



STAGE FOUR: Regained Momentum (2015–2021)

Strategy 2030 and beyond: stronger, better, faster ADB

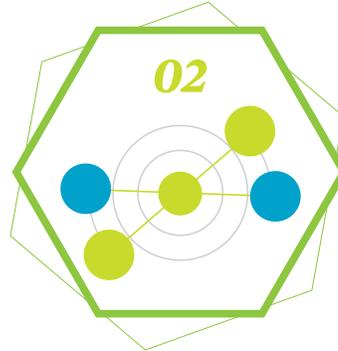
from 2015 to 2018

01

Midterm review of Strategy 2030 points the way

ADB's knowledge management journey picked up speed with the introduction of the country knowledge plan, designating the country director as knowledge custodian.

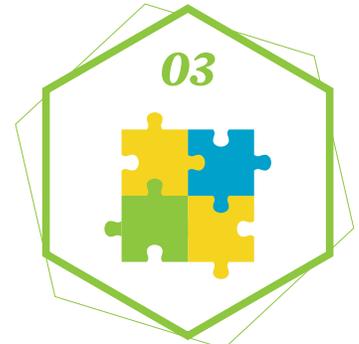
02



The shift to sector and thematic groups

The sector and thematic groups empowered to work closely with sector committees in ADB's regional departments.

03



Strategy 2030 strengthens ADB as a knowledge provider

Need for high-level strategic guidance on knowledge management and integration with finance and partnerships recognized.

from 2018 to 2021

04



Work begins on ADB's innovation framework

While knowledge management was seen in previous years as a tool to increase efficiency, the focus shifted from managing knowledge to implementing innovation.

05

A plan for collaboration, relevance, and impact

The new Knowledge Management Action Plan 2021–2025 determines concrete actions to continue to align knowledge management with Strategy 2030.



A new human resources policy document, Our People Strategy 2010, demonstrated ADB's strong commitment to knowledge management by defining core knowledge competencies to guide staff retention, recruitment, and development. These were

- application of technical knowledge and skills,
- leadership and strategic thinking,
- communication and knowledge sharing,
- change and innovation,
- achieving results and problem solving,
- client orientation, and
- working together.

To lock in support for knowledge sharing and teamwork, the KMAP Results Framework, approved in March 2010, was incorporated in the Work Program and Budget Framework. Furthermore, Human Resources recognized teamwork success stories and instituted an award system for teamwork and multidisciplinary work units. This all helped the cause of effective knowledge management.

Implementation of the second phase of the Information Systems and Technology Strategy continued, with new collaboration mechanisms for cross-departmental and multidisciplinary knowledge generation and sharing. The bank initiated several projects to improve information access and retrieval, including the development of an intranet for easier access to community of practice web pages and ADB databases such as ERCD's data library and database of DMC statistics; knowledge management applications (KMApps) for knowledge sharing, capture, and dissemination; and Mapview for improved spatial information use.

To further maximize the gains from these improved strategic, human resource, and IT directions, ADB consolidated three specialized knowledge units, the Economics and Research Department (currently ERCD), the Office of Regional Economic Integration, and the RSDD, under an expanded vice-presidency for knowledge management and sustainable development. This consolidation helped formalize the key role of knowledge management within the bank.

Other initiatives further strengthened knowledge management within the bank, including the establishment of the Knowledge Forum in 2012. Chaired by the President, the forum aimed to build stronger connections between ADB departments, including the ADBI, and avoid duplication of efforts. In addition, the Knowledge Sharing and Services Center was restructured to replace the Knowledge Management Center and strengthen knowledge management coordination and guidance.

In 2011 and 2012, ADB received the Asian MAKE Award for its commendable performance in collaborative enterprise-wide knowledge sharing. ADB was one of four public organizations out of 20 winners to have been chosen for this award by a panel of Fortune 500 senior executives and internationally recognized knowledge management experts.

By 2013, the push for knowledge management reforms started to slow down, but there was still progress toward improving the internal system, including the approval of the Knowledge Management Directions and Action Plan 2013–2015 and the third phase of the Information Systems and Technology Strategy. Both initiatives focused on enhancing information and communication technology (ICT) systems for better internal and external stakeholder communication and collaboration. On the human resources side, a recommendation that knowledge contribution be included in staff performance evaluation was approved, and international staff were strategically reassigned to promote knowledge sharing.

In 2014, the first Knowledge Operations Review Meeting affirmed the importance of “One ADB,” and brought knowledge management discussions to the level of ADB operations. The Midterm Review of Strategy 2020 was conducted in the same year to “prepare ADB to meet the challenges of a transforming Asia and the Pacific.”



There was a change when knowledge management became part of performance evaluation, but this was not enough. More incentives were needed to make people do more knowledge management, make it part of their day-to-day job.



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Strategy 2030, released in 2018, states that

ADB will strengthen its role as a knowledge provider. ADB will work closely with DMCs to identify their needs and produce the most relevant knowledge products and services. It will incentivize staff to integrate the best available knowledge with financing and institutional capacity building throughout the operational cycle. ADB will proactively engage in research, provide high quality policy advice to DMCs, and strengthen DMCs' institutional capacity in addressing development issues.

ADB's research is showcased annually during ERCD's Economists' Forum. This raises the profile and quality of ADB's research, aligns it with Strategy 2030 priorities, shares knowledge across the bank, and facilitates collaborative research work.

In 2015, after a midterm review of Strategy 2020, ADB's knowledge management journey picked up speed, with the introduction of the country knowledge plan, designating the country director as knowledge custodian. Each country knowledge plan reflects a DMC's knowledge priorities considering its specific circumstances and needs. Since then, a country knowledge plan has been appended to each CPS, and is operationalized through a pipeline of knowledge products and services reflected in the country operations and business plan.

The Midterm Review of Strategy 2020 noted that majority of the DMCs were transitioning to middle-income status and thus had improved their institutional capacity, and their needs were diversifying.¹⁵ As a result these DMCs were expecting ADB to respond to their changing needs.¹⁶

In 2014, ADB's then-President Takehiko Nakao announced his intention for ADB to become "stronger, better, and faster" and pressure mounted to really inculcate the vision of "One ADB" across departments and between ADB headquarters and its resident missions. Becoming a stronger knowledge institution meant ADB needed clearer, high-level strategic guidance on knowledge management, and a more systemic feedback mechanism for addressing the needs of DMCs.

In response to these challenges, in 2018 ADB implemented Strategy 2030, which aims to strengthen ADB's role as a knowledge provider. The strategy also promises to "incentivize staff to integrate the best available knowledge with financing and institutional capacity building throughout the operational cycle."¹⁷ It highlights the bank's approach, which integrates finance, knowledge, and partnership in its operations.

To align their functions more closely with operations, the communities of practice were reconstituted into sector and thematic groups (STGs) in 2015. The STGs had more flexible budgets and have since been

¹⁵ ADB. 2014. *Review of Medium-Term Strategy 2020: Meeting the Challenge of a Transforming Asia and the Pacific*. Manila.

¹⁶ McCawley, P. 2017. *Banking on the Future of Asia and the Pacific: 50 Years of the Asian Development Bank*. Manila.

¹⁷ ADB. 2018. *Strategy 2030, Achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Asia and the Pacific*. Manila.