



## Completion Report

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Project Number: 50034-001  
Technical Assistance Number: 9228  
April 2020

# People's Republic of China: Vocational Education- Enterprise Collaboration for Student Employment- Based Poverty Reduction in Gansu

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## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

<b>TA Number, Country, and Name:</b> TA 9228-PRC: Vocational Education-Enterprise Collaboration for Student Employment-Based Poverty Reduction in Gansu		<b>Amount Approved:</b> \$400,000.00	
		<b>Revised Amount:</b> Not applicable	
<b>Executing Agency:</b> Gansu Provincial Education Department	<b>Source of Funding:</b> TASF-other sources	<b>Amount Undisbursed:</b> \$143,648.33	<b>Amount Used:</b> \$256,351.67
<b>TA Approval Date:</b> 14 November 2016	<b>TA Signing Date:</b> 7 December 2016	<b>TA Completion Date</b>	
		<b>Original Date:</b> 31 December 2018	<b>Latest Revised Date:</b> not applicable
		<b>Financial Closing Date:</b> 23 May 2019	<b>Number of Extensions:</b> None
<b>TA Type:</b> Policy and advisory			

### Description

As one of the country's poorest provinces in the western part of the People's Republic of China (PRC), Gansu has been exploring ways to reduce rural poverty in its ecologically fragile regions. While most rural poverty reduction programs have focused on income improvement through enhanced agricultural production and rural infrastructure in the past, broader and better targeted-poverty reduction measures are needed. This is due to the (i) rapid rates of out-migration and urbanization, particularly of rural youth; (ii) structural reform in economic sectors; (iii) changing roles of government and enterprises; and (iv) industrial upgrading and relocation. The 2015 PRC presidential mandate to eliminate extreme poverty by 2020 has intensified the need for a more innovative policy and strategy for poverty reduction.

The Gansu Provincial Education Department (GPED) requested in 2015 a policy and advisory technical assistance (TA) for \$400,000 from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on vocational education-enterprise collaboration for student employment-based poverty reduction in the province. In 2016, the GPED included in its task integrating technical and vocational education and training (TVET) enterprise resources, increasing cooperation, and pilot testing a provincial-level modern apprenticeship scheme in 17 TVET schools to promote poverty reduction and education reform. This TA was designed to support the GPED in piloting and refining its TVET enterprise-based student poverty reduction and to explore a framework for sharing with other poor localities in the PRC.

### Expected Impact, Outcome, and Outputs

The expected impact was a more effective national framework for TVET-based poverty reduction implemented. The expected outcome was improved TVET-enterprise collaboration for student employment-based poverty reduction. The TA outputs include (i) experience in TVET-enterprise collaboration for student employment-based poverty reduction reviewed, (ii) poverty reduction capacity of the Gansu TVET modern apprenticeship scheme assessed, (iii) technical and vocational education and training-enterprise collaboration framework for student employment-based poverty reduction developed, and (iv) knowledge about the Gansu TVET-enterprise collaboration framework for student employment-based poverty reduction strengthened.

### Implementation Arrangements

The TA implementation was kicked off in March 2017, and completed in December 2018 as planned. ADB fielded two missions during the implementation period to oversee the progress, i.e., the TA midterm review mission in May 2018 and the TA final review mission in December 2018. The TA was financially closed with 64% disbursement of the total financing. The unutilized TA amount was partly due to savings on consultant recruitment and surveys (one national consultant used his own ongoing survey of another study for this TA), unused contingency, and lower costs of workshops conducted. The GPED used its own fund for the inception workshop, training programs and domestic study tours conducted.

The GPED was the executing agency (EA). The High and Vocational Education Center of Gansu Institute for Educational Research acted as the implementing agency. A TA advisory group, led by the Deputy Director General of the GPED with members including officials from the GPED and other related agencies such as the provincial poverty reduction agency and provincial finance department, convened meetings regularly to identify, track, and update overall TA progress and ensure timely and effective TA implementation.

ADB engaged one international consultant who provided three person-months inputs and three national consultants who provided 25 person-months inputs in total. All consultants were recruited using individual consultant selection procedures, following ADB's Guidelines on the Use of Consultants (2013, as amended from time to time).

### Conduct of Activities

The ADB team and the consultants worked closely together with the EA, TVET schools, and local government agencies. The PRC State councilor, facilitated and helped the consultants in (i) communicating with the Gansu provincial leadership and guiding the team in TA implementation, (ii) overseeing the team analysis of policies and data, survey design and implementation, stakeholder interviews, fieldwork and knowledge dissemination plans, domestic study tours, and project training; and (iii) preparing and disseminating the bilingual TA final report. The international consultant reviewed the experience of general TVET development, apprenticeship scheme, and TVET-enterprise collaboration in Germany, Japan, and the USA and prepared a subreport to help Gansu province learn from the international best practices. The national consultants carried out the following activities: (i) conducted field consultations and surveys to collect data, (ii) analyzed challenges in TVET development in Gansu, (iii) provided recommendations on TVET-enterprise cooperation strengthening to innovate the apprenticeship scheme, supporting students from poor households, and improving employment rate of TVET students and quality of TVET schemes, among others. Such policy recommendations were presented in the midterm and final review workshops to receive feedback from sector stakeholders.

Trainings were arranged to help the GPED and TVET staff strengthen their capacity. For this, domestic study tours were conducted in Tianjin municipality and Hunan province. Tianjin municipality is the counterpart city of Gansu for poverty reduction as designated by the “East–West Partnership Strategy” of the PRC central government issued in 1996. It has been helping Gansu in poverty reduction since then. Tianjin municipality is also very advanced in TVET development. It initiated the “Luban Workshop” and has scaled up the model abroad establishing cooperation with other countries under the Belt and Road Initiative. In Tianjin, the study tour visited several TVET institutions, met with the municipality education department, and discussed potential cooperations between Gansu and Tianjin on TVET. ADB’s first TVET loan investment is in Hunan. The study tour had meetings with Hunan provincial education department to learn from their experience in TVET development, especially on how to strengthen cooperations between enterprises and TVET institutions. The group also conducted field visits at several TVET institutions including one funded by previous ADB project.

The TA final report, available in English and Chinese, was published and widely disseminated to more than 300 TVET schools, related provincial and municipal agencies, and poverty reduction partners and enterprises in Gansu. The TA findings were presented by the consultant team leader at the ADB-PRC Knowledge Series Event at the PRC Resident Mission, and at an international education forum at Bangaledash in November 2018. The consultant team leader also provided two policy notes, one to the Gansu provincial government on suggestions to strengthen TVET cooperations between Gansu and Tianjin, and the other to the PRC State Council on introducing the “Luban Workshop” model to more countries under the Belt and Road Initiative. An article on the TA findings was published in the *International Journal of Training Research*, Volume 1, 2019, on the experiences from Gansu on TVET development.

The GPED issued two important documents, i.e., “Gansu Provincial Implementation Plan to Enhance TVET-Enterprise Cooperation” in 2019 and “Implementation Plan for Synergizing Vocational Education and Poverty Reduction” in 2018, which have adopted some policy recommendations provided by the TA final report, including those on structure adjustment of secondary and tertiary vocational schools, TVET-enterprise collaboration, apprenticeship scheme, poverty reduction and employment, and internet-based education.

### Technical Assistance Assessment Ratings

Criterion	Assessment	Rating
Relevance	The TA is rated relevant as it is in line with the Country Partnership Strategy for the PRC, 2016–2020 in supporting inclusive economic growth and reducing poverty and inequality. It is also aligned with the PRC government’s 13th Five-Year Plan and Gansu provincial government’s development priority in poverty reduction and promoting TVET. The TA design and results chain are generally appropriate, without major deficiencies noted.	Relevant
Effectiveness	The TA is considered effective as its findings directly helped the GPED in issuing two major documents, i.e., “Gansu Provincial Implementation Plan to Enhance TVET-Enterprise Cooperation” in 2019 and “Implementation Plan for Synergizing Vocational Education and Poverty Reduction” in 2018. The TA has achieved its designed outcome in improving TVET-enterprise collaboration for student employment-based	Effective

Criterion	Assessment	Rating
	poverty reduction in Gansu, and the four outputs, including (i) experience in TVET-enterprise collaboration for student employment-based poverty reduction reviewed, (ii) poverty reduction capacity of the Gansu TVET modern apprenticeship scheme assessed, (iii) TVET-enterprise collaboration framework for student employment-based poverty reduction developed, and (iv) knowledge about the Gansu TVET-enterprise collaboration framework for student employment-based poverty reduction strengthened.	
Efficiency	The TA is considered efficient as its implementation started and completed as scheduled, with most designed targets achieved, at 64% disbursement of the total financing. The unutilized TA amount was partly due to savings on consultant recruitment and surveys (one national consultant used his own ongoing survey of another study for this TA), unused contingency, and lower costs of workshops conducted. The GPED used its own fund for the inception workshop, training programs and domestic study tours conducted.	Efficient
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	Overall, the TA is rated successful as it was implemented effectively and efficiently with satisfactory performance of the international and national consultants, as well as active participation of the EA. The EA was satisfied with the TA's findings and recommendations. The TA recommendations directly helped the GPED to prepare and issue two important documents, i.e., "Gansu Provincial Implementation Plan to Enhance TVET-Enterprise Cooperation" in 2019 and "Implementation Plan for Synergizing Vocational Education and Poverty Reduction" in 2018.	Successful
<b>Sustainability</b>	The TA is likely to be sustainable as the GPED showed great interest in the TA findings, published the bilingual TA report, and distributed it widely to related agencies and TVET institutions, and will prepare a loan project proposal based on the TA findings, submitting to the PRC central government and ADB for consideration during the country programming mission in 2020.	Likely sustainable

#### Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Design and/or planning	The TA design is adequate in achieving its outcome and impact. Although due to the long approval and processing cycle (the GPED submitted the proposal to the PRC central government in June 2015, TA signed in December 2016 and implementation kicked off in March 2017), the EA had staff change and so as the needs, some adjustments were made at the request of the EA to meet their changing demand. The gender-sensitive training manual was replaced by a study on the role that TVET can play to promote people-centered urbanization process in Gansu, at the request of the government as they decided that gender does not constitute a major concern in TVET development in Gansu, whereas the latter topic is a more urgent research priority – how to provide targeted vocational education and training programs to help farmer workers increase their income and boost the local economy. A subreport was prepared in this regard.
Implementation and/or delivery	It is essential to keep close communication with the EA during the whole implementation period to fully understand their demands and concerns, and to involve them for the consultant recruitment so that they can work closely together along the process. Having the best fit consulting team leader who has rich network and resources is also a big plus to the successful implementation and delivery.

Management of staff and consultants	It is essential to ensure quality of the TA consultants TOR when preparing the TA project, especially for the team leader so that communication requirements including reporting among the consultants and EA as well as ADB project officer are clearly specified and understood by all parties. When consultants are recruited on individual basis, it is important to have a strong team leader, who plays a key role in managing the team and communicating with the EA. It is also important to have the team leader report to the project officer regularly as needed.
Knowledge building	Having the best fit consulting team leader and team members who have rich network and resources is a big advantage for knowledge building and dissemination.
Stakeholder participation	It is important to involve all key stakeholders for strong ownership of the project. For instance, the Gansu Development and Reform Commission, as a key stakeholder, could have been more actively involved to provide some useful information on priority sectors for medium and long-term development in Gansu. The information would be very helpful in guiding TVET development in the province.
Replication and/or scaling up	If time would have allowed, a national or multi-provincial knowledge sharing workshop could have been held to further disseminate and scale up the TA findings.
Post-TA financial resource	The TA studies will lead to a loan project proposal from Gansu to the PRC central government and ADB. It is recommended that for other TA projects the ADB team also explore such opportunities at a later stage of implementation to help synergize the loan and TA programs.

#### Follow-up Actions

The TA final report recommended a follow-up activity: a results-based loan to further develop the vocational education sector in Gansu. The Gansu provincial government expressed great interest and would prepare a loan proposal for submission to the National Development and Reform Commission and Ministry of Finance of the PRC for consideration during the next country programming mission. It is advised that EARD education sector specialists continue to follow up with and support the GPED on the loan proposal preparation and submission.

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## DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Impact TA is aligned with A more effective national framework for TVET-based poverty reduction implemented (Decisions on Winning the Tough Battle Against Poverty) <sup>a</sup>		
Results Chain	Performance Indicators with Targets and Baselines	Achievements
<b>Outcome</b>  TVET-enterprise collaboration for student employment-based poverty reduction improved	By December 2019 a. TVET-enterprise framework of guidelines and a gender-sensitive training manual for student employment-based poverty reduction adopted by GPED (2016 baseline: 0)  b. Provincial education and poverty reduction agency co-programming modality for TVET-based poverty reduction operational in Gansu (2016 baseline: 0)	a. A TVET-enterprise framework of guidelines was included in the “Gansu Provincial Implementation Plan to Enhance TVET-Enterprise Cooperation” jointly issued by the GPED and other provincial government agencies in December 2019. <sup>b</sup> The gender-sensitive training manual was not included in the TA as requested by the EA during the Inception mission, because gender does not constitute a major concern in TVET development in Gansu. In the province, in order to increase students enrollment, secondary TVET education is free of tuition to all students, and tertiary TVET education is free to all students from poor households, with additional financial aid provided on a need basis. This policy is universal to all students, male and female.  b. The provincial education and poverty reduction agency co-programming modality was included in the provincial “Implementation Plan for Synergizing Vocational Education and Poverty Reduction” issued by GPED in August 2018. <sup>c</sup> The modality is being operationalized at different levels in the province.
<b>Outputs</b>  1. Experience in TVET-enterprise collaboration for student employment-based poverty reduction reviewed  2. Poverty reduction capacity of the Gansu TVET modern apprenticeship scheme assessed	By 31 October 2018 1. Study reports on national and international TVET-enterprise collaboration for student employment-based poverty reduction prepared, with gender aspects highlighted (2016 baseline: 0)  2a. Assessment recommendations implemented to strengthen scheme operations, and poverty reduction agency and GPED monitoring (2016 baseline: 0)  2b. More than 15 GPED and poverty reduction staff trained (50% female) in scheme	1. Both national and international experience in TVET-enterprise collaboration for student employment-based poverty reduction were studied, and the results were included in the TA final report, with gender aspects highlighted.  2a. The TA consultant report assessed poverty reduction capacity of Gansu TVET and provided recommendations to strengthen modern apprenticeship scheme in Gansu TVET reforms. On 4 February 2019, GPED issued a document named “The implementation plan of Poverty Reduction of Vocational Education in Gansu Province”. In this plan, many recommendations provided by the TA were adopted. For example, strengthening the effectiveness of TVET in promoting poverty alleviation by targeting students from poor family to get qualified jobs, providing lifetime training to the poor, organizing TVET colleges in rich areas to help vocational schools in poverty counties, implementing a policy for the students from poor families job recruitment and school enrollment together, etc.  2b. Around 85 people (about 20 female) including GPED staff, TVET schools’ staff, and poverty reduction staff were trained in scheme monitoring in September 2018.



<p>3. TVET-enterprise collaboration framework for student employment-based poverty reduction developed</p> <p>4. Knowledge about the Gansu TVET-enterprise collaboration framework for student employment-based poverty reduction strengthened</p>	<p>monitoring (2016 baseline: 0)</p> <p>3a. Gansu TVET modern apprenticeship pilot scheme undertaken with at least 100 student participants (female numbers commensurate to eligible female students) by month 17 (2016 baseline: 0)</p> <p>3b. Gender-sensitive training manual produced and more than 40 TVET headmasters, teachers, and GPED and enterprise staff trained (women comprise at least 90% of eligible female trainees); 10 GPED staff trained as manual trainers (2016 baseline: 0)</p> <p>4a. Knowledge product sent to more than 300 Gansu TVET schools, national and subnational education and poverty reduction agencies, and East–West poverty reduction partners and enterprises by month 23 (2016 baseline: 0)</p> <p>4b. Collaboration framework and TA report findings publicly referenced by Gansu leadership (2016 baseline = 0)</p>	<p>3a. The modern apprenticeship pilot scheme has been implemented in 17 TVET schools in Gansu province, seven of which are at provincial level, with around 45% or 26,000 students are female.</p> <p>3b. At the Inception mission, the GPED requested not to include gender-sensitive training manual since gender issue has been largely addressed in Gansu.</p> <p>4a. The TA final report and subreports, in both English and Chinese, were published and widely disseminated to more than 300 TVET schools, related provincial and municipal agencies, and poverty reduction partners and enterprises.</p> <p>4b. The GPED issued two important documents, i.e., “Gansu Provincial Implementation Plan to Enhance TVET-Enterprise Cooperation related to TVET” in 2019 and “Implementation Plan for Synergizing Vocational Education and Poverty Reduction” in 2018, which have adopted many policy recommendations provided by the TA final report, including those on structure adjustment of secondary and tertiary vocational schools, TVET-enterprise collaboration, apprenticeship scheme, poverty reduction and employment, and internet based education.</p>
<p><b>Actual Key Activities with Milestones</b></p> <p><b>1. Review technical and vocational education and training-enterprise collaboration in student employment-based poverty reduction</b></p> <p>1.1 The TA kick-off meeting was held in March 2017 through teleconference, and a TA advisory group was established by the EA in May 2017, chaired by Mr. Wang Guangya, the Deputy Director General of the GPED.</p> <p>1.2 The TA’s national and international consultants were mobilized starting from March 2017. They started collecting and assessing PRC’s and international policies, schemes, experiences, and lessons in TVET-related poverty reduction since then, and the findings were discussed at the inception workshop conducted in Gansu in September 2017.</p> <p>1.3 An initial literature and statistical review of poverty reduction was completed and reported to the EA at the inception workshop conducted in Gansu in September 2017.</p> <p>1.4 The TA inception workshop was conducted in Gansu in September 2017. At the workshop, the TA inception report was presented to review and discuss the report findings, and suggestions on further studies. Fieldwork strategy and time frame, domestic study tour, and TA dissemination plan were also discussed.</p> <p>1.5 The domestic study tour was conducted in November 2017, visiting eight TVET institutions in Tianjin city and six TVET colleges in Hunan province. The tour reviewed TVET-enterprise collaboration for student employment-based poverty reduction, and reported the findings to the TA advisory group after the tour in early 2018.</p> <p><b>2. Assess the poverty reduction capacity of the Gansu technical and vocational education and training modern apprenticeship scheme</b></p> <p>2.1 The survey was conducted in 2018 on poor rural student TVET needs and preferences, household economic</p>		



	capacities, and career expectations; and the survey results were included in a subreport prepared by a national consultant.
2.2	The survey was conducted in 2018 in 17 TVET schools in nine poorer cities in central and western part of Gansu province, and the results on curriculum, training, soft skilling and employment methods, capacity and interest to pilot TVET modern apprenticeship scheme, were included in the subreport of the TA mid-term and final report.
	<b>3. Develop a technical and vocational education and training-enterprise cooperation framework for student employment-based poverty reduction</b>
3.1	The TVET school and enterprise rights and responsibilities were studied and details were included in the TA mid-term and final report.
3.2	The TVET-enterprise agreements and student-enterprise employment contracts were first piloted in seven schools in Gansu in 2018, and extended to 17 TVET schools by the government by end 2019.
3.3	A TA advisory group meeting and the mid-term review workshop were convened in May 2019. The meeting and workshop reviewed the draft report, provided comments for its finalization, and discussed the implementation mechanism and training manual.
	<b>4. Strengthen knowledge about the Gansu technical and vocational education and training-enterprise collaboration framework for student employment-based poverty reduction</b>
4.1	The experience-exchange meeting were conducted with Tianjin city, as the East–West Poverty reduction program partner for Gansu, and with Hunan province during the domestic study tours conducted in November 2017 and the findings were documented in the final report.
4.2	The TA completion workshop was convened in December 2018 in Gansu, with about 30 participants including the EA, TVET institutions and resource persons working on TVET from Beijing and other provinces. The TA report was finalized in February 2019.
4.3	The TA final report, in both English and Chinese, was widely disseminated among all stakeholders at national and subnational level. The TA findings were presented by the team leader and State Councilor, Mr. Tang Min, at the ADB-PRC Knowledge Series Event at PRCM and an international education forum in Bangladesh on November 2018. He also submitted two policy notes, one to Gansu provincial government and the other to PRC State Council using the TA findings. An article on the TA findings was published by the international consultant in the International Journal of Training Research in June 2019, introducing the experiences learned from Gansu on TVET development.
<b>Actual Inputs</b>	
Asian Development Bank: \$256,351.67	
Government: \$250,000 (estimated in-kind contribution from the government in the form of counterpart staff, office and housing accommodation, office supplies, secretarial assistance, and domestic transportation plus funding for the inception workshop, training programs and domestic study tours conducted)	
ADB = Asian Development Bank, EA = executing agency, GPED = Gansu Provincial Education Department, PRC = People's Republic of China, TA = technical assistance, TVET = technical and vocational education and training a Government of the PRC, Communist Party of China Central Committee and State Council. 2015. <i>Decisions on Winning the Tough Battle Against Poverty</i> . Beijing. The original document was issued on 7 December in Chinese.	
b <a href="http://www.gansu.gov.cn/art/2019/10/22/art_4786_429910.html">http://www.gansu.gov.cn/art/2019/10/22/art_4786_429910.html</a>	
c <a href="http://jyt.gansu.gov.cn/jzbf/content-9139c1b9c4af4988bb6cd988f8eb0505.htm">http://jyt.gansu.gov.cn/jzbf/content-9139c1b9c4af4988bb6cd988f8eb0505.htm</a>	
Source: ADB	

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COST

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

Item		Amount	
		Original	Actual
1.	Consultants	255.00	224.45
2.	Training, seminars and conferences	55.00	12.95
3.	Surveys	45.00	0.00
4.	Miscellaneous TA administration	15.00	18.95
5.	Contingency	30.00	0.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>400.00</b>	<b>256.35</b>

TA = technical assistance

Source: Asian Development Bank

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

	TASF-other sources
1. Original	400.00
2. Revised	0.00
3. Actual	256.35
4. Unused	143.65

TASF = Technical Assistance Special Fund

Source: Asian Development Bank