



Completion Report

Project Number: 48335-001
Technical Assistance Number: 8789
May 2020

Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation: Knowledge Sharing and Services in Transport and Transport Facilitation

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

TA Number, Country, and Name: TA 8789-REG: Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation: Knowledge Sharing and Services in Transport and Transport Facilitation		Amount Approved: \$1,800,000	
		Revised Amount: \$3,050,000	
Executing Agency: Asian Development Bank	Source of Funding: Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF-V and VI) and People's Republic of China Poverty Reduction and Regional Cooperation Fund (PRCF)	Amount Undisbursed: \$67,139.76	Amount Used: \$2,982,860.24
TA Approval Date: 12 December 2014	TA Signing Date: 12 December 2014	TA Completion Date	
		Original Date: 31 December 2018	Latest Revised Date: 31 July 2019
		Financial Closing Date: 31 October 2019	Number of Extensions: 2
TA Type: Policy and advisory TA		TA Arrangement: Regional	

Description

Central Asia's strategic location as a land bridge that connects the Caucasus, Europe, the Russian Federation, the Middle East, East Asia, and South Asia offers tremendous opportunities for transport and trade links with the burgeoning economies in these regions. In 2007, the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Transport and Trade Facilitation Strategy (the original strategy) was endorsed. In 2012–2013, a midterm review took stock of the original strategy and led to a refined CAREC Transport and Trade Facilitation Strategy 2020 (TTFS 2020), which was endorsed at the 12th Ministerial Conference on 23–24 October 2013 in Kazakhstan. TTFS 2020 acknowledges the importance of knowledge services and partnerships as necessary levers to propel TTFS 2020 implementation. Knowledge solutions are also one of the strategic priorities of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) leading up to 2020.

Given the emphasis on knowledge provision, management, and partnerships in ADB's Midterm Review of Strategy 2020 and TTFS 2020, a concept note and work plan on provision of knowledge sharing and services for TTFS 2020 was endorsed by CAREC countries at the 13th Transport Sector Coordinating Committee (TSCC) Meeting in Bishkek on 14–15 May 2014, and the Senior Officials' Meeting in Manila on 26–27 June 2014. Based on this, the proposed regional technical assistance (TA) for knowledge sharing and services (KSS) is designed as a vehicle for generation, management, and dissemination of knowledge aimed at strengthening TTFS 2020 implementation in the areas of transport and transport facilitation.

Expected Impact, Outcome, and Outputs

The TA's expected impact was enhanced quality of TTFS 2020 implementation. The expected outcome was enhanced capacities of CAREC countries for effective TTFS 2020 implementation in the areas of transport and transport facilitation. The TA included four outputs: (i) policy advisory and analytical work on selected TTFS 2020 topics conducted; (ii) organization of knowledge on selected TTFS 2020 topics improved; (iii) sharing of knowledge and experiences on selected TTFS 2020 topics enhanced; and (iv) skills and know-how for applying knowledge on selected TTFS 2020 topics in operational work strengthened.

Implementation Arrangements

The Transport and Communications Division of the Central and West Asia Department was in charge of the TA and was primarily responsible for implementation oversight, accountability for outputs, and communication with consultants and stakeholders.

The TA implementation period was originally from 12 December 2014 to 31 December 2018 but was extended by 1.7 years until 31 July 2019. The TA originally planned to provide 39 person-months of individual international consultants, and 93 person-months of individual national consultants. The original TA budget amounted to \$1,800,000 cofinanced

by ADB TASF fund (\$1,400,000) and PRC Fund for Poverty Reduction (\$400,0000), which was used to supplement limited TASF funding. Consequently, the total TA financing was increased two times from TASF funds.

The actual consulting inputs were a total of 54 person-months of international consultants, and 93 person-months of national consultants hired individually. ADB's assessments of the performance of all consultants were satisfactory. The TA had been implemented within the budget and delivered the expected outputs.

Conduct of Activities

The TA has successfully completed activities in priority areas of railways, transport facilitation, road asset management, road safety and aviation in line with the expected outputs.

The TA supported conducting of the annual CAREC TSCC meetings from 2015 until 2019. These meetings, attended by CAREC developing member country representatives from transport ministries and agencies and CAREC development partner organizations, aimed to: (i) review the implementation progress of the TTFS 2020; (ii) discuss issues of key importance to the transport sector; and (iii) examine new opportunities for the transport sector under CAREC 2020 and 2030 Strategies. The discussions, agreements, and activities held during these meetings are recorded in the summary of proceedings publicly disclosed in the CAREC website.

The TA has supported 8 regional meetings and workshops on cross-border transport facilitation, road safety, road asset management, and aviation, and three railway working group meetings. These have been attended by more than 200 participants from CAREC developing member countries. These events served as effective avenues for learning and collaboration between sector experts and country delegations in exploring challenges and formulating solutions to unique transport issues in CAREC countries. Joint activities were implemented with the CAREC Institute support, among which were Second Technical Consultation Meeting on Quadrilateral Traffic in Transit Agreement (Urumqi, PRC, 7–9 September 2015) and CAREC Regional Road Safety Workshop (30–31 August 2017). Furthermore, on 10 September 2018, the CAREC Institute signed a memorandum of understanding with the Intergovernmental Commission Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA) on cooperation between the CAREC Program and the TRACECA Program in the field of transport.

The TA has also funded the preparation, production, and dissemination of 13 knowledge products made available in 3 languages: English, Russian, and Mongolian. These include the CAREC Railway Strategy 2030, three road asset management manuals, the CAREC Aviation Scoping Study, CAREC transport sector progress reports, and a blog.

Technical Assistance Assessment Ratings

Criterion	Assessment	Rating
Relevance	The TA objectives were fully aligned with the TTFS 2020 objectives and served as a key tool for supporting the strategy implementation. All major knowledge support deliverables of the strategy were prepared within the scope of this TA. Following successful implementation of the TA, the second phase of the TA was suggested and approved for implementation of the new CAREC Transport Strategy 2030 since 2 July 2019.	Highly relevant
Effectiveness	All outputs of the TA contributed to implementing priority objectives of the TTFS 2020 to improve regional connectivity and enhance sustainability of the transport systems. Through the TA financed activities, CAREC developing member countries (DMCs) developed common approaches to road asset management, road safety, upscaled railways infrastructure projects and operations, developed priority actions in the aviation sector and cross-border transport and logistics.	Effective
Efficiency	The TA established a permanent CAREC Transport Secretariat, which adopted a universal approach towards organizing the annual TSCC meetings, regional working groups and workshops, development, printing and dissemination of strategic papers, manuals, reports and other knowledge products. The logistics arrangements for all events under the TA were done in advance, following robust implementation templates and service contracts, hence ADB staff, consultants, beneficiaries from the CAREC DMCs were not disrupted by logistics issues and could focus on highly productive transport knowledge acquisition and sharing	Efficient

Criterion	Assessment	Rating
Overall Assessment	The TA was successful in achieving the expected outcomes and impacts. Given its high relevance and successful ongoing implementation, ADB twice extended the TA implementation period and provided additional financing to support additional CAREC TSCC meetings, other regional events and knowledge products.	Successful
Sustainability	The second phase of the CAREC TA on Knowledge Sharing and Services in Transport and Transport Facilitation (TA 9754-REG) was approved by ADB on 2 July 2019 to continue highly relevant work started under the TA. The new TA continues to support the CAREC DMCs to implement the new CAREC Transport Strategy 2030 endorsed by the CAREC Ministers in November 2019. The new TA continues financing a well established CAREC Transport Secretariat and the international consulting team. Furthermore, this arrangement for supporting the CAREC Transport Strategy 2030 implementation is institutionalized by the paragraph 76 of the Strategy.	Most likely sustainable

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Design and/or planning	The TA was implemented primarily through the regional knowledge building and dissemination activities but demonstrated that some DMCs vary significantly in their capacity to implement the TA recommendations. Accordingly, the follow up TA includes more national capacity development events to support those DMCs which have lowest capacity.
Implementation and/or delivery	Establishment of the CAREC Transport Secretariat, staffed with highly qualified national consultants helped managing efficiently multiple regional events and knowledge products preparations and dissemination. The follow up TA has retained the Secretariat, which helps carry out TA activities smoothly and without loss of time for the initial TA set up arrangements.
Management of staff and consultants	Responsibility for the Transport pillars as per the CAREC TTFS 2020 and CAREC Transport Strategy 2030 was shared among the staff of Transport and Communications Division of the Central and West Asia Department and the Sustainable Infrastructure Division of the East Asia Department. This helped establish a strong TA implementation team supported by the permanent CAREC Transport Secretariat, established and financed by the TA.
Knowledge building	The TA relied on the CAREC program website for dissemination of knowledge products. The CAREC Transport page https://www.carecprogram.org/transport was established and became an integral part of the CAREC knowledge portal. It contains links to all major CAREC transport event pages and to the CAREC Transport knowledge products.
Stakeholder participation	As DMCs have varying capacity to implement transport sector reforms, the follow-up TA includes more national capacity development activities to support DMCs with the lowest implementation capacity.
Partnership	CAREC Transport Secretariat assisted international financial institutions and other development partners in promoting best practices in various transport pillars among the CAREC DMCs. Since the TA launch, CAREC Transport Secretariat kept open doors to any partners, willing to contribute to the CAREC Transport sector development and will continue implementing the open platform approach in the next CAREC Transport TA.
Replication and/or scaling up	The modality of this TA is implemented with minor modifications in the next CAREC transport TA. More national workshops and capacity development activities will be added in those countries which require additional support from the CAREC program.
Post-TA financial resource	The follow up TA (9754-REG) with Asia Regional Trade and Connectivity Fund (ARTCF) financing of \$1 million for 2020–2021 implementation period was approved on 2 July 2019. Upon endorsement of the CAREC Transport Strategy 2030 in November 2019, additional TA tasks will require additional financing resources which are being discussed with relevant ADB administered technical assistance funds.

Follow-up Actions

The second phase of the CAREC TA on Knowledge Sharing and Services in Transport and Transport Facilitation (TA 9754-REG) was approved by ADB to continue highly relevant work started under the TA. The design of the new TA accommodated all major lessons learned during implementation of the TA. Among key features of the new TA is increased attention to the CAREC logistics sector. In response to recommendations of the 18th CAREC Transport Sector Coordination Committee meeting (25 April 2019), the new TA supported preparing a CAREC Ports and Logistics scoping study. In addition to the CAREC Performance Measurement and Monitoring (CPMM), the CAREC Transport sector will monitor progress of the CAREC member countries against the Logistics Performance Index (LPI) and assist the countries with improvement of their general international logistics performance.

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DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Impact Enhanced quality of TTFS 2020 implementation		
Results Chain	Performance Indicators with Targets and Baselines	Achievements
<p>Outcome</p> <p>Enhanced capacities of CAREC countries for effective TTFS 2020 implementation in the areas of transport and transport facilitation</p>	<p>a. Milestones in TTFS 2020 results framework in the areas of transport and transport facilitation achieved by 2020</p> <p>b. At least 70% of CAREC member countries approved one new project between 2016 and 2018 whose design incorporated TA topics by 2019</p> <p>c. At least 50% of CAREC beneficiaries rated usefulness of TA outputs for TTFS 2020 implementation as 4 or higher (on a 5-point scale) by 2019</p>	<p>a. All transport physical infrastructure indicators/ milestones of the TTFS 2020 were fully achieved and all deliverables, related to the TA scope, such as preparation of strategies and knowledge products are achieved.</p> <p>b. All CAREC member countries approved at least one new project which incorporated at least one of the TA topics (such as road safety, road asset management, railway operations, cross-border transport and logistics facilitation).</p> <p>c. All CAREC events have been consistently rated high by the DMCs (e.g. 17th CAREC TSCC in 2018: 5 [76% of participants], 4 [24% of participants]). The TA was recognized as useful and the follow-up TA was approved by the 18th CAREC TSCC on 26 April 2019.</p>
<p>Outputs</p> <p>1. Policy advisory and analytical work on selected TTFS 2020 topics conducted</p> <p>2. Organization of knowledge on selected TTFS 2020 topics improved</p> <p>3. Sharing of knowledge and experiences on selected TTFS 2020 topics enhanced</p> <p>4. Skills and know-how for applying knowledge on selected TTFS 2020</p>	<p>1a. By 2019, at least 12 policy advisory and analytical products delivered</p> <p>1b. By 2019, MOU signed with at least one research institution</p> <p>2a. By 2019, knowledge database with user- friendly search interface developed and uploaded</p> <p>2b. By 2019, GIS database on TTFS 2020 projects enhanced and regularly updated</p> <p>3a. By 2019, at least 120 persons participated in experience-sharing events</p> <p>3b. By 2019, KSS web page launched and functioning</p> <p>4a. By 2019, at least 60 persons participated in training workshops</p>	<p>1a. Thirteen knowledge products are produced and disseminated.</p> <p>1b. The MOU with the TRACECA program has been signed by the CAREC Institute on behalf of the CAREC Program.</p> <p>2a. The knowledge database is maintained on www.carecprogram.org website.</p> <p>2b. The GIS database has been prepared but its maintenance was discontinued, as demand for this activity was low. This activity has been discontinued in the follow-up TA on CAREC Transport and Transport Facilitation.</p> <p>3a. More than 300 participants attended CAREC experience sharing events.</p> <p>3b. All CAREC Transport deliverable are posted and regularly updated on www.carecprogram.org website.</p> <p>4a. More than 300 participants benefitted from CAREC Transport knowledge sharing events, working groups and workshops.</p>

Results Chain	Performance Indicators with Targets and Baselines	Achievements
topics in operational work strengthened	4b. By 2019, at least 20 persons attended project design clinic	4b. Dedicated project design clinic was not found to be practical. More attention was dedicated specifically to road safety and road asset management design features of the CAREC projects; hence those aspects were addressed by the CAREC Transport knowledge products and events.
<p>Actual Key Activities with Milestones</p> <p>1. Policy advisory and analytical work on selected TTFS 2020 topics conducted</p> <p>1.1 Developed (and annually updated) detailed TA work program based on demand assessment and consultations with ADB, development partners and CAREC governments. Identify the scope of individual studies and training events, timeline, and resource requirements (April 2018).</p> <p>1.2 Produced 13 policy advisory and analytical products. These outputs could be in the form of case studies, good practice notes, policy papers, how-to guidance and tip sheets, sample terms of reference, standardized tools and instruments, data analytics, diagnostics, prefeasibility and/or scoping studies (April 2019).</p> <p>1.3 Explored institutional partnership opportunities and sign a memorandum of understanding with at least one research institution (by September 2018).</p> <p>2. Organization of knowledge on selected TTFS 2020 topics improved</p> <p>2.1 Undertook a literature review, based on defined selection criteria, and developed an indexed database of past knowledge resources on three TTFS 2020 topics (December 2017).</p> <p>2.2 Compiled an annotated bibliography on three topics, which also summarizes key messages of the included studies and reports (May 2019).</p> <p>2.3 Collected and consolidated data from the corridor performance monitoring and measurement database (on border crossing times and costs) and CAREC countries (on physical progress, safety, road conditions, traffic flows) to enhance and update the database for monitoring TTFS 2020 implementation (May 2019).</p> <p>3. Sharing of knowledge and experiences on selected TTFS 2020 topics enhanced</p> <p>3.1 Conducted 11 experience-sharing seminars (April 2019).</p> <p>3.2 Designed, launched, and updated KSS web page added to CAREC website (April 2019).</p> <p>4. Skills and know-how for applying knowledge on selected TTFS 2020 topics in operational work strengthened</p> <p>4.1 Conducted three training workshops (including one training of trainers workshop), preceded by a training needs assessment (April 2017).</p>		
<p>Actual Inputs</p> <p>Asian Development Bank: \$2,650,000</p> <p>People's Republic of China Poverty Reduction and Regional Cooperation Fund: \$400,000</p>		

ADB = Asian Development Bank, CAREC = Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation, DMC = developing member country, GIS = geographic information system, KSS = knowledge sharing and services, MOU = memorandum of understanding, TA = technical assistance, TRACECA = Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia, TSCC = Transport Sector Coordinating Committee, TTFS 2020 = Transport and Trade Facilitation Strategy 2020.

Source: Asian Development Bank.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COST

Table A2.1: Technical Assistance Cost by Activity
(\$'000)

Item	Amount ^a		
	Original ^b	Revised	Actual
1. Consultants	1,160.00	2,057.30	2,055.21
2. Equipment	30.00	11.70	11.48
3. Training, seminars and/or conferences	450.00	895.00	858.43
4. Surveys	30.00	0.00	0.00
5. Miscellaneous TA administration	100.00	80.00	57.75
6. Contingencies	30.00	6.00	0.00
Total	1,800.00	3,050.00	2,982.86

^a Includes ADB-financed funds and/or ADB fully administered cofinanced funds.

^b Original estimated cost in the TA report.

Source: Asian Development Bank estimates.

Table A2.2: Technical Assistance Cost by Fund
(\$'000)

	TASF-V and VI	PRCF	Total Cost
1. Original ^a	1,500.00	400.00	1,800.00
2. Revised ^b	2,650.00	400.00	3,050.00
3. Actual	2,582.86	400.00	2,982.86
4. Unused	67.14	0.00	67.14

PRCF = People's Republic of China Poverty Reduction and Regional Cooperation Fund, TASF = Technical Assistance Special Fund.

^a Original estimated cost in the TA report.

^b Cost after additional financing during TA implementation.

Source: Asian Development Bank estimates.