



# Technical Assistance Report

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Project Number: 48431-004  
Transaction Technical Assistance (TRTA)  
November 2019

## Myanmar: Support for Enhancing Education and Skills Base in Myanmar

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Asian Development Bank

## CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(as of 15 October 2019)

Currency unit	–	kyat (MK)
MK1.00	=	\$0.000653
\$1.00	=	MK1,532.00
€1.00	=	\$1.1025
\$1.00	=	€0.907029

## ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	–	Asian Development Bank
CPD	–	continuing professional development
EYE	–	Equipping Youth for Employment Project
EU	–	European Union
INGO	–	international nongovernment organization
MOE	–	Ministry of Education
SY	–	school year
TA	–	technical assistance
TVET	–	technical and vocational education and training

## NOTES

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

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## TRANSACTION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AT A GLANCE

<b>1. Basic Data</b>		<b>Project Number:</b> 48431-004	
<b>Project Name</b>	Support for Enhancing Education and Skills Base in Myanmar	<b>Department/Division</b>	SERD/SEHS
<b>Nature of Activity</b>	Project Preparation, Capacity Development	<b>Executing Agency</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>Modality</b>	Regular		
<b>Country</b>	Republic of the Union of Myanmar		
<b>2. Sector</b>	<b>Subsector(s)</b>	<b>ADB Financing (\$ million)</b>	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>3. Operational Priorities</b>		<b>Climate Change Information</b>	
✓ Addressing remaining poverty and reducing inequalities		Climate Change impact on the Project	Low
✓ Accelerating progress in gender equality			
✓ Strengthening governance and institutional capacity			
<b>Sustainable Development Goals</b>		<b>Gender Equity and Mainstreaming</b>	
SDG 1.1		Gender Equity (GEN)	✓
SDG 4.4, 4.c			
SDG 5.b			
SDG 8.6			
SDG 10.2			
<b>4. Risk Categorization</b> Complex		<b>Poverty Targeting</b>	
		General Intervention on Poverty	✓
<b>5. Safeguard Categorization</b> Safeguard Policy Statement does not apply			
<b>6. Financing</b>			
<b>Modality and Sources</b>		<b>Amount (\$ million)</b>	
<b>ADB</b>		<b>0.00</b>	
None		0.00	
<b>Cofinancing</b>		<b>26.00</b>	
European Union (Full ADB Administration)		26.00	
<b>Counterpart</b>		<b>0.00</b>	
None		0.00	
<b>Total</b>		<b>26.00</b>	
<b>Currency of ADB Financing:</b> US Dollar			

## I. THE ONGOING PROJECT

1. Since 2012, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has engaged with the Government of Myanmar to help formulate and implement education reforms, particularly in secondary education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET). The Equipping Youth for Employment Project (EYE)—the first ADB loan for Myanmar’s education sector—aims to strengthen the country’s education and skills base and promote inclusive growth and job creation.<sup>1</sup> The EYE supports reforms to realign secondary education and TVET to Myanmar’s evolving workforce needs. These reforms are vital to equip youth with skills for employment in a modern economy and meet employers’ skill demands. The project’s impact will be education and skills base for inclusive growth enhanced, and its outcome will be secondary education subsector and TVET realigned to evolving labor force needs and equitably expanded. The EYE has three outputs: (i) policy frameworks and capacities for cohesive, workforce-responsive secondary education subsector and TVET enhanced; (ii) new secondary education subsector curriculum delivered and access expanded; and (iii) new TVET programs introduced and access expanded. The project’s total cost is \$105.0 million, with \$98.5 million financed by a loan from ADB.<sup>2</sup>

2. ADB and the European Union (EU) have been closely collaborating with the Ministry of Education (MOE) and other development partners to design and implement education reforms, focusing strategically on secondary education and TVET.<sup>3</sup> In 2019, the EU and the Government of Myanmar signed the financing agreement for Education Sector Reform Contract with grant financing of up to €221 million, including budget support of €175 million for secondary education and TVET reforms and complementary measures.<sup>4</sup> The proposed transaction technical assistance (TA) will support a subset of the complementary measures. Enhancing ongoing ADB (EYE) and EU support, the EU will finance the proposed TA in the amount of €24 million (\$26.0 million equivalent) and ADB will administer it. The TA will support continued reforms to better align secondary education and TVET to Myanmar’s evolving skill demands. The TA aligns with ADB’s Myanmar country partnership strategy, 2017-2021, that focuses on strengthening human capital to promote a skilled workforce and increased employment, and enable the poor and disadvantaged to benefit from economic growth.<sup>5</sup> It also aligns with ADB’s Strategy 2030 and will help address remaining poverty and reducing inequalities by improving education and training (operational priority 1) and accelerate progress in gender equality (operational priority 2).<sup>6</sup>

## II. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

### A. Justification

3. Weak human capital poses a critical obstacle to Myanmar’s development, threatening to trap the economy in a low value-added model based on cheap, unskilled labor and natural

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<sup>1</sup> ADB. [Myanmar: Equipping Youth for Employment Project](#).

<sup>2</sup> As of 30 September 2019, cumulative contract awards reached \$20.9 and disbursements reached \$13.3 million. The project is rated an actual problem as of September 2019 because of startup delays. Implementation progress has improved, and thus project rating is expected to improve in 2020 after the midterm review.

<sup>3</sup> Development partner support for education in Myanmar is concentrated in primary education, while ADB and EU provide the main international support for secondary education and TVET.

<sup>4</sup> European Commission. International Cooperation and Development. [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/annual-action-programme-2018-part-1-favour-myanmarburma\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/annual-action-programme-2018-part-1-favour-myanmarburma_en).

<sup>5</sup> ADB. 2017. *Country Partnership Strategy: Myanmar, 2017-2021—Building the Foundations for Inclusive Growth*. Manila.

<sup>6</sup> ADB. 2018. *Strategy 2030: Achieving a Prosperous, Inclusive, Resilient, and Sustainable Asia and the Pacific*. Manila.

resource exploitation, while obstructing national poverty reduction and inclusive growth goals.<sup>7</sup> Many young entrants to the workforce lack skills needed for employment in a modern economy.<sup>8</sup> Employers consistently cite weak human capital as a leading constraint on business.<sup>9</sup> Secondary education and TVET are central to this human capital challenge. Secondary education supplies the largest share (50%) of entrants into nonagricultural formal wage labor. However, outdated curricula and rote-based teaching and learning approaches mean that school-leavers lack foundation skills (e.g., literacy and numeracy) and soft skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and communication skills). Likewise, TVET has struggled to equip youth with vocation-specific hard skills (e.g., construction or mechanical skills) and with entrepreneurship and other business-related skills. To address these challenges, the MOE initiated reforms under the National Education Strategic Plan, 2016–2021 to realign secondary education and TVET to meet evolving labor market skill needs. However, reversing decades of underinvestment will require sustained support. ADB and the EU are committed to support sequenced reforms under the current National Education Strategic Plan and any subsequent national plans.

4. The EYE is providing introduction training of the new curriculum which will not be sufficient for teachers to change their teaching and learning practice. It is supporting the introduction of competency-based modular short courses at selected public TVET schools which require further expansion to meet demands from industry. Building on key initial reforms supported by EYE and complementing the budget support provided by the EU (para 2), the proposed TA will support the MOE in advancing critical follow-on reforms. First, it will strengthen MOE capacity to formulate and implement cohesive and evidence-based reforms to align skill supply with evolving skill demand. Second, as part of a multipronged approach to improve teaching and learning, the TA will support the MOE to formulate and introduce (i) a continuing professional development (CPD) system for in-service secondary education teachers and (ii) updated pre-service education programs to prepare future high school teachers to deliver the new curriculum. This will enhance the MOE's overhaul of the secondary education curriculum (including textbooks and teacher guides) and annual rounds of in-service training of teachers to deliver the improved curriculum supported under EYE.<sup>10</sup> Third, the TA will provide follow-on support to the MOE to (i) reform curricula of longer-term TVET programs at upper secondary and post-secondary levels; and (ii) strengthen MOE cooperation with nongovernment organizations and industries to diversify TVET provision, including targeting females and ethnic group youth. The TA will also feed into a potential second phase of EYE.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> S. D'Amico, C. Spohr, and S. Tanaka. 2015. Myanmar Human Capital Development, Employment, and Labor Markets. *ADB Economics Working Paper Series*. No. 469. Manila: ADB.

<sup>8</sup> Females are particularly likely to be trapped in vulnerable employment: 53% of working females age 20–29 are own account or contributing family workers, versus 47% for their male counterparts.

<sup>9</sup> Myanmar's Private Sector Development Framework and Action Plan identifies human capital as a core priority: [http://www.dica.gov.mm/sites/dica.gov.mm/files/document-files/psd\\_framework\\_final\\_01\\_apr\\_english.pdf](http://www.dica.gov.mm/sites/dica.gov.mm/files/document-files/psd_framework_final_01_apr_english.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> In May 2019, EYE provided 14 days of in-service teacher training to support introduction of the new grade 6 curriculum, with further annual rounds planned for 2020–2022 to support introduction of the new curriculum for grades 7 to 12.

<sup>11</sup> The proposed provision of a transaction technical assistance (TA) after the approval of EYE reflects (i) signing of the financing agreement of EU's assistance program with the Government of Myanmar in February 2019 (para. 2), (ii) the technical nature of support, and (iii) EU preference for the TA modality in lieu of project grant modality, which would require administration by the MOE.

## B. Outputs and Activities

5. The TA will have three outputs, as outlined below and elaborated in the terms of reference.<sup>12</sup>

6. **Output 1: Evidence-based post-primary education reforms effectively supported, monitored, and disseminated.** The TA will provide cohesive and crosscutting umbrella support for post-primary education (focusing on secondary education and TVET) to align with evolving labor market demands for foundation skills, soft skills, and technical and vocational skills. In particular, it will support (i) analysis, evidence-based planning, and crosscutting capacity development, focusing on post-primary education reform, and (ii) TA-wide coordination, monitoring and evaluation, gender actions, and communication.

7. **Analytical and evidence-based planning and capacity development.** First, the TA will support the MOE to consolidate and analyze data from various sources (including via collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, and Population) on skill supply and evolving skill demands, including disaggregation by gender, geographic areas, and other social dimensions.<sup>13</sup> It will develop bilingual (Myanmar language and English) knowledge products distilling national and international analysis and experience. Second, the TA will help the MOE translate national analysis and international experience into the national education plan's next phase (2021–2026) and longer-term skills development strategies for Myanmar to improve regional and global competitiveness. It will support Myanmar's hosting of and participation in international forums to bring insights from global practices to Myanmar's key reforms. Third, the TA will support MOE capacities in engaging stakeholders at central to grassroots levels (e.g., local governments, the private sector, civil society groups working with female and ethnic group youth, and private education and training providers) in reform-related dialogue. It will enhance coordination mechanisms, including the government–industry Working Committee on Human Capital, and effective use of affordable digital technology, information, education, and communication tools for dissemination and social marketing of key reforms.<sup>14</sup>

8. **Support for TA-wide coordination, monitoring and evaluation, gender actions, communication, and administration.** The TA will help ensure strong ownership and coordination across all outputs with relevant departments of the MOE. It will also support monitoring and evaluation across all initiatives (including disaggregation by sex, ethnic group, and other dimensions), gender actions, communication plan implementation, other crosscutting work, and the TA-financed procurement of goods (e.g., learning materials and minor equipment).

9. **Output 2: New secondary education continuing professional development system and pre-service teacher education program introduced.** The TA will support the introduction of two critical reforms to improve teaching and learning outcomes in secondary education: (i) a

<sup>12</sup> The terms of reference for consultants are accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2. EYE's design and monitoring framework will be updated upon approval of the proposed TA during the midterm review of EYE, to reflect the key activities of the TA. The updated design and monitoring framework will be included in the project administration manual.

<sup>13</sup> Such data sources include the MOE's Education Management Information System, the November 2019 Intercensal Survey, and the periodic Labor Force Survey. The TA will build on initial ADB-supported geographic information system mapping of school networks and employment patterns.

<sup>14</sup> The Working Committee on Human Capital was established to support implementation of the human capital pillar of the Private Sector Development Framework and Action Plan (footnote 7) and is chaired by the MOE Deputy Minister. The TA may also support the proposed TVET Council (expected to be established by 2021) in promoting TVET-focused coordination.

school-based CPD system and (ii) upgraded pre-service education programs for future high school teachers. The TA will enhance EYE-supported introduction of new textbooks, teacher guides, and annual teacher training rounds, and will build on EU support for school-based CPD module development.

**10. Continuous professional development for in-service secondary education teachers.**

The TA will build on the ongoing EYE and EU support to introduce basic CPD activities for middle school teachers linked to the rollout of the revised grade 6 curriculum in school year (SY) 2019/20. First, it will support capacity building at the central to school level to manage and deliver CPD linked to the remainder of curriculum reforms, including extending high school through grade 12 in SY2022/23.<sup>15</sup> Second, it will support digital technology and media-based materials to support CPD, which will be sensitive to gender and ethnic group. Third, the TA will support development and institutionalization of a national CPD system to provide continued local and in-school support to teachers after the completion of ongoing curriculum reforms in SY2022/23. CPD programs will ensure equitable access to female and ethnic group teachers.

**11. Upgraded pre-service teacher education for future high school teachers.**

First, the TA will help the MOE revise the curriculum for Bachelor of Education programs for future high school teachers to align with the forthcoming 3-year (grades 10–12) high school curriculum.<sup>16</sup> New curricula will be sensitive to gender and ethnic group. Second, the TA will enhance the professional skills and competencies of teacher educators at the three universities offering the Bachelor of Education programs.<sup>17</sup> Third, the TA will strengthen the Bachelor of Education programs' management and quality assurance. The TA will help these three universities to forge twinning arrangements with international teacher education institutions to establish long-term partnerships to strengthen research capacity and teacher education management.

**12. Output 3: Technical vocational education and training programs diversified and better aligned with evolving labor market demands.**

The TA will support the MOE in accelerating reforms to improve TVET quality and relevance; diversify TVET offerings; and expand TVET access, including for female students, disadvantaged youth, and underserved areas. Enhancing EYE and EU support, the TA will support longer-term TVET program reforms and new partnerships in TVET provision.

**13. Development of revised curricula for government technical high schools and government technical institutes.**

The TA will support MOE's introduction of new curricula for government technical high schools and government technical institutes to better align with skill demands from industries. This includes capacity development of trainers in partnerships with industry, and procurement of the required materials and equipment to support preparation and initial roll-out of the revised TVET curricula. Social marketing will aim to attract more females into TVET, especially to nontraditional skill areas (e.g., manufacturing and electrical works). The TA will help the MOE to develop a strategic plan on infrastructure, equipment, and materials for the revised TVET programs, to be financed by government budget and/or international support.

**14. Expansion of technical vocational education and training partnerships.**

The TA will help the MOE expand strategic partnerships with international nongovernment organizations

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<sup>15</sup> Following the MOE's introduction of a new kindergarten year in SY2016/17, the extension of high school (upper secondary) through grade 12 (supported by EYE) in SY2022/23 will bring Myanmar up to international norm of a kindergarten–12 system.

<sup>16</sup> These include a 5-year program for high school graduates and a 2-year program to upgrade middle school teachers.

<sup>17</sup> These are Yangon University of Education, Sagaing University of Education, and University of Development of National Races.

(INGOs) and the private sector to diversify short-term TVET programs to include additional skill areas and reach more youth and workers, including females and males in underserved areas (including areas with large ethnic group populations). First, the TA will help the MOE collaborate with INGOs and local partners to extend TVET short courses, through harmonizing approaches, ensuring quality control, and facilitating issuance of completion certificates by the MOE. The TA will support competitive tendering of INGOs to provide short courses in selected high priority skill and geographic areas to open more room for INGOs to operate effectively in Myanmar’s TVET sector.<sup>18</sup> Second, in coordination with the government–industry Working Committee on Human Capital, the TA will support the MOE to expand MOE–industry collaboration in reskilling and upskilling youth and existing workers. This will include support to (i) develop operational guidelines for training organized jointly by public TVET schools and private sector entities, and (ii) pilot a training partnership fund to cover eligible costs for the training.

### C. Cost and Financing

15. The TA is estimated to cost \$26.1 million, of which \$26.0 million (not exceeding €24.0 million) will be financed on a grant basis by the EU and administered by ADB. The key expenditure items are listed in Appendix 1. Indicatively, output 1 is estimated to cost \$5.1 million, output 2 is estimated at \$7.3 million, and output 3 is estimated at \$10.7 million. In addition, ADB administration cost, contingencies, and audit cost are estimated at \$2.9 million. The Government of Myanmar will provide the balance in the form of counterpart staff, office accommodation for selected consultants, and other in-kind contributions.

16. The EU grant will finance the TA activities and outputs, including operational expenses, in the form of consulting services, trainings, workshops, conferences, modest goods procurement such as to support preparation and initial roll out of revised TVET curricula, as well as audit and administration costs.<sup>19</sup> The TA will not be used for civil works.

### D. Implementation Arrangements

17. ADB will administer the TA. The Human and Social Development Division, Southeast Asia Department will select, supervise, and evaluate TA-financed consultants, and will monitor procurement of goods by the TA-financed consultants. The MOE will be the executing agency and the MOE Executive Committee will provide oversight with the relevant focal departments.

18. The implementation arrangements are summarized in the table below.

<b>Implementation Arrangements</b>	
<b>Aspects</b>	<b>Arrangements</b>
Indicative implementation period	January 2020–December 2024
Executing agency	Ministry of Education
Implementing agency	ADB Southeast Asia Department, Human and Social Development Division.
Consultants	To be selected and engaged by ADB. Number of firms will be decided based on the results of the road show.

<sup>18</sup> In accordance with ADB rules and procedures, ADB will competitively recruit INGO(s) for service provision, based on detailed terms of reference agreed with the MOE following analysis of priority gaps. Following competitive tendering for the first phase, ADB may consider single-source selection for a second phase, contingent on satisfactory INGO performance in order to ensure uniformity in the extended service provision.

<sup>19</sup> The EU requires submission of an audit report of the TA transactions by the ADB external auditor every two years.

Aspects	Arrangements		
	Firms: Quality- and cost-based selection (90:10)	For all three outputs	\$20.0 million
	Individual consultants (7)	108 person-months (estimated)	\$2.3 million
	Direct contracting- Audit firm	1 contract	\$0.1 million
	INGOs		\$0.5 million
Procurement of goods	To be procured by TA-financed consultants		
	Open competitive bidding, national advertisements	Contracts will be determined based on needs during implementation.	\$2.0 million included in TA firms' contracts as a provisional sum
Disbursement	The TA resources will be disbursed following ADB's <i>Technical Assistance Disbursement Handbook</i> (2010, as amended from time to time).		
Asset turnover or disposal arrangement upon TA completion	TA-financed equipment will be dedicated to TA use and turned over to the Ministry of Education or an agency it may specify after TA completion.		

ADB = Asian Development Bank; INGO = international nongovernmental organization; TA = technical assistance.  
Source: Asian Development Bank.

19. **Consulting services.** ADB will engage the consultants following the ADB Procurement Policy (2017, as amended from time to time) and its associated staff instructions.<sup>20</sup> ADB will engage the consulting services principally through firms. In addition, several individual consultants will be mobilized, including one program manager (TA team leader) and some key consultants for early startup. ADB will engage INGOs following procedures of procurement of non-consulting services to implement competency-based short courses under output 3.

20. **Procurement.** The TA-financed consulting firms will procure goods and services, in dialogue with ADB and the MOE and in accordance with the ADB Procurement Policy (2017, as amended from time to time) and the Procurement Regulations for ADB Borrowers (2017, as amended from time to time).

21. The delegation agreement with EU stipulates that consultants and entities from all 28 members of the EU are eligible for contracts financed by the EU.<sup>21</sup> To meet the requirement, an exception pursuant to Article 14 (ix) of the Agreement Establishing the Asian Development Bank (the Charter) is requested to allow universal procurement for all prospective contracts under the TA.<sup>22</sup>

22. **Cofinancier requirements.** The EU specific requirements are stated in the special conditions of the delegation agreement between the EU and ADB.<sup>23</sup>

## E. Governance

23. ADB will administer the TA, and thus the financial management, procurement, and integrity risks during implementation are assessed to be low.

<sup>20</sup> Terms of Reference for Consultants (accessible from the list of linked documents in Appendix 2). Output-based contract will be considered for consulting services, wherever appropriate.

<sup>21</sup> There are 14 non-member countries of ADB eligible for EU-financed contracts: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic, and Slovenia.

<sup>22</sup> ADB. 1996. *Agreement Establishing the Asian Development Bank*. Manila.

<sup>23</sup> ADB. (Office of Cofinancing Operations). 2017. Administration of Cofinancing from the European Union. 22 November 2017. (Internal).

### III. THE PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION

24. The President recommends that the Board approve:
- (i) the Asian Development Bank (ADB) administering technical assistance not exceeding the equivalent of \$26,000,000 to the Government of Myanmar to be financed on a grant basis by the European Union for Support for Enhancing Education and Skills Base in Myanmar; and
  - (ii) the proposal in paragraph 21 of this report to permit the selection of consultants and the procurement of goods from non-member countries of ADB for Support for Enhancing Education and Skills Base in Myanmar.

**COST ESTIMATES AND FINANCING PLAN**  
(\$'000)

Item	Amount
<b>A. European Union<sup>a</sup></b>	
1. Consultants	13,559.0
2. Training, seminars, and conferences	
a. INGO-provided short course training	500.0
b. GITPF	500.0
c. Other training, seminars, and conferences	6,139.3
3. Surveys	120.0
4. Equipment <sup>b</sup>	2,026.0
5. Miscellaneous administrative and support costs <sup>c</sup>	270.0
6. Audit expenses	100.0
7. ADB administration fee	1,625.0
8. Contingencies	1,160.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,000.0</b>

ADB = Asian Development Bank, GITPF = government–industry training partnership fund, INGO = international nongovernment organization.

Note: The technical assistance (TA) is estimated to cost \$26.1 million, of which contributions from the European Union (not exceeding €24.0 million) are presented in the table. The Government of Myanmar will provide counterpart support in the form of counterpart staff, office accommodation, and other in-kind contributions. The value of the government contribution is estimated to account for 4% of the total TA cost.

<sup>a</sup> Financed by the European Union, and administered by the Asian Development Bank.

<sup>b</sup> Equipment includes office equipment, and other modest goods (materials and equipment) to support preparation and initial pilot of revised TVET programs, which will be determined during the TA implementation. The equipment will be handed over to the Ministry of Education or an agency it may specify at TA completion.

<sup>c</sup> Includes transport, accommodation, and other non-salary expenses for counterpart staff for participation in field visits; other support for data collection and compilation; and research assistants.

Source: Asian Development Bank estimates.

**LIST OF LINKED DOCUMENTS**

<http://www.adb.org/Documents/LinkedDocs/?id=48431-004-TARreport>

1. Terms of Reference for Consultants
2. Approved Report and Recommendation of the President: Equipping Youth for Employment Project