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ADB

Social Protection Operational Plan 2014–2020

Asian Development Bank

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Social Protection Operational Plan 2014–2020

December 2013

Asian Development Bank

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Abbreviations

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
CCT	–	conditional cash transfers
CLS	–	core labor standards
CoP	–	community of practice
DMC	–	developing member country
IED	–	Independent Evaluation Department
ILO	–	International Labour Organization
JFPR	–	Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction
MDG	–	Millennium Development Goal
OECD	–	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRC	–	People’s Republic of China
RSDD	–	Regional and Sustainable Development Department
SPI	–	Social Protection Index
SPOP	–	Social Protection Operational Plan
TVET	–	technical and vocational education and training
UN	–	United Nations
UNESCAP	–	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNICEF	–	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNRISD	–	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
WHO	–	World Health Organization

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Executive Summary

The long-term strategic framework 2008–2020 (Strategy 2020) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) identifies inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration as three strategic agendas for the Asia and Pacific region to achieve poverty reduction and improve the quality of life of their people. The inclusive growth agenda is premised on maintaining high sustainable growth, expanding access to economic opportunities, and providing adequate social protection. Strategy 2020 recognizes that investments in social protection help reduce poverty, inequality, and vulnerability. Social protection is a useful tool for achieving human development outcomes, including the Millennium Development Goals, and is expected to play an important role in the Post-2015 development agenda.

ADB's Social Protection Strategy (2001) defines social protection as the set of policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting labor markets functioning, diminishing people's exposure to risks, and enhancing their capacity to protect themselves against hazards and the interruption or loss of income. Social protection promotes inclusive growth by ensuring access to essential services by disadvantaged population groups, including widows, jobless workers, children in poor households, and persons with disabilities. It also helps to cushion the impact and social costs of natural disasters and economic crises. Social protection is generally understood to comprise three categories: social assistance, social insurance, and labor market programs. ADB's Social Protection Strategy also states that ADB will comply with the internationally recognized core labor standards (CLS) in its lending.

Social protection systems in ADB's developing member countries (DMCs) remain underdeveloped. Social assistance programs, which provide transfers to poor households, offer inadequate benefits and experience leakage of resources. Few poor households enjoy access to social insurance programs, and labor market programs have not been prioritized. There are large gaps in social protection coverage between those employed in the formal sector and those working in the informal sector, and shortcomings in the application of the CLS. To address these conditions, and promote inclusive economic growth, many DMCs have been strengthening their social protection systems.

The Social Protection Operational Plan 2014–2020 (SPOP) has been prepared to provide direction for ADB's social protection-related assistance to DMCs in financing, knowledge solutions, capacity building, and partnership activities. The SPOP also aligns ADB's Social Protection Strategy with Strategy 2020. It draws upon a comprehensive assessment of ADB's operational activities supporting social protection from 1996 to 2012, findings of the 2012 Independent Evaluation Department (IED) special evaluation study on the Social Protection Strategy, and a series of consultations with ADB staff.

The SPOP calls for (i) continued development of ADB-financed social protection projects; (ii) active identification of opportunities to integrate social protection into projects, particularly in the education, finance, health, and public management sectors; (iii) support to capacity building and policy, and knowledge sharing; (iv) cultivation of partnerships and South–South cooperation; and (v) monitoring and reporting on social protection programs and trends in Asia and the Pacific.

I. Rationale

1. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) Strategy 2020 highlights the need for higher government spending on social protection (and other sectors), and identifies social protection as a pillar of ADB's strategic agenda of inclusive growth.
2. The purpose of the Social Protection Operational Plan (SPOP) is to operationalize the social protection pillar of inclusive growth to better respond to developing member country (DMC) objectives to generate a more equal distribution of the benefits of growth. The SPOP also serves to align ADB's existing Social Protection Strategy (2001) with inclusive growth agenda of Strategy 2020 while providing direction for social protection-related assistance to DMCs in the areas of financing, knowledge solutions, capacity building, and partnership. Since the adoption of the Social Protection Strategy, ADB has identified new operational areas and placed a greater emphasis on knowledge generation and sharing. The SPOP recognizes these changes and proposes five priority areas for action between 2014 and 2020.
3. Although income poverty has fallen considerably in the Asia and Pacific region since 1990, inequality has risen, and deprivation and vulnerability remain widespread. The share of the region's population living in extreme poverty, as measured by the \$1.25 per day poverty line, has fallen impressively, but actual numbers remain unacceptably high at 743 million. Further, the \$2 per day poverty line, arguably a more accurate measure of deprivation and vulnerability in an otherwise flourishing region, is more than double this figure, at 1.64 billion.¹ Results from ADB's Social Protection Index (SPI) for Asia and the Pacific show that social protection systems remain underdeveloped in DMCs.²
4. Natural resource depletion, environmental and health threats, rapid urbanization, population growth, and an aging demographic profile have heightened social and economic vulnerabilities. Recurring commodity price shocks and economic and financial crises have jeopardized the already very basic living conditions of many people in the region. Such realities highlight the need for social protection programs that empower marginalized and poorer sectors of the society to overcome events that negatively impact their health and livelihoods.
5. Social protection is the set of policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting labor markets functioning, diminishing people's exposure to risks, and enhancing their capacity to protect themselves against hazards and interruption and loss of income.³ Social protection comprises three major categories: social assistance, social insurance, and labor market programs (see table on page 12).

“Strategy 2020 highlights the need for higher government spending on social protection.”

¹ ADB, UNDP, UNESCAP. 2013. *Asia-Pacific Regional MDG Report 2012/13: Asia-Pacific Aspirations: Perspectives for a Post-2015 Development Agenda*. Bangkok.

² ADB. 2013. *The Social Protection Index: Assessing Results for Asia and the Pacific*. Manila.

³ ADB. 2001. *Social Protection Strategy of the Asian Development Bank*. Manila.

6. Investment in social protection improves the productive capacity of individuals, thereby contributing to inclusive, equitable, and sustainable economic growth. Social protection is also a useful tool for promoting achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to poverty, education, and health. Deliberations within Asia and the Pacific on the Post-2015 development framework have highlighted an important role for social protection.⁴ Growing regional and global recognition of the importance of social protection was exemplified in the approval of a landmark international labor standard calling for the provision of essential health care and benefits and basic income security.⁵ At the 23rd ASEAN Summit, held in Brunei Darussalam in October 2013, government leaders from Southeast Asian countries outlined actions to improve the quality, coverage, and sustainability of social protection.

7. In 2001, ADB outlined policy challenges and strategic directions in its Social Protection Strategy. More recently, Strategy 2020 introduced a new vision and strategic principles for ADB, thus stimulating a need to realign the Social Protection Strategy with new sector and thematic priorities. The Independent Evaluation Department (IED) Special Evaluation Study on Social Protection at ADB identified a need for ADB to make social protection an important component of its strategy to reduce poverty and promote inclusive growth.⁶

8. Many DMCs are reforming, strengthening, and expanding social protection programs and policies. For example, national social protection strategies have been developed in Cambodia (2011), the Kyrgyz Republic (2011), Pakistan (2007), the Philippines (2009), Uzbekistan (2013),⁷ and Viet Nam (2010). However, based on SPI country assessments in DMCs, most social assistance programs that directly target poor households offer inadequate benefits and, in general, experience some leakages to people who are not living in poverty. Very few poor households are able to gain access to contributory social insurance programs as they are mostly engaged in the informal sector. This situation creates large gaps in social protection coverage of those employed in the formal sector and those working in the informal sector. Finally, labor market programs throughout the region have not been prioritized,⁸ and there are shortcomings in the application of the international core labor standards (CLS).⁹

9. In view of these developments, ADB requires an operational plan to provide direction for its social protection-related support to DMCs in financing, knowledge solutions, capacity

“Many DMCs are reforming, strengthening, and expanding social protection programs.”

⁴ UN Task Team. 2012. *Social Protection: A Development Priority in the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda*. New York.

⁵ The International Labour Conference approved the Recommendation Concerning National Floors of Social Protection on 14 June 2012. http://www.ilo.org/brussels/WCMS_183640/lang--en/index.htm

⁶ ADB. 2012. *Evaluation Knowledge Study. Asian Development Bank: Social Protection Strategy 2001*. Manila.

⁷ Uzbekistan’s Welfare Improvement Strategy II (2013–2015) was supported by an ADB technical assistance (TA No. 7671-UZB: Sustaining Growth and Improving Welfare).

⁸ Footnote 2, p. 1.

⁹ The CLS provide the global baseline for labor standards and include freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of forced and compulsory labor, the abolition of child labor, and the elimination of discrimination in the workplace.

building, and partnerships. Other leading development agencies have similarly recognized that changing developmental, economic, and policy environments require updated approaches to promoting social protection in developing and transition economies. In 2012, the European Commission, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank unveiled new strategies on social protection.¹⁰

A. Social Protection—Inclusive Growth Nexus

10. It is widely accepted among governments in Asia and the Pacific that growth alone is insufficient to raise average incomes while tackling inequality, promoting inclusiveness, reducing vulnerability, and ending abject poverty. ADB’s Strategy 2020 identifies inclusive economic growth as a strategic agenda characterized by (i) high and sustainable growth that creates and expands economic opportunities, and (ii) broader access to these opportunities, ensuring that members of society can participate in and benefit from growth. Strategy 2020 further recognizes that the region must promote greater access to opportunities by expanding human capacities through investment in social protection to prevent extreme deprivation. Figure 1 illustrates how the SPOP supports ADB’s inclusive growth agenda.

11. There are four main ways in which social protection advances inclusive growth. First, social protection facilitates access to productive resources and economic opportunities, provides income security, and assists individuals to manage risks.¹¹ Second, social protection helps improve human development outcomes and increase social inclusiveness. Third, social protection, when provided through transfers, reduces inequalities. At the macroeconomic level, growing evidence suggests that redistribution has a positive effect on growth, particularly in countries where inequalities are high.¹² Fourth, social protection programs help reduce vulnerabilities by targeting marginalized and disadvantaged groups including widows, jobless workers, children in poor households, and persons with disabilities.

12. Furthermore, social protection contributes to gender empowerment and equity goals. Most poor people in the Asia and Pacific region are women. Women in DMCs often rely on men for their income security, and find themselves in very difficult financial circumstances if their household loses its breadwinner. Although tremendous progress has been achieved in raising the education level and labor force participation of women, low-skilled, low-salaried, and temporary workers in the region tend to be women. They are among the most at risk of losing their job during economic downturns. A comprehensive social protection system can provide women with basic income security and access to essential services.

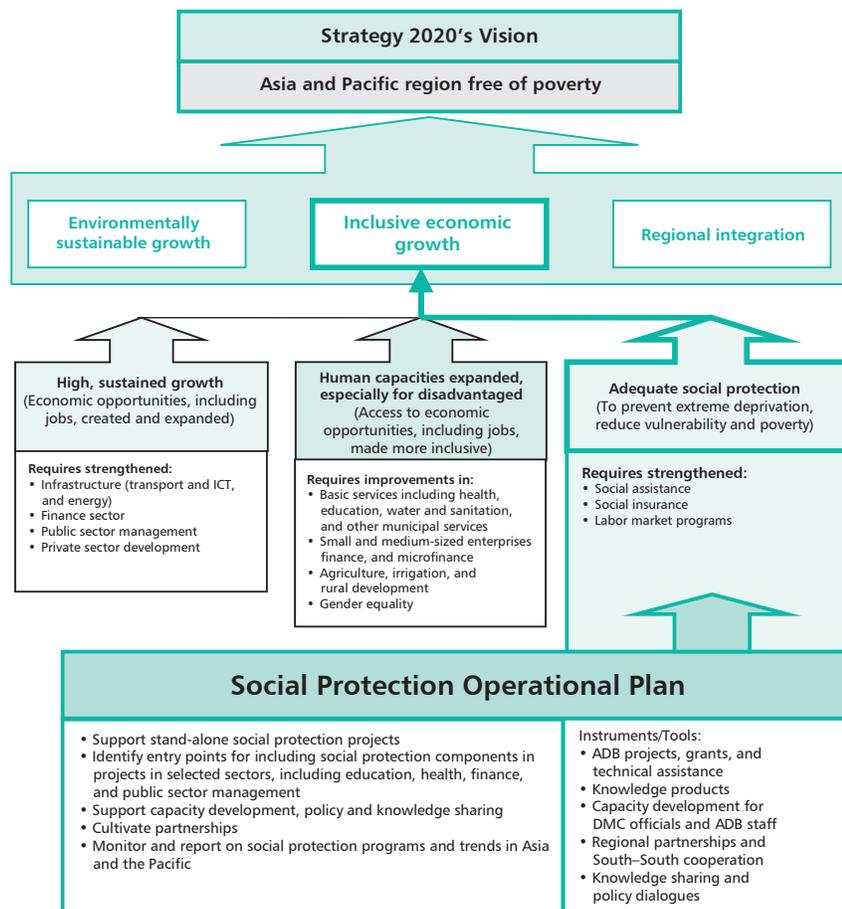
“Social protection contributes to gender empowerment and equity goals.”

¹⁰ European Commission. 2012. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee, and The Committee of the Regions: Social Protection in European Union Development Cooperation. Brussels; UNICEF. 2012. *Integrated Social Protection Systems: Enhancing Equity for Children*. New York; and World Bank. 2012. *Resilience, Equity, and Opportunity*. Washington, DC.

¹¹ International Labour Organization. 2008. Can Low-income Countries Afford Basic Social Security? *Social Security Policy Briefings*. Paper 3. Geneva.

¹² Footnote 11.

Figure 1: Alignment of Social Protection Operational Plan with Strategy 2020's Inclusive Growth Agenda



ADB = Asian Development Bank, DMC = developing member country, ICT = information and communication technology.
Sources: ADB Regional and Sustainable Development Department, and Strategy and Policy Department.

“ADB has supported different types of social protection programs and policies since the early 1990s.”

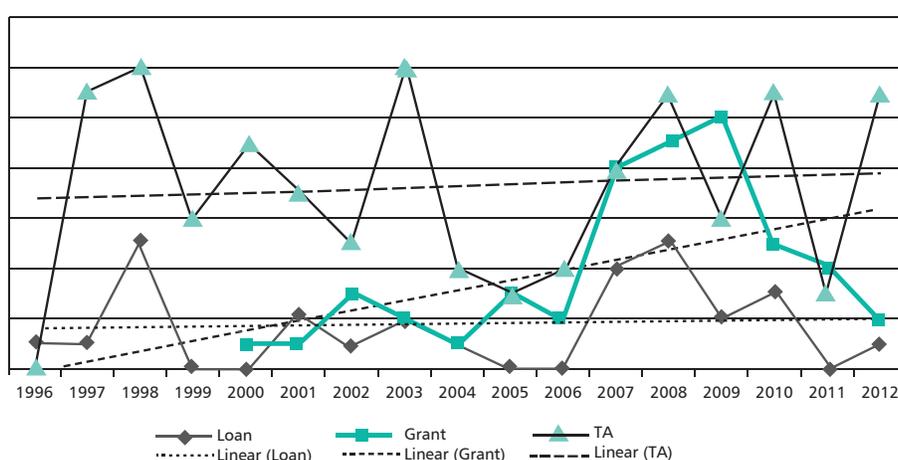
B. Social Protection Initiatives in ADB

13. ADB has supported different types of social protection programs and policies since the early 1990s. The share of social protection in ADB’s portfolio has risen slightly, but not steadily. There was an increase in approvals reflecting ADB’s response to the 1997–1998 Asian financial crisis, and the 2008–2010 food, fuel, and global economic and financial crises. Between 1996 and 2012, ADB approved 202 stand-alone loans, grants, and technical assistance on social protection with a total value of \$3.3 billion. This represents 2.3% of ADB’s total portfolio during the period.¹³

¹³ ADB. 2011. *ADB and Social Protection: Challenges and Opportunities*. Manila; and footnote 6, p. 2.

14. Lending in social assistance includes welfare and social services to highly vulnerable groups and cash or in-kind transfers.¹⁴ ADB's response to economic and financial shocks, including its Countercyclical Support Facilities, has also featured significant social protection elements. In addition, a large share of Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) grants has supported social protection.¹⁵ ADB technical assistance projects have also helped to improve targeting of social spending and support policy reforms, such as provision of rural pensions in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Figure 2 presents an overview of ADB's stand-alone social protection projects (loans, technical assistance, and grants), 1996–2012.

Figure 2: Number of ADB Stand-Alone Loans, Grants, and Technical Assistance, 1996–2012



ADB = Asian Development Bank, TA = technical assistance.

Sources: Data for 1996–2011 from ADB. 2011. *ADB and Social Protection: Challenges and Opportunities*. Manila; and ADB. 2012. *Evaluation Knowledge Study. Asian Development Bank: Social Protection Strategy 2001*. Manila; and data for 2012 from Strategy and Policy Department's database, and Regional and Sustainable Development Department.

C. Trends in Social Protection in Developing Member Countries

15. Since the mid-1990s, most DMCs have taken steps to expand social protection coverage, although spending has generally remained low. The SPI shows that most DMCs spend less than 2.5% of gross domestic product per capita on social protection (which appears as an SPI of 0.100 or lower).¹⁶

¹⁴ Examples include loans to support national conditional cash transfer programs in Pakistan and the Philippines.

¹⁵ About 38% of JFPR grants approved between 2000 and 2012 featured a direct social protection focus or social protection components.

¹⁶ Footnote 2, p. 1.

16. With recent government commitments made through the ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, and UN Resolution on Universal Health Coverage¹⁷—as well as the inclusion of a target for social protection coverage in the illustrative framework proposed by the UN High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 development agenda—it is expected that DMCs will continue to expand their social protection systems through 2020. Following are examples of social protection programs in the areas of social assistance, social insurance, and labor market operations.

Social Assistance

“Social assistance is intended to aid poor and vulnerable populations.”

17. Social assistance is noncontributory social protection intended to aid poor and vulnerable populations. It has become a focus of major innovation in recent years,¹⁸ and a core element of national strategies to achieve the MDGs and reduce poverty. Social assistance includes direct income transfers for poor individuals and families, as well as social pensions for older persons. The use of direct income transfers is gaining greater attention in Asia and the Pacific after the widespread adoption and scaling up of conditional cash transfers (CCTs) in Latin America and the Caribbean since the 1990s.¹⁹

18. CCTs provide income support to poor families with children if they fulfill certain requirements aimed at improving education and health outcomes. While CCTs have been positively assessed by many evaluation studies, they require an adequate supply of educational and health facilities to benefit targeted families, and are more effective when combined with complementary programs to lift poor people out of poverty and into decent jobs. Since 2009, Pakistan and the Philippines have significantly boosted coverage and spending on national CCTs.²⁰

19. Several Asian countries have introduced noncontributory social pension schemes to aid older persons who are not covered by formal pensions systems. Social pensions are cash transfers that help older persons meet their basic needs. They are typically means-tested to target older persons in poverty (Bangladesh, India, and Indonesia). A few schemes are universal and provide benefits to persons who have reached a certain age threshold regardless of their income (Fiji, Georgia, Nepal, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Viet Nam). Social pensions are important for providing a measure of financial security to older persons without regular income. This social protection tool has been shown to enable older persons to access health care, as well as strengthen their position within the family.²¹

¹⁷ Approved on 12 December 2012, see http://www.who.int/universal_health_coverage/un_resolution/en/index.html; see also footnote 5, p. 2.

¹⁸ A. Barrientos. 2010. *Social Protection and Poverty. Program on Social Policy and Development*. Paper No. 42. Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

¹⁹ S. Handayani and C. Burkley, eds. 2010. *Social Assistance and Conditional Cash Transfers*. Manila: Asian Development Bank.

²⁰ Footnote 2, p. 1.

²¹ S. Handayani and B. Babajanian, eds. 2012. *Social Protection for Older Persons: Social Pensions in Asia*. Manila: Asian Development Bank.

Social Insurance

20. Armenia, Georgia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Tonga, and Viet Nam are among the countries that have strengthened their contributory pension systems and explored ways to address the needs of people not covered by formal social insurance. A key challenge for pension systems is to extend coverage of programs while providing adequate benefits in a sustainable manner.²² Informal workers account for a large share of the labor force in most DMCs, and they generally are not part of social insurance schemes. In fact, only about 10%–15% of the region’s working-age population is part of a pension scheme. Those in wage employment or employed by the government are far more likely to enjoy pension coverage than others.²³ Extension of pension coverage would not only benefit employees in the informal sector, but also help address gender-specific vulnerabilities that result from longevity and female reproductive health risks and burdens. In 2009, the Government of the PRC, for example, launched the New Rural Pension Scheme to provide a minimum level of income security in old age and to encourage savings. Two years later, the Urban Social Pension Scheme was set up to provide a contributory retirement scheme to informal sector workers in cities.

21. Many DMCs have introduced or expanded programs providing benefits for maternity, work injury, unemployment, and health insurance. However, unemployment schemes remain uncommon in the region’s developing countries. The PRC, Thailand, and Viet Nam have introduced unemployment benefits, whereas Indonesia and the Philippines operate systems of severance pay. An ADB-financed project in Cambodia has supported a food-for-work program to assist poor people affected by higher food prices.²⁴ Governments in the PRC, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam are among those investing in universal health insurance. In middle-income countries and transition economies, there is growing attention to the need to improve the fiscal sustainability of existing social insurance systems. For example, Kazakhstan has introduced a phased increase in the retirement age for women (from 58 to 63 years of age).

“There is growing attention to the need to improve the fiscal sustainability of existing social insurance systems.”

Labor Market Programs

22. In an era of globalization, and greater labor flexibility and mobility, improving labor market operations and supporting the decent work agenda²⁵ are important social protection measures to reduce poverty and vulnerabilities; facilitate human capital development; and address discrimination due to ethnicity, gender, and age. Yet, the Asia and Pacific region has not prioritized investment in labor market programs, despite

²² M. Asher. 2010. Social Security Reform in Southeast Asia. Background paper for the Regional Conference on Enhancing Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific. Manila. 21–22 April 2010.

²³ D. Park. 2010. East and Southeast Asia’s Pension Systems: Overview and Reform Directions. Background paper for the Regional Conference on Enhancing Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific. Manila. 21–22 April 2010.

²⁴ ADB. 2008. *Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors: Proposed Loan and Asian Development Fund Grant to the Kingdom of Cambodia for the Emergency Food Assistance Project*. Manila.

²⁵ Decent work agenda is formulated by ILO constituents. It is based on the understanding that work is a source of personal dignity, family stability, peace in the community, democracies that deliver for people, and economic growth that expands opportunities for productive jobs and enterprise development.

“Active labor market programs increase the employment prospects of the jobless, and strengthen inclusiveness.”

slow growth of jobs relative to economic expansion.²⁶ The SPI shows that expenditures on labor market programs account for only 5% of total spending on social protection, and such programs benefit only about 6% of the target population.

23. Active labor market programs increase the employment prospects of the jobless, and strengthen inclusiveness through productive employment. They contribute to better employment opportunities, and help alleviate social problems that accompany high jobless rates. For the region to sustain a pace of high economic growth and maintain competitiveness, it is essential to invest in skills development and ensure that those entering—or seeking to enter—the labor force are equipped to fill available and emerging jobs. Drawing on the experience of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries, several DMCs have launched labor market programs, or expanded existing ones. For instance, in 2013, Azerbaijan launched a network of job training centers offering skills training and practical job-search techniques to young people to facilitate their entry into the labor force. Since 2010, ADB has substantially increased its support to improving labor force quality through investments in technical and vocational education and training (TVET).²⁷

24. Governments also support decent employment by upholding the CLS through law, regulation, education, and enforcement. Most DMCs have signed the ILO core conventions. However, not all have ratified every convention. Pursuant to the terms of the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work of 1998, all ILO members are required to promote and realize in good faith the rights contained in the CLS, whether or not they have ratified conventions that uphold the CLS.²⁸

²⁶ A. Bauer and M. Thant, eds. 2010. *Poverty and Sustainable Development in Asia: Impacts and Responses to the Global Economic Crisis*. Manila: Asian Development Bank.

²⁷ Examples of ADB support for TVET include loans and grants: Second Vocational Education and Skills Development Project in Kyrgyz Republic (2012), Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Lao People’s Democratic Republic (2010), Skills Development Project in Nepal (2013), and Mid-Level Skills Training Project in Timor-Leste (2011).

²⁸ See Article 2, ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/declaration/text/index.htm>)

II. Directions

A. Expected Outcomes

25. There are opportunities for ADB to integrate social protection into different ADB sector and thematic activities. Since DMCs at varying stages of development require different types of policy and program support to social protection, the SPOP adopts a flexible approach on how ADB will meet DMC demands. Through the SPOP, ADB intends to contribute to expanding social protection coverage in Asia and the Pacific to reach adequate levels, thereby supporting the inclusive growth agenda and overarching goal of poverty alleviation.

“ADB intends to contribute to expanding social protection coverage in Asia and the Pacific.”

B. Social Protection Operational Plan Priority Areas

26. The SPOP supports three internationally recognized categories of social protection: social assistance, social insurance, and labor market programs.²⁹ Priority ADB actions in each category appear below:

- (i) **Social assistance:** Provide financing and knowledge solutions to improve the effectiveness and coverage of social assistance programs to ensure income security and access to basic services for poor and vulnerable populations.
- (ii) **Social insurance:** Extend technical advice and financing to support the development of sustainable social insurance schemes that provide insurance against risks, as well as income security in old age. Support will be provided to help expand schemes to those working in the informal sector, including migrants.
- (iii) **Labor market programs:** Support development of job-relevant skills and worker retraining, particularly for low-skilled and marginalized workers; facilitate access to employment; and ensure that ADB operations comply with the CLS.

²⁹ The two remaining categories under the Social Protection Strategy (2001): *Micro and area-based schemes* and *child protection* are target-based conceptual categories that are effectively captured under the three categories.

C. Operational Approaches, Major Outputs, and Activities

27. Substantial DMC government interest in the social protection experience of other countries and demand for practical knowledge and financing to improve social protection systems point to a greater ADB role. IED's Special Evaluation Study on Social Protection³⁰ recommends that ADB increase its investments in social protection in order to realize its inclusive growth and poverty reduction objectives. The study further states that ADB should seek to scale up its social protection portfolio in periods between crises.

28. The SPOP supports (i) continued development of social protection projects; (ii) active identification of opportunities to integrate social protection into projects, particularly in the education, finance, health, and public management sectors; (iii) support to capacity building and policy, and knowledge sharing; (iv) cultivation of regional partnerships and South–South cooperation; and (v) monitoring and reporting on social protection systems in Asia and the Pacific. Specific activities to be supported by ADB are addressed in greater detail below.

Develop Social Protection Projects

29. ADB will continue to develop stand-alone social protection projects based on DMC demand. ADB will also build its capacity to develop particular types of social protection projects to expand its portfolio. For instance, ADB has gained experience and knowledge on how to implement CCTs, and cash transfer components of projects in different sectors.³¹

30. ADB will also continue to support policy reforms aimed at improving DMC social insurance and pension schemes for workers in both the formal and informal sectors.³² Such support will be provided through loans or technical assistance, or a combination of both. ADB will support efforts to provide income security in old age, primarily by expanding its knowledge base, and in public resource management programs with an impact on pension financing.

31. ADB will also support active labor market programs through TVET projects, which are expected to account for a large share of ADB's lending portfolio in social protection through 2020 (see also "Education").

“ADB will continue to support policy reforms aimed at improving DMC social insurance and pension schemes.”

³⁰ Footnote 6, p. 2.

³¹ Footnote 19, p. 6.

³² An ADB technical assistance (TA No. 6480-REG: Enhancing Social Protection Initiatives in Developing Member Countries) supported the South and Central Asia pension reforms, Indonesia's National Social Security System (SJSN) law, and Mongolia's health insurance scheme.

Identify Opportunities to Integrate Social Protection Components into Selected Sectors

32. By utilizing flexibility within its operations, ADB will seek to integrate social protection components into other sector operations. Between 2010 and 2012, projects with social protection components accounted for 5.8% of the total number of approved ADB-financed projects.³³ Sectors that are particularly well-suited for the incorporation of social protection components include, but are not limited to, education, finance, health, and public sector management. The table on page 12 identifies potential sector entry points.

Primary sectors and thematic initiatives that lend support to social protection

33. **Education.** Scholarships, universal child benefits, and in-kind transfers (e.g., school feeding programs) can be integrated into many types of education projects. CCTs are highly relevant to the priority areas of ADB's Education Sector Operations Plan,³⁴ including early childhood care and education, reduction of dropouts and grade repetition, and targeting and inclusion of disadvantaged groups. Social protection components can also be integrated into education projects to support skills development.

34. **Finance and Public Sector Management.** Without access to formal financial services and sustainable social insurance, including pensions, poor and vulnerable people will be excluded from the growth process and its benefits. A key challenge for DMC governments is how to extend pensions and health insurance to unprotected workers in the informal sector. Incorporating social protection support into finance and public sector management can be accomplished, for example, by budgetary support for social spending, rationalizing and improving coordination of highly fragmented social protection programs, improving beneficiary targeting, undertaking fiscal reforms, reforming pension systems, expanding health insurance, and strengthening financial inclusiveness.³⁵

35. **Health.** Health insurance schemes can be supported as components of health sector or finance sector projects. Improved health sector outcomes can also be supported through CCTs. ADB can provide technical inputs to improve and expand social health insurance for the poor and vulnerable by developing schemes to finance basic health, establishing health equity funds and community-based health insurance, and introducing mechanisms to identify individuals who cannot pay insurance premiums.

“Sectors that are particularly well-suited for the incorporation of social protection components include... education, finance, health, and public sector management.”

³³ Strategy and Policy Department estimates based on proposed enhancements in ADB Project Classification System.

³⁴ ADB. 2010. *Education by 2020: A Sector Operations Plan*. Manila.

³⁵ Including use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to cost-effectively enhance delivery of social protection programs.

Social Protection Priority Areas and Key Activities

Social Protection Priority Areas	Key Activities	Primary Sectors and Thematic Initiatives That Lend Support to Social Protection	Other Sector and Thematic Initiatives
Social assistance	Cash transfers (conditional/unconditional), social pensions, in-kind transfers (food for work), asset transfers, scholarships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Finance • Health • Public sector management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disaster risk management, Climate change adaptation
Social insurance	Pensions, provident funds, health insurance, micro-insurance, small farmer agricultural insurance, weather-indexed crop insurance, unemployment benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance • Health • Public sector management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture and food security • Disaster risk management, Climate change adaptation • Regional cooperation • Private sector development
Labor market programs	Active labor market policies (preemployment training, skills upgrading, public works); Passive labor market programs (core labor standards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education (TVET, skills development for employment, retraining) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure

TVET = technical and vocational education and training.
Source: ADB. 2001. *Social Protection Strategy*. Manila.

Secondary sectors and thematic initiatives that lend support to social protection

36. Agriculture and Food Security, Climate Change Adaptation, and Disaster Risk Management. Social protection has a strong link with food security. ADB also recognizes that in responding to the challenge of climate change, priority should be given to protecting vulnerable groups, especially women, the poor, and minority groups including children.³⁶ Cash transfers, assets transfers (through alternative livelihood programs), and public works programs can help curb extreme deprivation and hunger, and mitigate the impacts of environmental shocks on livelihoods. Weather-indexed crop insurance provides highly relevant social protection for vulnerable farmers. ADB has become increasingly responsive to DMC needs related to the risk and occurrence of natural disasters and will continue to strengthen social protection's role in disaster risk reduction and management, and climate change adaptation.

37. Infrastructure. Public works programs provide a promising entry point for integrating social protection components into physical infrastructure projects. In projects in the energy, transport, urban, and water sectors, ADB will promote decent

³⁶ ADB. 2009. *Under the Weather and the Rising Tide: Adapting to a Changing Climate in Asia and the Pacific*. 2nd ed. Manila.

employment and access to training and reemployment opportunities as project components, and support design of long-term employment strategies including exit strategies after project completion. ADB will ensure that its lending operations in infrastructure (and in other sectors) adhere to the CLS. A project's potential impacts on workers will be identified and assessed early in the project cycle. In addition, plans to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential adverse impacts on workers will be developed and implemented. ADB will utilize the Large Works (International Federation of Consulting Engineers, or FIDIC) and Plant (Engineering Advancement Association of Japan, or ENAA) Conditions of Contract requiring contractor compliance.

38. Regional Cooperation. Social protection can be advanced through regional cooperation and integration activities by means of (i) information exchange about national policies and programs, with the objective of spurring rapid learning among ADB regional members, and with countries in other regions, through the South–South cooperation; (ii) partnering with other international organizations to assist DMCs in developing, expanding, or rationalizing social protection programs while expanding coverage; and (iii) collaboration with the UN and other bodies to promote the use of social protection to accelerate achievement of the MDGs and the social goals of the Post-2015 development framework. One area for regional cooperation is cross-border portability of social insurance.

39. Private Sector Initiatives. The private sector can contribute to social protection in a variety of ways. For example, private sector organizations can serve as implementing agencies and partners for government social protection activities. Governments can build partnerships with the private sector in the management and delivery of social health insurance schemes, including old-age pensions, social health insurance schemes, and insurance against natural disasters and weather variation. Governments can also introduce measures to stimulate private sector provision of pensions; micro-insurance; and health insurance, including purely private schemes, as well as public–private partnerships.

Support to Capacity Development and Policy, and Knowledge Sharing

40. DMC social protection systems are often fragmented and poorly coordinated among several agencies that lack capacity to implement the programs. Many governments have shared with ADB their interest in reforming or enlarging their social protection systems.³⁷ Through technical assistance and grant activities, ADB will help governments develop national social protection strategies and integrate social protection objectives into their national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, programs for climate change adaptation and disaster risk management, and ADB country partnership strategies. Through its policy and advisory technical assistance projects, ADB will assist DMC governments to build their capacity to improve and expand social protection systems, and to collect data and report on the use of social protection.

“In the energy, transport, urban, and water sectors, ADB will promote decent employment and access to training.”

³⁷ For example, in response to demand from the Government of the PRC, ADB approved the Policy and Advisory Technical Assistance on Streamlining Legal and Regulatory Framework on Social Assistance in September 2012.

41. As set forth in the Social Protection Strategy, ADB will assess human vulnerability, social risks, labor market issues, and social protection needs during preparation of the country partnership strategy. Relevant linked documents, such as sector assessments that support social protection, will also be used to capture social protection issues. ADB will draw upon ILO expertise and analysis under the ADB–ILO Memorandum of Understanding in order to better address labor market and employment issues in DMCs.

42. ADB will promote awareness of social protection in DMCs by preparing knowledge products, engaging in policy dialogue, analyzing social protection systems, and supporting knowledge sharing on social protection through ADB’s communities of practice (CoPs) and internal and external networks.

Supporting Partnerships and South–South Cooperation

43. ADB will deepen collaboration with bilateral and multilateral development agencies and other important stakeholders in policy formulation, capacity development, knowledge generation, and research supporting the strengthening of social protection in DMCs. ADB will also enhance partnerships on social protection with the private sector, including through public–private partnerships. To promote the sharing of good practice and experience, ADB will, together with other interested parties, establish an Asia–Pacific Social Protection Network for South–South Learning with linkages to Latin America and the Caribbean, and other regional and global networks.

Monitoring and Reporting on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific

44. Measuring and reporting the inputs and outcomes of social protection interventions contribute to informed decision making. The SPOP supports monitoring of regional and country-specific activities and achievements on social protection at the corporate and subregional/country levels. ADB will continue to collaborate with other organizations in the collection, monitoring, and analysis of social protection data, including through activities connected with the updating of ADB’s database on social protection systems in the region.

“ADB will enhance partnerships on social protection with the private sector.”

III. Implementation Plan

A. Interdepartmental Cooperation

45. The Regional and Sustainable Development Department (RSDD), in collaboration with the Strategy and Policy Department and operations departments, will be the focal point for monitoring social protection interventions at the corporate level. The monitoring system will be based on progress, performance, and impacts of individual projects and programs, and will be tracked according to the strategic results framework (see Appendix 1).

46. RSDD and the Social Development and Poverty CoP remain responsible for providing strategic direction to ADB's social protection work.

B. Strategic Partnerships and Coordination

47. Strategic partnerships and effective coordination of development efforts support mobilization of resources, limit duplication of efforts, and ensure complementarity of development interventions in DMCs.

48. At the corporate level, RSDD will act as a focal point of collaboration on social protection with bilateral development agencies, ILO, OECD, UNICEF, UNESCAP, UNRISD, World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank, civil society organizations, and research institutes. Together with other ADB departments and offices, RSDD will promote strategic partnerships on social protection with other development partners.

C. Resource Requirements

49. **Staff.** Effective design of, and implementation support for, social protection projects demand an interdisciplinary perspective from various fields, including economics, social development, public administration, law, and finance, as well as technical expertise and policy experience in the different categories of social protection—social assistance, social insurance, or labor market programs. Sector and thematic specialists, together with CoPs, will integrate social protection components into their projects. ADB will support training of operations staff to better equip them to develop social protection activities. Consideration will be given to engaging interns to support ADB's social protection agenda.

50. ADB can increase its investments and knowledge activities on social protection through more coordinated action across departments, and through interagency

collaboration, which could include secondments. Sector specialists can lend their expertise in designing different social protection schemes. Appendix 2 lays out the various social protection components that could be supported through sector- and thematic-specific investments.

51. ADB employs few staff with extensive social protection expertise.³⁸ Yet, institutional capacity can be strengthened through training and staff development programs, operational collaboration between less experienced and more experienced staff, and staff participation in knowledge work on social protection. Staff are therefore encouraged to assess their learning needs on social protection topics and participate in various training and development approaches including, but not limited to, development assignments, online courses, and ADB in-house training programs. For operations departments, requirements for social protection knowledge will be based on opportunities to assist DMCs in developing their social protection programs and policies. Poverty, social sector, and social development specialists in RSDD will provide guidance and support in the development of social protection operations, expansion of the knowledge base and networks, and monitoring and reporting of ADB's contribution to social protection.

“Staff learning and development is essential in keeping staff informed of major emerging issues in social protection.”

52. **Learning and Development.** Staff learning and development is essential in keeping staff informed of major emerging issues in social protection. ADB will offer opportunities to enroll in social protection training programs, including short-term external training for redeployed specialists, and in-house training for other ADB staff. Such training will be financed from the administrative budget resources. ADB will institutionalize other development approaches (e.g., on-the-job training, mentoring, coaching, e-learning courses, and knowledge-sharing sessions) with the learning content developed by RSDD, relevant CoPs, including the Social Development and Poverty CoP, and operations department staff with social protection expertise. The Budget, Personnel and Management Systems Department and RSDD will monitor and guide staff learning and development on social protection. Exchange of staff between regional departments and RSDD is strongly encouraged to ensure knowledge capture and sharing, and participation of RSDD staff on project teams will be required when warranted by the project.

³⁸ Footnote 6, p. 2.

IV. Social Protection Operational Plan Monitoring and Reporting

A. Performance Indicators

53. A number of indicators will assist in monitoring the effectiveness and strategic focus of ADB's support to social protection. These include (i) percentage of projects (including loans, investments, and technical assistance) fully supporting social protection or containing components of social protection; and (ii) performance at completion of projects supporting social protection. The results framework (Appendix 1) presents baselines and targets for each of these indicators. It is also aligned with indicators monitored and reported in ADB's corporate results framework tracking support to inclusive growth.

B. Reporting to Management

54. The SPOP elaborates on how ADB can contribute to improved social indicators by carrying out social protection activities within the guiding context of Strategy 2020. Progress in the implementation of the SPOP will be regularly reported to Management. ADB has included a supplementary indicator on social protection in its corporate results framework, and will report on it in the annual Development Effectiveness Review.³⁹

“Progress in the implementation of the SPOP will be regularly reported to Management.”

³⁹ ADB. 2012. *Strategy Paper: Review of the ADB Results Framework*. (R286-12, 18 December 2012).

APPENDIX 1

SECTOR OPERATIONAL PLAN RESULTS FRAMEWORK: SOCIAL PROTECTION 2014–2020

Indicators	Baseline (Year/Period)	Target (Year/Period)
I. Sector Progress in Asia and the Pacific		
Percentage of population below \$1.25 per day consumption (as measure of extreme poverty) lowered	871 million (2009)	Decrease from baseline (2016)
Percentage of population below \$2 per day consumption (as measure of vulnerable poor) lowered	1.63 billion (2008)	Decrease from baseline (2016)
Countries with high income inequality (% of countries with Gini coefficient exceeding 0.4)	29.6 (2000–2010)	Monitor
Access to social protection programs (SPI) ^a	0.110 (regional average, 2009)	Increase from baseline (2016)
Coverage of social protection programs (breadth/width of social protection coverage)	0.343 (regional average, 2009)	Increase from baseline (2016)
Social protection benefits going to the poor (SPI for poor)	0.024 (regional average, 2009)	Increase from baseline (2016)
Social protection benefits going to women (social protection for women)	0.046 (regional average, 2009)	Increase from baseline (2016)
II. ADB's Contribution to Sector Results^b		
Quality of Completed Operations		
Performance of projects with full social protection focus at completion rated <i>successful</i> or <i>highly successful</i> (%)	90.0% (2002–2010) ^c	Maintain
Performance of projects with social protection components at completion rated <i>successful</i> or <i>highly successful</i> (%)	77.1% (2002–2010)	Increase from baseline
Performance of technical assistance projects with full social protection focus at completion rated <i>successful</i> or <i>highly successful</i> (%)	81.4% (2002–2010)	Increase from baseline
Performance of technical assistance projects with social protection components at completion rated <i>successful</i> or <i>highly successful</i> (%)	81.8% (2002–2010)	Increase from baseline

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Indicators	Baseline (Year/Period)	Target (Year/Period)
III. Operational Management of ADB's Sector Program		
Strategic focus^d		
Operations contributing to inclusive growth focusing on social protection (% of total number of ADB operations)	5.8% (2010–2012)	Increase
Operations contributing to inclusive growth focusing mainly on social protection (% of total number of ADB operations)	1.9% (2010–2012 average)	Maintain or Increase
Operations contributing to inclusive growth focusing on pillar 1: growth and creation of jobs and opportunities, with partial social protection (% of total number of ADB operations)	2.4% (2010–2012 average)	Maintain or Increase
Operations contributing to inclusive growth focusing on pillar 2: inclusive access to jobs and opportunities, with partial social protection (% of total number of ADB operations)	1.6% (2010–2012 average)	Increase
Technical assistance supporting social protection (percentage share of total number) stand-alone with social protection components	(2010–2012 average) 2.5% 2.0%	Increase
SPI updating	2013 (2009 data)	2015 (2010–2012 data) 2018 (2013–2015 data)
IV. Organizational Management of ADB's Sector Program		
Human Resources		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Development and Poverty Community of Practice as lead, and other communities of practice (Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food Security; Education; Energy; Environment; Financial Sector Development; Gender Equity; Health; Operations; Public Management and Governance; Public–Private Partnership; Regional Cooperation and Integration; Transport; Urban; and Water) mobilized to support social protection • Informal network of ADB staff with social protection knowledge • Staff training and capacity development on social protection implemented, starting in Q1 2014 		
Budgetary Resources		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5.0 million total RETA funds to support SPOP implementation will be proposed for approval in 2014, 2016, and 2018. • ADB will explore the utility of creating a trust fund (or similar funding mechanism) to support the SPOP, and in particular to boost ADB's capacity to respond to DMC demand for social protection. 		

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Indicators	Baseline (Year/Period)	Target (Year/Period)
<p>Business Processes and Practices (2014–2020)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and update a database of approved ADB projects supporting social protection • Review country programming documents to address social protection issues • Design, process, and implement social protection projects • Strengthen social protection systems through loans, grants, and TA activities • Support institutional capacity development through loans, grants, and TA activities • Develop partnerships for enhancing social protection in the Asia and Pacific region • Promote knowledge sharing by conducting learning events on social protection • Enhance ADB’s capacity for supporting social protection • Monitor and report on progress of SPOP implementation • Updating project classification system to incorporate social protection in line with three pillars of inclusive growth • Monitor the social protection pipeline yearly • Report projects supporting social protection (i.e., pillar 3 of inclusive growth) in the annual Development Effectiveness Review • Biannual reporting of SPOP implementation 		

ADB = Asian Development Bank, DMC = developing member country, Q1 = first quarter, RETA = regional technical assistance, SPI = Social Protection Index, SPOP = Social Protection Operational Plan, TA = technical assistance.

^a The Social Protection Index (SPI) is calculated by dividing total social protection (SP) expenditures per total potential beneficiaries by 25% of gross domestic product per capita (representing average poverty line expenditures). In other words, the total SP expenditures spread across all potential beneficiaries are compared to poverty line expenditures in each country. The general formula of the SPI takes the form: Total SP expenditures per total reference population divided by a regional poverty line.

^b If data permit, indicators quantifying results of ADB-assisted projects on SP will be added during implementation which may include number of beneficiaries assisted; levels of benefits extended by SP programs. Current indicators use data for projects approved between 2002 and 2010 that already have project completion reports (PCRs) and technical assistance completion reports (TCRs), but not all projects identified have PCRs and TCRs.

^c Reference years are based on the comprehensive assessment completed in 2011, which covers the period up to 2010 (see ADB. 2011. *ADB and Social Protection: Challenges and Opportunities*. Manila).

^d Based on the Strategy and Policy Department’s database on projects supporting inclusive growth; criteria used for identifying SP projects already include proposed enhancements in the project classification system where technical and vocational education and training projects with more than 50% focus on SP are considered stand-alone SP projects.

Source: Asian Development Bank.

APPENDIX 2

SECTOR AND THEMATIC APPROACHES: LINKS BETWEEN THE SOCIAL PROTECTION OPERATIONAL PLAN 2014–2020 AND OTHER ADB SECTOR AND THEMATIC AREAS

Sector and Thematic Areas	Strategic Priorities	Linkages to SPOP 2014–2020
Primary sectors lending support to social protection		
Financial Sector Operational Plan (2011)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Promote inclusive finance for poor households and small and medium-sized enterprises. Support infrastructure finance and access to capital market including development of contractual savings institutions such as pension funds and insurance companies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPOP supports increasing access to financial resources/ credit and ability of the poor, women, and the vulnerable to build productive assets. SPOP supports micro-pensions and micro-insurance as new business opportunities for microfinance institutions in urban and rural areas.
Education by 2020: A Sector Operations Plan (2010)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen quality, inclusiveness, and relevant skills at all levels of education. Utilize new innovative models of service delivery and financing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPOP encourages skills development through active labor market programs. SPOP promotes access to education by providing income support to poor households, and incentives to send children to school (for example, through conditional cash transfers, scholarship for the poor and vulnerable population, school feeding programs).
Health Sector—An Operational Plan for Improving Health Access and Outcomes Under Strategy 2020 (2008)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Support for the health outcomes through economic governance and improved public expenditure management such as cost containment; public–private partnership; and financial aspects of improving access, equity, and outcomes of essential health care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPOP supports giving access to health care services by providing income support to poor households and vulnerable groups (for example, through conditional cash transfers) SPOP promotes access to health care services through basic health insurance for the poor and vulnerable.

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Sector and Thematic Areas	Strategic Priorities	Linkages to SPOP 2014–2020
Secondary sectors lending support to social protection		
<p>Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Transport Initiative Operational Plan (2010) • Water Operational Framework (2011) • Energy Policy (2009) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement accessible, safe, and affordable transport system. 2. Extend energy service to communities and groups, contributing to inclusive growth and MDG targets. 3. Accelerating investment in hygiene sanitation to meet MDG targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPOP advances the idea that sustainable transport system—while aiming to improve access and affordability for poor and vulnerable—should also ensure compliance with core labor standards to support social protection. Better approach to determining tariffs and subsidies, and raising standards for design to address the needs of older persons and disabled. • SPOP supports the development of social and economic infrastructure through workforce programs. • Adequate and reliable transport, electricity, and water supply and services increase enterprise productivity, competitiveness, and growth, increasing opportunities for employment and skills development.
Thematic initiatives lending support to social protection		
<p>Sustainable Food Security Operational Plan (2009)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve agriculture productivity. 2. Enhance inclusive food and agriculture value chain with particular attention to small farmers and other vulnerable groups. 3. Improve resilience due to climate change and volatility of food price. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPOP supports cash-for-work or food-for-work programs to strengthen rural livelihood and promote food security by enabling the rural poor to smoothen their consumption during slack agricultural seasons when prices are volatile and there is less demand for labor.

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Sector and Thematic Areas	Strategic Priorities	Linkages to SPOP 2014–2020
Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Operational Plan, 2013–2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reaffirm ADB's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment by narrowing gender disparities through ADB operations. 2. Gender mainstreaming in Strategy 2020 sectors, explore more gender equity theme operations, pilot and scale up initiatives on gender equality, and make infrastructure work better for women and girls (basic infrastructure to reduce women's time poverty). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPOP supports development of comprehensive social protection systems that can provide women and girls with basic income security and access to essential services. SPOP supports gender equality and empowerment through increased control of resources (transfers of social insurance and social assistance), gender-appropriate opportunities for employment in workforce programs, skills development, etc. • SPOP facilitates gender equity through the expansion of social insurance (pensions, health, disability, unemployment, etc. for informal labor market sector to ensure that both men and women are well protected).
Private Sector Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist DMCs to attract direct private sector investment that supports inclusive growth and improve the environment. 2. Promote public–private partnerships to all DMCs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPOP supports identifying and involving private sector organizations for various social protection programs resulting in effective and efficient service delivery. • SPOP promotes building partnerships with the private sector in the management and delivery of social protection programs such as social health insurance, old-age pensions, and insurance against catastrophes and weather variations. • SPOP promotes providing financing support to private sector institutions for extending pensions and health insurance coverage through private scheme.

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Sector and Thematic Areas	Strategic Priorities	Linkages to SPOP 2014–2020
Disaster and Emergency Assistance (Action Plan, 2008)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitate assistance to DMCs following disaster impact to help address immediate needs, assist in early recovery measures, build greater resilience into post-impact reconstruction efforts, and identify safer sites for relocation of essential infrastructure. 2. Early disaster recovery assistance. 3. Longer-term reconstruction and rehabilitation assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPOP contributes to protecting the poor and vulnerable after natural disaster shocks through cash transfers, public works, etc. • SPOP promotes adaptive capacity by reducing vulnerability of the poor through micro-insurance, cash transfers, livelihood programs, and diversification, etc.
Governance and Anticorruption Policies (GACAP II, 2006)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve ADB's performance in the implementation of the governance and anticorruption in the sectors and subsectors where ADB is active. 2. Enable DMCs in partnership with ADB to design and deliver better quality projects and programs. 3. Harmonize and coordinate approach with governments, donors, and other actors at the country and global levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance is central to improve service delivery and enhance accountability of social protection programs. • Accountability mechanism for delivery of social protection programs is supported by SPOP.

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Sector and Thematic Areas	Strategic Priorities	Linkages to SPOP 2014–2020
Enhancing Knowledge Management (Plan of Action 2009) and Partnerships	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sharpen the knowledge focus in ADB operations. 2. Strengthen external knowledge partnerships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPOP supports enhancement of policy and institutional frameworks and capacity to address social protection concerns and provide income security to the poor. • SPOP supports social protection through knowledge solutions, including for policy and institutional reform and program design and delivery. • SPOP promotes knowledge generation through policy-relevant research and analytical work; knowledge dissemination and policy dialogue; and capacity building for social protection research analysis, monitoring, and evaluation. • SPOP supports developing and strengthening partnerships in policy formulation and development as well as knowledge generation and research, including training program for ADB staff and external partners.
Regional Cooperation and Integration Strategy (2006)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create, consolidate, and disseminate knowledge and information on regional cooperation and integration to DMCs (acting as a knowledge bank). 2. Help DMCs and regional and/or subregional bodies build institutional capacity to manage regional cooperation and integration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPOP supports collaboration with development partners and civil society organizations to promote partnerships for identifying opportunities for collaboration in social protection initiatives. • SPOP supports developing skills and technical capabilities in developing countries including, among others, training policy makers, developing local institutions, and helping local enterprises become work innovative, all of which have relevance in the implementation of SPOP.

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Sector and Thematic Areas	Strategic Priorities	Linkages to SPOP 2014–2020
Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Operational Directions (2012) • Focused Action: Priorities for Addressing Climate Change in Asia and the Pacific 	1. Pursue green growth that fosters environmentally sustainable, resource-efficient, low-carbon, climate-resilient, and socially inclusive development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPOP supports alternative livelihoods in environmental restoration, reforestation, etc., through public works programs. • SPOP promotes enhancing adaptive capacity by reducing vulnerability through transfers, livelihood program, crop insurance, etc. • SPOP supports protection of the poor and vulnerable from natural disasters and climate shocks through transfers, work programs, etc.

DMCs = developing member countries, GACAP II = Second Governance and Anticorruption Action Plan, MDG = Millennium Development Goal, SPOP = Social Protection Operational Plan.

Social Protection Operational Plan 2014–2020

This operational plan provides strategic directions for Asian Development Bank (ADB) support to its developing member countries to strengthen social protection systems. It aligns ADB's 2001 Social Protection Strategy with the inclusive growth agenda of Strategy 2020. The operational plan supports the development and integration of social protection components in key sectors, and institutional capacity building. It also promotes knowledge sharing, partnerships, and South–South cooperation on monitoring and reporting on social protection programs and trends in the Asia and Pacific region.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB's vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region's many successes, it remains home to two-thirds of the world's poor: 1.7 billion people who live on less than \$2 a day, with 828 million struggling on less than \$1.25 a day. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.