provided that work relating to regional economic cooperation is given priority.

C. **Short-Term Experts**

1. **Regional Cooperation Expert** (2 person-months)

5. The internationally recruited specialist will be engaged to undertake a study on the strategic direction of the CAREC program focusing on coordination and cooperation with other regional cooperation initiatives. The study will be designed to provide possible strategic directions and recommended actions in a practical and sequential manner for the CAREC program. In particular, the consultant is required to

- (i) analyze ADB initiatives for regional cooperation, focusing on possible areas of complementarities, overlap, and their implications on the capacities of member countries in view of membership, mandate, organizational structure, planned activities, and donor alliance;
- (ii) based on the analysis, develop specific recommendations on how to integrate such efforts and coordinate within ADB to avoid overlap;
- (iii) analyze succinctly the major regional organizations in terms of their membership structure, strategic thrusts, core activities, financing mechanisms, donor involvement, strengths vs. weaknesses, future prospects, and effectiveness. Major regional

- organizations to be analyzed should focus on, but not limited to, the Central Asia Cooperation Organization (CACO) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO);
- (iv) develop practical options for (a) strategic cooperation modality with these organizations, (b) institutional and operational adjustments of the CAREC program including membership, and (iii) cooperation with neighboring countries; and.
 - (v) develop concrete ways to strengthen donor partnership under the CAREC program.

2. Media and Publication Expert (6 person-months)

6. The domestically recruited consultant will be engaged as a media and publication expert to (i) improve the CAREC web site significantly; (ii) support publishing of a quarterly regional newsletter; (iii) prepare publications and reports related to high-profile CAREC meetings and events; and (iv) help arrange for media coverage of high-profile CAREC meetings, projects, and activities, as required.

3. Poverty Expert (4 person-months)

7. A regional database on income and nonincome poverty would benefit all regional cooperation projects and activities, and has been included in the RSCP as an activity to be supported by this umbrella TA. A domestically recruited consultant will be engaged as a poverty expert to (i) review and analyze existing data on income and nonincome poverty in the region; (ii) build on a regional poverty database in coordination with ongoing studies on transport, trade, and transit; (iii) provide inputs on regional poverty for various CAREC papers; and (iv) perform other tasks as required.