

Implementation of the UN Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries:

Overview of ADB Efforts and the Way Forward

A. Introduction

1. **Landlocked countries among ADB's developing member countries.** According to the United Nations criteria,¹ there are 12 ADB developing member countries (DMCs) that are landlocked developing countries (LLDCs).² LLDCs face special difficulties in economic growth due to high transport costs which impede their trade. They have to route their merchandise through longer routes passing through neighboring transit and coastal countries.

2. **ADB's strategic direction for regional cooperation and integration in support of LLDCs.** ADB's support for LLDCs has been integrated into its regional cooperation and integration (RCI) related strategies which promote economic cooperation among ADB's DMCs through subregional programs such as the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program (CAREC), the Greater Mekong Subregional Program (GMS), and the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Program (SASEC) for which ADB serves as the secretariat and key financier. In 2006, ADB adopted its RCI Strategy.³ In 2008, ADB adopted Strategy 2020 which identified RCI as a strategic agenda and core area of operations. ADB's Strategy 2030 adopted in July 2018 continues to highlight RCI as one of the seven operational priorities for ADB's operations.⁴ In 2019, ADB approved the Strategy 2030 Operational Plan for RCI, which focuses ADB's support in three pillars: (i) greater and higher-quality connectivity between economies; (ii) expanded global and regional trade and investment opportunities; and (iii) increased and diversified regional public goods.⁵

B. ADB Support for LLDCs 2019-2021

3. **ADB's overall RCI lending and grants.** Figure 1 presents an overall picture of RCI lending and grants (volume of commitments) in ADB DMCs over the period of 2019-2021. There was a significant jump in 2020 as ADB provided large-scale assistance under the COVID-19 Pandemic Response Option (CPRO). Loans and grants under CPRO made up nearly 60% of total RCI commitments in 2020. In 2021, overall RCI lending and grants returned to historical trends, although commitments remained above pre-pandemic levels as ADB continued to finance pandemic relief operations. Roughly 45% of the RCI commitments in 2021 supported the \$9-billion Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility (APVAX) announced in December 2020 to enable swift and equitable access to vaccines. Around 3% of the RCI commitments were under CPRO.

4. Figure 2 presents the sectoral composition of RCI loans and grants committed in 2019–2021. There was a marked diversification in the overall project portfolio compared to previous

¹ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. List of land-locked developing countries. <http://unctad.org/en/pages/aldc/Landlocked%20Developing%20Countries/List-of-land-locked-developing-countries.aspx>

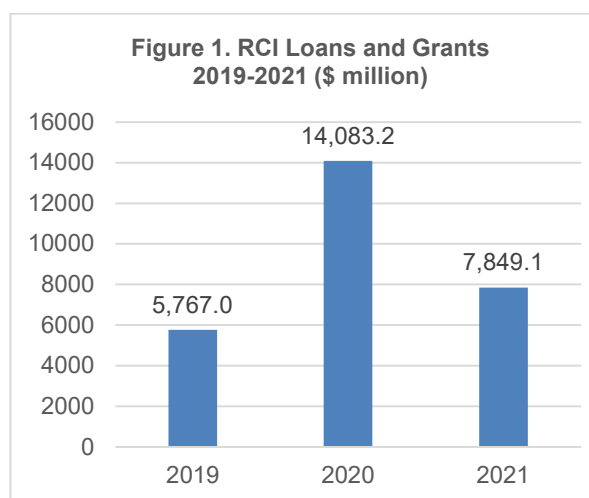
² They are: Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

³ ADB's RCI Strategy has four pillars: (i) cross-border infrastructure (both hard and soft), (ii) trade and investment, (iii) monetary and financial cooperation, and (iv) regional public goods. ADB. 2006. *Regional Cooperation and Integration Strategy*. Manila.

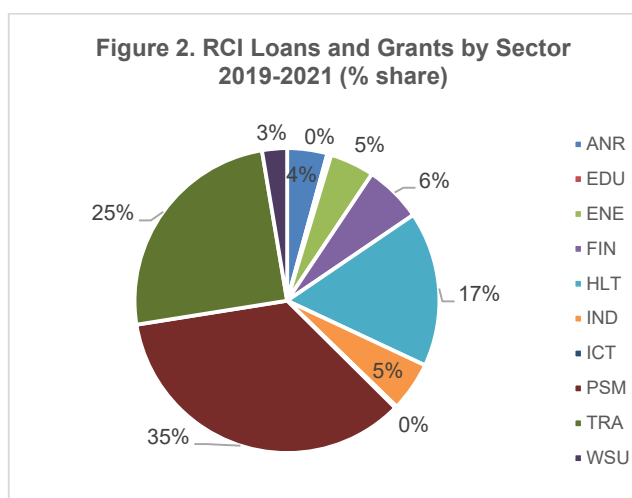
⁴ ADB. 2018. *Strategy 2030: Achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Asia and the Pacific*. Manila.

⁵ ADB. 2019. *Strategy 2030 Operational Plan for Priority 7: Fostering Regional Cooperation and Integration, 2019–2024*. Manila.

years, largely driven by the COVID-19 response packages. As a result, Public Sector Management (PSM) accounted for the lion's share of commitments at 35% of the total. The transport sector, which has been the traditional priority area for regional cooperation, accounted for the second largest share at about 25%. Health was the third largest sector at 17%. Due to APVAX, there was a significant expansion in the health sector's share of total RCI loans and grants from less than a percent in 2019 to 47% in 2021. ADB's also provided much-needed assistance to the private sector in DMCs, especially SMEs, by supporting international trade through direct investments in businesses and indirectly through policy-based lending.



Source: ADB RCI Thematic Group, based on data from ADB Strategy, Policy, and Review Department

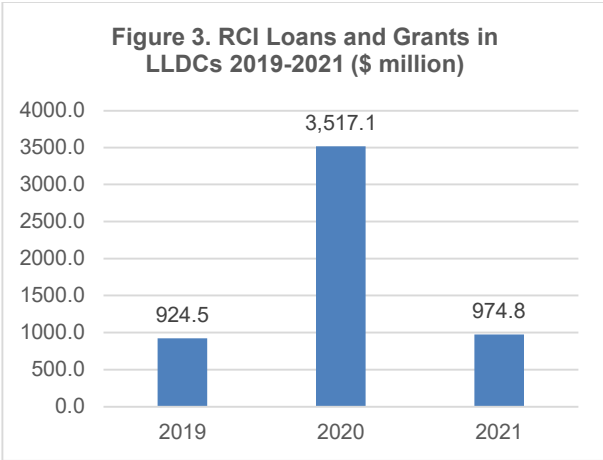


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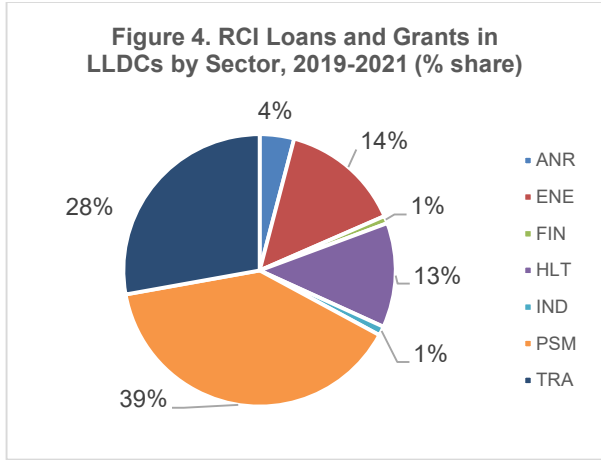
Based on commitments in 2019-2021. Reference to ADB sector/thematic areas: ANR = agriculture, natural resources and rural development, EDU = education, ENE = energy, FIN = finance, HLT = Health, ICT = information and communication technology, IND = industry and trade, PSM = public sector management, RCI = regional cooperation and integration, TRA = transport, WWSU = water and other urban infrastructure and services.

5. RCI is an important element in the ADB-assisted COVID-10 response programs. ADB focused specific RCI operations on strengthening policy dialogue, regional health surveillance and information sharing, and regional provision of vaccines and medical supplies. It invested in RCI projects to keep borders open; provide trade and supply chain finance; and protect vulnerable groups such as SMEs, border area residents, and migrants. ADB also helped apply World Health Organization standards in relation to cross-border health protocols.

6. **ADB's RCI lending and grant support for LLDCs.** Figure 3 shows ADB's lending and grant support for LLDCs in 2019-2021. Over the period, ADB committed \$5.42 billion worth of loans and grants to LLDCs, accounting for 20% of ADB's overall RCI support in the same period. Figure 4 shows the sectoral distribution of ADB's support to LLDCs. Almost 67% of this lending volume was provided to the PSM and transport sectors (39% and 28% respectively). The rest of the RCI lending and grants for LLDCs were for energy (14%), health (13%), agriculture, natural resources and rural development (4%), industry and trade (1%), and finance (1%).



Source: ADB RCI Thematic Group, based on data from ADB Strategy, Policy, and Review Department

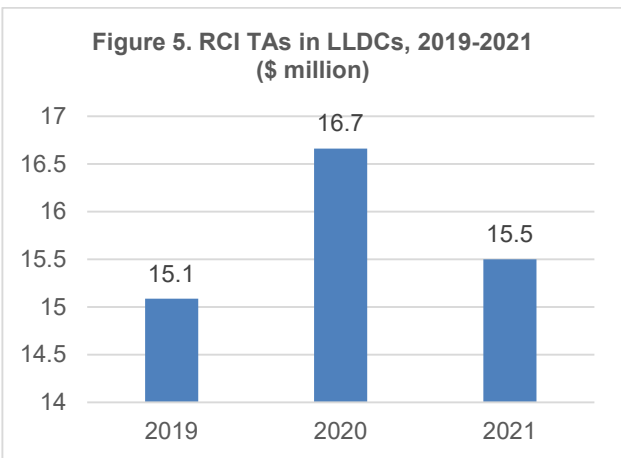


Source: ADB RCI Thematic Group, based on data from ADB Strategy, Policy, and Review Department

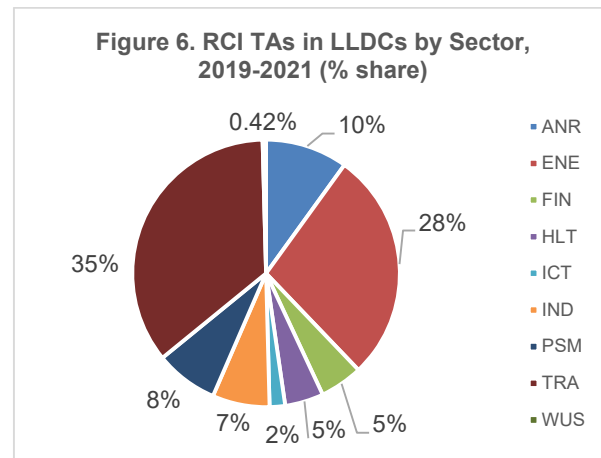
Based on commitments in 2019-2021. Reference to ADB sector/thematic areas: ANR = agriculture, natural resources and rural development, EDU = education, ENE = energy, FIN = finance, HLT = Health, ICT = information and communication technology, IND = industry and trade, PSM = public sector management, RCI = regional cooperation and integration, TRA = transport, WUS = water and other urban infrastructure and services.

7. The pattern of RCI lending and grant support for LLDCs in 2021, which totaled at \$975 million, largely mirrored that of overall RCI support that year, with the bulk of financing going to pandemic response (29% for APVAX and 26% for CPRO, for a total of 55%). The PSM and health sectors accounted for 34% and 29% of RCI project volume for LLDCs in 2021. By region, LLDCs in Central and West Asia accounted for 75% of RCI project support in 2021, followed by South Asia with 23%, and East Asia with 2% (See Appendix 1).

8. **ADB’s RCI-related technical assistance for LLDCs.** Substantial RCI technical assistance (TA) was also provided to LLDCs, amounting to \$47.2 million in 2019-2021. TA commitment amounts remained stable over the last three years, with a slight uptick in 2020 (Figure 5). Figure 6 shows that transport accounted for the bulk (35%) of this amount, followed by energy (28%), agriculture (10%), PSM (8%), industry and trade (7%), finance (5%), health (5%), information and communication technology (2%), and water and other urban infrastructure and services ([WUS] 0.42%).



Source: ADB RCI Thematic Group, based on data from ADB Strategy, Policy, and Review Department



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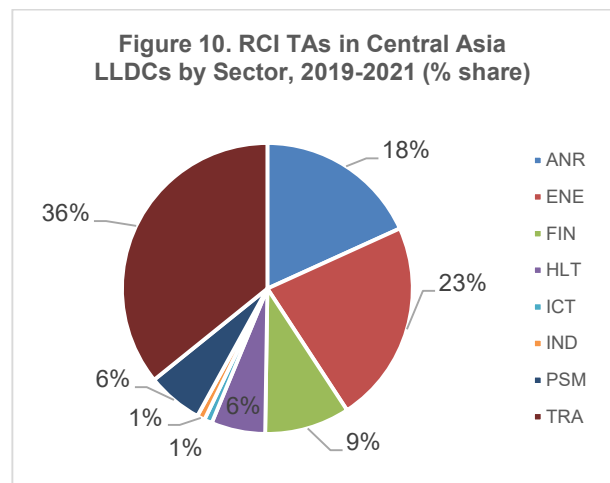
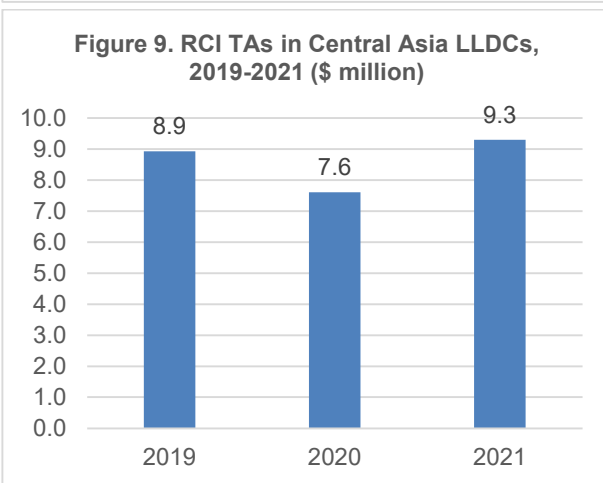
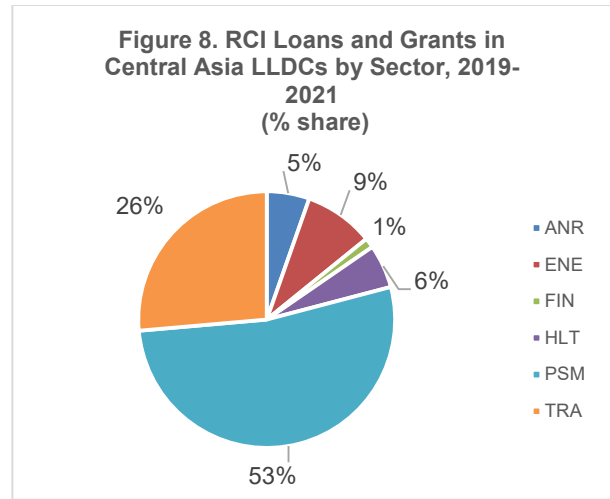
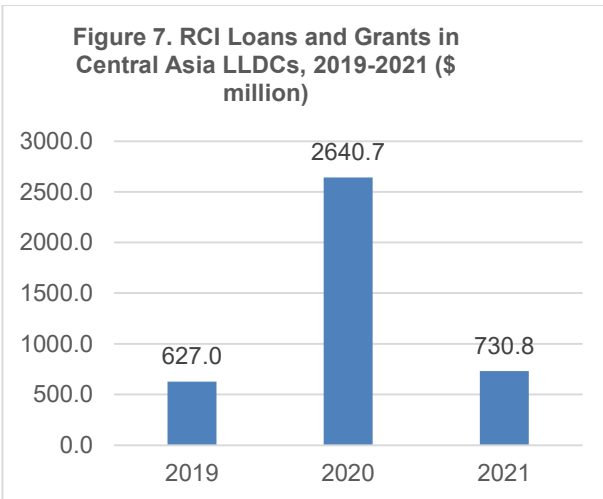
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9. **ADB support to LLDCs in Central and West Asia.** ADB has been providing significant support for LLDCs in different parts of Asia and the Pacific. The scaling-up of ADB's support for LLDCs has been particularly demonstrated in Central and West Asia where 8 out of 12 ADB's LLDC member countries are located. The CAREC Program, which includes 7 of ADB's Central and West Asia LLDCs and Mongolia in East Asia,⁶ has made special efforts in turning those landlocked nations into land-linked economies. This vision has been clearly built into the CAREC Program's long-term strategic framework, or the CAREC 2030, which was adopted in October 2017 with a new mission statement "A Regional Cooperation Platform to Connect People, Policies, and Projects for Shared and Sustainable Development".⁷ It broadens the CAREC agenda into five operational clusters: (i) economic and financial stability; (ii) trade, tourism, and economic corridors; (iii) infrastructure and economic connectivity; (iv) agriculture and water; and (v) human development. Following a series of sector strategies renewed or formulated, in 2021, CAREC endorsed two key strategies to further promote regional cooperation for mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, reviving economic growth, and setting the path for post-pandemic recovery in the region. These include (i) the CAREC Health Strategy 2030, and (ii) CAREC Digital Strategy 2030.

10. RCI loans and grants committed to LLDCs in Central and West Asia was just shy of \$4 billion in 2019-2021 (Figure 7), accounting for 74% of ADB's total RCI lending to LLDCs in the same period. The sectoral distribution is shown in Figure 8. Out of the nearly \$4 billion, about 53% went to PSM; 26% to transport; and 9% to energy. The increase in the share of lending in the PSM sector was largely driven by the COVID-19 response packages. Other sectors accounting for the remaining amount include health (6%), agriculture (5%), and finance (1%). Meanwhile, RCI-related TA provided to Central Asia LLDCs in the same period amounted to \$26 million or 55% of ADB's total RCI TA support to LLDCs (Figure 9). In the case of TAs, the transport and energy sectors accounted for the majority shares—36% and 23% respectively, followed by agriculture (18%), finance (9%), PSM (6%), health (6%), and ICT and industry and trade with about 1% each (Figure 10).

⁶ These are: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Mongolia is the only CAREC LLDC that is not in Central Asia. Armenia is not a member of CAREC.

⁷ ADB. 2017. CAREC 2030: Connecting the Region for Shared and Sustainable development. Manila.



Source: ADB RCI Thematic Group, based on data from ADB Strategy, Policy, and Review Department

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Based on commitments in 2019-2021. Reference to ADB sector/thematic areas: ANR = agriculture, natural resources and rural development, EDU = education, ENE = energy, FIN = finance, HLT = Health, ICT = information and communication technology, IND = industry and trade, PSM = public sector management, RCI = regional cooperation and integration, TRA = transport, WUS = water and other urban infrastructure and services.

11. Key examples of ADB support to the Central and West Asia LLDCs, the bulk of which was provided under the CAREC Program, include the following:

- (i) As of 31 December 2021, a total of \$100 million from APVAX have been provided to Central and West Asia LLDCs to help the governments mitigate the health, social, and economic impacts of the pandemic (Appendix 1).
- (ii) ADB organized high-level policy dialogues on economic and financial policies for CAREC countries to mitigate COVID-19 impact for economic growth. A CAREC High-Level Policy Dialogue on Financial Stability was held virtually in July 2021, to discuss government policy responses to challenges on financial inclusion particularly for the poor and for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises; the use of fintech and innovation; and the role of regional cooperation platforms in promoting financial inclusion among CAREC countries to mitigate the impact of the

COVID pandemic. A CAREC High-Level Policy Dialogue on Social Spending to Tackle Rising post-COVID-19 inequality was also held virtually in November 2021, to discuss social spending measures in the context of the broader COVID-19 response and macroeconomic policies.

- (iii) Through investment projects, policy dialogues and tailored capacity building, ADB has strengthened efforts to promote trade (including cross-border trade) for CAREC countries to mitigate COVID-19 impact. In September 2021, the CAREC Trade Week: Enhancing Cooperation in Digital Trade was organized at the sidelines of the Customs Cooperation Committee and Regional Trade Group meetings. In April 2021, the CAREC SPS Measures Week: Facilitating Safe and Sustainable Trade in the CAREC Region; and in May to September 2021, regional workshops to explore the potential of regional free trade agreement were organized. Trade knowledge-sharing modules on regional improvement of border services, national single windows, and sanitary and phytosanitary measures were developed jointly with CAREC Institute.
- (iv) ADB adopted the CAREC Health Strategy 2030 in 2021, to support regional cooperation in addressing common health threats and challenges and safeguarding regional health security for CAREC LLDCs and other countries in the region. These will be achieved through supporting and/or promoting (i) leadership and human resource capacity; (ii) technical preparedness on laboratories and surveillance; (iii) surge demands and access to supplies; and (iv) vulnerable population groups and border health.
- (v) ADB has initiated regional cooperation for CAREC LLDCs and other CAREC countries in the water sector, through completing a scoping study with a framework for water sector cooperation proposed to respond to growing demand for water at a time of increasing climate related uncertainty.
- (vi) ADB strengthened the implementation of the CAREC Transport Strategy 2030 and Energy Strategy 2030 in 2021, to enhance infrastructure and economic connectivity in CAREC LLDCs by improving road safety and logistics services, and railway sector development; as well as to promote energy trade between Central Asia and South Asia. These include two railway line electrification projects in CAREC Corridor 2 in Uzbekistan: the Pap-Namangan-Andijan and the Bukhara-Miskin-Urgench-Khiva railway sections, and a series of capacity building activities such as road safety engineering manuals, and a new e-learning course on safer road works, as well as the conduct of the first CAREC-wide Energy Efficiency Awareness Campaign and the initiation of a concept for a new regional green financing vehicle.
- (vii) ADB continues supporting CAREC LLDCs in strengthening institutional systems to operationalize international food safety standards, including harmonizing domestic legislation and regulations with international norms including the development of a new Food Safety Law, national action plans, hygiene, microbiological and chemical hazard regulations, inspection checklists and risk categorization.
- (viii) As cross-cutting themes, ADB continues supporting CAREC LLDCs and other CAREC countries in 2021 in implementing the CAREC Gender Strategy 2030 through processing a TA to promote gender equality in the CAREC region. The CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 was also endorsed in 2021, to provide a vision, road map, and catalyst for digital transformation through regional cooperation. Activities include developing a virtual startup ecosystem hub to improve connectivity between CAREC related agencies and capacities to participate in virtual events and workstreams.

- (ix) The CAREC Tourism Strategy 2030 continues to support capacity building and skills development of CAREC LLDCs. Implementation of the Strategy follows a phased approach. During the initial phase (2021–2023), regional interventions will focus on domestic and intraregional tourism. The CAREC tourism virtual portal is currently under development.
- (x) ADB is also implementing a regional TA that promotes health cooperation among CAREC LLDCs and Armenia. Following the formulation of the CAREC Health Strategy 2030, a CAREC health investment framework (2022-2026) will be formulated to guide future CAREC investment in the health sector, as well as piloting digital health projects in selected CAREC countries. In 2021, ADB continues implementing a TA that supports Armenia’s regional cooperation through developing economic corridor in Western Caucasus to enhance trade and competitiveness in Armenia. ADB has also processed a TA “South Caucasus Gateway” to support Armenia in developing a regional cooperation approach to maximize the benefits of economic cooperation in the South Caucasus leveraging the region’s geostrategic importance offered by the 2020 Armenia-Azerbaijan Ceasefire Statement.

12. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the necessity of regional cooperation and importance of strengthening resilience to risks arising from cross-border movement of goods and people. Trade continues to be a driver for achieving the sustainable development goals and CAREC countries’ post-pandemic recovery. CAREC member countries continue to exchange information and experience with respect to trade measures implemented amid the COVID-19 pandemic with the objective of facilitating safe trade.⁸ Under the CAREC Integrated Trade Agenda 2030 and its strategic action plan for 2021-2023, investments and technical support are progressing in terms of: (i) accession to World Trade Organization by Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; (ii) regional improvement of border services for Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, and Tajikistan; (iii) upgrade of sanitary and phytosanitary measures in Georgia, Mongolia, and Uzbekistan; a pilot initiative in the Fergana Valley for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan; and PRC-led knowledge-training on foot-and-mouth disease free zone status for Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan; (v) research and capacity-building to promote paperless trade and cross-border e-commerce among CAREC countries including accession to and/or implementation of the *UN Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts*; the *WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement*, and the *UN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific*; and (vi) dissemination of the CAREC Corridor Performance Measurement and Monitoring (CPMM) reports to address connectivity and trade bottleneck issues. Key knowledge work with policy recommendations published in 2021 are: (i) a policy brief on Expanding Agri-Trade in Central Asia through the Use of Electronic Certificates; (ii) E-Commerce in CAREC Countries: Laws and Policies; (iii) Developing the Services Sector for Economic Diversification in CAREC Countries; and CPMM Annual Report 2020. The E-Commerce in CAREC Countries: Infrastructure Development was also published in March 2022.

13. **ADB support to LLDCs in other subregions.** In **South Asia** for the period 2019-2021, ADB provided \$811 million to Nepal for six projects, with three for power grid strengthening for cross-border power trade (\$416 million), two for aviation reforms and airport capacity enhancement (\$200 million) and one for improved road connectivity (\$195 million). Under ADB’s COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support (CARES) Program, Nepal availed of a total

⁸ CAREC Secretariat. 2021. CAREC Trade Sector Progress Report and Work Plan (June 2020 – September 2021). See https://www.carecprogram.org/uploads/CAREC_Trade_Week_CAREC_Trade_Sector_Report_Sep_2021_20210927_EN.pdf

of \$271.21 million for 15 projects in 2020-2021, with the largest going into COVID-19 expenditure support (\$250 million)⁹, COVID-19 emergency response (\$3 million)¹⁰ and the rest for trade finance, supply chain and other development support. Also under CARES, Bhutan availed of \$54.02 million for 13 projects for the same period, with the bulk for promoting financial inclusion (\$30 million)¹¹ and COVID expenditure support (\$20 million)¹² and emergency response (\$2 million). Under the APVAX facility, ADB committed \$165 million in 2021 for Nepal's COVID vaccine deployment. Since 2019, ADB provided a total of \$11.3 million in seven regional technical assistance (TA) grants to Nepal, to prepare road and aviation and power transmission projects, support Customs/ logistics reforms and support sustainable development efforts. Bhutan received \$4.1 million in regional TA grants to support aviation development and support cottage/ small industries. Bhutan and Nepal are part of 12 multi-country regional TA grants for South Asian countries worth \$32.01 million, which support strengthening development cooperation in the areas of transport, energy, trade facilitation, climate/ disaster resilience, and post-COVID recovery.

14. In **Southeast Asia**, ADB provided \$20 million in grants and loans in 2020 to the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) to support regional health security. The financing supported the Government of the Lao PDR's National Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19, which aims to mitigate the impact of possible large-scale community transmission and improve pandemic preparedness. In addition, ADB is supporting Lao PDR in COVID-19 response through technical assistance projects focused on supporting COVID-19 vaccination program and strengthening Lao PDR's participation in regional health cooperation in the Greater Mekong Subregion and community-led and civil society responses to COVID-19.

15. In **East Asia**, ADB committed \$19 million in loans to Mongolia under APVAX to support the country's vaccination program. In addition, ADB continues to work proactively to ensure that Mongolia derives tangible benefits from its participation in the CAREC program and other regional cooperation initiatives. Under ADB's new Country Partnership Strategy for Mongolia (2021–2024), ADB will promote climate-resilient infrastructure to drive competitiveness and diversification, improving border efficiency and developing economic corridors. This will be complemented by TA to strengthen economic and trade policies to boost exports and foreign direct investment and link with efforts to strengthen the business-enabling environment. As of 31 December 2021, ADB's lending to Mongolia in support of regional cooperation (or RCI-tagged effective January 2021) includes 16 active projects totaling \$666.5 million, mainly for developing transport corridors, border crossing points, and logistics facilities, modernizing customs and sanitary and phytosanitary measures systems, developing economic cooperation zones, and promoting sustainable tourism. ADB is supporting a bilateral agreement signed in June 2019 by Mongolia and the PRC to develop an economic cooperation zone along CAREC Corridor 4. The \$30 million Developing the Economic Cooperation Zone Project for Mongolia, approved in June 2020, will develop the physical infrastructure, operationalize the Zamyn-Uud free zone, and support seamless transit to and from the neighboring Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region of the PRC. It will create a port of entry system which will use information technology solutions to promote trade while ensuring border security, social safety, and improved traceability to mitigate

⁹ Covers (i) health support (testing, incentive to health workers), (ii) social protection (food and employment assistance), and (iii) economic support (concessional loans to MSMEs).

¹⁰ For procurement of essential PPE and medical equipment.

¹¹ Includes promotion of financial inclusion, through support for inclusive green finance and financial technology for digital inclusion, resulting in enhanced access to finance and greater efficiency of financial intermediation for marginalized groups.

¹² Involves three broad approaches: (i) social relief, (ii) fiscal and monetary measures, and (iii) targeted interventions. Examples: (i) provision of gender focused loans with 3-month deferred payments, concessional micro-loans to cottage/ small industry; and (ii) economic assistance to target groups (age, gender, disability).

transboundary health risks.¹³ ADB's work is highly-relevant and well-aligned to support Mongolia's New Revival Policy adopted by the Parliament in December 2021: which covers (i) recovery of operations of border posts; energy recovery; (iii) industrial recovery; (iv) urban and rural recovery; (v) recovery through green development; and (vi) recovery of public productivity.

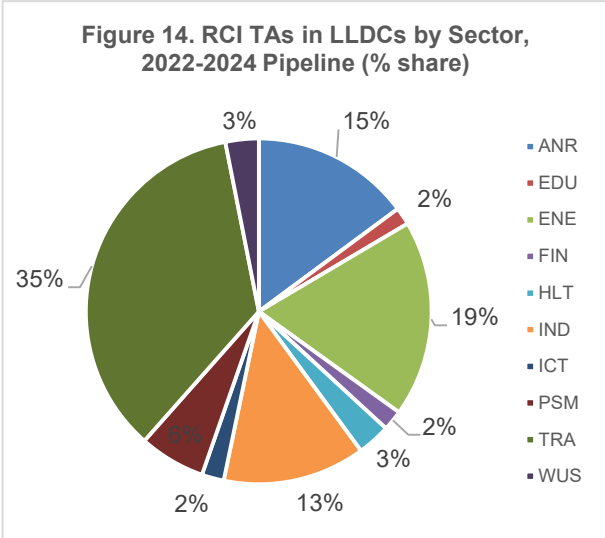
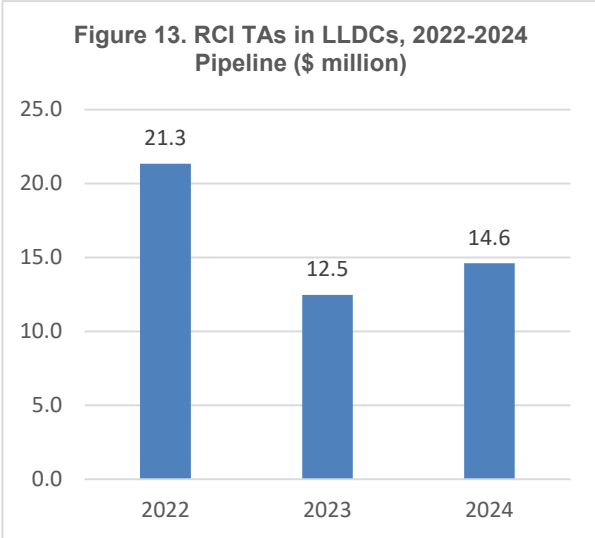
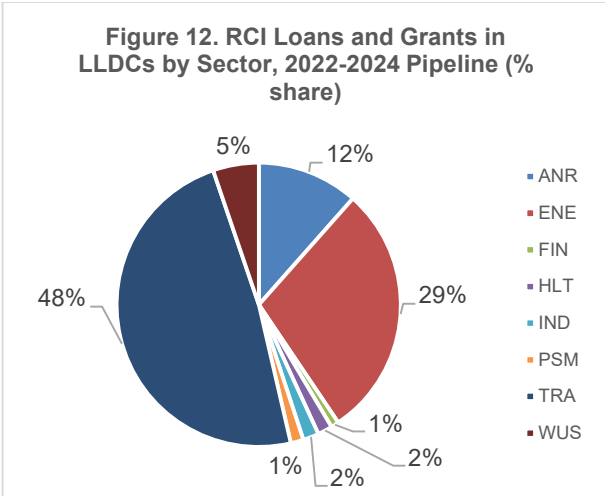
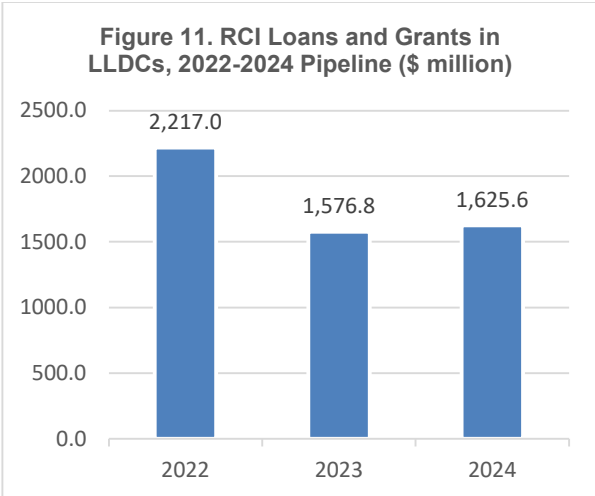
C. Way Forward

16. ADB's DMCs are confronted by a host of new challenges under the changing development landscape in the region. As Asia and the Pacific begins to recover, regional cooperation will play a critical role in rebuilding smartly to inclusive, resilient, and sustainable economic recovery. For LLDCs, regional cooperation can help keep the hardest-hit sectors (such as trade, tourism, and health) functioning, while preparing for a full recovery during post-pandemic time. To help LLDCs meet these challenges will require continued support from international development agencies, including ADB.

17. **ADB's planned support to LLDCs over 2022-2024.** Approximately \$5.4 billion worth of RCI loans and grants have been identified in the indicative pipeline for LLDCs for years 2022–2024 (Figure 11; see Appendix 2 for the full pipeline). With support for pandemic response expected to wind down in the next three years, the more traditional transport and energy sectors will account for the bulk of projects, with shares of 48% and 29% of total RCI project financing to LLDCs, respectively. Agriculture will account for the third largest share, with 12% of the total. The remainder would be for WUS (5%), industry and trade and health, with roughly 2% each, and PSM and finance, with some 1% each. The change in shares compared to 2019-2021 is starkest in the case of PSM and health (Figure 12).

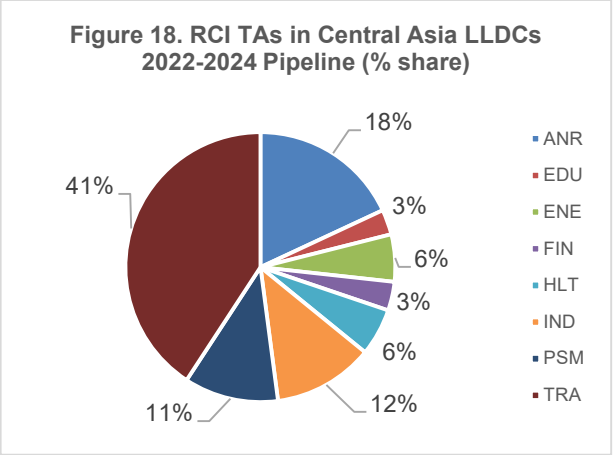
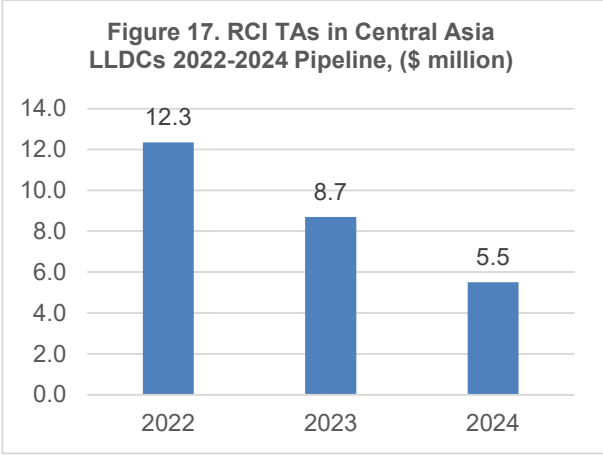
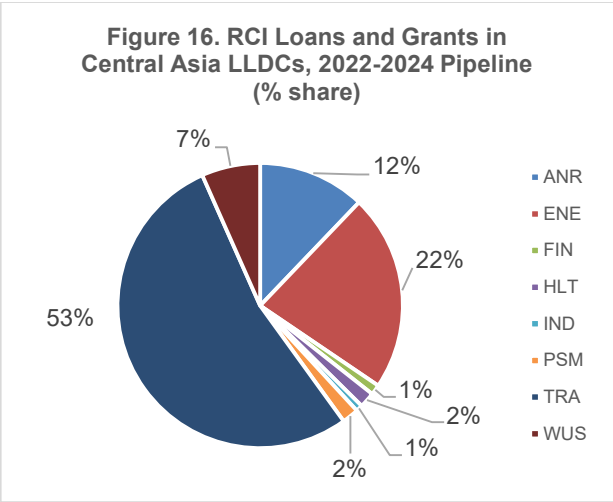
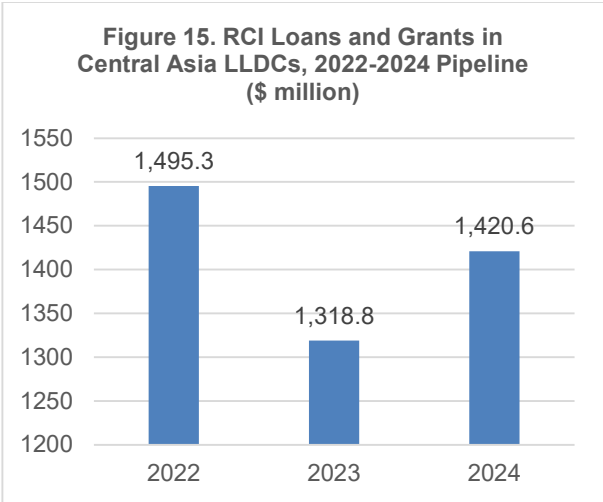
18. Meanwhile, some \$48 million worth of TA support is included in the indicative RCI TA pipeline for LLDCs in 2022-2024 (Figure 13). Although the transport and energy sectors also account for the lion's share of the TA pipeline (35% and 19% respectively), the distribution of TA support is noticeably more diversified and balanced than the investment project pipeline. Agriculture accounts for the third biggest share with 15%, followed by industry and trade (13%), health (3%), and finance, ICT and WUS with 2% each (Figure 14).

¹³ It comprises the development of (i) a passenger and vehicle inspection system that uses digital surveillance and facial biometric recognition; and (ii) an integrated border management database. The database will promote interagency coordination by linking the Customs Automated Information System of Mongolian Customs General Administration with the Inspection Management System of the General Agency of Specialized Inspection and the Immigration System, which is a joint platform shared between the General Authority of Border Protection and the Mongolia Immigration Agency.



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19. RCI pipeline for Central and West Asia LLDCs. The indicative RCI project pipeline for Central Asia LLDCs amounts to \$4.2 billion, accounting for 78% of the total pipeline for LLDCs. This is broadly in line with actual spending and shares in 2019-2021 (Figure 15). Transport accounts for more than half of the indicative amount (53%), followed by energy with 22%, and agriculture with 12% (Figure 16). Meanwhile, the indicative RCI TA pipeline for Central and West Asia LLDCs amounts to \$26.5%, with their share of the total for LLDCs holding steady at 55% (Figure 17). The top three sectors are transport with 41%, agriculture with 18%, and industry and trade with 12% (Figure 18).



Reference to ADB sector/thematic areas: ANR = agriculture, natural resources and rural development, EDU = education, ENE = energy, FIN = finance, HLT = Health, ICT = information and communication technology, IND = industry and trade, PSM = public sector management, RCI = regional cooperation and integration, TRA = transport, WUS = water and other urban infrastructure and services.

20. **RCI pipeline for LLDCs in other subregions.** In South Asia, for 2022-2024, ADB's firm RCI pipeline for Bhutan include support for SASEC Air Connectivity (\$38 million), the shift to renewable energy (\$33 million), and the National Single Window/SASEC Customs Modernization and Trade Facilitation Program (\$15 million). The 2022-2024 project pipeline for Nepal meanwhile, amounts to roughly \$1 billion to support energy (\$594 million), transport (\$300 million), agriculture (\$60 million), and industry and trade (50 million).

21. For the period 2022-2024, ADB has lined up RCI TA for Bhutan worth about \$4.5 million; to promote green energy development, air connectivity, and trade facilitation and customs modernization. For Nepal, ADB will provide RCI TA worth about \$5.8 million. The TA program for Nepal will support green power and transmission development, customs and logistics reform, and road corridor and air connectivity.

22. In Southeast Asia, planned lending and grants for Lao PDR in 2022-2024 will support agriculture, specifically cross-border livestock health and value chains improvement (\$49.5 million), improvements in the Northern Greater Mekong Subregion Transport Network (\$30 million), and healthy borders in special economic zones (\$15 million). One firm TA worth 800,000

will support Phase 2 of Preparing for the Second Northern Greater Mekong Subregion Transport Network Improvement Project.

23. Finally, in East Asia, firm projects for Mongolia in 2022-2024 include \$150 million for the Bogdkhan Railway Bypass Investment Program; \$121 million Regional Road Development and Maintenance Phase 4; \$102.2 for the Aimag and Soum Centers Green and Resilient Regional Development Investment Program; and \$32 million for the Resilient and Integrated Border Services for Safe and Fast Trade. Firm TAs amounting to \$11 million will support transport (\$2.5 million), agriculture (\$2.4 million), energy (\$2.4 million) WUS (\$1.5 million), and ICT (\$ 1 million).

Appendix 1. RCI Loans and Projects in LLDCs, 2021

DMC	Region	Project Name	Commitment Amount (\$ million)	Primary Sector (project-level)
AFG	Central and West Asia	COVID-19 Vaccine Support Project under the Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility	50	Health
AZE	Central and West Asia	COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program	250	Public sector management
AZE	Central and West Asia	Avrora COVID-19 Staple Food Supply Chain Support Project	5.9	Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development
KGZ	Central and West Asia	COVID-19 Vaccine Support Project under the Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility	12.5	Health
KGZ	Central and West Asia	COVID-19 Vaccine Support Project under the Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility	12.5	Health
KGZ	Central and West Asia	Promoting Economic Diversification Program (Subprogram 2)	10.7	Public sector management
KGZ	Central and West Asia	Promoting Economic Diversification Program (Subprogram 2)	69.3	Public sector management
TAJ	Central and West Asia	COVID-19 Vaccine Support Project under the Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility	25	Health
UZB	Central and West Asia	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Corridor 2 (Bukhara-Miskin-Urgench-Khiva) Railway Electrification Project	162	Transport
UZB	Central and West Asia	Korzinka COVID-19 Supply Chain Support Project	12	Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development
UZB	Central and West Asia	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Corridor 2 (Pap-Namangan-Andijan) Railway Electrification Project – Additional Financing	121	Transport
MON	East Asia	Support for COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery in Mongolia under the Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility	9.5	Health
MON	East Asia	Support for COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery in Mongolia under the Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility	9.5	Health
NEP	South Asia	Responsive COVID-19 Vaccines for Recovery Project under the Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility	165	Health
NEP	South Asia	Electricity Grid Modernization Project – Additional Financing	60	Energy

Appendix 2. RCI Loans and Projects in LLDCs, 2022-2024 Pipeline

Commitment Year	Region	DMC	Project Name	Commitment Amount (\$ million)	Sector
2022	Central and West Asia	AFG	COVID-19 Vaccine Support Project under the Asia Pacific Vaccine Access Facility, Phase 2	20	Health
2022	Central and West Asia	AFG	CAREC Corridors 5 and 6 (Kabul–Jalalabad) Road and Border Services Improvement Project	65.7	Transport
2022	Central and West Asia	UZB	Surkhandarya Regional Road Project	197.1	Transport
2022	Central and West Asia	AFG	Turkmenistan Afghanistan Pakistan and India (TAPI) Gas Pipeline Project (Phase 1)	105	Energy
2022	Central and West Asia	TKM	Turkmenistan Afghanistan Pakistan and India (TAPI) Gas Pipeline Project (Phase 1)	500	Energy
2022	Central and West Asia	TKM	Turkmenistan Afghanistan Pakistan and India (TAPI) Gas Pipeline Project (Phase 1)	300	Energy
2022	Central and West Asia	TAJ	Resilient Livelihoods, Agriculture Value Chain, and Security for Rural Women in Khatlon	17.5	Agriculture Natural Resources and Rural Development
2022	Central and West Asia	TAJ	Road Network Sustainability Project (Additional Financing)	35	Transport
2022	Central and West Asia	ARM	Health System Transformation Project (RBL)	35	Health
2022	Central and West Asia	KGZ	Strengthening Diagnostic and Reference Laboratory Capacity Project	20	Health
2022	Central and West Asia	KAZ	CAREC Corridors 1, 2, and 6 Connector Road (Kyzylorda-Zhezkazgan) Reconstruction Project	200	Transport
2023	Central and West Asia	UZB	Integrated Urban Development Project	100	Water and Other Urban Infrastructure and Services
2023	Central and West Asia	AFG	Climate Resilient Livestock Value Chain Enhancement Sector Project	65	Agriculture Natural Resources and Rural Development
2023	Central and West Asia	AFG	CAREC Corridor 5 (Kabul-Kandahar Road Project)	95	Transport
2023	Central and West Asia	AFG	Horticulture Value Chain Sector Development (Additional Financing)	50.7	Agriculture Natural Resources and Rural Development
2023	Central and West Asia	TKM	CAREC Corridors 2, 3 and 6 (Ashgabat–Dushak) Railway Modernization Project	300	Transport
2023	Central and West Asia	AFG	Energy Sector Development Program	40	Energy

Commitment Year	Region	DMC	Project Name	Commitment Amount (\$ million)	Sector
2023	Central and West Asia	TAJ	Business Environment Improvement through e-Governance Program, Subprogram I, PBL	30	Public Sector Management
2023	Central and West Asia	KGZ	Road Network Climate and Disaster Resilience Improvement Project	50	Transport
2023	Central and West Asia	KGZ	Almaty-Bishkek Economic Corridor: Modern Agriculture Wholesale Market Development Project	81	Agriculture Natural Resources and Rural Development
2023	Central and West Asia	KGZ	Almaty-Bishkek Economic Corridor: Border Crossing Point Modernization Project	18	Transport
2023	Central and West Asia	AZE	Railway Sector Development Program (Additional Financing)	100	Transport
2023	Central and West Asia	KGZ	Promoting the Economic Diversification Program (subprogram 3)	50	Public Sector Management
2023	Central and West Asia	KAZ	Livestock Value Chain Development Project	100	Agriculture Natural Resources and Rural Development
2024	Central and West Asia	UZB	Animal Health Improvement Project	120	Agriculture Natural Resources and Rural Development
2024	Central and West Asia	UZB	Guzar-Bukhara-Nukus-Beyneu Road Reconstruction Project (581-673 km and 673-698 km sections)	244	Transport
2024	Central and West Asia	TKM	Supporting SME Exporters Project (Phase 2)	50	Finance
2024	Central and West Asia	AFG	Samangan Section Standalone Project	80	Transport
2024	Central and West Asia	TAJ	Tourism Development Multisector Project	45	Water and Other Urban Infrastructure and Services
2024	Central and West Asia	KGZ	Disaster Risk Reduction Program	11.72	Agriculture Natural Resources and Rural Development
2024	Central and West Asia	KGZ	Disaster Risk Reduction Program	11.72	Agriculture Natural Resources and Rural Development
2024	Central and West Asia	ARM	Regional Economic Corridor Improvement Project	100	Transport
2024	Central and West Asia	KGZ	Issyk-Kul Lake Environmental Management for Sustainable Tourism Development Project (formerly Issyk-Kul Wastewater Management Project)	35	Water and Other Urban Infrastructure and Services
2024	Central and West Asia	KAZ	Turkistan-Saryagash Road Project	350	Transport

Commitment Year	Region	DMC	Project Name	Commitment Amount (\$ million)	Sector
2023	East Asia	MON	Agriculture and Rural Development Project Phase 2	57.1	Agriculture Natural Resources and Rural Development
2023	East Asia	MON	Regional Road Development and Maintenance Phase 3	150	Transport
2023	East Asia	MON	Resilient and Integrated Border Services for Safe and Fast Trade	32	Industry and Trade
2024	East Asia	MON	Aimag and Soum Centers Green and Resilient Regional Development Investment Program (MFF, Tranche 2)	102.2	Water and Other Urban Infrastructure and Services
2024	East Asia	MON	Regional Road Development and Maintenance Phase 4	121	Transport
2024	East Asia	MON	Bogdkhan Railway Bypass Investment Program	150	Transport
2022	South Asia	NEP	SASEC Customs and Logistics Reforms Program	50	Industry and Trade
2022	South Asia	NEP	Nuts and Fruits in Hilly Areas	60	Agriculture Natural Resources and Rural Development
2022	South Asia	NEP	Dudh Koshi Hydropower Project	514	Energy
2022	South Asia	BHU	Renewable Energy for Climate Resilience Project	33.231	Energy
2023	South Asia	NEP	South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Highway Enhancement Project (Laukahi-Kakadvitta)	140	Transport
2023	South Asia	NEP	Power Transmission Strengthening Project	80	Energy
2023	South Asia	BHU	SASEC Air Connectivity Project	38	Transport
2024	South Asia	NEP	Second SASEC Highway Enhancement Project (Narayanghat–Pathlaiya, Mugling–Abukhaireni)	80	Transport
2024	South Asia	NEP	Tribhuvan International Airport Capacity Expansion Project (International Terminal Building)	80	Transport
2024	South Asia	BHU	National Single Window/SASEC Customs Modernization and Trade Facilitation Program	15	Industry and Trade
2022	Southeast Asia	LAO	Greater Mekong Subregion Cross-Border Livestock Health and Value Chains Improvement Project	49.5	Agriculture Natural Resources and Rural Development
2022	Southeast Asia	LAO	Greater Mekong Subregion Healthy Border in Special Economic Zones Project	15	Health
2024	Southeast Asia	LAO	Second Northern Greater Mekong Subregion Transport Network Improvement Project (phase 2)	30	Transport