

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: RSGP

TA No. and Name TA 7351-REG: Improving Public Services through Information and Communication Technology			Amount Approved: \$500,000	
			Revised Amount:	
Executing Agency: Asian Development Bank		Source of Funding: Republic of Korea e-Asia and Knowledge Partnership Fund	TA Amount Undisbursed \$42,631	TA Amount Utilized \$457,369
Date			Completion Date	
Approval 22 Sept 2009	Signing N.A.	Fielding of Consultants 27 Nov 2009	Original 31 Mar 2011	Actual 31 Oct 2011
			Closing Date	
			Original 31 March 2011	Actual 20 Feb 2012
Description <p>ADB recognized the importance of ICT for development in its ICT strategy in 2003 and in its long-term strategic framework 2008–2020 (Strategy 2020). ADB has responded to increasing demands from its developing member countries (DMCs) by providing assistance in establishing ICT infrastructure and by using ICT as a project component in various sector programs. This assistance has contributed to national ICT and electronic government (e-government) development in DMCs. Despite some innovative features, however, the application of ICT is often found to lack the prerequisite preparatory assessment, a realistic road map for development, and appropriate skills and competence. This has led to a piecemeal approach in various ICT projects, and resulted in overlapping efforts, poor information sharing, incompatibility among different ICT applications, and failure to exploit synergies.</p> <p>To address these challenges, this regional capacity development technical assistance (TA) was processed to complement ADB's ICT-supported sector programs. It took a countrywide approach to enhance the capacity of concerned ministries and agencies in three focus countries (Mongolia, Philippines and Viet Nam) in better applying ICT for national and sector development. These three focus countries have the highest number of ADB ICT supported projects, but it was expected that the TA would also be beneficial to other DMCs.</p>				
Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs <p>The expected impact of the TA was improved sustainability of ICT operation and success rate of ICT project used by government for national and sector development. The expected outcome was improved knowledge, skills, and awareness of ICT of the governments of participating DMCs. The TA envisaged to produce three outputs: (i) e-government maturity model and practices, and road map development, (ii) ICT project guidebook and online platform, and (iii) Learning programs.</p>				
Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities <p>A consulting team was formed comprised of one international consultant, three national consultants from Mongolia, Philippines and Vietnam and was supported by a research consultant based in Manila. Overall performance of the international consultants was good and the performance of the national consultants was excellent.</p> <p>The consulting team was managed and advised by ADB staff from RSDD (project officer), OIST (advisor), VRM (coordinator) and MRM (coordinator). The counterpart country teams ("Country Teams") headed by a senior government official from the coordinating government agency in the respective country comprised of the future expert users ("Champions") and trainers. The Country Teams were consistently updated on the progress of the project outputs and participated in the Training of Trainers after which their role was elevated to become the main coordinator within their agencies. The partner organizations including the NIA, UN-APCICT and IESG had provided relevant technical inputs (e.g., best practices, case studies), logistical support as well as direct funding (in the case of NIA) to the Project.</p> <p>The Project had been implemented within the budget and completed as planned in the original TA paper. There was one minor change in scope to increase person-day inputs for the international consultants, which was needed to adjust the change of project direction in the development of e-Gov CMM. Overall, ADB's performance was satisfactory. The international consultant's performance was satisfactory and the performance of three local consultants was a mixture of excellent, satisfactory and generally satisfactory.</p>				
Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome <p>The project delivered the three major expected outputs. The first output, e-Gov CMM was developed incorporating global best practices and learning from similar initiatives, and then tested with selected government agencies. The second deliverable, ICT project guidebook was developed as a collection of international best practices, case studies and references to international ICT Management frameworks and models. The third deliverable was the development</p>				

of an online platform to host the e-Gov CMM, ICT Project Guidebook. All deliverables were initially to be developed in English and then to be translated into Mongolian and Vietnamese. It was envisaged that the government agencies could identify their capacity gaps and be assisted in the development of ICT related action plans through the capacity development program for the government agencies in three focus countries based on the first three outputs.

The Project had delivered all required outputs with a level of quality as indicated at the consultant's TORs and other project documents. Narrative assessments submitted by country partners showed that the participants joining the various training programs were generally satisfied with the management and content of the training courses. In all countries, the trainings created awareness of importance of capacity development program based on capacity assessment of the organizations that have a plan or are implementing ICT projects.

Overall Assessment and Rating

The e-Gov CMM and the ICT Project Guidebook have been made available to both government officials in DMCs and ADB staff. The e-Gov CMM was introduced to a total of five sectors and three ICT agencies in Mongolia, Philippines, and Vietnam. Over 150 government officials were trained for e-Gov CMM whereby the awareness of the importance to improve e-Government capacity development was successfully raised and the ownership of methodologies transferred to the designated government officials in the participating countries. The majority of the involved ministries planned to implement organizational ICT capacity development program based on e-Gov CMM in both the national and provincial levels.

Overall, the RETA is considered successful.

Major Lessons Learned

First, it was too ambitious that the TA aimed to develop the e-Gov CMM and the application of it to the nine government agencies in the participating countries at the same time. Although the value of the e-Gov CMM has been well accepted, the number of the pilots should have been reduced in order to get a better quality in the Model development as well as the capacity development in pilot agencies.

Second, it was a right decision to develop the e-Gov CMM based on the COBIT framework, the internationally recognized IT governance model. However, there was no clear plan for maintenance and further development. Since the Gov CMM was developed by customization and simplification of the COBIT framework, it cannot be supported by the international standard body which created and manages the COBIT framework any more. More importantly, mainstreaming is also difficult without a strong supporting institution such as the ISACA and the ITGI¹ in the first place. Sustainability of the e-Gov CMM becomes a critical issue to move forward.

Third, the Project team had closely worked with resident missions (Mongolia Resident Mission and Viet Nam Resident Mission) for the Project implementation. However, there was not much effort to engage the relevant regional departments during the course of Project implementation. Because of lack interface with regional departments, it was difficult to take follow-up actions based on the Project's achievements in an effort to mainstream e-Governance in ADB's operations going forward.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

The key recommendations are as follows: First, in continuation of the e-Government capacity development initiative which started in the Project, ADB needs to further develop the e-Gov CMM and its methodology in collaboration with the partner organizations. Second, a TA is proposed to support e-Government projects in DMCs through the e-Gov CMM and toolkits. Third, to mainstream e-Government in ADB's PSM operations, it is proposed to prepare a guideline for e-Governance projects which can incorporate the e-Gov CMM methodology and toolkits. In addition, regional departments need to proactively consider e-Government projects to be included in the DMCs' CPS/COBP.

Prepared by Seok Yong Yoon Designation Senior Public Management Specialist (e-Governance), RSGP

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¹ The COBIT was created by the Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA) and the IT Governance Institute (ITGI) in 1996