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Action Fiche for Asia for Short Term Technical Assistance

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title/Number	Operational short-term technical assistance related to the political, economic, cultural, financial and technical cooperation with developing countries in Asia 2010/022-571		
Total cost	€8 000 000 (EU Contribution: 100%)		
Aid method / Method of implementation	Project approach – centralised management		
DAC-code	43010	Sector	Multisector aid

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Sector context

This financing proposal aims at providing financial provisions to run operational short-term technical assistance (STTA) related to the political, economic, cultural, financial and technical cooperation with the Asian developing countries for the period 2010-11.

2.2. Lessons learnt

Experience has shown that the resources made available to run activities of short-term technical assistance are vital to adequately prepare, implement, monitor, and evaluate bilateral and regional projects and programmes.

In this way the short term technical assistance raises significantly the quality and efficiency levels of project identification, management and control, enabling the achievement of project and programme objectives and increasing the results and impact of EU assistance.

To achieve similar objectives over the past years, the European Commission adopted several Decisions (in 2006, Decisions 18313 and 18300; in 2007, Decision 18889; in 2008, Decision 19770; in 2009, Decision 21502). The resources made available under these decisions have been used to provide operational short term technical assistance related to the financial and technical co-operation with developing countries in Asia.

The large majority of these interventions concerned diagnostic and formulation missions, the preparation of studies (including environment country profiles) and finally activities of technical assistance of various nature (trainings, preparation of action plans, etc).

Activities financed through these facilities were essentially related to the identification and the formulation of projects and/or programmes included in the different Country Strategy papers (CSPs) or National Indicative Programmes (NIPs).

2.3. Complementary actions

The administrative technical assistance (ATA) budget complements the operational short term technical assistance budget, as it funds technical assistance that is in the interest of the Commission, as opposed to the beneficiary countries.

2.4. Donor coordination

N/A

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The overall objective of this EU support is to contribute to enhancing the capacity of Asian developing countries to integrate into the regional and global systems, to reduce poverty and improve living conditions.

The purpose of this EU support is to provide adequate resources to finance the provision of short-term technical assistance related to the financial and technical cooperation with the Asian developing countries covered by the Development Cooperation Instrument.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

The expected results are:

- Improved expertise in various areas provided to Asian countries.
- Enhanced ownership among beneficiaries and therefore improved sustainability of programmes and projects.

The main activities that are expected to be funded may cover the entire project cycle and therefore include:

- Identification, formulation, monitoring, evaluation and audit.
- Feasibility studies, conferences, seminars, workshops, training sessions and study visits.
- Technical follow-up.
- Communication and information linked to assistance programmes for the interest of beneficiaries countries.

The specific nature, content, objectives and expected results of each assignment will be defined on a country by country level and on a case by case basis. Detailed terms of reference will be prepared and attached to each request for services. Programmes related to thematic budget lines should be funded under the relevant budget lines.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

Given the specificity of this operation there are no major risks and assumptions.

However a fully successful implementation will depend on:

- Willingness of the Asian countries of continuing the process of improvement of their institutions.
- Keeping and improvement of the political, social and economic stability.
- Good knowledge of this instrument by potential users.
- Provision of assistance to the Delegations interested in the tool.
- Good EU internal co-ordination.
- Good management of the various contracts.
- High quality of experts supplied.
- Full involvement and support of beneficiary countries and related stakeholders in the implementation of the activities.

3.4. Crosscutting Issues

The European Commission recognises in full the importance of considering cross-cutting issues (i.e. gender environment, etc) during the design, formulation and implementation of projects.

In using the resources that will be made available under this financing proposal, the Commission will make sure that cross-cutting issues are duly considered in each funded activity.

3.5. Stakeholders

The main stakeholders of this action will be the European Commission services, the Asian beneficiary countries and other specific development co-operation partners such as NGOs, citizens...

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Method of implementation

Centralised management through the use of Framework Contracts (Framework Contract for Beneficiaries and Framework Contract for Commission, depending on where the principal benefit lies) and service contracts following call for tenders.

As the management of the bulk of assistance to Asia is now devolved to the Delegations, the latter will have the day-to-day responsibility for contract conclusion and management. A limited number of contracts might be managed directly by the Commission's headquarters, especially in connection with non-devolved programmes.

Taking into account the necessity to hire the most appropriate technical assistance, both in the traditional technical fields as well as in new fields of cooperation, this financing decision aims to draw on the range of contracting possibilities offered under the Commission's contracting procedures for services contracts.

4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures

All contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

4.3. Budget and calendar

The overall budget for this programme is €8 000 000.

Category Breakdown	EU	Contracting/Paying Authority
1. Services	8 000 000	EU
1.1. Short-term Technical Assistance	8 000 000	EU
Total	8 000 000	EU

The operational implementation period will be 36 months as from the date of the budgetary commitment.

4.4. Performance monitoring

The activities funded under this operation will be monitored by the European Commission services.

Key indicators for measuring the performance of this operation will be:

- Short-term technical assistance activities delivered.
- Study and reports submitted.
- Identification and formulation missions funded.

Key indicators for measuring the performance of this operation will be derived from the Contractor Assessment Form to be completed at the end of the assignments covering performance of the contractor, performance of experts and overall performance.

4.5. Evaluation and audit

Each activity funded under this operation will be subject to evaluation according to EU rules, such as inter-service meetings or committees, internal reporting, mid-term and final report validation and acceptance, etc.

External evaluations and audits might also be carried out by independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission in accordance with EU rules and procedures on specifically established Terms of Reference.

4.6. Communication and visibility

Any action financed will follow the rules applicable to the visibility of external actions as defined and published by the EU. The Beneficiary will take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed or co-financed the action. In particular, the beneficiary will mention the action and the European Union's financial contribution in information given to the final recipients of the action, in its internal and annual reports, and in any dealings with the media displaying the EU logo wherever appropriate.