

July 30, 2021

Call for participation as observer in “Case Study (International Field Workshop)” in S2 Intensive (5140730-1/5179004-1)

A series of virtual sessions for Case Study (International Field Workshop) are scheduled for the following time slots with the overarching theme “Sustainable, resilient and inclusive societies beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.”

	Aug 10 Tue	Aug 11 Wed	Aug 16 Mon	Aug 18 Wed	Aug 25 Wed	Aug 26 Thu	Aug 30 Mon
Beijing/KL/Manila time	10:00 -17:00	10:00 -17:00	10:00 -17:00	15:00 -17:00	15:00 -17:00	15:00 -17:00	10:00 -17:00
Tokyo/Seoul time	11:00 -18:00	11:00 -18:00	11:00 -18:00	16:00 -18:00	16:00 -18:00	16:00 -18:00	11:00 -18:00

Tuesday, August 10 | 11:00-12:00 (Tokyo time)

Asian Development Bank

“Supporting the high-quality growth agenda post-COVID-19 through institutional reforms in China”

Mr. Hans Van Rijn, Principal Public Management Specialist, East Asia Department

Mr. Hanif Rahemtulla, Principal Public Management Specialist, Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department

Wednesday, August 11 | 11:00-12:00 (Tokyo time)

Asian Development Bank

“Technology-enabled innovation in Southeast Asia”

Mr. Khatiwada Sameer, Technology and Innovation Specialist, Southeast Asia Department

Monday, August 16 | 16:00-17:00 (Tokyo time)

Asian Development Bank

“How to ensure the energy policy shift in member countries towards a low carbon plan”

Mr. Priyantha Wijayatunga, Director, Energy Division, South Asia Department

Monday, August 30 | 11:00-12:00 (Tokyo time)

Asian Development Bank

“Promotion of gender-responsive judicial systems”

Ms. Christina U. Pak, Principal Counsel, Office of the General Counsel

Time slots yet to be announced

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)

“The role of AIIB in Asian debt capital markets beyond the COVID-19 pandemic:

What makes a sustainable bond sustainable?”

The Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS)

“How can we sustain and further facilitate trilateral cooperation beyond the COVID-19 pandemic?” & “Having the online learning/meeting platforms developed and normalized during the pandemic, how would the TCS try to reach out to a wider range of students to participate in exchange programs?”

World Bank’s Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Finance Hub in Malaysia

“Fight against corruption in public procurement”

Students who want to participate as observer are asked to register [HERE](#)

(<https://forms.gle/g58j9kYukWawNBuL7>) by Friday, August 6. Those who have registered and been accepted will be notified and receive the link.

Attachments

Request for discussion with professionals at ADB—proposed issues & questions

Topic 1—“Promotion of gender-responsive judicial systems”

We would like to discuss the following issues with **Ms. Christina U. Pak**, Principal Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, who is in charge of the TA project “Promotion of Gender-Responsive Judicial Systems.”

<https://www.adb.org/projects/54410-001/main#project-overview-collapse>

1. The emergence of the global pandemic and requirements to stay indoors has exacerbated the situation of gender based violence (GBV). This does not mean that prior pandemic the GBV was addressed adequately and kept at minimum. In contrast, it has illustrated the weakness of judicial systems of many countries that are until today unable to provide proper response and protection to the victims.
2. Through this TA project, ADB acknowledges the importance of the role of judicial systems, particularly, in its developing member countries (DMCs) and Timor-Leste. The weak gender-responsive judicial system is a reflection of a social inequality, whereby the society functions on a gender-blind policy-making. This not only poses a security threat to the women and girls, but also impedes the states’ inclusive socioeconomic development. ADB as an MDB through strengthening the gender-responsive judicial system enables its partner governments to protect and empower its human capital. In turn, this can lead to mobilization of domestic financial resources, which will allow any DMCs to further invest in resilient and sustainable infrastructure.
3. Therefore, it is an extremely interesting work to look into as I would hope to see how ADB can provide its knowledge and support, while dealing with potential resistances from the domestic governments of the targeted regions, as well as, in addressing the question of the rigid traditional judicial system. It would be great for me to discuss the examples of central Asian countries in this context and how strengthened judicial response towards GBV can lead to a more inclusive and safe society for women post COVID19 pandemic. Discussion could center on (a) resistance from domestic governments; (b) rigid traditional judicial system; and (c) long term sustainability of this project.

Prepared by Imanmadiyeva Zhansaya

Topic 2—“How to ensure the energy policy shift in member countries towards a low carbon plan”

We would like to discuss the following issues with **Mr. Yongping Zhai**, Chief of Energy Sector Group or **Mr. Priyantha Wijayatunga**, Director, Energy Division, South Asia Department, who are team leaders to prepare a draft policy paper “Energy Policy: Supporting Low Carbon Transition in Asia and the Pacific.”

<https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/699206/energy-policy-draft-consultation.pdf>

1. To achieve the Paris agreement goals, it is now a common cognition that actions by developing countries are essential. However, most of those have not made a clear statement for their own numerical targets of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. On the other hand, many of those countries need power infrastructure investment.
2. According to ADB Strategy 2030, there are still 400 million people in Asia lacking access to electricity and ADB estimates 14.7 trillion USD is needed for infrastructure investment in the power sector from 2016 to 2030. Some countries, such as Indonesia, Viet Nam and the Philippines, still plan to construct new coal power plants to meet the electricity demand. A huge gap seems to exist between the needs of developing countries and the ADB statement of stopping investment in coal. Against this backdrop, I would like to discuss how to achieve the universal energy access while complementing sustainable growth in developing countries.
3. Specific questions follow.
 - 3.1. What is the motivation for preparing this draft policy paper? Did you seek opinions of member countries before issuing it officially? What is the typical process for preparing a draft policy paper?
 - 3.2. ADB aims to support phasing out of the usage of coal in developing member countries (DMCs) by suggesting the preparation of long-term energy plans, roadmaps, strategies, and policies. How does ADB help advance such a phased or layered approach by DMCs?
 - 3.3. ADB has not financed any projects for coal power plants since 2013 and announced to end financing coal this year. However, there remains a huge need in DMCs. How is ADB trying to fill that gap? Could it be an option to finance coal projects with application of low-carbonized technology with a view to preventing DMCs from relying on coal power options offered by countries without commitment to carbon mitigation?

Prepared by Kaho Matsuura

Topic 3—“Technology-enabled innovation in Southeast Asia”

We would like to discuss the following issues with **Mr. Khatiwada Sameer**, Technology and Innovation Specialist, Southeast Asia Department, who leads the TA project “Technology-Enabled Innovation in Southeast Asia.”

<https://www.adb.org/projects/54098-001/main>

1. Around 1.5 billion children and youth (World Bank, Mar 28, 2021) are estimated to have been forced home due to school closure, a measure enforced by governments worldwide to deal with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. School closure has meant that millions of kids had to attend classes from home. Such measures have further worsened inequality both within and among countries due to varying access to education technology (EdTech) and related tools between different households and countries.
2. The TA project aims at a diagnostic analysis of different EdTech interventions in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam. Investing in innovation and technology is fundamental to achieve economic growth and, in turn, the starting point for innovation and development is education. This study of countries with different ICT levels and education policies can provide precious insights on which EdTech interventions best work in different socio-economic environments.
3. The topic enables me to investigate several interesting aspects on education development, and education and innovation as drivers of wellbeing and economic growth. Discussion questions could be as follows.
 - 3.1. How do the project members evaluate EdTech readiness, pros/cons of a global EdTech readiness index, challenges of implementing EdTech with limited budgets?
 - 3.2. What are the advantages and opportunities of EdTech readiness outside the scope of reducing the spreading of infectious diseases?
 - 3.3. Can EdTech provide wider access to education when a country’s population is sparse? Would it provide more opportunities or challenges to children in rural areas?

Prepared by Martina Marsili

Topic 4—“Supporting the high-quality growth agenda post-COVID-19 through institutional reforms in China”

We would like to discuss the following issues with **Mr. Van Rijn** or **Mr. Johannes Jacobus Frederik**, who is responsible for the TA project “People’s Republic of China: Supporting the High-Quality Growth Agenda Post-COVID-19 through Institutional Reforms.”

<https://www.adb.org/projects/54085-001/main>

1. COVID-19 pandemic has exposed many challenges, which we may have or may not have envisioned, including but not limited to the institutional limitations of emergency response system, power struggle within government, logistic and supply chain issue etc. Under the “pandemic new norm,” an overhaul of governance structure and interaction method between the public and private sectors is necessary for more sustainable and resilient post-pandemic society.
2. Since the very beginning of its foundation, ADB has been dedicated to promoting Asian economic and institutional development and has also developed good relationship with major international partners. ADB cooperates with NDRC to identify institutional obstructions in public services, monitor the performance and introduce new ideas. Most importantly, at the request of NDRC—not very typical for Chinese government to my best knowledge—ADB may indicate possibly the NDRC’s goal for high quality growth after pandemic. This project, if successful eventually, can be an important pilot project for supporting China’s institutional transformation as well as reforms in other developing member countries (DMCs).
3. Against this background, my main questions are as follows.
 - 3.1. How does the pandemic experience redefine an “accountable and efficient” government, and what efforts are necessary to make government effectively “accountable and efficient”?
 - 3.2. How could ADB ensure that the project will have sufficient impact to guide China for the recovery and transformation in the post-pandemic era?
 - 3.3. Does ADB have any mechanisms to deliver results “as is”?

Prepared by Zihao Liu

The role of AIIB in Asian debt capital markets beyond the COVID-19 pandemic

What makes a sustainable bond sustainable?

In April 2021, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) launched a new framework to help the investor community better assess its sustainability commitments under the mission of “Financing Infrastructure for Tomorrow.” The framework called [Sustainable Development Bond Framework](#) outlines “how AIIB is adhering to the principles set out in its Environmental and Social Framework that guides project selection, and how it is helping its members to meet their commitments under the Paris Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.”

I would like to discuss with AIIB staff the core elements making their sustainable development bond sustainable. Throughout the discussion, I hope that we touch upon how the Framework is comparable to other international standards and frameworks, e.g., [Sustainability Bond Guidelines](#) by International Capital Market Association. Besides, shedding a light on how exactly AIIB will commit to Paris Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals is vital to the discussion. The discussion should consist of both financial aspects and non-financial aspects.

Furthermore, the discussion could cover the context of the involvement of the People’s Republic of China and the Belt and Road Initiative as well. Conducting such discussions requires holistic perspectives of different stakeholders—AIIB as an issuer, investors, investees, and other underlying stakeholders.

Prepared by Kanshu Miki

**Request for discussion at the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat
—proposed issues & questions**

For Department of Political Affairs and/or Department of Economic Affairs

The COVID-19 pandemic has hindered trilateral cooperation efforts between China, Japan and the Republic of Korea. In order to survive political and economic challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic, ministerial-level dialogues combined with the grassroots efforts—such as engendering a “we-feeling among younger generations”—is critically important.

How can we sustain and further facilitate trilateral cooperation beyond the COVID-19 pandemic?

What are the requisite conditions for the continuous ministerial-level trilateral cooperation and dialogues in the time of global challenges?

What can we do to create such conditions?

What are the prospects for holding a Trilateral Education Minister’s meeting 2022 and onward?

For Department of Socio-Cultural Affairs

Educational activities under student exchange programs—such as CAMPUS Asia—were cancelled or conducted online amid the COVID-19 pandemic. While the pandemic deprived many students of mutual learning opportunities by in-person interactions, online technologies have allowed broader range of students to gain access to educational activities and to interact with each other.

Having the online learning/meeting platforms developed and normalized during the pandemic, how would the TCS try to reach out to a wider range of students to participate in exchange programs?

What are the challenges for the enhanced use of online-based communication platforms for various stakeholders (e.g., government, TCS, schools, students)?

Prepared by Karin Nishimura

Proposed issues for discussion on fight against corruption in public procurement

How to finance a sustainable, resilient and inclusive recovery in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic is a key question for governments facing fiscal pressure. While strategies to finance the recovery will depend on the context of each country, promoting spending efficiency is one of the alternatives. Good fiscal governance by strengthening the public procurement framework can allow governments to improve the delivery of public services with the given level of available resources (technical efficiency) and to reallocate them to meet other urgent needs (allocation efficiency).

Traditionally, improving public procurement has focused primarily on tackling one type of waste: corruption. To prevent and combat it, governments have adopted multiple actions and reforms. Transparency, integrity, open government, capacity building, e-procurement, strengthened audit and sanctions are some of the recommendations adopted to fight against corruption in procurement. However, these measures only had limited or even unknown impacts on the quality of spending.

The lack of evaluation of these actions due to the hidden nature of corruption raises concerns about the capacity to tackle corruption and the effectiveness of the strategies. Questions arise then about the cost of implementing those strategies. Are they worth the cost? Are they part of the problem (greater inefficiency because their results cannot be measured)?

Taking into account those limits, can we envisage that actions to improve fiscal efficiency in public procurement must go beyond the fight against corruption? For example, proposing innovative solutions to tackle corruption, treating corruption as a symptom of deep-rooted problems, or even focusing on tackling passive waste could be some alternatives to increase fiscal governance in procurement. However, achieving this requires strong leadership and cooperation with multilateral organizations, such as the World Bank, which have a strategic role in supporting governments to improve fiscal efficiency.

In this regard, I would like to discuss strategic directions and innovative actions to promote fiscal efficiency in public procurement for building a sustainable, resilient and inclusive society beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

Proposed questions for discussion

1. Is there a proven successful strategy to combat corruption in public procurement?
2. What are the main problems in the fight against corruption in public procurement?
3. What are the limits to measure the success of anti-corruption strategies, and how to overcome these limits?
4. Why is corruption at the center of the debate even if it is difficult to identify acts of corruption?
5. Who benefits from this anti-corruption approach?
6. Is the fight against corruption economically efficient and sustainable over time?
7. Could we think of any approaches to improve fiscal efficiency in public procurement more effective than fighting corruption?

Prepared by Maria Fernanda Quintero