

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Department : OREI

TA No., Country and Name			Amount Approved: \$1,300,00	
TA 7526-REG: Asia 2050			Revised Amount: N/A	
Executing Agency ADB		Source of Funding Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF-IV)	Amount Undisbursed: \$37,443.02	Amount Utilized: \$1,262,556.98
TA Approval Date: 28/04/2010	TA Signing -	Fielding of First Consultant(s): 28/06/2010	TA Completion Date Original: 30/04/2012	Actual: 30/04/2012
			Account Closing Date Original: 30/04/2012	Actual: 31/01/2014
Description				
<p>In 2010, ADB commissioned the Asia 2050 study through this TA to develop plausible scenarios of where the region could be in 40 years; identify drivers of change and policy choices that the region must make; and implement national, regional, and global agendas. While several in-depth studies have already analyzed specific countries or sectors, only a few region-wide studies have combined related themes affecting potential development solutions. This Study aimed to lay out long-term proposals upon which development policies could be based. The Study hoped to determine critical question of whether a paradigm shift is required for Asia to reach its development potential by 2050, and—if so—what that would involve in terms of policies and reforms across the economic and social spheres.</p> <p>The Study covered multi-generational issues impacting the region, and drew upon success stories as well as lessons from Asia's failures. Some of the key policy issues covered by the Study included: sustaining high growth and avoiding the middle income trap, addressing widening inequalities; addressing the demographic challenges of rapidly aging populations, mitigating environmental degradation, including climate change, and addressing resource constraints; reversing deterioration in quality and credibility of national and political institutions, and promoting greater regional cooperation.</p>				
Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs				
<p>The TA hoped to contribute to the implementation of medium- and long-term and regional policies to promote regional cooperation and integration (RCI) in Asia and the Pacific. The expected outcome was to inform policy makers of feasible regional policies and strategic measures to achieve greater RCI in the region. Planned outputs included knowledge creation in the form of thematic studies and a main report, and knowledge sharing achieved from dissemination of the study findings and recommendations.</p>				
Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities				
<p>The TA was implemented by OREI. In accordance with the ADB's Guidelines on the Use of Consultants, a firm was hired as a consultant by QCBS method. Over the course the of the implementation period, three national consultants were engaged, with all positions posted via CSRN. In total, consulting services inputs amounted to about 30 person-months for national consultants and 66 person-months for the consulting firm. The consulting firm was given an excellent rating at the end of the contract period. Three national consultants' contracts were also rated excellent, as indicated in the PER records. In addition to the work done by the consulting firm, considerable ADB staff inputs also went into preparing the Study, including complete sole authoring of background papers.</p> <p>The TA conducted consultation workshops with policy makers in key Asian cities (i.e., Beijing, Shanghai, Jakarta, Seoul, Tokyo, Ha Noi, Mumbai and Delhi). In addition, a briefing was conducted with the ADB President and workshops were held with the heads of ADB regional and knowledge departments to elicit feedback on initial study findings. At the ADB Annual Meeting 2011 held in Ha Noi, during the Governor's Seminar, a brief video on key messages from the overview publication of the Asia 2050 study was presented. The focus of the Governors' Seminar was on challenges to Asia's growth and prosperity and corresponding strategic choices and actions at the national, regional and global levels, drawing on issues raised from the Asia 2050 study. An Asia Wise Persons Group seminar was also organized in June 2011 to gather more inputs and feedback on the study findings from the distinguished members of this group. The TA subsequently launched the flagship publication "Asia 2050: Realizing the Asian</p>				

Century” co-published with Sage Publications India Pvt Ltd in August 2011 in Tokyo, Japan. Dissemination activities were then held in Asia, North America, and Europe to generate more debate and discussions on the study with a wider audience.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome

The extensive consultation process that had been taken, both at the internal (ADB) and external levels, and the dissemination activities that followed raised a high level of interest in the study and in the resulting publication. The publication has been well received by various stakeholders, including policy makers, the academe, other development agencies, think tanks, and even the private sector, judging from feedback received at the various dissemination activities and press coverage. Policy makers from DMCs lauded the book for providing a blueprint for longer term sustainable growth, highlighting relevant issues faced by the region. The publication was widely circulated and OREI received numerous requests for copies from government officials, academe, think tanks, private sector, and ADB staff. The book also drew significant media interest during the launch, with coverage from BBC, Nikkei, The Economics Times, and The Straits Times. The Study’s findings were highlighted in an article which appeared in The Economist in November 2011 (see: <http://www.economist.com/node/21536964>).

Overall Assessment and Rating

The TA has been assessed as highly successful. The TA managed to deliver proposed outputs within the given timeframe, without further requests to extend the completion date. The study output contributed to stimulating robust discussions within and outside the region. The book was lauded for facilitating a common understanding of the challenges that the region needs to tackle in order to make the prospect of an Asian Century a reality. High ranking government officials also cited the study as timely, addressing relevant and urgent issues in the wake of the global financial crisis. OREI continued to receive requests for copies of the publication well into 2013. Internally, the study findings have also been useful inputs for management presentations and speaking engagements with external audiences. Asia 2050 was a flagship study that significantly contributed to ADB’s status as a knowledge institution on Asian affairs.

Major Lessons

Strong management support and an extensive consultation process, internally and with policy makers in the region, helped significantly in increasing the visibility and broadening the readership of the book. The presentation of the findings, for instance in terms of scenarios, was effective in being able to quickly convey crucial messages to policy makers. Organizing issues on three levels: national, regional, and Asia’s relation with the global community provided a clearer perspective to be able to identify opportunities and address vulnerabilities in a comprehensive manner.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

The Asia 2050 study may serve as basis for future study undertakings to address challenges that have been identified, and for informing policy. In fact, other initiatives have followed after the launch of Asia 2050. For example, ADBI will be soon be releasing its book *ASEAN 2030: Toward a Borderless Economic Community*. Also, Strategy 2050 for Kazakhstan has recently been launched by the government outlining a long term vision for the country. It “calls for widespread economic, social and political reforms to position Kazakhstan among the top 30 global economies by 2050.” Building on the visibility created by Asia 2050, ADB could focus on more in-depth assessments of selected issues highlighted in the book that have the potential to become mega trends.” ADB staff could also use the analysis, methodology and findings in Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) formulations, or undertake such analysis for countries or sub-regions as inputs to CPSs.

Prepared by: Jayant Menon

Designation: Lead Economist, OREI

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