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Technical Assistance Rural Vitalization—Rural Wastewater Treatment and Environmental Management (People's Republic of China)

The attached report is circulated for the information of the Board. The President approved the technical assistance on 14 October 2019.

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Project Number: 53088-001

Knowledge and Support Technical Assistance (KSTA)

October 2019

People's Republic of China: Rural Vitalization— Rural Wastewater Treatment and Environmental Management

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Asian Development Bank

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(as of 1 October 2019)

Currency unit – yuan (CNY) CNY1.00 = \$0.1399 \$1.00 = CNY7.1484

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB – Asian Development Bank

NDRC – National Development and Reform Commission

PRC – People's Republic of China

SWM – solid-waste management

TA – technical assistance

NOTE

In this report, "\$" refers to United States dollars.

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KNOWLEDGE AND SUPPORT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AT A GLANCE

1		LEDGE AND SUPPORT TECHN	IOAL ACCIOTA	Droinet N	
1.	Basic Data	B IVER E B IVE	Domoutine ant/Direct	•	umber: 53088-001
	Project Name	Rural Vitalization—Rural Wastewater Treatment and Environmental Management	Department/Divis		
	Nature of Activity	Capacity Development, Research and Development	Executing Agence	Province, F Henan Pro	Finance, Shanxi Finance Department vince, National ent and Reform on
	Modality	Regular			
	Country	China, People's Republic of			
	Sector	Subsector(s)	,	ADB Fin	ancing (\$ million)
1	Agriculture, natural resources and rural development	Rural sanitation			0.45
	•	Rural water policy, institutional and cap	acity development		0.15
				Total	0.60
3.	Operational Priorities		Climate Change	Information	
1		poverty and reducing inequalities		npact on the Project	Low
✓	Accelerating progress	in gender equality			
1		ge, building climate and disaster			
1		ing environmental sustainability opment and food security			
✓	Strengthening governa	Strengthening governance and institutional capacity			
	Sustainable Developm	nent Goals			
	SDG 6.b		Some gender eler	nents (SGE)	1
			Poverty Targetin		
	District in	1	Geographic Targe	eting	1
4.	Risk Categorization	Low			
5.	Safeguard Categoriza	tion Safeguard Policy Statement does	not apply		
6.	Financing				
	Modality and Sources			Amount (\$ mi	,
	ADB				0.60
	Knowledge and Sup Special Fund	port technical assistance: Technical Assi	stance		0.60
	Cofinancing				0.50
		es Foundation (Full ADB Administration)			0.50
	Counterpart				0.00
	None				0.00 1.10
	Total				1.10
	Currency of ADB Fina	ncing: US Dollar			

I. INTRODUCTION

- 1. Agricultural production and rural livelihoods have lagged behind industrial production and urban livelihoods in the People's Republic of China (PRC). As a result, income inequality and poverty persist in rural areas of lesser-developed regions. The majority of rural wastewater and wastes are directly discharged to the environment without appropriate treatment and disposal. Against this backdrop, the Government of the PRC formulated the rural vitalization strategy for 2018–2022 to promote poverty reduction, rural development, and green and inclusive growth. The strategy focuses on agriculture modernization, rural wastewater and waste management, rural—urban integration, ecosystem services protection, rural health and education services development, and rural governance reform. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the government have agreed to adopt a framework approach to strategically design ADB's lending and nonlending program to provide support for the PRC's rural vitalization initiatives.
- 2. This knowledge and support technical assistance (TA) will specifically support the preparation of guidelines on rural sanitation, wastewater, and solid-waste management (SWM) in line with the priorities of the rural vitalization strategy, the Thirteenth Five-Year Plan of the PRC² to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth by 2020; ADB's country partnership strategy for the PRC, 2016–2020; and ADB's Water Operational Plan, 2011–20204 to expand knowledge work and increase efficiency of sanitation and wastewater management. The TA is included in ADB's country operations business plan for the PRC, 2019–20215 and is aligned with key operational priorities of ADB's Strategy 2030,6 especially environmental sustainability.7

II. ISSUES

- 3. The government has been promoting rural development with specific targets identified in the Thirteenth Five-Year Plan, 2016–2020 (footnote 2). In addition to helping alleviate poverty and promoting development of rural areas, rural vitalization focuses on building ecologically friendly and livable villages by improving the rural living environment and addressing rural environmental infrastructure to reduce nonpoint source pollution. This is particularly important as poor sanitation and wastewater pollution control continues to be a key environmental issue in rural areas, and the slow progress in addressing this problem is putting further pressure on rural ecological assets.
- 4. Since the enforcement of the reform and open policy, the PRC has experienced rapid economic and social development in its rural areas. However, the economic conditions and the living environment in rural towns and villages lag behind those in urban areas. Thus, the government identified rural vitalization as key to ensuring future economic development and environmental improvement in rural areas. The strategy requires efforts to solve outstanding environmental problems and actions to improve the rural environment. In particular, support to rural development necessitates suitable approaches to (i) improving access to rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management; (ii) improving rural infrastructure and capacity development; (iii) controlling pollution; (iv) improving rural financial services; and (v) modernizing agriculture.

¹ Government of the PRC. 2018. *National Strategic Plan for Rural Vitalization, 2018–2022.* Beijing.

² Government of the PRC, State Council. 2015. The Thirteenth Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China, 2016–2020. Beijing.

³ ADB. 2016. Country Partnership Strategy: People's Republic of China, 2016–2020—Transforming Partnership: People's Republic of China and Asian Development Bank. Manila.

⁴ ADB. 2011. Water Operational Plan, 2011–2020. Manila.

⁵ ADB. 2019. *Country Operations Business Plan: People's Republic of China, 2019–2021*. Manila. The name of the TA project was modified to better reflect its scope and purposes.

⁶ ADB. 2018. Strategy 2030: Achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Asia and the Pacific. Manila.

⁷ The TA first appeared in the business opportunities section of ADB's website on 9 July 2019.

- 5. In 2017, the PRC's rural population was approximately 590 million, while only about 25% of rural villagers access appropriate sanitation facilities. Simple pit latrines are widely used in rural areas. Most villagers face poor sanitation and hygiene conditions because of inadequate, outdated, and/or faulty sanitary facilities. In the southeastern provinces of the PRC, flush toilets are installed in households but wastewater is discharged into leaking septic tanks underneath houses, putting both personal hygiene and public health under threat. In 2015, the government, in its Thirteenth Five-Year Plan (footnote 2), mandated that by 2020 sanitation systems shall be installed in at least 70% of rural villages in the PRC. During 2014–2018, there has been rapid development of rural sanitation throughout the country.
- 6. International best practice has proven that rural sanitation facilities can be designed and managed in accordance with local criteria, including affordability, local people's operating and managing skills, influent flow and strength, local water self-purification capacity, effluent reuses, climate conditions, and land constraints.⁹ The government has adopted rigorous provincial rural wastewater discharge standards and standardized technologies that may be inappropriate for local conditions, are heavily dependent on government subsidies, and lack the engagement of villagers. Consequently, many constructed facilities have not been properly operated or maintained, sewers and onsite treatment plants are poorly designed and constructed, there is weak regulatory enforcement on effluent quality control, and there are financial difficulties in maintaining proper operation. It is estimated that more than two-thirds of rural wastewater systems are not properly functioning. There are also no practical guidelines available in the PRC to assist local officials and planners with designing, building, and managing rural sanitation.
- 7. Shanxi province has a large rural population. The rural semiarid areas of the province have problems with inadequate sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management systems. The natural conditions, ecological background, living habits, and economic conditions of rural areas of the province make it difficult to adopt uniform rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management in different areas. Because of the scattered villages and difficult terrain, the logistics of transporting the large per capita wastewater and solid-waste output has long been a challenge. An effective and innovative solution is the Shanxi province focus on accelerating poverty alleviation and rural vitalization through improving the living environment.
- 8. Henan province has serious rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management issues. Both the financial capacity and farmers' environmental awareness are weak. As Henan has a large rural population, agricultural development and rural environmental management are crucial tasks. Shortage of investments and absence of long-term financing mechanisms are key restrictions on rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management. Moreover, effective management of rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management is inadequate. As a result of substantial funding gaps, the construction and operation and maintenance of such projects have limited coverage. There is no effective fund-sharing mechanism among levels of government, or private participation.

Appropriate sanitation facilities are sanitation systems where everybody benefits from adequate and inclusive sanitation service solutions, human waste is safely managed along the whole sanitation service chain, and effective resource recovery and reuse are considered. Appropriate sanitation systems, including for public use, whether sewered or nonsewered or centralized or decentralized, consider the most appropriate and innovative technology and service delivery method, which may include public—private partnerships (countywide inclusive sanitation).

⁹ In the United States, for instance, rural people still use septic systems or onsite treatment plants to treat sewage in their backyards. The state provides practical manuals, which detail design criteria for various soil conditions, locations, flow projection, technologies, and technical specifications. Households are responsible for their sewage treatment and compliance. At the rural level, the state subsidizes small-scale treatment plants.

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- 9. The National Strategic Plan for Rural Vitalization, 2018–2022 (footnote 1) has become a national policy set out by the government to promote poverty reduction, rural development, and green and inclusive growth. The strategy has particularly specified the promotion of localized rural sanitation and wastewater management models, and provision of technical support and guidance to practitioners. In August 2018, ADB and the government reached a memorandum of understanding to support the rural vitalization strategy, which prioritizes rural sanitation and wastewater management to build ecologically friendly and livable rural villages. ¹⁰ The TA is aligned with the strategy of ADB and the government to (i) disseminate experiences in innovative, demonstrative, and replicable pilot projects, and new cooperation modalities; and (ii) develop guidelines with online information for planning and management of rural sanitation.
- 10. Taking the management of sanitation and wastewater in rural areas as a priority, the TA will provide policy advice and guidelines, capacity development, and knowledge exchange, which will strengthen rural ecological and environmental management and systems. In line with local government priorities and needs, the TA will also assist the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) to develop a set of issue-focused, high-quality projects to maximize ADB funding support and knowledge. The pilot study in Shanxi province will help explore appropriate suitable technology for the local conditions for rural sanitation and wastewater. The Henan province study will provide the financing and legislative reviews for effective sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management. It will explore financing mechanisms and raise awareness and institutional implementation of the rural vitalization strategy, which has major impacts on rural wastewater and sanitation.

III. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A. Impact and Outcome

11. Rural vitalization is key to addressing the issue of rural environmental degradation, supported by policies and guidelines for local government. The strategy will contribute to disseminating experiences in environmental protection and improvement and rural development to other regions, which will promote inclusive and sustainable development. The TA is aligned with the following impact: rural vitalization strategy mainstreamed in rural areas of the PRC (footnote 1). The TA will have the following outcome: sustainable and innovative solutions for rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management in the PRC developed.¹¹

B. Outputs, Methods, and Activities

12. Output 1: Rural vitalization initiatives (including rural sanitation, solid-waste management, and wastewater management) supported. The TA will work with NDRC to improve the rural living environment through upgrading the rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management systems. The TA team will (i) develop national practical guidelines and online information on rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management, including online guides for public access; (ii) develop rural vitalization projects in the PRC; and (iii) conduct workshops on rural vitalization. The specific scope of the output includes (i) a thorough survey of rural sanitation; wastewater covering planning, financing, design, construction, and operation; and regulatory compliance to identify challenges and key issues handicapping rural areas of the PRC; (ii) technical review of provincial and local regulations, standards, and guidelines; (iii) a study of policies, institutional arrangements, and the investment environment to recommend sustainable

¹⁰ Article IV of the Memorandum of Understanding between NDRC and Ministry of Finance, the People's Republic of China, and Asian Development Bank on Support Rural Vitalization in the People's Republic of China, signed on 29 August 2018 in Beijing.

¹¹ The design and monitoring framework is in Appendix 1.

financing mechanisms: (iv) a study on community engagement to endorse local ownership; (v) development of practical guidelines for practitioners and villagers; and (vi) development and installation of online guidelines for the public. The output will support the NDRC and local governments to prepare the rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management projects, and promote local regulatory and administrative reforms. Cooperation and knowledge exchange are expected through workshops.

- Output 2: Rural sanitation, solid-waste management, and wastewater management pilot project feasibility in Shanxi province prepared. The output will (i) entail technical review and improvement of provincial and local regulations, standards, and guidelines on sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management in rural areas: (ii) develop rural community engagement support system for Shanxi province; and (iii) prepare a feasibility study for a pilot project for rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management systems in Shanxi province. The feasibility study for three pilot projects will be selected in three administrative villages where different modes for rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management will be needed. Best practice will be applied in the feasibility study.
- Output 3: Financial incentive mechanisms for rural sanitation, solid-waste management, and wastewater management in Henan province prepared. The TA will help strengthen the mechanism to improve sustainable financing for rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management in Henan province. The output will (i) promote stakeholder awareness and an engagement program to enhance their participation in supporting rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management; (ii) strengthen the policy and institutional coordination framework to create an enabling investment environment; and (iii) develop sustainable innovative financing mechanisms to mobilize private sector investments in rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management.

C. **Cost and Financing**

- The TA is estimated to cost \$1.2 million, of which (i) \$600,000 will be financed on a grant basis by ADB's Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF-other sources), and (ii) \$500,000 will be financed on a grant basis by the Sanitation Financing Partnership Trust Fund¹² under the Water Financing Partnership Facility and be administered by ADB. The key expenditure items are listed in Appendix 2.
- The following are ineligible expenditures: vehicle purchases, salaries for civil servants, foreign travel, scholarships or long internships, detailed engineering design, civil works and other related expenses, and items on ADB's List of Ineligible Items (or Negative List) and Prohibited Investment Activities List. 13
- The government will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff (including translation services), office space and supplies, data and information, secretarial assistance, domestic transportation, and other in-kind contributions.

D. **Implementation Arrangements**

ADB will administer TA implementation through the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Division of the East Asia Department. The NDRC, Shanxi Province Bureau of Finance, and Henan Province Finance Department are the executing agencies. Each TA output has an assigned implementing agency that will implement the associated activities. The implementing

¹³ ADB. 2011. Cost Sharing and Expenditure Eligibility: Policy Implementation Review. Manila.

¹² Financing partner: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

agencies will (i) provide project management support and carry out day-to-day TA activities, such as overseeing the TA consultants' work; (ii) organize peer reviews and comments on consultants' reports; (iii) organize TA review workshops and stakeholder meetings; and (iv) coordinate with provincial government agencies and private stakeholders for awareness-raising and capacity building activities.

19. The implementation arrangements are summarized in the table.

Implementation Arrangements

Aspects	Arrangements		
Indicative implementation period	November 2019–December 2021		
Executing agency	Output 1: National Development and Reform Commission		
	Output 2: Shanxi Province Bureau of Finance		
	Output 3: Henan Province Finance Department		
Implementing agencies	Output 1: Foreign Capital and Overseas Investment Department		
	Output 2: Shanxi Provincial Housing and Urban-Rural Development		
	Department		
	Output 3: Environment and Ecological Division under Finance Department		
	Henan Province		
Consultants	To be selected and engaged by ADB		
	QCBS (90:10)	Output 1: international (7.0	\$415,000
	Contract scope includes		
	three packages	(18.0 person-months)	
	(individuals and teams_	\ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \	
	combination) for each TA	h TA person-months); national (12.0 person-months)	
	output		
Output 3: international (2.0 person-months); national			\$250,000
	(16.0 person-months)		
Disbursement	The TA resources will be disbursed following ADB's Technical Assistance		
	Disbursement Handbook (2010, as amended from time to time).		

ADB = Asian Development Bank, QCBS = quality- and cost-based selection, TA = technical assistance. Source: ADB.

20. **Consulting services.** ADB will engage a consulting firm and/or individual consultants following the ADB Procurement Policy (2017, as amended from time to time) and its associated project administration instructions and/or staff instructions using a simplified technical proposal and the quality- and cost-based selection method. The quality-cost ratio will be 90:10 because of the high technical complexity of the consulting assignment.

IV. THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION

21. The President, acting under the authority delegated by the Board, has approved (i) the Asian Development Bank (ADB) administering a portion of technical assistance not exceeding the equivalent of \$500,000 to be financed on a grant basis by the Sanitation Financing Partnership Trust Fund under the Water Financing Partnership Facility; and (ii) ADB providing the balance not exceeding the equivalent of \$600,000 on a grant basis to the Government of the People's Republic of China for Rural Vitalization—Rural Wastewater Treatment and Environmental Management, and hereby reports this action to the Board.

¹⁴ Terms of Reference for Consultants (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 3).

DESIGN AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Impact the TA is Aligned with

Rural vitalization strategy mainstreamed in rural areas of the PRC (National Strategic Plan for Rural Vitalization) $^{\rm a}$

Results Chain	Performance Indicators with Targets and Baselines	Data Sources and Reporting Mechanisms	Risks
Outcome Sustainable and innovative solutions for rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management in the PRC developed	By 2021: Three demonstration projects use the developed rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management guidelines (2019 baseline: 0)	Technical assistance consultants' final report	Recommendations and guidelines need to be updated because of changing needs and/or priorities.
Outputs 1. Rural vitalization initiatives (including rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management) supported	By 2021: 1a. At least three rural vitalization project proposals prepared (2019 baseline: 0) 1b. Rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management guideline prepared (2019 baseline: 0) 1c. Online information prepared and installed (2019 baseline: 0)	Project reports submitted Description of the point and consultant report (semiannual and annual) Central consultant report (semiannual and annual) Central consultant report (semiannual and annual)	Cooperation from local stakeholders and/or agencies is not sustained.
2. Rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management pilot project feasibility in Shanxi province prepared	2a. Rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management technical review report for Shanxi province prepared (2019 baseline: 0) 2b. Rural community engagement and proposal for pilot project prepared	2a. Technical review reports (semiannual and final report) 2b. Project monitoring report and consultant report (semiannual and	
3. Financial incentive mechanisms for rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management in Henan province prepared	(2019 baseline: 0) 3a. Stakeholder awareness and engagement program prepared (2019 baseline: not prepared) 3b. Institutional coordination framework prepared (2019 baseline: not prepared) 3c. Sustainable financing mechanism (fund) developed (2019 baseline: not developed)	annual) 3a. Project monitoring report and consultant report (semiannual and annual) 3b. Project monitoring report and consultant report (semiannual and annual) 3c. Implementing-agency-approved fund financing mechanism	

Key Activities with Milestones

1. Rural vitalization initiatives (including rural sanitation, solid-waste management, and wastewater management) supported

- 1.1 Develop national practical guidelines and online information on rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management (Q4 2019–Q3 2020).
 - 1.1.1 Conduct preliminary situation assessment, inventory of stakeholders, and stakeholder analysis; and conduct initial workshop (Q4 2019).
 - 1.1.2 Assess sanitation practices; institutional, legal, and regulatory framework; and financing (Q4 2019).
 - 1.1.3 Select sites for treatment, stakeholders, and organization modes (Q4 2019).
 - 1.1.4 Quantify and characterize sludge (Q1 2020).
 - 1.1.5 Preselect technologies and organizational and financial mechanisms (Q1 2020).
 - 1.1.6 Conduct detailed evaluation of selected options, presentation workshop, and final selection of options (Q2 2020).
 - 1.1.7 Develop guidelines for practitioners and villagers, and provide website for public access (Q3 2020).
- 1.2 Develop projects for rural vitalization in the PRC (Q4 2019–Q1 2021).
- 1.3 Conduct three workshops on the PRC's rural vitalization (Q2 2021–Q4 2021).

2. Rural sanitation, solid-waste management, and wastewater management pilot projects in Shanxi province prepared

- 2.1 Conduct survey on rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management (Q4 2019–Q4 2019).
- 2.2 Review local regulations, standards, and technical guidelines (Q4 2019).
- 2.3 Study village engagement and participation (Q4 2019).
- 2.4 Study rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management (Q3 2019–Q3 2020).

3. Financial incentive mechanisms for rural sanitation, solid-waste management, and wastewater management in Henan province prepared

- 3.1 Study policies, institutional arrangement, investment environment, and financing arrangements for rural sanitation, SWM, and wastewater management (Q4 2019).
- 3.2 Prepare stakeholder awareness and engagement program (Q4 2019).
- 3.3 Prepare institutional coordination framework (Q4 2019).
- 3.4 Develop sustainable financing mechanism in Henan province (Q1 2020–Q3 2020).

Inputs

Asian Development Bank: \$600,000 (TASF-other sources)

Sanitation Financing Partnership Trust Fund under the Water Financing Partnership Facility: \$500,000

Note: The government will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff (including translation services), office space and supplies, data and information, secretarial assistance, domestic transportation, and other in-kind contributions.

Assumptions for Partner Financing

Not applicable

PRC = People's Republic of China, Q = quarter, SWM = solid-waste management.

^a Government of the PRC. 2018. *National Strategic Plan for Rural Vitalization, 2018–2022.* Beijing. Source: Asian Development Bank.

COST ESTIMATES AND FINANCING PLAN

(\$'000)

Ite	ltem Amount			
Α.	Asian Development Bank ^a			
	1.	Consultants		
		a. Remuneration and per diem		
		i. International consultants	180.0	
		ii. National consultants	260.0	
		b. Out-of-pocket expenditures		
		i. International and local travel	40.0	
		ii. Website rental (provisional sum)	20.0	
	2.	Training, seminars, workshops, forum, and conferences ^b	70.0	
	3.	Contingencies	30.0	
		Subtotal (A)	600.0	
В.	3. Sanitation Financing Partnership Trust Fund ^o under the Water			
	Financing Partnership Facility			
	1.	Consultants		
		a. Remuneration and per diem		
		i. International consultants	150.0	
		ii. National consultants	220.0	
		b. Out-of-pocket expenditures		
		i. International and local travel	40.0	
		ii. Reports and communications ^d	5.0	
	2.	Training, seminars, workshops, forum, and conferencese	60.0	
	3.	Contingencies	25.0	
		Subtotal (B)	500.0	
		Total	1,100.0	

Note: The technical assistance is estimated to cost \$1,200,000, of which contributions from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Sanitation Financing Partnership Trust Fund under the Water Financing Partnership Facility are presented in the table. The government will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff (including translation services), office space and supplies, data and information, secretarial assistance, domestic transportation, and other in-kind contributions. The value of the government contribution is estimated to account for 8% of the total technical assistance cost.

- ^a Financed by ADB's Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF-other sources).
- ^b These costs may include food and beverages; interpretation and translation; training materials; printing of materials; engagement of resource persons, including ADB staff who will serve as resource persons and/or facilitators in the workshops; and other administrative and logistics costs.
- ^c Financing partner: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Administered by ADB.
- d These costs may include report preparation and translation expenses.
- These costs may include engagement of resource persons, including ADB staff who will serve as resource persons and/or facilitators in the workshops.

Source: Asian Development Bank estimates.

LIST OF LINKED DOCUMENTS
http://www.adb.org/Documents/LinkedDocs/?id=53088-001-TAReport

1. Terms of Reference for Consultants