

TCR Validation Report
September 2021

Kyrgyz Republic: Strengthening Government Capacity for Managing Development Projects

Reference Number: TCRV-2021-012
Project Number: 48038-001
TA Number: 8783



Raising development impact through evaluation

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
CPS	–	country partnership strategy
DMF	–	design and monitoring framework
GDPM	–	Guidelines for Development Project Management
EA	–	executing agency
IED	–	Independent Evaluation Department
MOE	–	Ministry of Economy
MOF	–	Ministry of Finance
SCEIUS	–	State Committee on Industry, Energy and Subsoil Use
TA	–	technical assistance
TCR	–	technical assistance completion report
TCRV	–	technical assistance completion report validation

NOTE

In this report, “\$” refers to United States dollars.

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT VALIDATION REPORT¹

1. PROJECT DATA TA No. 8783

TA Name	Strengthening Government Capacity for Managing Development Projects	Approval Date	4 Dec 2014	Approved (\$)	600,000.00
		Signing Date	25 Dec 2014	Revised (\$)	Not applicable
Country	Kyrgyz Republic	Planned Completion Date	31 Dec 2017	Disbursed (\$)	526,939.00
		Actual Completion Date	17 Feb 2020	Undisbursed (\$)	73,061.00
Department	Central and West Asia Department	TA Type	TRTA () KSTA () PATA () CDTA (✓) RDTA () PPTA () RETA ()	Sources of Funding	Technical Assistance Special Fund-V
Sector and Subsector	Public sector management			Executing Agency	Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic

CDTA = capacity development technical assistance, KSTA = knowledge and support technical assistance, PATA = policy and advisory technical assistance, PPTA = project preparation technical assistance, RDTA = research and development technical assistance, RETA = regional technical assistance, TA = technical assistance, TRTA = transaction technical assistance.

2. DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK AND RESULTS

Objective	The main objective of the capacity development technical assistance (CDTA) was to strengthen government's capacity to manage development projects. The technical assistance (TA) envisaged improvement in governance and implementation effectiveness of development projects in key sectors.
TA Rationale	<p>The TA was responsive to a capacity need identified in ADB's country partnership strategy (CPS), 2013–2017, for the infrastructure and education sectors that made up 86.8% of the total CPS envelope.²</p> <p>The TA responded to government's request to strengthen its capacity to manage development projects aligned with the timing of ADB's country operations business plan, 2014–2016. It built on ADB's long-standing experience and was oriented to strengthen the effectiveness and results of its development interventions, thus, contributing to government's reform efforts in strengthening public financial management and good governance.</p>

Results Levels	Indicators ³	IED Comment on Evaluability of Indicators
Outcome Strengthened government capacity for managing development projects	Country performance assessment (CPA) rating on portfolio performance improved to 4.0 or higher in 2018 (2013 baseline: 3.0).	Evaluable. The original design and monitoring framework (DMF) was revised in August 2018, and it expected that the revised portfolio CPA score would be 4.5 at the same level of 2016. However, this

¹ Team members: C. Ramos-Galacgac (initial reviewer), D. Menezes (validator), G. Rauniyar (quality reviewer).

² ADB. 2013. *Country Partnership Strategy: Kyrgyz Republic, 2013–2017*. Manila.

³ Indicators reflected in this table are based on the final approved DMF as per the memo dated 2 August 2018.

Results Levels	Indicators ³	IED Comment on Evaluability of Indicators
		indicator may not accurately measure strengthened government capacity as improved CPA rating could also be a result of improved capacity of ADB and changed socioeconomic and political context.
Output 1 Policy guidelines and procedures for managing development projects improved	a. Guidelines for Development Project Management (GDPM) approved by the government for mandatory use by December 2017.	Evaluable. The indicator could have been clearer about which government authority would approve the GDPM.
	b. Handbook on managing development projects prepared and approved by the third quarter of 2018.	Evaluable. This indicator replaced an earlier indicator when the DMF was revised in August 2018. The indicator could have been clearer about which authority would approve it (i.e., Ministry of Finance, MOF and ADB). Also, the reason for revision should have been provided.
Output 2 Sustainable training program for project management introduced to the MOF Training Center, Ministry of Economy (MOE), project management office (PMO), and executing agencies (EAs)	a. Training program approved by MOF by March 2018.	Evaluable. It contains clear statement on approval date and approving authority. As the output statement reflected that this training was for project management, the indicator should have been more specific.
	b. 45 trainees complete the pilot program by October 2018	Evaluable. Clear target for the number of trainees with a timeframe. The original DMF had two indicators for training staff and completion of the pilot program. The TCR noted that these were merged into the revised indicator. The indicator should have been disaggregated by gender. The DMF could also have included proxy indicator and target to reflect the quality of training.
	c. Training Center launched the training course in project management by December 2018.	Evaluable. The indicator was revised from the original DMF target date of 2016 to reflect a new timeframe. It also dropped previous references to the training course being certified during the DMF's

Results Levels	Indicators ³	IED Comment on Evaluability of Indicators
		revision. ⁴ The rationale for this minor change was unclear.
Output 3 National capacity for project management and monitoring improved	Three national consultants to facilitate portfolio management are hired and placed in the Prime Minister's Office and State Committee on Industry, Energy and Subsoil Use (SCEIUS)	Evaluable. The indicator should have stated the type of national consultants to be engaged. It would have been helpful to also know specific deliverables of the consultants.

3. PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Relevance

Item	Highly Relevant	Relevant	Less than Relevant	Irrelevant
TCR Rating			✓	
TCRV Rating			✓	
IED Rationale	<p>The TA was aligned with the objectives of ADB's CPS 2013–2017 (footnote 2) and the government's National Sustainable Development Strategy 2017. ADB responded to the government's request to address the capacity gaps in the public institutions. The CDTA modality was, therefore, relevant to the intended objective.</p> <p>The TA had several changes in scope, and it received two extensions:</p> <p>(i) Memo of 15 December 2015. Inputs of the existing consulting team were reduced by 19 person-months and tional positions were recruited to strengthen the government's implementation capacity.⁵</p> <p>(ii) TA review in April 2017–May 2017. ADB and MOF agreed to changes in implementation arrangements to ensure that best international practices were incorporated and supported finalization of key outputs (i.e., GDPM), according to the 25 July 2017 memo.⁶ Consequently, the consultancy contract with ICON Institute GmbH was terminated, and one international and three national consultants were hired to complete the work, with activities refocused on output 1 (improved policy guidelines and procedures for managing development projects) and output 2 (sustainable training program for project management introduced to MOF Training Center for MOF, MOE, PMO, and EAs) to expedite the finalization of the GDPM. Accordingly, output 4 (knowledge products for developing the local supply market capacity) was cancelled due to its weak linkage to overall TA outcome and implementation delays, and the DMF was revised. The budget was also reallocated across categories to address a mismatch between demand and supply in the original TA design.</p> <p>(iii) Minor change in scope on 2 August 2018 memo. It was approved to strengthen the project outcome and likelihood of sustainability, and to enable MOF to avail of continuous expert support to ADB portfolio implementation.</p>			

⁴ ADB (Central and West Asia Department [CWRD]). 2018. CDTA 8783-KGZ: Strengthening Government Capacity for Managing Development Finance – Minor Change in Scope. Memorandum. 2 August (internal).

⁵ ADB (CWRD). 2015. CDTA 8783-KGZ: Strengthening Government Capacity for Managing Development Projects – Minor Change in Scope. Memorandum. 15 December (internal).

⁶ ADB (CWRD). 2017. CDTA 8783-KGZ: Strengthening Government Capacity for Managing Development Projects – Minor Change in Scope and extension of TA closing date. Memorandum. 25 July (internal).

	<p>Indicators for outputs 1 and 3 (improved national capacity for project management and monitoring) were revised in the DMF to reflect the project emphasis on the key deliverables (output indicator 1b was added and two others were dropped; and output 3 indicators were dropped and replaced with a single indicator (footnote 2). Apparently, indicators appear to have lacked required consultation and agreements between TA design team and the government agencies.</p> <p>(iv) Minor change on 14 May 2019. It permitted reallocation of \$15,000 from studies/surveys to trainings/seminars given that expenses were no longer needed after output 4 was cancelled.⁷ The reallocation of funds facilitated engagement of four consultants to support and build capacity of government partners.</p> <p>(v) Extensions of the project completion date. The first extension was for a year from 31 December 2017 to 31 December 2018 due to project implementation delays and the revised implementation arrangement (footnote 6). The completion date was then further extended by 11 months to 1 December 2019 to cover training of more EA staff on the new policy on development project management and enable MOF to access continued support to ADB portfolio implementation.⁸</p> <p>ADB considered that these revisions to the project design did not change the TA's main objectives. They were instead meant to strengthen government ownership by taking on board suggestions of the EA, strengthen implementation, and ensure completion of activities. However, as the TCR noted, the need for these changes indicated that the project design's lacked internal coherence, resulting in frequent changes in scope, implementation arrangements, and the DMF design. This seriously affected the delivery of the TA outputs and outcomes.</p> <p>This validation, therefore, assesses the TA less than relevant, and it concurs with the TCR assessment.</p>
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Effectiveness

Item	Highly Effective	Effective	Less than Effective	Ineffective
TCR Rating			✓	
TCRV Rating			✓	
Evidence of Outputs Achieved	<p>The TCR assessed achievements against output targets as follows:</p> <p>Output 1: Of the two targets, one was achieved with delay and the other was partially achieved. The target of GDPM's approval was achieved in 2019 against the revised DMF target of 2017. The target of "handbook on managing development projects being prepared and approved" was partially achieved as the handbook was still pending approval as of TA completion.</p> <p>Output 2: All three targets were achieved, with some delays. A training program in project management was developed and approved by MOF. Training in management of donor-financed projects was provided to 71 officials, professors, and EA staff, against the target of 45 trainees. The training course was launched and integrated into the annual training plan of the MOF Training Center.</p>			

⁷ ADB (CWRD). 2019. TA 8783-KGZ: Strengthening Government Capacity for Managing Development Projects – Minor Change in Reallocation and Implementation Arrangements. Memorandum. 14 May (internal).

⁸ ADB (CWRD). 2018. CDTA 8783-KGZ: Strengthening Government Capacity for Managing Development Projects – Extension of the TA completion date. Memorandum. 7 December (internal).

	Output 3: The revised target of hiring and placing three national consultants to facilitate portfolio management was not achieved as only one consultant was eventually hired.
Evidence of Outcomes Achieved	The TCR indicated that the outcome was partially achieved. The CPA rating on portfolio performance improved from 3.0 in 2013 to 4.5 in 2016, and it dropped to 3.5 in 2018 and 2020, falling short to the targeted outcome of a CPA rating of 4.0 or higher. The TCR noted that the TA did not achieve intended results and, thus, it rated TA's performance less than effective.
IED Rationale	The TA did not achieve its output targets. The output targets were reduced during the implementation, and the revised targets were only partially achieved after delays. The TA outcomes fell substantially short to their targets. This validation assesses the TA performance less than effective in agreement with the TCR rating.

Efficiency

Item	Highly Efficient	Efficient	Less than Efficient	Inefficient
TCR Rating		✓		
TCRV Rating			✓	
IED Rationale	The TA disbursed 88% of its budget and there were no cost overruns. However, the TA implementation period was extended twice for a total of 23 months, or 64% of the planned implementation period of 36 months. Some key TA deliverables were cancelled during the implementation process, and the reduced output targets were only partially achieved at completion. Although the TA produced some useful outputs, such as the GDPM and institutionalization of the training program, the TCR noted that the TA did not improve the governance and effectiveness of development projects or strengthen the portfolio management in the Kyrgyz Republic. This validation assesses the TA's socioeconomic benefits insignificant and, therefore, the TA less than efficient.			

Criterion	Weight	Rating Value	Weighted Rating
Relevance	0.35	1	0.35
Effectiveness	0.35	1	0.35
Efficiency	0.30	1	0.30
Overall Assessment (Weighted average of above criteria) ⁹			1.00

Overall Rating

Item	Highly Successful	Successful	Less than Successful	Unsuccessful
TCR Rating			✓	
TCRV Rating			✓	
IED Rationale	The TA was in line with ADB's CPS and business plan. However, it was assessed less than relevant due to serious design shortcomings that resulted in frequent changes to the project design and significantly affected achievement of the TA outputs and outcomes. The TA was less than effective as the outcomes and outputs were only partially achieved. The TA was less than efficient due to process inefficiencies and its very limited socioeconomic benefits, although some useful outputs were produced. Overall, this validation assesses the TA less than successful.			

⁹ Each subrating is assigned a numerical value: e.g., highly relevant = 3, relevant = 2, less than relevant = 1, and irrelevant = 0. The compound criteria for performance rating are (i) highly successful—overall weighted average greater than 2.30; (ii) successful—overall weighted average greater than or equal to 1.65 and less than or equal to 2.30; (iii) less than successful—overall weighted average greater than or equal to 0.75 and less than 1.65; and (iv) unsuccessful—overall weighted average is less than 0.75.

4. SUSTAINABILITY

Item	Highly Likely	Likely	Less Likely	Unlikely	NA
TCR Rating	✓				
TCRV Rating		✓			
IED Rationale	This validation assesses this TA likely sustainable as there is evidence of government commitment to the GDPM and the training program within the MOF Training Center. The GDPM and the training program have been institutionalized and fully operational since 2019 and are likely to expand. The government approved the regulation on public investment management in May 2019. The MOF hired the training coordinator as deputy director of the Training Center, and two other consultants were designated as key trainers for the course. A minor weakness was that the user handbook remained in draft form and its finalization and dissemination would be important to ensure that project agencies were able to effectively put the GDPM into practice.				

Lessons Learned (1–3 implementation, 4–7 development results, 8 others)

Criteria	TCR Self-Assessment	IED Comment
1. Design and/or planning	Extensive consultations should take place before TA approval to avoid redesign of the DMF. Sound diagnosis, risk assessments, and consultation with government are key to avoiding post-approval revisions to the TA. This TA had a straightforward goal of developing, approving, and implementing a new policy or regulation to improve development projects' performance. All project activities should have been linked to and supported this overarching goal, thus strengthening the project outcome.	This validation agrees with the TCR lesson, which is well framed.
2. Implementation and/or delivery	Several consultant positions were added to the original project design and cancelled later without being filled. Two additional policies were developed on the EA's request, but were not formally approved by EA itself. Requests for additional consultants, procurements, and deliverables must be thoroughly reviewed and discussed with all stakeholders and direct beneficiaries to avoid unnecessary changes in the TA design.	This validation agrees with the main thrust of this lesson. ADB also needs to ensure that the TA formulation has gone through due diligence process. During implementation, the justification for scope change needs to be triangulated prior to the approval.
3. Management (staffing, including consultants)	The TA had three consecutive ADB project team leaders in the first year of implementation and five in total. This also might have negatively affected project performance and consistency. It is recommended to maintain the same ADB teams as much as possible without unnecessary reshuffling throughout the project's life.	This validation agrees with the lesson for ensuring continuity of ADB staff. It notes that when staff changes occur, there should be a mechanism for smooth transfer of responsibility so that institutional memory is retained without adversely impacting project performance.

Criteria	TCR Self-Assessment	IED Comment
4. Knowledge building	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awareness <input type="checkbox"/> Technical product <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption or uptake <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building institutional or system capacity <input type="checkbox"/> National or sector practice (guidelines) <input type="checkbox"/> Policy, legal standards <input type="checkbox"/> Academic literature Trainings under output 2 were conducted for mixed groups comprising project implementers; controlling bodies (chamber of accounts, prosecutor's office); and academia. Under professional facilitation, this approach prompted comprehensive discussions and led to participants' deeper understanding of issues. It is recommended to continue the practice of mixed groups of various backgrounds and roles in project preparation, implementation, and assessment.	The lesson is written as a recommendation. This validation is not convinced by the lesson because its implications are not known. The lesson could be nuanced by emphasizing the need to maintain a proper focus on training officials and staff from relevant core agencies.
5. Stakeholder participation		Given the design shortcomings, stakeholder participation had been lacking.
6. Partnership (and cofinancing)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internal to ADB <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External to ADB (may also include ADB) Effective and timely coordination with the World Bank team streamlined the focus of two parallel TA projects. ADB concentrated on implementation issues, and World Bank on assessment.	This statement should be reframed as a lesson, emphasizing that coordination with other development partners can help enhance synergy and reduce duplication.
7. Replication and scaling up	<input type="checkbox"/> Replication <input type="checkbox"/> Scaling up	No lesson identified.
8. Post-TA financial resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ADB <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Private sector <input type="checkbox"/> Other	The nature of post-TA financial resources should be stated clearly.
9. Others		

ADB = Asian Development Bank, DMF = design and monitoring framework, EA = executing agency, TA = technical assistance, TCR = technical assistance completion report.

TCR Quality Assessment (Reviewer's Assessment)

TCR Quality	TCRV				IED Comment
	HS	S	LS	US	
Coherence of TCR (25%)		✓			The TCR provided clear and logic evidence needed to assess the TA's success. It offered a balanced view of the project's design and implementation, the challenges it faced, and the remedial action undertaken by ADB and MOF. It provided sufficient details on the outputs, outcomes, and their achievements, and followed the required format.
Quality of Data (25%)		✓			The TCR presented a substantial body of evidence, including both quantitative and qualitative data, to support its assessment on the TA's performance. The data quality is satisfactory, although it could be improved further. For example, the TCR did not provide information on delivery dates for various outputs, making it difficult to assess whether some deliverables were completed on schedule.
Quality of Lessons Learned (50%)		✓			The TCR captured well main lessons from this TA, although several of them could be nuanced or further improved and recommendations should be avoided in crafting the lessons.
Overall TCR Quality (weighted as per performance) ¹⁰		✓			The TCR presented a substantial body of evidence necessary to properly assess the TA results, provided reasonable ratings against main evaluation criteria, and produced some useful lessons for future projects. This validation agrees with ratings on all evaluation parameters except TA's efficiency. Overall, the TCR quality is satisfactory.
Further IED Action (e.g., in-depth evaluation)		N	Reason: No further follow-up action needed.		
Other Remarks					

¹⁰ Each sub-rating is assigned a numerical value: e.g., highly satisfactory = 3, satisfactory = 2, less than satisfactory = 1, and unsatisfactory = 0. The compound criterion for the TCR quality rating is: highly satisfactory (overall weighted average greater than 2.30), satisfactory (overall weighted average greater than or equal to 1.65 and less than or equal to 2.30), less than satisfactory (overall weighted average greater than or equal to 0.75 and less than 1.65), and unsatisfactory (overall weighted average is less than 0.75).

Attachment 1: Description of the Technical Assistance

The technical assistance is described in the technical assistance completion report.¹

Attachment 2: Design and Monitoring Framework

The design and monitoring framework is in the technical assistance report.²

Planned and Actual Achievements of the Technical Assistance

Performance Indicators	Planned ^a	Actual	Reasons for Variance
Outcome Strengthened government capacity for managing development projects	a. CPA rating on portfolio performance improved to 4.0 or higher in 2018 (2013 baseline: 3.0).	a. Partially achieved. CPA rating on portfolio performance was 3.5 in 2018 and 2020.	The TCR did not explain reason for partial achievement.
Outputs 1. Policy guidelines and procedures for managing development projects improved	1a. GDPM approved by the government for mandatory use by December 2015.	1a. Achieved. GDPM was approved and enacted on 28 May 2019.	The TCR did not state reason for delay.
	1b. Handbook on managing development projects prepared and approved in the third quarter of 2018.	1b. Not achieved. TA consultants prepared the draft handbook, but it has not been approved by TA completion.	The TCR noted that while the handbook was prepared, it remained in draft and awaited government approval before it could be rolled out. TCR also referred to changes in government officials as one possible reason for the delay.
	1c. One study tour for government staff at policy making and technical levels conducted by December 2015.	1c. Cancelled.	The TCR did not state reason for cancellation.
2. Sustainable training program for project management introduced to MOF Training Center for MOF, (added) MOE, PMO, and EAs	2a. Training program approved by MOF by March 2018.	2a. Achieved. Training program was developed and integrated into the training plan of the MOF Training Center.	No substantial variance noted.
	2b. 45 trainees complete the pilot program by October 2018	2b. Achieved. Two rounds of 3-day training workshops built capacity of 71	The TCR noted that 71 (instead of 45) people were trained – indicating that the

¹ Asian Development Bank (ADB). 2021. *Technical Assistance Completion Report: Strengthening Government Capacity for Managing Development Projects in the Kyrgyz Republic*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/project-documents/48038/48038-001-tcr-en.pdf>.

² ADB. 2014. *Technical Assistance to Kyrgyz Republic for Strengthening Government Capacity for Managing Development Projects*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/project-document/150991/48038-001-tar.pdf>.

		(instead of 45 planned) government officials, university professors (potential trainers), and EA staff on key aspects of project management for donor-financed projects. TA consultants and core MOF staff involved in project facilitated the training.	achievement exceeded the target. It should have stated the reasons for overachievement. The TCR stated that the extension of the project completion date enabled training of more people on the newly approved guidelines on development project management.
	2c. MOF Training Center launches the training course in project management by December 2018.	2c. Achieved. MOF Training Center has integrated the corresponding 3-day course into its annual training plan, legalized tuition fee of Som2200, and conducted one training in 2020 despite COVID-19-related lockdown. More trainings are planned for 2021. Online version of the training has also been developed.	No substantial variance noted.
3. National capacity for project management and monitoring improved	3a. Three national consultants to facilitate portfolio management are hired and placed in Prime Minister's Office and SCEIUS.	3a. Not achieved. A national portfolio and results management specialist helped the MOF in the preparation of the joint ADB-WB 2017 CPRM and Action Plan for 2018. Two other positions were cancelled.	The revised target of hiring and placing three national consultants to facilitate portfolio management was not achieved as only one consultant was eventually hired.
4. Knowledge products for developing the local supply market capacity	4a. 1–2 studies (exact topic and scope to be defined during TA implementation) funded by December 2017 and assessed by the government as good quality analysis and policy advice.	4a. Output 4 cancelled	Output was cancelled during the first of two DMF revisions in July 2017 and this change was reflected in the second revision (August 2018). The TCR explained that this did not fit with government's priorities and that the output was removed from the DMF

			following a government's request.
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ADB = Asian Development Bank; COVID-19 = coronavirus disease; CPA = country performance assessment; CPRM = country portfolio review mission; DMF = design and monitoring framework; EA = executing agency; GDPM = Guidelines for Development Project Management; MOE = Ministry of Economy; MOF = Ministry of Finance; PM = Prime Minister; PMO = project management office; SCEIUS = State Committee on Industry, Energy and Subsoil Use; TA = technical assistance; TCR = technical assistance completion report; WB = World Bank.

^a These indicators have been taken from the TCR Appendix 1 which reflect slight differences with the revised DMF indicators as per memo dated 2 August 2018.

Sources: Asian Development Bank (ADB). 2014. *Technical Assistance to the Kyrgyz Republic for Strengthening Government Capacity for Managing Development Projects*. Manila; and ADB. 2021. *Technical Assistance Completion Report: Strengthening Government Capacity for Managing Development Projects in the Kyrgyz Republic*. Manila.