



Completion Report

PUBLIC

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People's Republic of China: Research to Support the Social Integration of Migrants

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

TA Number, Country, and Name: TA 9435-PRC: Research to Support the Social Integration of Migrants		Amount Approved: \$400,000	
		Revised Amount: Not applicable	
Executing Agency: National Health Commission. ¹	Source of Funding: Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF-other sources)	Amount Undisbursed: \$277,757.85	Amount Used: \$122,242.15
TA Approval Date: 1 December 2017	TA Signing Date: 28 December 2017	TA Completion Date	
		Original Date: 30 November 2019	Latest Revised Date: 31 October 2021
		Financial Closing Date: 1 December 2021	Number of Extensions: 2
TA Type: Knowledge and support TA	Nature of Activity: Research and development	TA Arrangement: Not applicable	

Description

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has been facing an unprecedented wave of rapid urbanization, internal migration, and social transformation in the past decades. While 1950s to late 1970s brought about strict migration policies, economic reforms, and higher migration control; the early 1980s led to increased population mobility, especially from rural to urban areas. Majority of migrants aged 25–49 years moved in search of employment opportunities created by market reforms and labor demand. Concurrently, the urbanization rate in PRC almost tripled from 19.4% in 1980 to 52.6% in 2012 with an estimated 200 million rural migrants working in the largest cities.² Moreover, urban migration policies made it difficult for rural migrants to fully integrate into city life. Restrictions in terms of available job opportunities and subsidized social services for rural migrants created economic and social inequities which led to marginalization of migrant populations.

Studies showed that migrants often reported lower levels of average subjective well-being than urban and rural residents.³ Inflexibility and restrictions on movement of internal migration led to differences in access to social services and differentials based on residency. There was an increased gender wage gap in urban areas, largely attributed to a more challenging environment for women to find and secure employment. Migrant women workers were also more likely to have unaddressed grievances such as unpaid wages, inadequate pay increases, more forced overtime, and factory layoffs.⁴

The purpose of the technical assistance (TA) was to help the National Health Commission (NHC), which was responsible for the overall migrant health, to (i) assess the well-being and social integration of migrants by analyzing the current situation of migrants and their families, (ii) evaluate international best practices, (iii) develop a set of evaluation criteria to measure social and physical integration, and (iv) develop a set of policy recommendations including gender-specific recommendations to integrate migrant populations.

The TA was aligned with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) country partnership strategy for the PRC, 2016–2020 and the Social Protection Operational Plan, 2014–2020.⁵ It was also consistent with the PRC's Thirteenth Five-Year Plan, 2016–2020, which encouraged the registration of migrants to provide them with basic social services and improve their integration in all facets of society.⁶ In line with a series of ADB TA projects to support the PRC to develop a social protection system (which reflected a collaborative effort to support health and social services), the TA sustained the

¹ National Health Commission was formerly the National Health and Family Planning Commission.

² Z. Chen, M. Lu, and P. Ni. 2016. [Urbanization and Rural Development in the People's Republic of China](#). Asian Development Bank Institute Working Paper Series. No. 596. Tokyo: Asian Development Bank Institute.

³ J. Zhang et al. 2017. [Public Health Services Utilization and Its Determinants among Internal Migrants in China: Evidence from a Nationally Representative Survey](#). International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. Vol. 14, Issue 9. Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute.

⁴ Asian Development Bank (ADB) and International Labour Organization. 2017. [Gender Equality and the Labor Market: Women, Work, and Migration in the People's Republic of China](#). Manila.

⁵ ADB. 2016. [Country Partnership Strategy: Transforming Partnership: People's Republic of China and Asian Development Bank, 2016–2020](#). Manila; and ADB. 2013. [Social Protection Operational Plan, 2014–2020](#). Manila.

⁶ Government of the PRC, State Council. 2015. [National Economy and Social Development Thirteenth Five-Year Plan, 2016–2020](#). Beijing.

PRC's commitment to improve migrants' access to social services and their fundamental rights and to mitigate against social exclusion, isolation, poverty, and gender inequalities.

Expected Impact, Outcome, and Outputs

The TA was aligned with the following impact: social status and integration of migrant populations improved in accordance with the PRC Thirteenth Five-Year Plan (footnote 6). The intended outcome was policy base for the social integration of migrants strengthened. The TA had four outputs: (i) international and national experience on social integration of migrant population reviewed and compiled, (ii) evaluation index on social and physical integration of migrants developed, (iii) policy recommendations on integration of migrants developed, and (iv) knowledge development and dissemination supported.

Implementation Arrangements

NHC was the TA executing agency and its Executive Leadership Training Center was the implementing agency. The government provided counterpart support, including staff time and access to data and information. ADB selected and engaged eight individual consultants: (i) national senior specialist on social integration of migrant populations/team leader (12 person-months), (ii) international specialist on migration (4 person-months), (iii) national senior statistician (9 person-months), (iv) national senior public health demographer (9 person-months), (v) international long-term care (LTC) specialist (4 person-months), (vi) national medical services specialist (9 person-months), (vii) national elderly care and social protection system specialist (9 person-months), and (viii) project coordinator (3 person-months). Individual consultant selection method was used due to the wide degree of varying expertise required across the positions.

Conduct of Activities

The consultant team produced reports, international case studies, and analysis and recommendations on internal migration policy and domestic challenges related to access to social services. The planned activities under the TA were delivered and the design and monitoring framework targets were met (Appendix 1). The TA experienced some start-up and implementation delays due to changes in ADB mission leadership and the executing agency's restructuring which resulted in a 23-month delay. After the initial start-up delays, consultants were recruited in April 2018 and the TA inception workshop was organized in August 2018, where the project team, NHC, and consultants confirmed research plans, reconfirmed TA objectives, and agreed on timelines for the international study tour and submission of the following technical reports: (i) international case studies on migrant integration; (ii) analysis of migrant integration using available national secondary data; and (iii) policy recommendations on the impact of gender on migration and social integration. The consultants conducted desk research on international experience of migrant integration; social services available to migrant populations; and assessment of migrants' physical, psychosocial, and social integration in cities across the PRC.

In early 2019, NHC underwent institutional realignment, as LTC and migrant health became an important focus of the government's national health strategy. At the same time, NHC reiterated the importance of appropriate LTC services for migrant populations especially since the average age of migrants had been increasing, as the elderly were moving to cities with their children. Given that migrants were significantly affected by LTC issues, ADB approved a proposed minor change in scope to accommodate additional research topics proposed by NHC on (i) LTC and social protection of migrant health in the PRC; (ii) financing of LTC services and coverage criteria for migrants and non-migrants across the PRC; and (iii) implication of internal migration on the elderly population with focus on gender. Additional consultants to undertake this work were mobilized in December 2019. The consultants had experience in LTC financing and human resource development. In addition, a project coordinator was mobilized to support preparations for the international study tour. The reports provided key recommendations to integrate migrants into social services including LTC systems and improving the information sharing mechanisms across rural and urban areas as well as including migrants in the scope of urban population health management. In addition, the reports evaluated the current LTC insurance pilots ongoing in 14 PRC cities and the financing models with varying degrees of coverage. Reports across the three areas were presented to NHC for comments and were revised and formally submitted in August 2020.

While the TA intended to organize an international study tour to understand best practices on how other countries plan, develop, and implement policies and systems to promote internal integration and assimilation; it was not completed as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic resulted in strict quarantine policies and travel restrictions globally. Despite being postponed several times, the midterm workshop in June 2021 planned to organize a domestic study tour in Beijing in lieu of the international study tour, pending relaxation of existing COVID-19 restrictions. However, due to the continued strict travel restrictions in the PRC, the domestic study tour was also canceled. In addition, the TA planned to pilot, through qualitative focus group discussions, the evaluation index developed under the TA, however, due to COVID-19 restrictions, it was not completed. TA recommendations included (i) investing in migrant labor force by providing job training and addressing the skills mismatch for urban migrants; (ii) adopting concrete efforts to facilitate migrant social integration such as improving migrant policies to ensure equal access to public services; (iii) ensuring

female migrant needs were met by transforming traditional gender roles and promoting equitable distribution of unpaid care and domestic work; and (iv) promoting the well-being of elderly migrants through stronger public support for the elderly, their families, and children by providing appropriate public services. In terms of outputs, the TA reports and policy recommendations were well received by the executing agency. The final workshop was organized in October 2021, wherein experts presented the final technical reports and the draft knowledge product.

Technical Assistance Assessment Ratings

Criterion	Assessment	Rating
Relevance	The TA outcome was aligned with the national development plans and ADB strategic priorities. The design and results chain were sound, and the TA rationale were clearly explained. The TA responded to a critical development need and addressed migrant health, gender considerations, and aging, which are areas of the strategic national importance. In 2019, when NHC underwent institutional restructuring, it requested additional areas of research on LTC as it related to migrants, for which the TA responded with a series of reports. The TA remained responsive to overall government requests and changing PRC national priorities and strategies. Moreover, the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan, 2021–2025 also addresses migrant integration and reduced restrictions on internal migration, indicating that the TA was relevant to the country context and policy environment. ⁷	Relevant
Effectiveness	The TA achieved the outcome to strengthen the policy base for the social integration of migrants and the following key output targets: (i) a research report on international and national case studies with gender considerations, (ii) an index encompassing key determinants of migrant integration, and (iii) a gender-specific policy brief on recommendations to integrate migrants. The TA provided recommendations that were endorsed by NHC based on reports on migration practices in other countries, and identification of national level challenges in migrant integration. The TA also produced additional reports on LTC and migration under outputs 1 and 2, which provided key recommendations on migrant integration in social services such as LTC, improving information access across rural and urban areas, and including migrants into the scope of urban population health. In addition, the reports evaluated the current LTC insurance pilots ongoing in 14 PRC cities and the financing models with varying degrees of coverage. The TA could not complete the international study tour under output 1 nor the piloting of the evaluation index under output 2 because of travel restrictions due to COVID-19 pandemic.	Effective
Efficiency	The TA had two extensions because of delays in implementation. The delays were due to ADB staff turnover, executing agency's institutional realignment, and the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in a 23-month delay in completion. The executing agency is in-charge of the PRC's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and has since been overburdened due to the crisis. This resulted in delayed implementation as the agency was preoccupied with COVID-19 response for most of 2020 and 2021. In addition, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some planned activities such as the international study tour could not be completed due to travel restrictions that resulted in cost savings. Upon evaluation, the budget was not fully utilized, all activities were completed within the budget, and additional activities were conducted using TA savings. There were no issues with financial reporting and procurement and the TA resulted in indirect socioeconomic benefits due to the executing agency's increased knowledge in integrating migrant health and addressing LTC issues. Eight individual consultants were recruited which led to more coordination and management affecting TA efficiency.	Less than efficient
Overall Assessment	The TA was flexible and responsive to the government's priorities even as the executing agency underwent institutional restructuring and additional priorities were articulated and shared with ADB during TA implementation. It was also in line with ADB strategic priorities. The TA achieved the overall outcome and there were no major design flaws. The TA rationale and type was also appropriate to TA objectives. TA outcome and outputs were achieved albeit with delays.	Successful
Sustainability	The TA results were supported by NHC. In addition, the TA impact to improve the social status of migrants is in line with the central government's priorities and targets under Article 27 of the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan, 2021–2025 (footnote 7)	Most likely sustainable

⁷ DigiChina Stanford Cyber Policy Center. 2022. [14th Five-Year Plan for National Informatization](#).

Criterion	Assessment	Rating
	which aims to accelerate the full integration of rural migrant population in cities and liberalize restrictions on movement of individuals from rural to urban areas which indicates the long-term sustainability of the revised policies to address migrant health and well-being. Inclusion of these targets in the plan indicates the central government's long-term commitment to achieve physical, psychosocial, and social integration, and especially rural migrants' integration with their families and to urban life. Migrant welfare is a long-term government priority demonstrating continued relevance and, therefore, contributing to the sustainability of the TA outcome and results.	

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Design and/or planning	The TA was approved and became effective in December 2017 and the TA inception workshop was scheduled in April 2018. However, consultant recruitment took longer than expected, as such more time should have been planned and allocated between the consultant recruitment and the inception workshop.
Implementation and/or delivery	While the TA was unable to conduct some major activities on account of the COVID-19 pandemic such as the international study tour and the pilot testing of the evaluation index, the TA provided research and analysis on additional areas related to LTC and migration for the executing agency. Three reports were produced in addition to the activities in the design and monitoring framework. The TA cost estimates may have been overestimated which resulted in cost savings. A more balanced and accurate analysis of cost estimates should be prepared in future projects.

Follow-up Actions

Since 2015, ADB's engagement in the social sector has been established through a series of TA projects. This included the following three TA projects with the Ministry of Civil Affairs: (i) Policy and Social Work Services for Vulnerable Children, (ii) Strategies for Involving Social Organizations in Social Assistance, and (iii) Determining the Direction of Social Assistance Reforms.⁸ These TA projects marked ADB's increased engagement in the PRC's social sector and relatedly shed light on the intersection of health and social protection policies especially for population aging and internal migration. Further gender analysis would also be important to understand and assess specifically how gender issues affect access to basic services. A follow-up action would be to conduct an assessment to understand the lessons learned from the series of social and human capital development TA projects. The series of TA projects provided a conducive entry point to engage on investment loans in the social sector related to population aging. Assessment of ADB's engagement to foster and leverage TA support warrants further understanding.

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⁸ ADB. [People's Republic of China: Policy and Social Work Services for Vulnerable Children](#); ADB. [People's Republic of China: Strategies for Involving Social Organizations in Social Assistance](#); and ADB. [People's Republic of China: Determining the Direction of Social Assistance Reforms](#).

DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

[illegible]

Results Chain	Performance Indicators with Targets and Baselines	Achievements
developed	overall well-being of migrant populations developed with gender-disaggregated indicators (2017 baseline: 0)	surveillance survey, which is a dataset collected by NHC. The data was analyzed to understand the economic, psychological, social/behavioral, and cultural assimilation of migrants; and how gender affected migration patterns. The migrant dynamic surveillance survey was used to understand individual desire for social integration, behavioral adaptation, and cultural assimilation of migrant populations. The report was presented to NHC during the TA midterm workshop.
3. Policy recommendations on integration of migrants developed	<p>By 2019</p> <p>3a. Gender-specific policy brief that encapsulates the recommendations on integration of migrants developed (based on research and evidence collected through the evaluation index and research report) (2017 baseline: 0)</p>	<p>3a. Achieved. A gender-specific policy brief entitled "Migration and Gender Differentials in the People's Republic of China," was drafted in 2021 and presented in the final workshop with NHC in October 2021. The document analyzed how an individual's gender can affect the migration experience and influence decision-making. The report also explores internal migration challenges faced by women, in terms of traditional gender roles, family structures, earning potential, and opportunities for employment.</p>
4. Knowledge development and dissemination supported	<p>By 2019</p> <p>4a. A knowledge product on evaluation index developed and disseminated (2017 baseline: 0)</p>	<p>4a. Achieved. A knowledge product produced under outputs 2 and 3 was presented to NHC during the final workshop, updated and edited with suggestions, and will be published in Q3 2022. The knowledge product analyzed secondary data on female migration patterns and constraints considered in making decisions to internally migrate as well as how the migration experience varies by gender and is heavily impacted by traditional gender roles.</p>
Actual Key Activities with Milestones <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. International and national experience on social integration of migrant population reviewed and compiled <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Developed a research report on the international and national experience of social integration of migrant populations and emphasized gender-specific considerations (May 2019). 1.2 Collected and documented case studies on best practices from other regions on the integration of migrant populations, including a dedicated section on gender-specific needs (May 2019). 2. Evaluation index on social and physical integration of migrants developed <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Conducted a qualitative and quantitative assessment to better understand the issues facing migrant populations and included specific gender-based questions (June 2019). 2.2 Consulted relevant stakeholders from other government departments and civil society on the indicators to be considered for inclusion in the index (August 2019). 2.3 Identified data requirements to appreciate migrant needs (September 2019). 2.4 Defined quantifiable gender-sensitive indicators, which were used to construct the index (September 2019). 2.5 Designed an evaluation index (November 2019). 2.6 Developed the robust evaluation index in consultation with relevant stakeholders (January 2020). 3. Policy recommendations on integration of migrants developed <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Developed gender-specific policy recommendations in consultation with relevant stakeholders (May 2020). 3.2 Prepared a gender-specific policy note with recommendations and findings (June 2021). 3.3 Disseminated the policy note to relevant stakeholders (October 2021). 4. Knowledge development and dissemination supported <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Conducted an inception workshop with key stakeholders to validate the objectives and methodology of the TA (August 2018). 4.2 Conducted a midterm review workshop (June 2021). 4.3 Developed a knowledge product on the evaluation index (October 2021). 4.4 Prepared the final TA report (October 2021). 4.5 Conducted the final workshop for TA dissemination of outputs and policy recommendations (October 2021). 		
Actual Inputs ADB: \$122,242.15 (Technical Assistance Special Funds—Others)		

Government: \$50,000 (estimated in-kind contribution from the government in the form of office accommodation, venue for meetings, counterpart staff, and miscellaneous administration support).

ADB = Asian Development Bank, NHC = National Health Commission, PRC = People's Republic of China, TA = technical assistance.

^a Government of the PRC, State Council. 2015. *National Economy and Social Development Thirteenth Five-Year Plan, 2016–2020*. Beijing.

^b NHC was formerly the National Health and Family Planning Commission.

Source: ADB.

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

Item	Amount	
	Original	Actual
1. Consultants	298.0	121.0
2. Training, seminars, and conferences	37.0	1.2
3. Surveys	25.0	0.0
4. Contingency	40.0	0.0
Total	400.0	122.2

Source: Asian Development Bank.

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

	TASF-Other Sources
1. Original	400.0
2. Actual	122.2
3. Unused	277.8

TASF = Technical Assistance Special Fund.
Source: Asian Development Bank.