

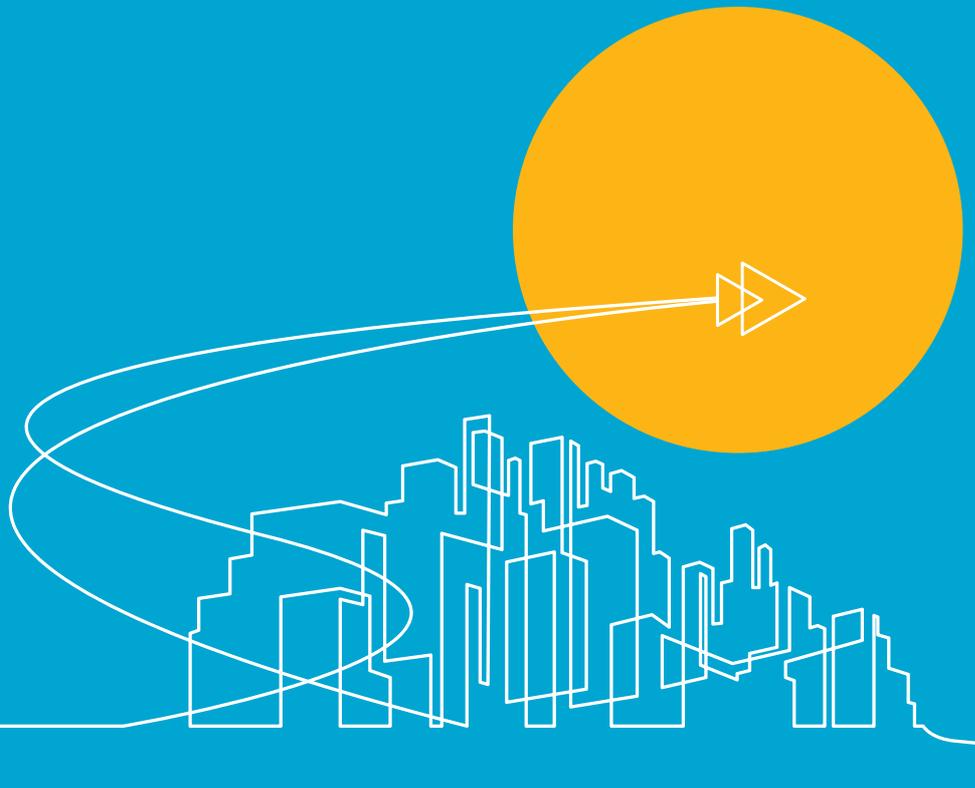
Highlights and Takeaways

FORUM ON SUCCESSFUL PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Rising to the Challenge of COVID-19 and Beyond

10-12 November 2020

ONLINE



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Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
COVID-19	coronavirus disease of 2019
DMCs	developing member countries
EA	executing agency
EARD	East Asia Department
FDD	Financial Due Diligence
FM	financial management
FMAP	Financial Management Action Plan
IA	implementing agency
ICT	information and communications technology
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IT	information technology
MDB	Multilateral Development Banks
OGC	Office of the General Counsel
O&M	operations and maintenance
PARD	Pacific Department
PFFM	Public Financial Management Division
PFFPM	Portfolio Management Division
PFP1/2	Procurement Division 1/2
PIU	project implementation unit
PPFD	Portfolio Management Division
SARD	South Asia Department
SDCC	Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department
SERD	Southeast Asia Department
SOP	standard operating procedure
SPP	Strategic Procurement Planning
SPS	Safeguard Policy Statement
TA	technical assistance
VfM	value for money

Participants' Profile

1,018

Total Participants

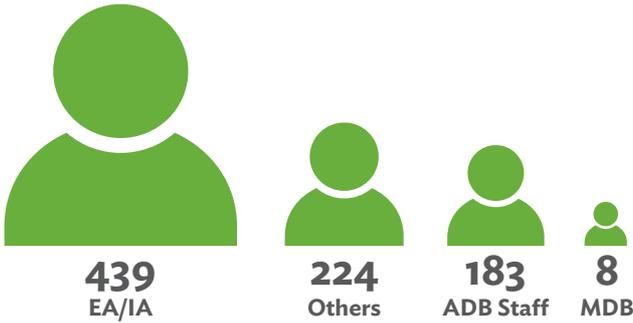


854 Registered participants who logged in

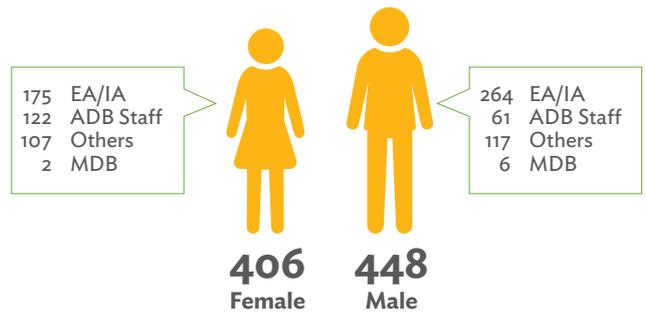
164 Unregistered participants who logged in

Of the 854 Registered Participants:

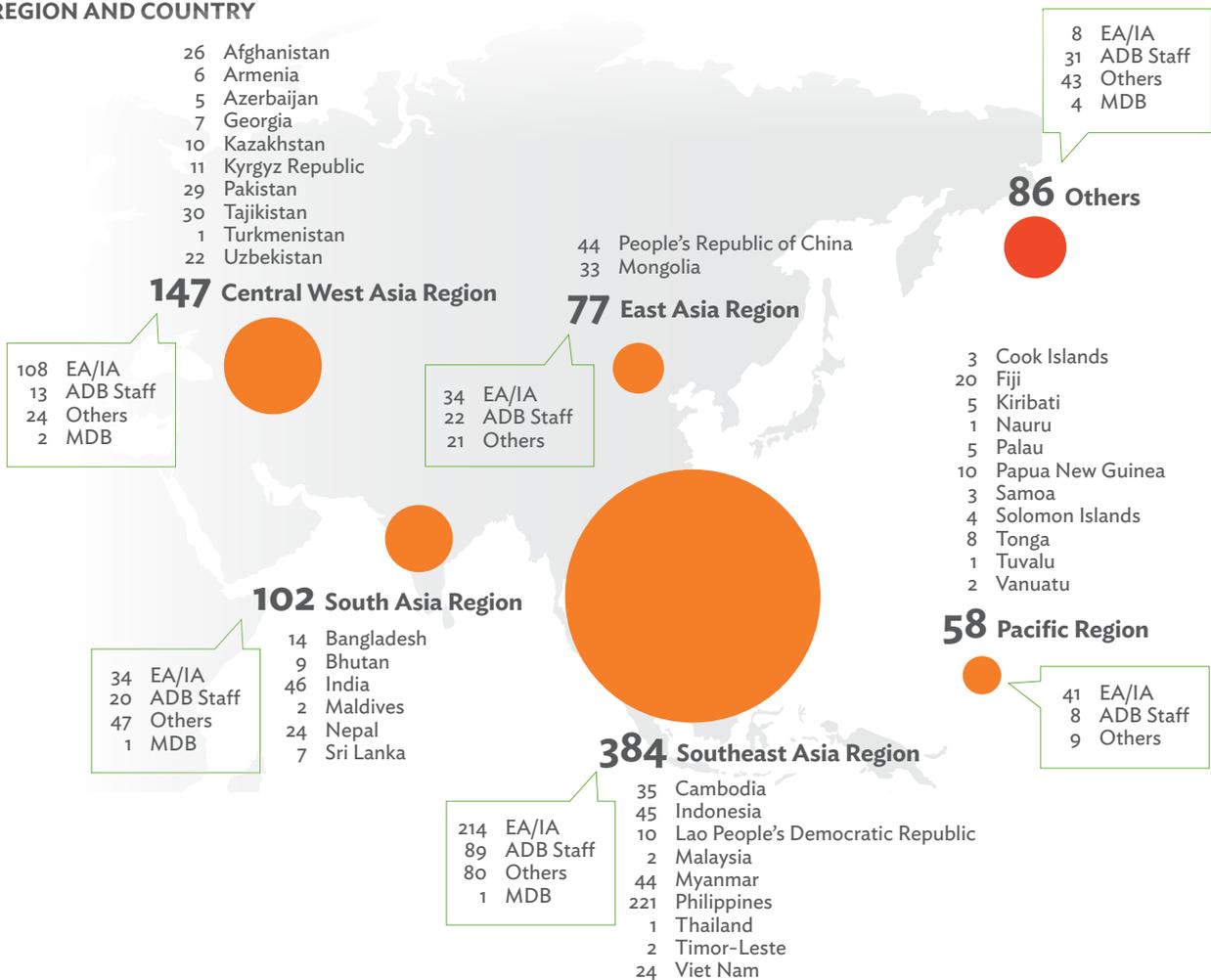
BY ORGANIZATION



BY GENDER

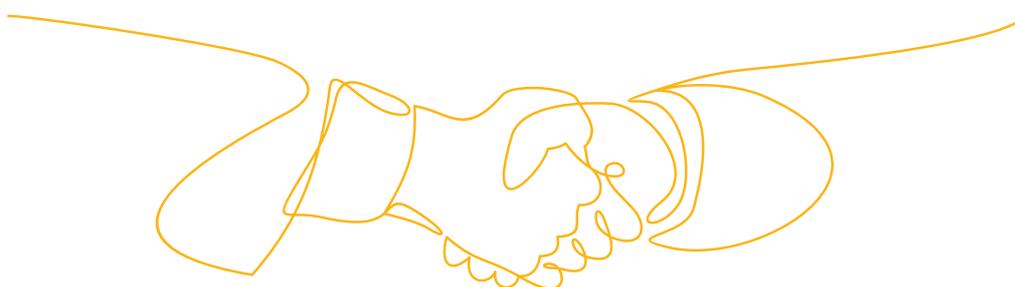


BY REGION AND COUNTRY



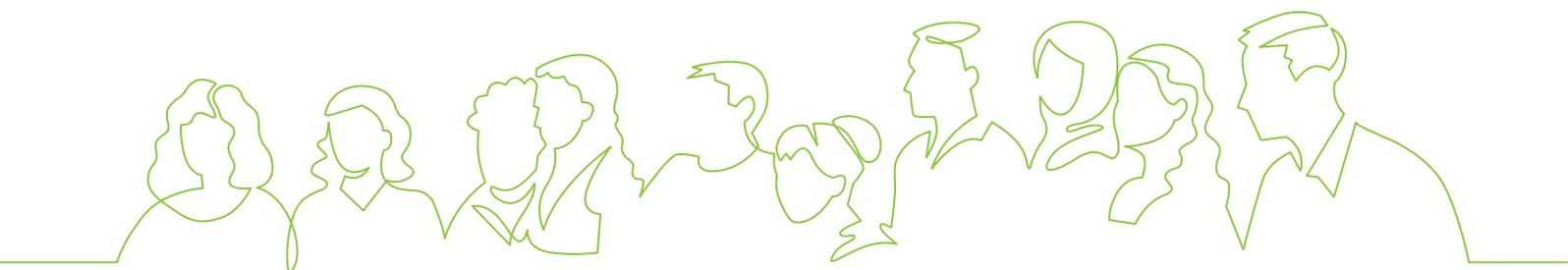
Acknowledgement

The Portfolio Management Division (PFPM) of the Procurement, Portfolio and Financial Management (PPFD), the organizer of the forum, is grateful for the support of ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa; Deborah Stokes, Vice President for Administration and Corporate Management; Risa Zhijia Teng, PPFD Director-General; and the PPFD management team. PFPM also extends its sincerest thanks to the participants, resource persons, and the technical team that supported the event.



I. Introduction

- 1. In Strategy 2030, ADB to strengthening governance and institutional capacity as an operational priority.** This commitment means not only men promoting effective, timely, and transparent delivery of better public services, but also taking the necessary actions toward achieving robust project readiness, sound project management, and sustainable mechanisms that are embedded in project design and implementation.
- 2. The COVID-19 global pandemic in 2020 unleashed widespread impact on human health, work places and the economy.** Inevitably, the crisis affected development projects. Project design planners and implementers thus finds themselves at a critical point where they must protect the health and safety of people at the same time that they rebuild project momentum for better and more resilient results. The speed and efficiency required to perform this task involve another accompanying challenge—that of ensuring the quality of projects, which in the first place is the primary building block for sustainable development outcomes. How then can we respond quickly and effectively during the crisis? It is a question of what is needed now and what is imperative beyond the pandemic.
- 3. The Forum on Successful Project Design and Implementation on 10-12 November 2020 centers on the theme “Rising to the COVID-19 Challenge and Beyond”.** It draws from the initial experience of project frontliners and cases from the field to create an opportunity for peer learning and gaining practical knowledge. Policy guidelines and relevant cases are presented to stir discussions of actual issues in project management and operations.
- 4. The virtual forum was attended by representatives of executing and implementing agencies (EAs and IAs) of developing member countries (DMCs), ADB staff, and participants from the development community.**
- 5. PPFD has been organizing the forum annually since 2013 to help enhance the institutional capacity of EAs and IAs, and draw lessons learned on successful project design and implementation.**



II. Forum Objectives

6. The forum had three objectives: to shape, change, and reinforce the knowledge and behavior of participants in project design and implementation during the pandemic and beyond.
 - a. **To enhance** the operational knowledge of participants by introducing the updated project operations guidelines for risk mitigation and adaptation during the pandemic as well as approaches in rebuilding project momentum.
 - b. **To share** options for meeting the challenges under the New Normal based on the emerging good practice in project design and implementation.
 - c. **To strengthen** cooperative problem solving and peer learning through content and discussions of operational experience and expertise.



III. Key Messages

7. Following are the key messages discussed throughout the three-day forum:

a. **Rising to the challenge of COVID-19 means speed and flexibility in project design and implementation.**

The COVID-19 global pandemic unleashed widespread impact on human health, the world of work, and the economy. Inevitably, the impact reached development projects that propel growth with equity in countries. The crisis compels us to act now, without delay.

b. **The health and safety of people are the primary goals of our response.**

Project design and implementation finds itself at a critical point where we must protect the health and safety of people, at the same time that we rebuild project momentum for better and more resilient results.

c. **Restoring momentum for better and more resilient projects is founded on quality design and implementation.**

The speed and efficiency required to respond to the crisis involve another accompanying challenge—that of ensuring the quality of projects, which in the first place is the primary building block for sustainable development outcomes. How then can we respond quickly and effectively during the crisis? It is a question of what is needed now and what is imperative beyond the pandemic.

d. **Rising to the challenge requires all of us learning and working together.**

It may be too early to define the severity and scale of the impact of the pandemic and what a post-COVID-19 scenario will look like. But the current situation already provides opportunities for us to explore our options in navigating the ‘New Normal’. To do this, we must harness our experiences and evidence from emerging practice to be able to rise to the challenge of COVID-19 and beyond.



IV. Forum Highlights



A. Opening Session

Welcome Remarks

Risa Zhijia Teng, Director General, ADB Procurement, Portfolio and Financial Management Department

Distinguished participants, welcome to the Sixth Forum on Successful Project Design and Implementation, organized by the Procurement, Portfolio and Financial Management Department of the Asian Development Bank.

Recognizing that we are in the middle of a crisis, we still went ahead with this forum, to grasp this knowledge sharing opportunity.

I am pleased to inform you that we have over 400 participants today, the largest guest number since the first forum from 2013. Unlike prior forums which gathered only government representatives, for this forum, we also have guests from the private sector, donor community, and civil society, connected from around the world.

Before speaking today, I asked myself a question. How has our capacity building program helped us navigate the pandemic? I do not think there is a single institution that can claim outright success. This pandemic delayed, if not halted, our operations in some of our developing member countries. But here is what I can say: the way forward for delivering goods and services to work through the pandemic and our recovery from it will be revealed during this forum. We will be discussing the following

topics in this forum: adapting to the new normal with sustainable and resilient projects, safeguarding public funds to ensure that they are spent for the intended purpose, prioritizing the health and safety of project stakeholders, achieving value for money through procurement, and good practices and lessons learned for project frontliners.

Project implementation is a continuous process, and it involves you, us, and our key stakeholders throughout the course of development investment operations. Let me stress that planning for implementation begins at project preparation and not after the project has been approved. Sound planning will lead to sound results. It is crucial to remain vigilant and focused during project implementation to ensure that the project achieves its intended development outcome. The project management unit and the ADB project mission leaders must always be alert and proactive to identify and manage the challenges and issues which occur during implementation.

Let me close by thanking all of you for your commitment to this forum. Together as development partners we must be willing to continually strengthen our implementation capacity and support in the interest of project beneficiaries.

Please stay safe and healthy. Thank you!



“Together as development partners we must be willing to continually strengthen our implementation capacity and support in the interest of project beneficiaries.”

Risa Zhijia Teng, Director General, ADB Procurement, Portfolio and Financial Management Department

Keynote Address

Masatsugu Asakawa, President of the Asian Development Bank

Good day to you, officials and project frontliners of our ADB members, colleagues in ADB, and members of the development community. Welcome to this virtual Forum on Successful Project Design and Implementation.

While I hope to meet in person when it is safe to do so, I am glad that you have joined us online to exchange ideas and experiences that will improve project design and implementation, especially during the challenges we face because of the pandemic.

I. ADB'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic has deeply affected public health, livelihoods, and the economies where we operate. At the same time, the crisis offers us opportunities to reaffirm our commitment to support our developing members, improve the quality of life of their populations, and strengthen our unified action.

Let me outline how ADB has been supporting our developing members during the pandemic. As many of you know, ADB launched a \$20 billion comprehensive response package in April, which consists of the following three pillars of support.

The first pillar focuses on helping to meet the immediate needs created by health crisis, through quick-disbursing grants to our developing member economies. This assistance is enabling governments to acquire critical medical equipment and supplies.

The second pillar focuses on providing fast-disbursing countercyclical funding to support strained government budgets. So far, we have committed \$8.3 billion to 19 of ADB's developing member economies to help fund emergency programs and recovery efforts.

The third pillar directs support to the private sector. Some \$1.7 billion is helping to rejuvenate trade and supply chains, and to provide enhanced microfinance and guarantees for liquidity-starved businesses, including those run by female entrepreneurs.

The total commitment we made is about \$12.5 billion to date, out of \$20 billion package. Working closely with development partners, we have also mobilized an additional \$8 billion in cofinancing.

II. IMPROVING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE PANDEMIC

Let me turn now to the crucial role of project implementation, which ensures that our planned commitments are effectively put into action.

As you know, project implementation is never easy, as projects can be ambitious, complex, and diverse. A strong capacity of project management unit and ownership of the government are the necessary drivers of quality, effectiveness, timeliness, and efficiency in meeting the development objectives.

Because of the pandemic, our operations face new and significant challenges, such as lockdowns and community quarantines that limit the movement of people and the



“Rest assured that executing and implementing agencies have our full support and commitment, as ADB works with each of you to enhance the quality and speed of project implementation. At the same time, please ensure that your inputs meet the highest standards, because ADB cannot accomplish our project objectives without full effort from everyone.”

Masatsugu Asakawa, President of the Asian Development Bank

operation of services. As a result, project management units can no longer operate in a business-as-usual environment. I fully understand the difficulties that executing and implementing agencies, development partners, and ADB staff face in their roles as project implementers.

But please rest assured that executing and implementing agencies have our full support and commitment, as ADB works with each of you to enhance the quality and speed of project implementation. At the same time, please ensure that your inputs meet the highest standards, because ADB cannot accomplish our project objectives without full effort from everyone.

To be specific, let me suggest three short-term measures that I believe will be relevant for ongoing projects, especially during the extraordinary circumstances created by the COVID-19 crisis:

First, let us identify issues affecting problematic projects by carefully assessing whether or not the problem has been caused by the pandemic. This careful review will enable us to undertake the most relevant mid-course restructuring when needed.

Second, when presented with potential loan savings, please initiate their cancellation as early as possible—so that we can repurpose the savings for COVID-19 related interventions.

And third, let us strengthen our communication by making full use of virtual project team meetings and review missions—so that we can collectively monitor project implementation as closely as possible, in spite of the ongoing travel restrictions.

III. ADDRESSING LONG-TERM ISSUES TO STRENGTHEN PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY

In addition to taking action to grapple with these immediate issues, we should also ask ourselves how we can address longer term issue: that is strengthening capacity for project implementation. Let me emphasize that project implementation capacity is the key to deliver development impact. Staff of both ADB and project implementation agencies have to enhance project implementation capacity through effective and sustained collaboration.

Let me offer three suggestions in this regard.

My first suggestion focuses on enhancing the quality of project design and project readiness, which is always so critical to reduce start-up delays. I suggest that you tap into ADB's "Project Readiness Financing Modality" and the "Small

Expenditure Financing Facility" to support project preparation and design activities in a faster and more responsive manner.

Second, we should direct our focus further on Strategy 2030—specifically, Operational Priority 6 on strengthening governance and institutional capacity to improve public service delivery. For example, ADB will work with developing members to promote the use of e-procurement systems and robust financial management throughout the project cycle; and to prioritize capacity building and knowledge work in countries where project implementation and service delivery can be further strengthened.

As for my third suggestion, I strongly urge you to capitalize on the opportunities that technology can offer. Please find ways to take advantage of the increasing opportunities to use new technologies in your work—such as through artificial intelligence, big data, robotics, satellites, and cloud-based systems, which can have a positive impact on project outcomes.

For example, in Nauru, a drone is flown over the new deepwater port project site to provide remote monitoring through images that are captured and fed into a 3D model. The data can then be used to track deliverables and outcomes, and to identify gaps and potential risks.

Furthermore, let me emphasize that we will continue to enhance the One ADB approach for strengthening project implementation capacity. This forum is one such example of the One ADB approach to capacity building, as we promote even closer collaboration with regional and non-regional departments and resident missions by leveraging our diverse expertise, best practices, and lessons learned during project implementation.

So, please take advantage of this event, and embrace it as an opportunity to work together on difficult but necessary questions in project management and implementation. Let us ask, for example, questions such as:

What are the guiding principles to make our investments deliver their intended development outcomes on the ground?

How does due diligence help us make informed decisions and manage project risks? Where is the value for money? How can we make the government's ownership of the project even stronger, in order to accelerate the achievement of development goals?

I will follow with keen interest the smart new directions that you take project design and implementation "beyond" COVID-19—

because solid project management and quality implementation are indispensable to enable countries to be back on track to the path toward achieving Sustainable Development Goals.

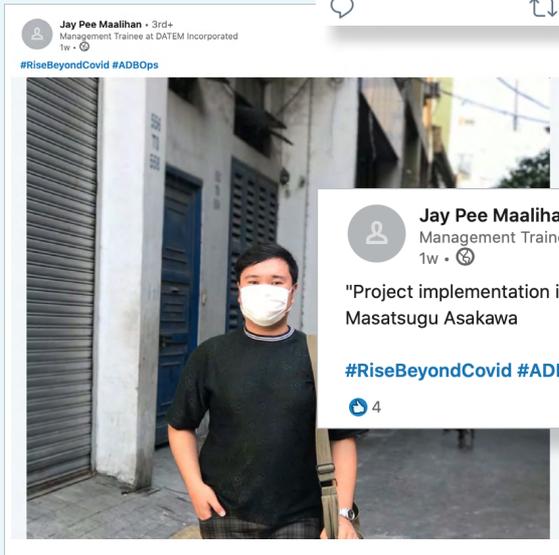
I hope that this forum can provide you with lessons and renewed commitment to help build a more prosperous,

inclusive, resilient, and sustainable region after COVID-19. Let us work more closely than ever before to make this possible.

Thank you and please stay safe.

Let's talk about #RiseBeyondCovid

Manu K K @iammanukk · Nov 10
"Project implementation is never easy, as projects can be ambitious, complex, and diverse" from ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa's keynote message during Forum On Successful Project Design and Implementation
[#RiseBeyondCovid](#) [#ADBOps](#)
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Jay Pee Maalihan · 3rd+
Management Trainee at DATEM Incorporated
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"Project implementation is never easy, as projects can be ambitious, complex, and diverse" - ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa
[#RiseBeyondCovid](#) [#ADBOps](#)
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Jun Rusell Aquino @JunRusell · Nov 10
[@ADB_HQ](#) President Masatsugu Asakawa: Project implementation is never easy, as projects can be ambitious, complex, and diverse.
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Jun Rusell Aquino @JunRusell · Nov 10
A strong capacity of project management units and ownership of the government are the necessary drivers of quality, effectiveness, timeliness, and efficiency in meeting the development objectives.
[#RiseBeyondCovid](#) [#ADBOps](#)
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B. Session Takeaways



SESSION 1

Adapting to the New Normal

The pandemic gave rise to serious challenges in project design and implementation. **Macroeconomic impacts are being felt across the globe** and economic recessions are inevitable. In some countries, **health impacts are superseded by socioeconomic repercussions** following trade disruptions. The pandemic occasions a review of our paradigm. What we are experiencing is **as much a crisis in public health as it is crisis in public service delivery**. Such a multidimensional understanding requires **a shift from a sectoral approach to a thematic approach** in finding solutions, and which is affirmed in ADB Strategy 2030. This, for example, means pursuing cross-cutting themes in our work, and **investing more in infrastructure**, which is the lever for public service delivery. ADB's **short-term responses have been quick and flexible** - all aimed at supporting developing member economies cope with the impact. There is an urgent need to boost **the capacity of executing and implementing agencies**, local consultants, and resident missions. **Technology will enhance our decision making** as we utilize big data, localized solutions during the lockdown, virtual meetings, and project missions.

SESSION 2

Prioritizing the Safety and Well-being of Project Stakeholders

With high fatality rates from COVID-19 and a vaccine that will take time before everyone has access to it, one should avoid the 3Cs (closed spaces, crowded spaces, and close contact) and observe the 2Ws (wear face masks and face shields and wash one's hands). Governments must continue to implement policies and programs to support the individual actions of

citizens, including the **ease of testing, contact tracing, and access to treatment**. We need to continuously update our **health and safety management plans to include measures for addressing COVID-related risks** and addressing them in our risk mitigation and action plans. Executing agencies must require bidders on ADB-financed projects to specify measures to, which the aligned with country systems, for **preventing infection or managing it at the workplace**. **In contracts, safety measures must be highlighted and rigorously followed**. There are **COVID-related guidance notes** on safeguards and procurement now available for the guidance of project implementers. There are cost and legal implications in implementing COVID-related health and safety measures, and these need to be carefully considered in the contract. As a precaution, the employer (executing agency) may not always pass on the cost of said measures to the contractor.

SESSION 3

Strengthening Financial Management for Successful Project Outcomes

Ensuring that project funds are used for their intended purpose is a shared responsibility between ADB and the borrower. To fulfill this duty, we **embed financial management in all phases of the project cycle**, from strategy formulation through design and implementation all the way up to evaluation. **Project sustainability emanates from organizational sustainability**, where institutions can operate, maintain, and manage projects effectively. The pandemic tests our financial management capacity and the due diligence that goes with it. ADB and project teams are conducting **remote financial due diligence**, with data gathering and verification done virtually. Connectivity and distance can inhibit spontaneity and candidness of communication. ADB and project teams have taken great strides in strengthening **virtual interaction**. This again affirms the need to complete **financial management assessments prior to project approval**, which can be referenced as teams deal with the impact of the pandemic. In fragile, conflict-affected, and small island states, the **pandemic magnified the limitations in capacity**, resources, access, and security situation. **Early engagement with project stakeholders** as well as building the capacity of the staff and consultants of implementing agencies are proven routes to effective financial management.



SESSION 4

Achieving Value for Money in Procurement

Value for money (VfM) is **the effective, efficient, and economic use of resources to achieve optimal development outcomes**. This principle, explicit in ADB's 2017 Procurement Policy, underpins the procurement objectives of **quality, price, risk mitigation, speed and security of service delivery**. Member countries employ various VfM models. The Greater Malé Waste-to-Energy Project in Maldives uses **market sounding to ensure that qualified bidders participate** and risks are identified early on. The project is a design-build-operate contract that specifies exactly what technology is required, the performance guarantees to ensure quality, and defined project life cycle. Quality is an important consideration in the selection of contractors. A methodology for ranking and selecting bidders is necessary, based on a **balance between quality, cost, and other requirements such as safety performance and management capability**. Sri Lanka uses a merit point evaluation in its Science and Technology Human Resource Development Project, where the alignment with local procurement standards and detailed evaluation guidelines agreed in advance are central to achieving VfM.

SESSION 5

Rebuilding the Momentum: Project Implementation and Stakeholder Engagement

During the pandemic, there are **no waivers extended on ADB's safeguards policy**. However, in its draft guidance note, ADB proposes **various alternative methods and a decision-**

making tool to determine whether the complexity of risks, ability to apply various mitigation measures, and other considerations would warrant continuing or deferring action. In Nepal, ADB issued **standard operating procedures, which the government customized** for its projects and then released the SOP to contractors. In the People's Republic of China, the team had created a COVID-management plan as early as February. In Viet Nam, the teams are **working with civil society organizations to collect information** ahead of review missions. With travel restrictions in place, we are relying increasingly on **national consultants to undertake critical work in the field**. **Technology use is immense**, such as drones for field surveys, 3D cameras in site monitoring, and live video feeds in the inspection of equipment and procurement of goods. **Project preparation time has doubled, and so has the cost of using technology** and the implementation of health and safety protocols. Concerns remain about data privacy among communities, and behavioral and cultural factors need to be considered as we make our projects pandemic-resilient.

SESSION 6

Initial Good Practice for Project Frontliners

Dialogue and sustained engagement can turn a crisis to an effective response. This is true with quick action in procurement and financial management, as well as in the long-term response of governments in planning resilient programs such as in social protection. COVID-19 is not only a public health crisis; it is a **crisis of public services delivery**. As we navigate the crisis, we are discovering that **localized and differentiated solutions** and **country systems** work well. Strengthening institutional capacity becomes even more important. Where there are limitations in conducting field surveys, there is satellite imagery and online databases that can help map out pockets of poverty. As for access to finance, there are platforms for e-commerce and e-banking available. To enable these, we need to **invest in digital infrastructure** including developing policies that will **improve the regulatory framework, foster competition, and allow more players**—particularly private sector groups—in the technology market. In procurement and financial management, we need to **balance flexibility in making the goods and services available and ensuring that project funds are spent well**.

C. Discussion Highlights

SESSION 1

Adapting to the New Normal

FACILITATOR

Ashraf Mohammed, Deputy Director General, Office of the Director General (PFOD), PPF

PANELS

Bruno Carrasco, Chief of Governance Thematic Group, Governance TG (SDTC-GOV), SDCC

Nianshan Zhang, Deputy Director General, Office of the Director General (CWOD), CWRD

Ramesh Subramaniam, Director General, Office of the Director General (SEOD), SERD

Emma M. Veve, Deputy Director, Office of the Director General (PAOD), PARD

Robert Guild, Chief Sector Officer, Office of the Cluster Head (SDSC), SDCC

8. This session highlights the lessons and experience in implementing projects under the 'new normal' as countries navigate the challenges posed by the COVID-19 global pandemic.

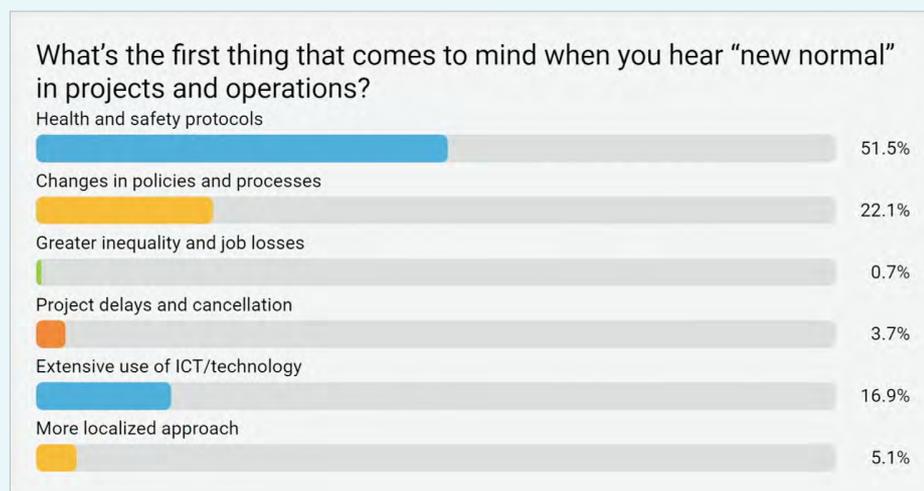
The pandemic has far-reaching effects on the economy, with major serious implications on our policies and operations. It also makes us rethink our paradigms and practice.

9. **The effort to slow the infection curve resulted in a huge revenue compression.** The macroeconomic impact of the pandemic is staggering, with huge revenue compression and an imperative for flattening the pandemic curve and flattening the recession curve. In fact, in some countries, the impact is not so much on public health but on the socioeconomic repercussions of keeping the economy afloat amid trade disruptions.

10. **There are serious project delays and disruptions in the supply chain.** The pandemic resulted in serious problems in project design and operations. There are delays in procurement and the mobilization of consultants and workers, with some potential contract disputes. The dearth in international consultants has widened, with the few who are available leaving the countries or not able to return because of travel restrictions.

11. **The delays notwithstanding, the short-term responses have been quick and flexible as long-term responses are put in place.** Medical supplies, health facilities, and support for micro, small and medium enterprises were made available to countries. Governments and ADB are negotiating for rescheduling of payments and project targets. There is an urgent need to further boost the capacity of executing

Poll 1: What's the first thing that comes to mind when you hear "new normal" in projects and operations



and implementing agencies, local consultants, and resident missions. Projects need to be realistic and designed to integrate resilience and workers' health and welfare as indispensable elements. The new normal calls for reinvigorated coordination across agencies and across countries, as we cannot deal with the pandemic in silos.

12. The pandemic's scale and impact calls for a decisive shift from a sectoral approach to a thematic approach.

The pandemic is not a public health crisis but a crisis of service delivery. Strategy 2030 recognizes that development challenges have become more complex than they have ever been. The strategy casts aside the traditional siloed approach to addressing constraints and instead tackles them in an integrated way and as part of broader themes. Part of the strategy is operational priority 6, which is about improving service delivery by mainstreaming governance and institutional capacity across sectors. Successful transition to a thematic approach and better integration of knowledge and innovation into projects are challenging but becoming more important than before.

13. The crisis necessitates a strategic choice of soft and hard projects, short-term and long-term response.

Expenditure allocation for hard projects such as infrastructure and soft projects such as health and social protection will need to be reviewed in the context of resilience and sustainability. In other words, it will be a path toward health and environmental survival as well as economic and infrastructure survival. What the pandemic means in project design and implementation is how soft projects such as education and hard projects such as roads can complement each other. More concretely, how can roads help schoolchildren in remote areas go to school, and how can buildings be designed to comply with social distancing norms and health and safety protocols.

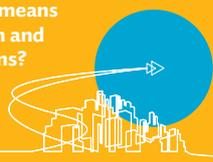
14. Technology will propel our actions and decisions.

Adapting to the new normal requires analytical capacity. Projects will use technology increasingly to help in the collection and processing of information. Big data, localized solutions in areas during the lockdown, virtual meetings and project missions have become part of the new normal.

Let's talk about #RiseBeyondCovid

ADB has committed \$11.2 billion in grants, technical assistance, loans, and private sector assistance to help its developing members as they address the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic (ADB, Sep 2020).

Rising to the challenge of COVID-19 means speed and flexibility in project design and implementation. What are our options?



Our work toward a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive recovery stands on a foundation of mutual trust formed over decades of cooperation with you, our members. Building on these relationships, we will continue to strengthen ADB's support (ADB President M. Asakawa, Sep 2020).

Learn from project frontliners and emerging practice in navigating the 'New Normal'.



Dhamar Adhibawono: Good session to understand more on how is ADB perspective on projects during this challenging time. I hope I will get more understanding how the upcoming sessions can relate to disaster mitigation so that all development efforts will not be evaporated by disasters.. #RiseBeyondCovid

Manu K K: COVID has took each one of us to a new dimension of managing the projects and inventing the so-called 'New Normal' in our own ways. Today I attended the first session and it was very interesting to understand and learn the various challenges and solutions from across the Globe. I am definitely sure that this would help me and my team to perform better during the pandemic. Thanking ADB for this wonderful opportunity.

Manu K K: In the beginning days, the most challenging activity during COVID was the communication management through ICT which later got normalised. Then it was obviously to keep up the mental health of the team. Now we have opened offices and back to normal operations, at present, we are tackling to operate at minimum available resources to ensure COVID protocols.

Kim Chung Vu: The Covid 19 is much more devastating that it seemed. Most of us are suffering, more or less. The projects are suspended, delayed; the consultants lose opportunities, the expected benefits are hold back. Yes, we've got to go on in the new normal situation. From the presentation and explanation from the Expert panel I do believe things will be adapted and get back on track soon. Thank you all.

SESSION 2

Prioritizing the Safety and Well-being of Project Stakeholders

FACILITATOR

Sharlene Jo-Ann Shillingford-Mckimon, Senior Procurement Specialist, Procurement Division 1 (PPF1), PPF1

PANELS

Jenny Yan Yee Chu, Procurement Specialist, Procurement Division 2 (PPF2), PPF2

Felix Oku, Senior Social Development Specialist (Safeguards), Safeguards Division (SDSS), SDCC

Eduardo P. Banzon, Principal Health Specialist, Health SG SDCC

Koichi Takei, Counsel, Office of the General Counsel (OGC), OGC

Saranga Gajasinghe, Safeguards Officer, Sri Lanka Resident Mission (SLRM), SARD

15. This session presents the guidelines and case examples of promoting safety and protecting the well-being of project stakeholders as well as the challenges in implementing the safety measures.

Evidence and practice show concrete measures for protecting and promoting the health and safety of people.

16. Mask up, hand wash, and practice distancing. Sri Lanka's road project has a public awareness campaign urging people to observe basic health protocols. This is part of the preparations for community meetings about handling complaints through the project's grievance redress mechanism. Also in Sri Lanka, prior to the reopening of construction sites, the government prepared a guide for preventing and managing COVID infections at the work place.

17. Use a risk-based approach in evaluating COVID risks in projects. It is the responsibility of executing agencies to ensure that their projects are safe from biological and environmental

hazards. The measures to mitigate these hazards are included in the health and safety plan, which is part of the environmental safety plan. As a requisite, executing agencies should conduct a workplace risk assessment to determine the presence, severity, and impact of hazards. Use a risk-based approach that rates conditions as low risk, medium risk, and high risk. For example, a project is high risk when workers are in close contact with people, possibly exposed to persons who might be COVID-infected, or use contaminated objects. Each risk rating requires a calibrated risk management action. ADB prepared a guidance document on risk assessment and the risk-based approach.

18. Require COVID infection mitigation and health and safety measures in plans and bid documents. Following country procedures, executing agencies must require bidders in ADB-funded projects to specify measures to prevent infection or manage it at the workplace. In contracts, safety measures must as well be included, although ADB does not require any template—only that the process needs to be followed. There are now COVID-related guidance notes on safeguards and procurement that EAs and IAs can use. There are cost and legal implications in implementing COVID-related health and safety measures, and these need to be carefully considered in the contract. As a precaution, the employer (executing agency) may not always pass on the cost of said measures to the contractor.

19. Use country systems. When preparing health and safety plans and COVID infection mitigation measures, ensure that contractors and bidders follow country requirements. ADB prepared a good practice document that project teams can use when assessing and mitigating the impact of COVID in projects. ADB also provides technical support, training, webinars, and other capacity building measures to help countries adapt.

Sri Lanka: Safety of construction sites in the iRoad 2 program

The lockdown in March 2020 had a sudden and immediate threat to the physical, social and biological environments in the construction sites. As approved by relevant government authorities, a small number of staff maintained site safety and security and attended to any environment-related emergency. Projects such as the Mahaweli Water Security Investment Program (MWSIP) had “emergency response plans” which were developed by the contractors with the help of supervision consultants.

Sri Lanka: Social surveys during the pandemic in iRoad 2 program

Safety measures were included in the contract documents for conducting a social survey in an ADB-supported project. Tablets and other electronic devices were not used in the survey because the respondents were reluctant to respond when they saw the gadgets. No case of infection among the enumerators was reported during or after the survey.

“New Normal” in the field



Photo: cnbc.com



Josaia Koroilavesau
9 days ago

Greetings from Fiji That was a wonderful Day 1! My Name is Josaia and I am a Senior Engineer in the PMU for the Water Authority of Fiji. Our ongoing project is called the Rewa River Water Supply Scheme under the Fiji Urban Water Supply and Waste Water Management Program which is co-financed by the ADB and other MDBs. My main target in attending this Forum is to understand the ADB's considerations in implementing Project Safeguards during this pandemic. This of course is not only for projects that are already in Implementation Phase but also for those that are still in Feasibility Phase under the Program. Even though we currently have zero cases in my country we still need to be prepared. Thank You and We Wish You All the Best!!!

Let's talk about #RiseBeyondCovid #ADBOPs

Rathanak Lim: The most challenging for me during the pandemic, that I still need to go to the field for survey, to keep maintain social distancing and keep myself & equipment Hygiene has become anxious.

Sonil Koul: The biggest issue which was face by us was Uncertainty, Uncertainty of Jobs by Employees, Uncertainty of getting payments from Clients. Most of Consulting organizations have fired what they regarded as Unproductive staff (Unbillable). Now as market is opening, they are facing crunch of staff and interestingly approaching some of those firms they have fired during the earlier phase of Pandemic.

Anoop Markose Mani: Covid-19 as distracted all the business, and normal work life throughout the world. At the same time it is giving business new opportunity to face the challenges. This forum 'SPDI' is one such opportunity. Thank you ADB, the first session was very insightful and provided cues to face this uncertain situation.

Marua Utezhan: Hello. I am from Damu Fund, Kazakhstan. The biggest challenge for me during the pandemic is to adapt to the new normal, which includes wearing a mask and participating in a number of online events, continue studying and communicating online.

SESSION 3

Strengthening Financial Management for Successful Project Outcomes

FACILITATOR

Maria Joao Kaizeler, Senior Financial Management Specialist, Public Financial Management Division (PFFM), PPF

PANELS

Srinivasan Janardanam, Principal Financial Management Specialist, Public Financial Management Division (PFFM), PPF

Ma. Elisa B. Paterno, Principal Financial Management Specialist, Office of the Director General (SEOD), SERD

Matthew Rees, Financial Management Specialist, Papua New Guinea Resident mission (PNRM), PARD

20. This session discusses ADB guidance and good practice on financial management. It also focuses on the challenges brought about by the pandemic and the measures to adapt processes and compliance requirements to the new normal.

Financial due diligence and supervision seek to ensure that funds are used efficiently according to their intended purpose so that project objectives can be attained.

21. The goal of financial due diligence is to help projects and organizations achieve financial sustainability. In project design, financial due diligence (FDD) aims to ensure that (1) projects have adequate financial resources to operate at their intended capacity and expected economic life; (2) EAs and IAs can operate and maintain the project facilities while remaining financially sustainable during the expected economic life of the project. FDD also seeks to strengthen the governance arrangements of the EA/IA. Financial management (FM) is present in the project cycle, from country partnership strategy to evaluation. The scope of FDD during processing includes the assessment of the following: reasonableness and adequacy of the cost estimate and financing plan; project financial viability; EA/IA financial sustainability and governance. During implementation, supervision involves monitoring compliance with agreed financial management arrangements, provision of financial resources, and financial reporting and auditing.

22. Timebound financial management action plans and timebound legal covenants can help strengthen governance and manage risks. At the processing stage, FDD includes the development of a timebound financial management action plan (FMAP), which is done after

identifying potential risks to successful project implementation and operation. Major actions that have deep impact are incorporated as timebound covenants in the legal agreement. Some examples of these major actions are maintaining an appropriate debt to equity ratio or a debt service coverage ratio and appointing senior officers such as a director for finance. Often, technical assistance (TA) grants or loan-financed components are required to strengthen financial management, governance, and sustainability. It is essential that ADB, the borrowing government, including the EA/IA focus on the timely implementation of the FMAP, financial covenants, and the TA or loan-financed components for strengthening financial management and governance.

23. During implementation, financial supervision involves monitoring timely compliance with covenants, FM action plans, submission and review of audited financial statements, and policy dialogue with the borrowing government, EA and IA. Financial supervision facilitates timely implementation of the FMAP, compliance with financial covenants, and financial reporting. Regular monitoring helps identify the occurrence of risks and whether the risk mitigation is effective. In case of delay or non-compliance with the FMAP implementation, covenant provisions, or financial reporting, ADB will seek to achieve compliance through dialogue with the higher management of the EA/IA or with the borrowing government. ADB has an internal performance rating mechanism to assess the financial management risks of all projects in the portfolio, identify projects that need more attention, and assign sufficient resources. The limited mobility and office closures brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic have made it necessary for ADB to develop alternative solutions to continue its operations, including FDD. Risks are elevated due to the declaration of a health emergency, and the dilution of

COVID-19 Considerations

Heightened risks – weaker FM capacity, use of emergency procedures, suspension of checks and balances, travel restrictions, virtual supervision.

Extension of 6 months to all projects for submission of APFS/AEFS/Covenants' opinions.

Tailored approach to FDD

- FMA must be concluded prior to project approval
- Financial analysis and evaluation may be delayed slightly but must be in place to justify the investment.
- Need to gather and preserve original supporting documents.

internal control arrangements in many countries for expediting work. ADB has developed a tailored approach to FDD to be applied flexibly during processing and implementation.

24. Remote due diligence during COVID-19 enables flexibility but comes with heightened risks. Mitigation requires use of modern technology, close and full communication between ADB and the EAs/IAs, and more frequent virtual missions. Remote FDD during processing and implementation requires a more extensive use of technology, such as virtual conferences and electronic copies of documents. This can be relatively easy with existing EAs/IAs with whom there is prior business relationship and trust. However, for new agencies and complex project designs or modalities, this can be quite challenging. As border closures and travel restrictions may persist for another year or longer, we need to leverage the knowledge, relationships, and ability to travel of in-country ADB staff and consultants. Remote FDD is challenging for many reasons. There are technical and practical challenges – quality of internet, access to adequate data, behavior (e.g., trust, fear of being recorded). It is imperative to establish a strong relationship based on mutual trust. Early engagement of financial staff in projects is helpful. Regular, open, and two-way communication between EA/IA, the borrowing government, and ADB needs to be established. The elevated risks due to remote processing should be

managed through more frequent virtual reviews or meetings and supplemented by physical missions and possible remedial actions when the travel restrictions are eventually lifted.

25. In situations of conflict and in small island states, ADB assigns more staff and consultants to partly fill the capacity gap in EAs and IAs. In fragility and conflict-affected situations as well as in small island developing states, financial risks in governance and resource management are often elevated due to limited institutional capacity and qualified and experienced staff. Frequent staff turnover is a reality and replacements are difficult to find. Developing suitable incentives to nurture and retain talent is essential. Though ADB attempts to bridge the shortage of consultants during project implementation, it is not a sustainable solution because consultants leave the project at the end of their contract. Sustainability requires permanent staff in the EAs/IAs who can be trained and take over the functions during operation. ADB has established in-country offices in most such countries to deepen its engagement. ADB needs to assign more experienced staff and consultants for strengthening FDD and effective financial supervision during implementation. More frequent training may be needed for the staff in such situations. Early engagement of FM staff can help identify the risk areas and staff capacity constraints and design a suitable risk mitigation strategy.

CPS – Project design

- Constant engagement Government with ADB – ADB is always available
- Good project design leads to good project outcomes
- Early engagement of FM staff allows better design and more robust FM arrangements
- Sustainability – know the areas of risk
- Staff capacity – work together to build staff knowledge and capability
- Impact of COVID: few consultants / contractors; lockdown; need for longer implementation periods.



Importance of Communication and relationships

Papua New Guinea: Communication and stakeholder engagement in financial management

Successful financial management is underpinned by communication and strong relations between government, EA/IA, and ADB. This includes dialogue with government counterparts to get agreement on how the project will deliver outputs and meet the desired outcomes.

Let's talk about #RiseBeyondCovid

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to disrupt global economic activity, developing Asia's gross domestic product is now expected to contract by 0.7% in 2020. GDP is projected to grow by 6.8% in 2021 (Asian Development Outlook 2020 Update).

What is the implication on project financing and financial management?



Manu K K @iammanukk · Nov 10

Attending Session 3 : Strengthening Financial Management for Successful Project Outcomes at the Forum on Successful Project Design and Implementation by ADB.

[#RiseBeyondCovid](#) [#ADBops](#)



SESSION 4

Achieving Value for Money in Procurement

FACILITATOR

Jesper Pedersen, Principal Procurement Specialist, Office of the Director General (PFOD), PPF

PANELS

Luca Di Mario, Urban Development Specialist, Urban Development and Water division, (SAUW), SARD

Ahmed Murthaza, Director General, Waste Management and Pollution Control at the Ministry of Environment, Maldives

Janyna C. Rhor, Principal Procurement Specialist, Procurement Division 1 (PFP1), PPF

Ryotaro Hayashi, Social Sector Economist, Human and Social Development Division (SAHS), SARD

Dr. Rasika Perera, Project Director, Science and Technology Human Resource Development Project, Sri Lanka

26. This session explores Value for Money (VfM) in procurement using case examples of the merit-point system and other approaches.

Value for Money is an instrument for achieving optimal development outcomes.

27. VfM requires a balance between quality, cost, and other requirements such as safety performance and management capability. Quality is an important consideration in the selection of a contractor. A methodology for ranking and selecting bidders is necessary, based on a balance between quality, cost, and other desired characteristics such as safety performance and quality management capability. It is a combination of qualitative and quantitative criteria. This can be achieved by applying percentage weighting to the evaluation criteria in proportion to their importance to the achievement of contract outcomes. Quality being critical, it is desirable to weight quality higher than price. Where quality is given a high weighting, the borrower needs to ensure that the evaluation criteria and the scoring system are applied as objectively as possible. Risk regarding abuse of discretion and subjectivity must be addressed.

28. There are various VfM models, but the intent is the same: effective, efficient, and economic use of resources.

VfM is the effective, efficient and economic use of resources to obtain optimal development outcomes. It is based on an evaluation of relevant costs and benefits, together with proper assessment of risks, non-price attributes, and whole life-cycle costs. To apply VfM, we look at the procurement objectives and determine what can create VfM: lowest price, long-term costs? Once the procurement objectives are clarified, procurement strategies will need to be designed, including how we approach the markets and how we design the contract. What is crucial is that the market must deliver the solutions.

29. VfM starts at project design and extends beyond end of contract through the life cycle of an asset.

VfM depends on the complexity and risk of the project, which will determine the level of research and analysis to be undertaken in strategic procurement planning (SPP). Each project has its own merits and we need to determine these in order to define the VfM. SPP focuses on the quality of procurement, which fits the purpose of the project. We need to identify why and when to apply quality and cost-based selection in the evaluation of bids. This framework will guide us in choosing suitably experienced quality contractors and minimizing potential subjectivity risks when applying merit-point criteria evaluation or other evaluation criteria such as life cycle costing and total cost of ownership. This is because VfM considers the real total costs to the borrower of the goods, works, or services procured.

30. Conduct market analysis to improve bidding documents and get better response from the market.

High participation/competition from qualified contractors is a key to achieving VfM in procurement. Especially for complex contracts, it is worth spending some time up-front engaging with the market to understand how contractors see the project and the opportunity and what risks they perceive or will not accept. This is very important information to include in the bidding documents, and contracts to ensure that competent firms are not aware and they are not discouraged to bid. This also improves contract sustainability.

Maldives: Market analysis for the Waste Management and Pollution Control in the Ministry of Environment

Maldives conducted a market engagement as part of bidding document preparation. This was crucial in understanding international private sector appetite and risk perception to bid for a complex contract. The project was a DBO or design, build and operate with long-term operation in the remote island of Thilafushi, in a small country context. The government prepared a market sounding brochure that was published on the Ministry of Environment website and sent to potential contractors. The brochure described the key design features of the project, its design elements and scope. Firms were requested to answer several key questions and send any additional information. The feedback from the market was incorporated in the DBO contract and helped to define a more balanced risk allocation. This resulted in interest and good participation from qualified and competent firms.

Maldives: “New Normal” in procurement and project implementation

Because of the pandemic, bid submission was extended to two months. Bid evaluation is ongoing and contract award is expected in Q1 2021. We do not expect the pandemic to substantially affect the contract implementation in a design, build and operate contract. A lot of work in the initial stage of design, which is expected to last up to Q4 2021, can be done remotely. Maldives has also lifted some travel restrictions, although in the project design, we included more time for implementation. This is to account for the possible impact of the pandemic and the application of health and safety measures to limit the spread of infection during project implementation in case the pandemic continues beyond 2021 (we hope not).

Sri Lanka: Merit-point evaluation in the Science and Technology Human Resource Development Project

The biggest challenges in merit-point evaluation were maintaining transparency and a high level of accountability. The preparation of detailed guides on the merit-point evaluation criteria and setting up of an expert panel of evaluations were crucial well before the bid submission deadline. The common merit-point evaluation criteria were prepared for four different faculty buildings in different universities, but some criteria needed to be contextualized, such as flood prone construction site condition. Minimum pass/fail criteria could be included, but too many criteria might result in the disqualification of qualified bidders. The minimum score at each merit-point evaluation sub-criteria also needed to be designed carefully. More effort to attract quality bidders could have been done since there were no international bidders participating in four civil work packages.

Assigning appropriate weight to technical and financial parts would also be crucial for VfM. Initially ADB and the EA planned to set a higher weight on the technical proposal, at least 60%, so that bidders would prepare high quality technical proposals. However, the weights were determined as 25% technical and 75% financial at the final stage. The government committee could not find any basis to approve the originally proposed weight allocation in any existing regulations, guidelines or precedents in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the committee decided to follow the guidelines issued by the Construction Industry Development Authority or CIDA (supervise construction industry) in Sri Lanka. This guideline indicated that technical weight could be up to 25%.

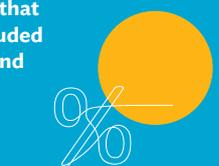
Bidders could be pressured to provide low price bid. This would not be the ideal arrangement in terms of VfM in achieving the objective of constructing landmark faculty building in the university. In the future, it is recommended to check in advance whether the borrower is ready to accept any higher weight on technical evaluation based on the nature of civil works.

Sri Lanka: Challenges in online procurement and contract implementation

The procurement process for awarding civil works contracts was conducted through online meetings. There were challenges in coordinating with various experts regarding the details of some technical proposal. During the implementation of the contract, construction workers came from different parts of the country. The EA had a series of discussions with awarded contractors and advised them to adhere to the guidelines and the regulations issued by the Ministry of Health and CIDA. These protocols included body temperature check, site cleaning, social distancing, zoning of movement, and random PCR tests. The contractors did their best to stick to the original implementation timeline, but certain deviations could not be avoided due to the enforcement of curfew and lockdown in the different parts of the country.

Let's talk about #RiseBeyondCovid

In building infrastructure, value for money is not about lowering cost. It's about building projects that are meant to last. And ensuring that efficiency measures are included in the long-term operation and maintenance cost.



SESSION 5

Rebuilding the Momentum: Project Implementation and Stakeholder Engagement

FACILITATOR

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PANELS

Karma Yangzom, Principal Environment Specialist, Safeguard Division (SDSS), SDCC

Ricardo Carlos Barba, Portfolio, Results and Quality Control Unit, (SAOD-PR), SARD

Steven Schipani, Unit Head, Project Administration, Viet Nam Resident Mission (VRM), SERD

Deepak Bahadur Singh, Senior Environment Officer, Nepal Resident Mission (NRM), SARD

Laxmi Pant, Chief, Safeguard Unit, Project Implementation Directorate, KUKL (Kathmandu Upatyaka Khanepani Limited), Government of Nepal

Manoj Silwal, Deputy Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority, Government of Nepal

Chandan Kumar Ghosh, Project Manager, Kaligandaki Transmission Corridor Project, Project Management Directorate, Nepal Electricity Authority, Government of Nepal

31. This session focuses on mitigating safeguard risks. It also presents interim measures for regaining the momentum in project implementation and maximizing the use of technology for project oversight during the pandemic.

Project implementation is challenging in the face of Covid-19 but there are adaptive ways to rebuild momentum.

32. The new guidelines for social and environmental safeguards for COVID-19 presents a set of risk criteria and a risk-based approach in evaluating risks. During the pandemic, there are no waivers in ADB's safeguards policy, and the commitment to promote and protect the welfare of people and the environment remains as strong. However, in its draft guidance note, ADB proposes various alternative methods and a decision-making tool to determine whether the complexity of risks, ability to apply various mitigation measures, and other considerations would warrant continuing or deferring action.

The criteria are comprehensive and take into consideration the capacity of EAs and IAs. The approach can be used in assessing impact and taking appropriate and timely measures to mitigate the risks.

33. Virtual missions take the place of onsite and in-person meetings. The pandemic poses difficulties in public engagement mechanisms, such as public consultations and grievance redress mechanisms; site visits, field surveys, and compliance monitoring; and public consultations and information disclosure. With the travel restrictions in Vietnam, teams are holding virtual missions, with protocols shared with participants ahead of time, including any template that will be used for gathering information. Virtual missions prove efficient, but they require considerable preparation time. In fact, there is room for improvement in conducting meetings. On data collection, civil society organizations assist in gathering information, especially in communities where the organizations operate.

34. Capacity building among local consultants, EAs and IAs must be intensified as they deal with the impact of COVID containment measures in the field. The pandemic is a shock, but it is at the same time a crisis of learning and fast action. With the travel restrictions, we are relying more on national consultants to perform critical work in the field. We find that projects managed by resident missions respond better and quickly on the ground. Local resources, consultants, and organizations in the project sites are essential partners in project design, implementation, and monitoring. Through them, we are able to gather information, undertake compliance monitoring and quality assurance when staff and international consultants cannot travel due to quarantine restrictions and lockdowns. Actions must be taken to strengthen their capacity. Furthermore, the health and safety of workers and workplaces in the field must be ensured if we are to keep the projects going.

35. Adapting to the new normal should not be ad hoc but systematic and integrated in the current system for resilience and sustainability in projects. Project preparation time has doubled, and so has the cost of using technology and implementing health and safety protocols in projects.

These costs need to be included in planning and resource allocation. Early action to manage disasters is important. With virus containment implemented across the country, travel restrictions, social distancing, and other measures paused some of our project preparation and monitoring activities. But most countries can resume development activities soon after implementing standard operating procedures (SOP) for preventive, detective and curative management. Since authorized agencies have been predicting that the virus may remain for a considerable period of time in the future, we have to adapt to the situation that we call the 'new normal'. We need to apply our learnings and experience as we establish effective and efficient systems and practices that are systemic and not ad hoc.

36. Through adaptive management, we use a combination of technology and compliance with safeguards policy.

Our practices should be resilient and adaptive in a pandemic situation. It is important to ensure a balance between

complying with the safeguards policy and ensuring the safety of everyone in the extraordinary circumstances. Conducting surveys digitally using an Android tablet had been a practice even before the pandemic. Digital methods of data recording and storage are more resilient than on paper-based methods. Similarly, survey and monitoring using 3D cameras, drones, and satellite imageries can minimize the risk of exposure. Use of remote and digital technology will also improve the resiliency in project operations and help continue work according to the required safety protocols.

37. Technology should be flexible, accessible, and culture-sensitive.

Technology brings efficiency and speed. But there are both positive and negative sides to it. There are concerns about data privacy among communities, the behavioral and cultural nuances that cannot be captured on camera, and the fundamental issue of access to technology in many areas. All these need to be managed as we make our projects pandemic-resilient.

Nepal: Challenges in online procurement and contract implementation

In Nepal, the lesson is clear: we do not know how long the pandemic will last, but we must continue with our projects because people rely on us for service delivery. ADB issued standard operating procedures (SOP), which the government customized for its projects and then released the SOP to contractors. There are preventive, detective, and curative measures in the SOP. The Project Implementation Directorate of the Kathmandu Upatyaka Khanepani Limited (PID-KUKL), employer and contractor for water projects, confirms that many of the SOP items are already in the occupational health and safety plan and in the bill of quantities, hence there was no need to consider them as separate items. However, PID added new items with the corresponding cost for the COVID-related insurance of staff and workers, disinfectant, and quarantine or isolation areas. These items were subsequently added as additional work with cost for SOP implementation in the bidding and contract documents of new contract packages.

Nepal: Risk mitigation in an urban water supply and sanitation project

PID intensively worked to mitigate potential risks of Covid-19. They followed the government instructions and ADB requests to continue the work by undertaking safety measures. PID prepared a brief SOP prepared by themselves and distributed to contractors. They also prepared awareness materials on COVID-19 and distributed to all workplaces. They included guidance on the arrangement of handwash, setting up sanitation station in the office, thermal screening, keeping a record of visitors (name and address for tracking).

In the meantime, ADB prepared a sample SOP and helped PID and contractors to prepare site-specific SOP for each contract package along with orientation, based on which the existing procedure was replaced by the improved SOPs. PID jointly discussed on the SOP and related cost implications with the contractors and agreed to reimburse the cost for the items not covered under the occupational health and safety plan of the project. PID formed a Covid-19 committee to give a special focus on the implementation of SOP. implementing the SOP.

PID conducted a series of actions during the lockdown period including field monitoring to ensure if the SOP was being implemented by the contractors and prepared daily status report to PID and recommended if any corrective actions needed to be taken.

Nepal: Kaligandaki Transmission Line Corridor Project

The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) of the SASEC Power Sector Expansion Project (SPSEP) used a systematic approach in resuming work in a limited scale during the lockdown imposed by the government. The project faced human resource and materials shortage. There were also problems in the monitoring and verification of plant and equipment to be procured from foreign manufacturing companies due to travel restrictions. To navigate these difficulties, PIU undertook the following actions:

- (i) Obtained government and local administration transit passes for the staff, workers, and vehicles of the project and the contractors
- (ii) Prepared an SOP and implemented it, and submitted a copy to the district administration offices for their information
- (iii) Allowed workers and staff that tested negative in rapid diagnostic tests to travel within the district
- (iv) Mobilized local consultants to conduct virtual monitoring of the project and clearance for supply materials

In India and Bangladesh, project teams use handheld devices and mobile phones to gather field data for rapid assessment, and they use videoconferencing for field visits.



Your project is high-risk if workers are in close contact with people who might be COVID-infected, or use contaminated objects. Set up measures to monitor, prevent, and protect frontliners.

Start by updating your safeguard management plans.



Let's talk about #RiseBeyondCovid

Anoop Markose Mani: Challenge being faced due to COVID is the difficulty in timely completion and achievement of set targets. Difficulty due to lack of personnel for the completion of work. Technology training to be provided to all for free

During the present times, we organize meeting online / collect-call. If at all the meeting is to be conducted face-face, prior timing and advance arrangement are made, and meeting space is arranged to keep ample distance between the participants.

Sheila Mae Almasa: To address current pandemic, we started observing Health Protocols while traveling and engaging with our Project Stakeholders...

SESSION 6

Initial Good Practices for the Project Frontliners

FACILITATOR

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PANELS

Pavit Ramachandran, Country Director, Mongolia Resident Mission (MNRM), EARD

Jeff Taylor, Director, Procurement Division 1 (PFP1), PPF

Rehan Kausar, Director, Portfolio Management Division (PFPM), PPF

Aman Trana, Director, Public Financial Management Division (PFFM), PPF

Thomas E. Abell, Advisor, SDCC and Chief of Digital Technology for Development, Digital Technology for Development Unit (ADCC-DT), SDCC

38. This session synthesizes the learnings from previous sessions and draws key take-aways about rising to the challenge of the pandemic and beyond.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Dialogue and sustained engagement, especially during the pandemic, can turn an immobilizing crisis to an effective response. This is true with quick action in procurement and financial management, as well as in the long-term response of governments in planning resilient programs such as in social protection. Dialogue is particularly crucial in times of crisis. It enables us to act very quickly through, for example, a disaster response facility.
- Resident missions are becoming even more effective in client engagement. They have the advantage of having direct access to clients.

- Donor coordination is critical during a crisis. By working with the UN system and international financial institutions, we improve the response and support for countries; minimize transaction costs; use information systems, build on them, and make them readily available.

NATIONAL SYSTEMS AND LOCALIZED APPROACH

- Use existing systems: a crisis is not the time to redesign. We use the current social protection system, for example, in channeling resources for food stamps. Doing so enables us to mobilize support very quickly.
- Use adaptive and flexible design and implementation. Setting up an emergency response and financing quickly during the pandemic is possible because we work across teams. In procurement, this means simplifying procurement post-review and evaluation of bids, encouraging national bidders and joint ventures to participate, and working closely with counterparts in the ministries of finance.
- COVID-19 is not only a public health crisis; it is a crisis in service delivery in the public sector. As we navigate the crisis, we find that localized and differentiated solutions and existing country systems work best, and this invariably requires working with development partners so that we can do better in our country partnerships.
- A project owned and managed by a country using a localized approach, including in project management and procurement, demonstrates capability to continue operation during the pandemic. To support countries, ADB procurement is decentralized. Procurement staff work directly with EAs to work through their procurement issues.

Poll 2: In a scale of 1-3 with 3 the highest, what is your confidence level in adapting to the new normal

People believe that they learned lessons and now have some experience to carry them forward in adapting to the new normal.

Rate your confidence adapting to the New Normal at work

Low
1

2.4

High
3

PROCUREMENT AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- In procurement and financial management—and with supply chains affected by the pandemic—we need to balance flexibility in making the goods and services available and ensuring that we spend public funds well.
- It is important to look at loan savings early and or cancel them because the funds can be repurposed for COVID-19 related interventions or be reused for adding additional outputs to the project. In some cases, this may mean cancellation of a contract.
- Our timely and accurate financial and portfolio reporting is critical in helping us make strategic decisions and better resource planning during the pandemic. Our market assessment in SPP, for example, can help us scan the environment for broader participation among national bidders, expedite processes, and work with executing and implementing agencies as well as resident missions in mitigating risks.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Strengthening institutional capacity should include not just executing and implementing agencies, but the entire government bureaucracy. Capacity building is a multidimensional approach of working within the broader accountability mechanisms in the country: audit, controller, ministry of finance, public accounts committees, public sector division, procurement, accounting, recording, budgeting.
- Targeted or differentiated approach becomes far more important than before given the local conditions and requirements in countries. Dialogues and stakeholder engagement are again key to understanding local realities.

TECHNOLOGY

- Where there are limitations in conducting field surveys, there are satellite imagery and online databases that can show, for example, where the pockets of poverty are. In access to finance, there are eCommerce and eBanking. To enable these, we need to invest in digital infrastructure, such as cables and satellite facilities; develop policies that will improve the regulatory framework, foster competition, and allow more players—particularly private sector groups—in the technology market.
- Digital reforms have to improve access for the poor, through online banking and digital IDs, for example. ADB needs to help countries invest in technology and address the digital divide. The pandemic is compelling us to do so.
- The private sector has a niche in technical expertise and mature processes, and governments stand to benefit in a partnership with this sector. In technology, the challenge is in bringing in the technology vendor into a public project. Many technology companies are looking to expand their operations and work with governments, but the regulatory framework must be in place to foster a competitive business environment.

VULNERABLE GROUPS

- Small, micro and medium enterprises have minimal access to government programs. There are intermediation loans that are now available to them to augment their working capital and cash flow. The challenge is providing assistance to the informal sector as they are not qualified in a formal banking system. This is an issue before COVID and carries over beyond COVID-19.

Poll 3: How can we use information and communications technology to make the delivery of public services better and faster?

How can we use information and communications technology to make the delivery of public services better and faster?



We have to adapt to the new normal. But which of the new normal will you keep beyond?

- Build procurement in project design
- One ADB team approach where you have everyone part of the team at the beginning, upfront, mitigate risks, especially in financial management to make meaningful recommendations
- Have financial management in every team from the beginning
- Pragmatism and flexibility
- Stop calling this the new normal; this is normal now
- The whole world has to get better in working through digital tools. Make things robust, more people will be working remotely. This is not only for the new normal, it is going to continue beyond
- Invest more in health projects, make sure that projects are more resilient.
- Virtual missions but nothing compares with face-to-face dialogues

Our work toward a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive recovery stands on a foundation of mutual trust formed over decades of cooperation with you, our members. Building on these relationships, we will continue to strengthen ADB's support (ADB President M. Asakawa, Sep 2020).

Learn from project frontliners and emerging practice in navigating the 'New Normal'.

Responding quickly and effectively during the crisis is a question of what is needed now and what is imperative beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

How can we use ICT to enhance the way we engage with stakeholders and make the delivery of public services better and faster?



Let's talk about #RiseBeyondCovid

Sheila Mae Almasa: This Forum had provide insights, knowledge and ideas that are practical and must be considered in addressing the New Normal especially in the Project Design and Implementation. This knowledge sharing activity/event provided a brighter perspective, hope and confidence to the Project Holders and Implementing Agencies. I appreciated this opportunity since it ignite certain sense of passion to continue achieving and believing that successful Project Implementation is attainable and that are necessary to rise beyond this Covid Pandemic and its impact to our lives, our communities and the World. #RiseBeyondCovid.

D. Closing Session

Closing Remarks

Deborah Stokes, Vice President for Administration and Corporate Management

I wish to thank all you for your participation in this important program. We appreciate that in this extraordinary year, our partners have faced huge challenges in delivering development programs on the ground. We appreciate the extraordinary efforts you have been making.

We also appreciate the pressures on your time and commend you for making time available this week for learning and sharing, as valued members of the ADB community.

This is the first time we've done this forum in a completely virtual environment. While we have greatly missed the usual opportunities for face-to-face interaction, the virtual format has enabled a much larger number of project front-liners and development practitioners to participate. I hope the experience has been both rewarding and encouraging.

The insights from your discussions this week will be crucial in our common efforts to rise to the challenge of COVID-19 and beyond.

Under our Strategy 2030, we are committed to strengthening governance and institutional capacity of our developing member countries. That translates to effective, timely, and transparent delivery of better services, and thus improving the lives of people, especially the poor and vulnerable.

With the pandemic halting or reversing progress in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals, regaining momentum in our development operations is extremely urgent. Millions of people rely on our collective capacity to deliver services in health, transport, education, agriculture, and other sectors. The backbone of this urgent action is our joint capacity to design and implement impactful development projects.

As you have heard, ADB has been active this year in supporting our members in their COVID-19 response. And in the year ahead, the international community including ADB and our Developing Member Countries will have a major focus on the rapid and equitable distribution of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines.

As resources and investments are allocated for pandemic response and recovery, and vaccine roll-out, policy planners and project front-liners need to be more prepared than ever to adhere to the highest standards of transparency and governance in procurement, financial management, safeguards, monitoring and evaluation.

2021 will be an important year in terms of navigating the new normal. We look forward to further sharing of knowledge and experience with you in our continuous engagement and in this forum in the year ahead.

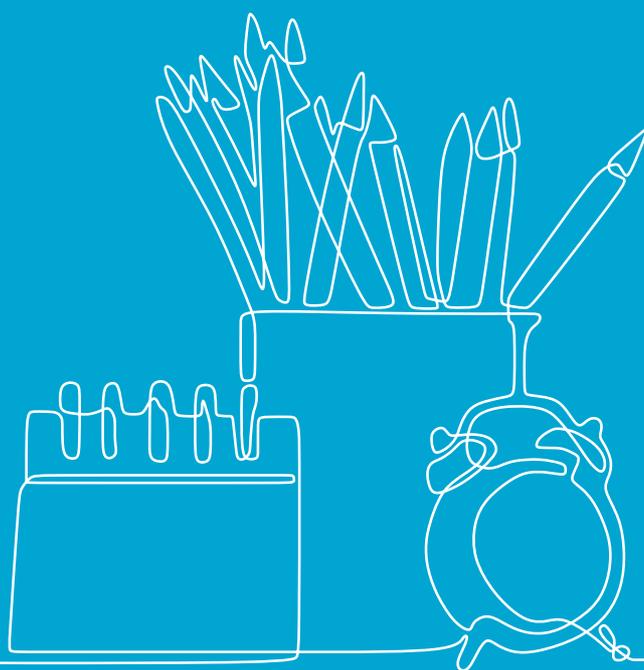
Congratulations once again, stay safe, and thank you for being part of #RiseBeyondCovid.



“As resources and investments are allocated for pandemic response and recovery, and vaccine roll-out, policy planners and project front-liners need to be more prepared than ever to adhere to the highest standards of transparency and governance in procurement, financial management, safeguards, monitoring and evaluation.”

Deborah Stokes, Vice President for Administration and Corporate Management

Annexes



ANNEX 1

Agenda

FORUM ON SUCCESSFUL PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Rising to the Challenge of COVID-19 and Beyond

 GMT +8 MANILA LOCAL TIME	Day 1 Tuesday, 10 November	Day 2 Wednesday, 11 November	Day 3 Thursday, 12 November
OPENING 10–10:10 a.m.	OPENING SESSION		
	INTRODUCTORY REMARKS Rehan Kausar Director Procurement, Portfolio and Financial Management Department, ADB		
	WELCOME REMARKS Risa Zhijia Teng Director General Procurement, Portfolio and Financial Management Department, ADB		
10:10–10:20 a.m.	KEYNOTE ADDRESS Masatsugu Asakawa President Asian Development Bank		
MORNING SESSION 10:30 a.m.–12 noon	SESSION 1 Adapting to the New Normal	SESSION 3 Strengthening Financial Management for Successful Project Outcomes	SESSION 5 Rebuilding the Momentum: Project Implementation and Stakeholder Engagement
12 noon–2:30 p.m.	FREE-TIME PARTICIPANT NETWORKING		
AFTERNOON SESSION 2:30–4 p.m.	SESSION 2 Prioritizing the Safety and Well-being of Project Stakeholders	SESSION 4 Achieving Value for Money in Procurement	SESSION 6 Initial Good Practice for Project Frontliners CLOSING REMARKS Deborah Stokes ADB Vice President for Administration and Corporate Management

ANNEX 2

COVID-19 related guidance notes

- **Guidance Note on COVID-19 and Transport in Asia and the Pacific:**
<https://www.adb.org/documents/guidance-note-covid-19-transport-asia-pacific>
- **Livable Cities: Post-COVID-19 New Normal:**
<https://www.adb.org/documents/guidance-note-livable-cities-post-covid-19>
- **COVID-19 Specific Guidance on Consulting Services:**
[COVID-related guidance notes on safeguards and procurement](#)
- **Safeguard Policy Statement:**
<https://www.adb.org/documents/safeguard-policy-statement?ref=site/safeguards/main>
- **Protecting the Safety and Well-Being of Workers and Communities from COVID-19:**
<https://www.adb.org/publications/safety-well-being-workers-communities-covid-19>

ANNEX 3

Learning & Networking Award Top 26 Let's #RiseBeyond COVID Game

1	Israel Nunez	Philippines	14	Paul Emanuel Reyes	Philippines
2	Davit Getsadze	Georgia	15	Sophanna Chan	Cambodia
3	Jay Pee Maalihan	Philippines	16	Zarex Robas	Singapore
4	Bibiano Garay	Philippines	17	Romar Dagupan	Philippines
5	Rezwan Sayed	Bangladesh	18	Dennis Montana	Philippines
6	Zafer Ozkan	Turkey	19	Mehri Davlesova	Kyrgyzstan
7	Phoungun Phommaha	Laos	20	Vanessa Nicopior	Philippines
8	Lourdes Risa Yapchiongco	Philippines	21	Jeremiah Joseph de Castro	Philippines
9	Stephanie Vaiimene	Cook Islands	22	Khaing Khaing Soe	Myanmar
10	Filbert Ian Tan	Philippines	23	Diyora Khasanova	Uzbekistan
11	Jun Cheng	China	24	Khin Myo Naing	Myanmar
12	Bolorchimeg Bold	Mongolia	25	Kaimalie Kino	Tuvalu
13	Manu K K	India	26	Lkhagvatseren Bishuugaram	Mongolia

David Getsadze • 3rd+
Acting Director of Technical Secretariat at Roads Department of Georgia
6d • Edited • 🌐

#Risebeyondcovid 🎉🎉🎉🎉🎉 Thanks to #asiandevelopmentbank #ADBops for this Opportunity!!!

Congratulations to the Winners of our Let'sRiseBeyondCOVID Game!

The Top 3 winners will be invited to the next in-person (not virtual) Forum on Successful Project Design and Implementation.

Name	Score
Israel Nunez	94
Davit Getsadze	84
Jay Pee Maalihan	77
Bibiano Garay	74
Rezwan Sayed	72
Zafer Ozkan	63
Phoungun PHOMMAHA	63
Lourdes Risa Yapchiongco	63
Stephanie Vaiimene	63
Filbert Ian Tan	61

7 • 4 Comments