

Working with ADB: A Primer for Identifying Business Opportunities for NGOs

An Overview: How ADB and civil society work together



ADB recognizes the contributions that civil society makes to development, and continually seeks to increase civil society organization participation involved in its projects, from the design phase through to evaluation.

ADB is a non-profit bank made up of [68 member-countries](#). It designs and lends money to its member governments for development projects. It also lends to private sector companies to implement projects, particularly in areas where traditional investors may be less likely to invest.

ADB does not have any funds dedicated to supporting civil society initiatives, or to which NGOs can directly apply for and receive funding.

However, NGOs are involved in a very high proportion of ADB-financed projects, usually at the design phase, and typically through consultations.

In addition, NGOs bid for contracts to implement components of ADB-financed projects in some countries and sectors. There is growing interest among international NGOs with strong capacities to bid for and win contracts on ADB-financed projects.

These business opportunities are for contracts to implement part of an ADB-financed development project, and ADB does not request proposals designed by NGOs for such contracts. Instead, ADB defines the work that needs to be done, and

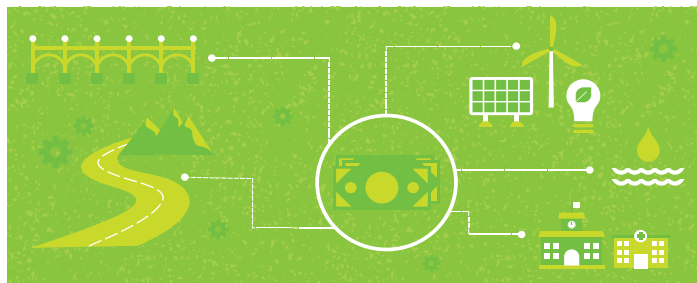
treats NGOs who win contracts to implement ADB projects the same as commercial firms, as service providers under a contractual relationship with standard conditions for compliance.

Bidding for an ADB contract is not always a suitable match for NGOs. To help decide, consider these factors first:

- ⚙️ ADB has already decided how this activity is to be implemented. The engaged NGO will implement the activity that way, and will have very little flexibility to change the approach.
- ⚙️ NGOs and all of their staff working on an ADB-financed contract must be from one of ADB's 68 member-countries.
- ⚙️ ADB offers a standard contract. Ensure that your organization is willing to agree to these terms and conditions before bidding. Learn more about [ADB contracts](#).

If bidding for ADB-financed contracts is still of interest, read on to understand what the different types of business opportunities are.

How ADB finances development projects



Understand the 3 main financial products ADB offers to governments– loans, grants, and technical assistance– and how NGOs fit into each.

ADB offers 3 main financial products to governments: loans (which is given to a government and paid back, but at very low rates because the money is for development projects), grants (which is given to a government for development projects in ADB's poorest member countries that is not repaid, and which is managed by the government), and technical assistance (money that is managed by ADB, that is not repaid, which is used to pay for expert advice).

Since technical assistance projects (TAs) are managed by ADB, and grants and loans by the government, NGOs engaged under a grant or loan would enter into a contract with the government. On the other hand, NGOs hired to work on a TA would be engaged directly by ADB. ADB also has products for the private sector but typically they do not include business opportunities for civil society.

ADB does not lend money to NGOs or give NGOs grants or technical assistance. ADB does not fund unsolicited project proposals from NGOs and has no facility to do so. However, ADB may hire an NGO to perform a specific service ADB defines. From ADB's perspective, this is a business relationship only, defined under its standard contractual arrangements.



- 💰 money for development projects
- ⚙️ managed by the government
- 📄 paid back at low rates



- 💰 money for development projects
- ⚙️ managed by the government
- 📄 not repaid



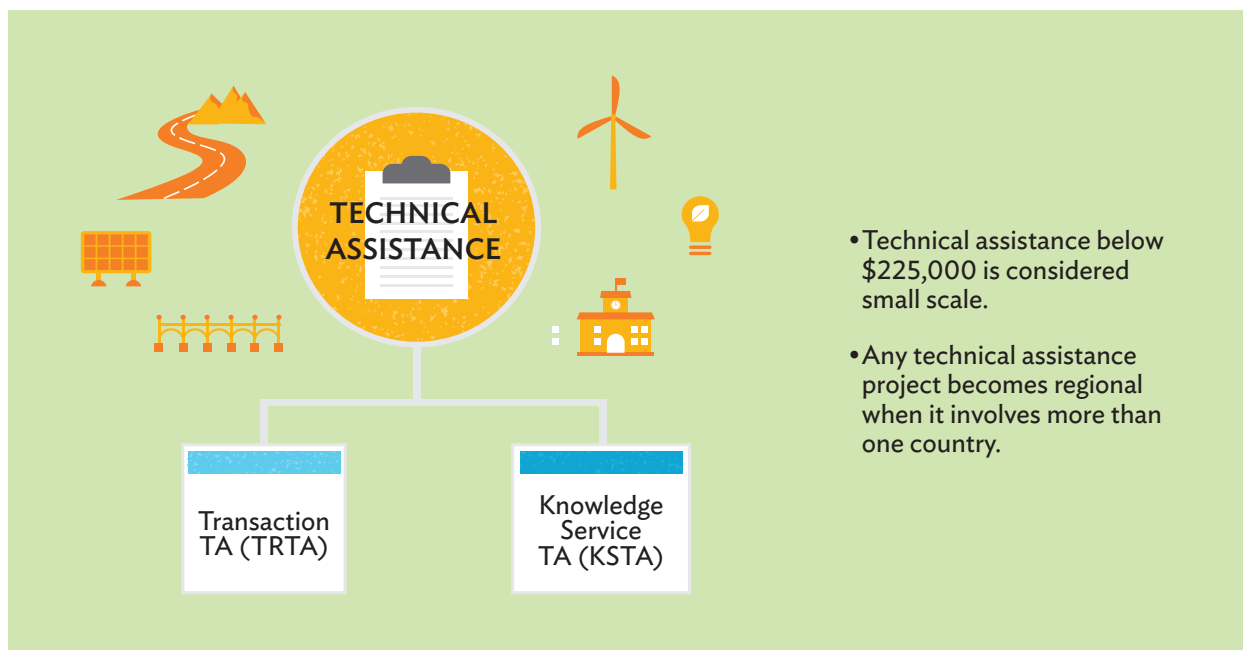
- 💰 money for expert advice
- ⚙️ managed by ADB
- 📄 not repaid

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

There are generally two types of technical assistance.

One of the two types is the Transaction Technical Assistance (TRTA), which is money that ADB spends to design a loan for a development project that a government has requested ADB to finance. ADB staff prepare proposals for TRTA funding. A TRTA budget usually ranges from about \$500,000 to \$2M and usually lasts about a year. ADB manages the TRTA funds and hires all of the consultants. The TRTA activities are related to loan design and preparation, such as commissioning reports, convening workshop, and hiring experts to provide inputs for the project design. NGOs can be involved in loan preparation activities, like mobilizing communities and raising awareness.

To design a loan, ADB must address social issues, including environmental impact, resettlement (and livelihood restoration in some cases), and impact on indigenous peoples. ADB must conduct an assessment of the poverty, social, and gender situation, to identify relevant social issues and determine measures to address these issues



within the scope of the project. ADB should also consult with communities and collect data for a poverty analysis, among other requirements. As a result, there may be opportunities for NGOs to contribute to TRTA work.

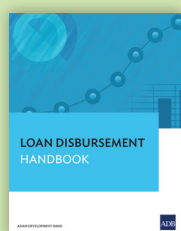
The other type of TA is the Knowledge Service Technical Assistance (KSTA). The type of work supported under KSTA varies widely, and includes, for example, general institutional capacity building, policy advice, and research. Depending on the nature of the project, NGOs may be competitive bidders for contracts to deliver these services.

GRANTS

Likewise, some activities in a grant could be carried out by an NGO. Because governments are not repaying a grant, grant projects often have more innovative features and “soft” components, such as pilot initiatives, communications, or community mobilization work, which may include opportunities for NGOs. The government issues the call for proposals and selects the firms- which could be an NGO- to implement those activities in line with ADB procurement procedures.

LOANS

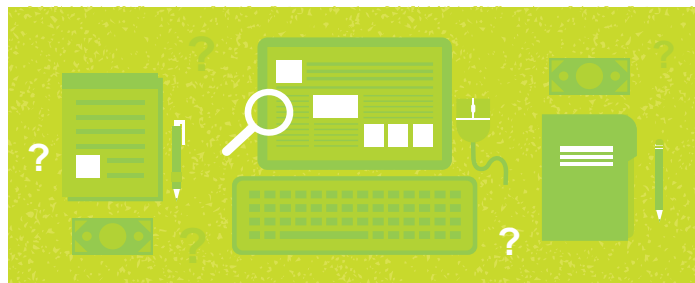
Although it is less common, part of a loan (which is most often for infrastructure) may have a component that could be contracted to an NGO. For example, in a road project, the government may decide to use an NGO to lead a road safety campaign, or to train affected communities about HIV and AIDS or human trafficking. A government may hire NGOs to deliver health services in remote areas where it does not have a presence. But the bulk of the loan activities are typically large-scale construction contracts, for which international firms bid and implement.



Check out the following references for further guidance in handling different types of ADB financial products:

- ADB's [Technical Assistance Disbursement Handbook](#) (for technical assistance projects)
- ADB's [Loan Disbursement Handbook](#) (for loans and grants)
- [Project Administration Instructions](#)

How to bid for ADB-financed contracts



Resources for registering and viewing current business opportunities:

- ⚙️ **Register in the [ADB Consultant Management System](#) (CMS)** to become eligible to bid for any of the opportunities.
- ⚙️ **Visit the [ADB Business Center](#)** to see a range of resources.
- ⚙️ **View the current business opportunities** in ADB-financed projects at the [Consulting Services Recruitment Notices](#) (CSRN).
- ⚙️ **Sign up for the [e-Alerts email notification system](#)**, which provides updates while enabling customization of notifications based on preference, including business opportunities, publications, and other types of information.
- ⚙️ **Respond as an NGO** to an opportunity for an **individual** (by proposing a candidate) or for a **firm** (by proposing several candidates). All proposed candidates must be from ADB member countries. ADB will pay the NGO who proposes a candidate, not the candidate.

Tips for registering in the CMS:

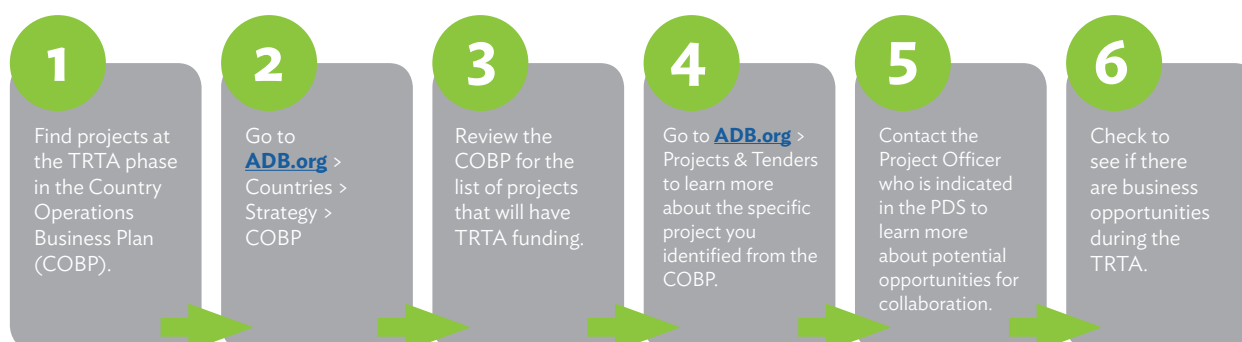
- Ensure that the CMS registration is complete and comprehensive.
- Update the profile at least once a year to keep it active.
- Use a generic organizational email address rather than an individual staff email address as the main contact.

To view current business opportunities, visit csrn.adb.org.

Tips for identifying future business opportunities:

In addition to responding to currently advertised opportunities that are posted on the CSRN, some background research can identify what opportunities may be coming up.

Part A - Identifying Projects



1. The best time to get involved in a project is not when it is already underway, but when it is being designed. The first phase of a loan or grant design is the TRTA, or transaction technical assistance. To find out what projects are at the TRTA phase, look at the Country Operations Business Plan (COBP), which lists all loan and grant projects under design and all planned TAs. Typically, TRTA takes place the year before a project is approved.
2. To find the COBP, select the country on the [ADB website](#). Then look at the Strategy link on the menu on the left. On the strategy page, choose the most recent Country Operations Business Plan (COBP). The COBP has a table of projects, usually in Appendix 3 planned each year. All projects that ADB will finance are in the COBP, so it is an excellent reference to identify projects where there may be future business opportunities.
3. Review the COBP for the list of projects that will have TRTA funding in the current year to design the project and see if there are similarities in the projects ADB will finance and your organization's expertise. The next step is to learn more about these projects.
4. Once you have identified a specific project listed in the COBP that is in the pipeline that might be of interest to your organization, go to the ADB project database. Once a project's concept paper has been approved, it will have a page on the ADB website. Select the country and then filter for Proposed Projects. Click on a project to learn more about it.
5. Project Data Sheets (PDS) provide details about each project, including those that are not yet approved. To learn more about the project and potential opportunities for collaboration, contact the project officer whose name is indicated in the PDS.
6. The TA paper, which is posted online, details the expertise the project officer will hire during the TRTA.

This is a sample COBP for learning purposes only and does not indicate any ADB support to any project or program.

INDICATIVE ASSISTANCE PIPELINE
Table A3.1: Lending Products, 2019–2021

Project/Program Name	Sector	Poverty Targeting	Strategic Agendas and Drivers of Change	Division	Year of TRTA/ PDA	Cost (\$ million)						
						Total	ADB				Gov't	Co-finance
							OCR	COL	ADF Grants	Total		
2019 Firm												
Secondary Education Development Project	EDU	TI	IEG, GEN, GCD, KNS, PAR	XXHS	2018	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Water Sector Investment Program	WUS	GI	ESG, PSD, GCD, KNS, PAR	XXUW	2018	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Capital City Highway Project	TRA	GI	RCI, GCD	XXTC	2017	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Rural Electrification	ENE	TI	IEG, ESG, GCD, PSD	XXEN	2018	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total						0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2020 Standby												
Health Support Program	HLT	TI	IEG, RCI, GEM, GCD	XRM	2016	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total						0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

ADB = Asian Development Bank; ADF = Asian Development Fund; ANR = agriculture, natural resources, and rural development; COL = concessional OCR lending; EDU = education; ENE = energy; ESG = environmentally sustainable growth; FIN = finance; GCD = governance and capacity development; GEM = gender equity and mainstreaming; GI = general intervention; Gov't = government; IEG = inclusive economic growth; KNS = knowledge solutions; OCR = ordinary capital resources; PAR = partnerships; PSD = private sector development; TRA = transport; TRTA = transaction technical assistance; WUS = water and other urban infrastructure and services.

Will the project be designed in HQ or in a field office?

What year will be/was the project designed?

Is cofinancing coming from a donor of interest?

Part B- Submitting a bid

1. Register in the CMS well before you plan to submit a bid.
2. Once a business opportunity becomes advertised in CSRN, then click on the Express Interest button and follow the CSRN instructions. For technical problems, email cmshelps@adb.org.



3. Consider the fact that in general, ADB assesses applications from NGOs using the Quality Cost Based Selection Method. Chapter 9, Recruiting Other Types of Consultants and Consulting Services on page 113 of the [Consulting Services Operations Manual](#) offers advice to staff about how to evaluate a proposal from an NGO. This guide also explains other selection methods ADB allows, including Consultant Quality Selection, Single Source Selection, and Quality-Based Selection.

Part C- Other resources for business opportunities

1. Participate in the [ADB Business Opportunities Fair](#) (BOF) each year in March. A one-stop forum for consultants, contractors, manufacturers, and suppliers looking to provide goods and services for ADB projects, the BOF is an excellent opportunity to network not only with peers in the industry, but also with ADB specialists in different sectors. The annual program also includes a dedicated session on opportunities for civil society.
2. ADB posts information on shortlisted firms for those who may wish to deal directly with a shortlisted firm. NGOs can get experience on ADB-financed projects as sub-contractors to experienced firms. Check the [list of shortlisted firms](#).
3. Search the [project database](#) for what will be approved in the next year and review projects to see what skills the project will recruit for. Also review the [procurement plans](#) for new projects to see what is coming up in the future.
4. NGOs may want to consider partnering with [these successful firms](#) to get experience on ADB-financed projects.
5. Read the ADB [Country Fact Sheet](#), as on the last page is a table showing who has won the biggest and most ADB contracts in the country. Some NGOs new to ADB will partner with a consultant or contractor who has a lot of experience with ADB before applying directly themselves. The fact sheet is a good starting place to see who has been successful in winning ADB contracts in the country. Here is the Philippines Fact Sheet.

Top 5 Contractors/Suppliers from the Philippines Involved in Goods, Works, and Related Services Contracts under ADB Loan and Grant Projects, 1 January 2013–31 December 2017

Contractor/Supplier	Sector	Contract Amount (\$ million)
R.D. Interior Junior Construction & Hebei Road and Bridge Group Co. Ltd. (JV)	TRA	17.74
Alcatel-Lucent Philippines Inc.	TRA	5.03
Vicente T. Lao Construction	ANR, TRA	5.03
R.D. Policarpio & Co. Inc. & Sunwest Construction (JV)	TRA	3.27
A.M. Oreta & Co. Inc. & LBC International Builders Corp. (JV)	TRA	2.73
Others		2,306.17
Total		2,339.97

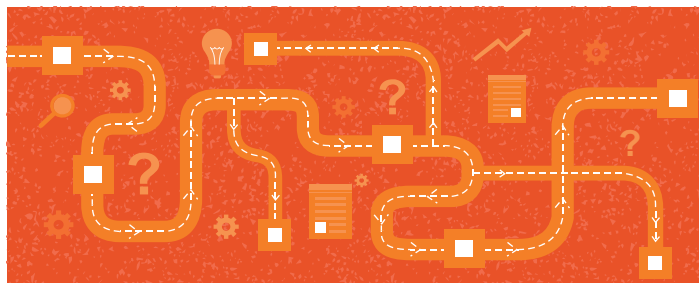
ANR = agriculture, natural resources, and rural development; TRA = transport.

Top 5 Consultants from the Philippines Involved in Consulting Services Contracts under ADB Loan, Grant, and Technical Assistance Projects, 1 January 2013–31 December 2017

Consultant	Sector	Contract Amount (\$ million)
Pacific Rim Innovation and Management Exponents Inc.	ANR, EDU, HLT	12.16
Renardet Ingenieurs Conseils S.A.	TRA	9.44
Plan International Philippines	PSM	7.48
Angel Lazaro & Associates	TRA	5.97
Development Strategists International Consulting Inc.	EDU, IND	5.57
Individual Consultants		58.13
Others		23.37
Total		122.12

ANR = agriculture, natural resources, and rural development; EDU = education; HLT = health; IND = industry and trade; PSM = public sector management; TRA = transport.

What you need to know



Be guided by the essentials to managing an ADB contract.

NGOs can successfully implement ADB-financed contracts. But NGOs bidding for ADB contracts need to think like a consulting firm. Here are some other tips:

- ⚙️ NGOs are expected to cover all of their costs and overheads from an ADB contract. The contract budget does not have to be prepared on an at-cost basis.
- ⚙️ ADB's budget template does not include a line for administrative or indirect costs such as NICRA. Therefore, prepare a budget that breaks down and covers all indirect costs. ADB allows a multiplier for monthly salaries of between 2.0 and 3.0 for full-time employees. See page 3, paragraph F of ADB's [Standard Forms for proposal submissions](#).
- ⚙️ Engage a dedicated administrator with strong finance skills to manage your ADB contract and include the administrator in your proposal.
- ⚙️ If possible, reach out to the ADB Headquarters in Manila and meet staff there working across the Asia and the Pacific region.
- ⚙️ Maximize the information, education and communication resources of the ADB website, including signing up for the ADB Alerts to get timely updates.
- ⚙️ Remember not to treat an ADB contract as funding for organizational activities; instead play the role of a service provider that ADB requires.
- ⚙️ Be familiar with ADB's requirements, and consider your NGO's own institutional requirements, which may not support this type of contract.
- ⚙️ Read the ADB contract and become familiar with it. ADB does not provide training on its own procedures but expects those it engages to learn them.
- ⚙️ Keep good records and be prepared to provide clear statements of consulting inputs and actual inputs.
- ⚙️ Realize that ADB's standard conditions of contract are non-negotiable.



How else ADB engages with civil society



Reach out to the ADB in 5 other ways: through the [NGO Anchor](#), during [Country Partnership Strategy](#) preparations, and when [ADB reviews its policies and strategies](#), and through [knowledge events](#).



Participate in [strategy and policy reviews](#). ADB holds consultations on all of its major policy review, typically hosting several dedicated to seeking civil society views. Thus, NGOs interested in the strategy or policy that is being reviewed may want to share their perspectives while representing people's interest and their rights. This ensures dialogue and consultation with all stakeholders and potential beneficiaries of ADB projects in communities which often access information on development initiatives in their countries through civil society.



ADB updates its [Country Partnership Strategies](#) (CPS) in line with the government national poverty reduction strategy. They are ADB's primary platform for designing operations to deliver development results at the country level. Find out when the ADB will be updating its next CPS by seeing when the current CPS will run out. Participating in the consultations for the CPS is an excellent way to stay informed about what ADB is planning in each country.



[NGOs and their networks](#) participate in consultations throughout ADB's project cycle in various ways. The majority of ADB-NGO collaboration takes place on a voluntary basis, such as during consultations. Some NGOs monitor ADB projects without compensation to ensure they maintain independence. Most NGOs who participate in consultations and monitoring are local organizations who bring their local knowledge to a project.



Introduce yourself to the NGO Anchor in each country where you have an office. The NGO Anchor is a person who is appointed as the focal point for civil society relations in each ADB field office. Check the [full list of NGO Anchors](#) and their contact details.



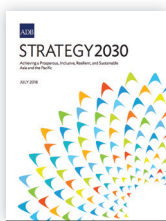
ADB's Strategy 2030 states that ADB will work with CSOs to tap their unique strengths, such as their specialized knowledge. View ADB's [planned events](#) for details. ADB's Annual Meeting includes a dedicated [CSO program](#), where CSOs actively participate and share knowledge.

Additional Resources

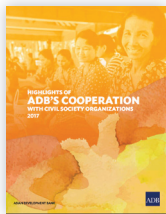


Review other key documents and references to get you started.

Navigate the ADB site for essential documents, contacts, and other information that can help you identify areas of interest for your organization.



ADB's Strategic Plan, [Strategy 2030](#) is the institution's key strategic document.



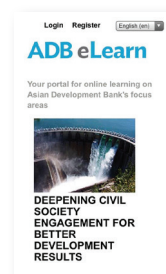
[Reports of ADB-civil society participation](#) are annual reports describing how ADB and CSOs work together. These explain the processes and practices of collaboration with civil society, including charts that illustrate what ADB is doing with NGOs in regions, sectors where collaboration is highest, and by financing modality.



The [ADB and Civil Society webpage](#) is a repository of information on how CSOs can increase their participation in ADB-financed projects.



[Strengthening Participation for Development Results: An Asian Development Bank Guide to Participation](#) reflects ADB's new business processes and highlights key opportunities for participation in policy dialogue and throughout the project cycle, and advises on methods and approaches, as well as pitfalls to avoid.



[Deepening CSO Engagement for Better Development Results](#) is an e-learning course that aims to give CSOs an introduction on ADB-financed operations and how they can be involved in the different stages of the ADB project cycle. Learners will also get an overview of the business opportunities available for civil society organizations and how they can bid for them.

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