

# Networking Asian Think Tanks for KS and CD: The Case of Asian Think Tanks Network (ATTN)

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# Context

## **Asian Think Tanks:**

- Playing increasingly important roles in policy formulation and implementation, but capacity still weak in research and policy advising;
- Eager to share knowledge with peers on development experiences and policy lessons;

## **ADB:**

- Good governance and capacity development, knowledge solutions, and partnerships, as drivers of change in Strategy 2020;

# Benefits of Networking



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- Enhanced learning & knowledge sharing;
- Enhanced capacity to plan for and address complex development challenges;
- Enhanced collective intelligence and strength;
- More effective use of resources;
- Better services to clients.



# Timeline: ATTN

- Early 2012, ADB and Asian think tanks initiated the network;
- June 2012, TA Concept Paper endorsed by ADB;
- November 2012, resources provided by PRC Fund;
- May 2013, TA Report approved by ADB: RETA 8392: Provision of KPS to DMCs thru Systematic KS;
- 30-31 October 2013, 1<sup>st</sup> ADB-Asian Think Tank Development Forum held in Beijing. ATTN established;
- 20-21 November 2014, 2<sup>nd</sup> ADB-Asian Think Tank Development Forum held in Seoul.
- 8-9 September 2015, 3<sup>rd</sup> ADB-Asian Think Tank Development Forum held in Kuala Lumpur.

# Objectives of ATTN

**ATTN:** an institutionalized knowledge sharing and capacity development platform among the government-linked think tanks in Asia and the Pacific

- Enhance systematic knowledge sharing, particularly S-S knowledge cooperation;
- Enable better policy advising; bridge the gap between research and policy;
- Strengthen the capacity of the Asian think tanks, particularly, those in low income DMCs; and
- Increase the collective voice of Asia and the Pacific in international arenas.

# Targeted Membership

Economic and development think tanks in the region, particularly those:

- Under macroeconomic agencies, such as ministry of finance, economy, and development agencies;
- With close linkages with the government's macroeconomic agencies and assisting in development policy formulation and implementation; and
- Preferably, one think tank from each DMCs.

# Focus Areas

- In line with Strategic 2020 and the challenges facing DMCs, ATTN focuses knowledge sharing on **inclusion and innovation**
- Theme of the ATTN forums:
  - ✓ 1<sup>st</sup> Forum: Innovation & Inclusion for a Prosperous Asia;
  - ✓ 2<sup>nd</sup> Forum: Promoting Innovation & Inclusion for a Prosperous Asia;
  - ✓ 3<sup>rd</sup> Forum: Advancing Innovation & Inclusion for a Prosperous Asia.
  - ✓ 4<sup>th</sup> Forum: continue with innovation and inclusion



# Networking Mode

- ATTN: a joint initiative of ADB and Asian think tanks
- Internally, ERCD (content and organization), and ADBI, RDs/RMs, RKSI (collaborators)
- At the initial stage, ADB acts as lead agency, co-financier, honest broker and secretariat
- In the long run, it is expected that a sustainable financing mechanism can be found and ATTN shall be operated largely by the participating think tanks

# DMF

- **Impact:** Enhanced development effectiveness of DMCs' macroeconomic and development policies.
- **Outcome:** Enhanced learning and capacity of the Asian think tanks in policy advising.
- **Outputs:** a systematic KS and CD network: ATTN, and policy-oriented knowledge products.

# Networking Activities

- Flagship ATTN event: Annual ADB-Asian Think Tank Development Forum
- e-Newsletter: ATTN e-News
- Proceedings
- Website: [www.adb-asianthinktanks.org](http://www.adb-asianthinktanks.org), and
- More to be explored, such as joint studies, staff exchange, webinar, etc.

# Results and Feedback

- ATTN established:
  - ✓ 3 forums organized in 2013, 2014 and 2015; over 60 think tanks from about 30 countries participated; also attended by international organizations and regional think tanks, govt. agencies, academia, business and media;
  - ✓ e-news and proceedings published, website built and updated;
  - ✓ 4<sup>th</sup> Forum planned in India in October 2016;
  - ✓ Members' interest and ownership growing, feedback positive and encouraging;
  - ✓ Donor continued financial support.

# Factors to Consider for Networking

- How to position and differentiate the network (uniqueness):
  - ✓ Target audience
  - ✓ Focused areas
- How to make the network relevant (usefulness):
  - ✓ Meet the growing need of the members
  - ✓ Nurture the ownership and participations of the members
- How to make the network sustainable (sustainability):
  - ✓ Financing mechanisms
  - ✓ Governing structure: roles of different participants;
- How to reach out efficiently and effectively (impact):
  - ✓ Globally, regionally and domestically
  - ✓ Policy makers, media, business, and other clients