



CASE STUDY SERIES: Innovative Financing for Gender Equality via Bonds



Asia and the Pacific: GENDER BOND PROGRAMME BY A MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANK

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Multi-currency





<p>Issuer</p>	<p>The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional development bank established on 19 December 1966, which is headquartered in the Ortigas Center, in the city of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines.¹ ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient and sustainable Asia and the Pacific while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty.</p> <p>ADB assists its members and partners by providing loans, technical assistance, grants and equity investments to promote social and economic development. ADB maximizes the development impact of its assistance by facilitating policy dialogues, providing advisory services and mobilizing financial resources through cofinancing operations that tap official, commercial and export credit sources.</p> <p>From 31 members at its establishment in 1966, ADB has grown to encompass 68 members, of which 49 are from within Asia and the Pacific. ADB launched its first theme (water) bond for sustainable development in 2010, in response to a growing demand among its investor base to highlight key initiatives. Since launching the water bond, ADB has expanded its theme bond offerings to include health, gender and education bonds.²</p>
<p>Issuance tranche</p>	<p>XS2102283657, CA045167FD06, XS2482388449, XS2432303571, CA045167FJ75, XS2459476235, XS1720537007, XS2352748334, CA045167FQ19, XS2547999552, XS2580869373, XS2585575652, XS2580296403, XS2608201682³</p>
<p>Amount issued</p>	<p>Through its Gender Thematic Bond programme, ADB has raised over US\$3.655 billion as of March 2022⁴</p>
<p>Date of issuance</p>	<p>ADB issued its first gender bond in November 2017</p>
<p>Date of maturity</p>	<p>Multiple dates of maturity</p>
<p>Number of issuances</p>	<p>ADB has issued 14 gender bonds as of 1 April 2023⁵</p>
<p>Coupon rate</p>	<p>Multiple coupon rates</p>



Listing (domestic or international)	International
Stock exchanges where listed	Luxembourg Stock Exchange
Future issuances	The next issuance is planned on 26 April 2023 (XS2608201682)
<h2>Use of proceeds</h2>	<p>Eligible projects of the gender bonds include those that target narrowing gender disparities and promoting the empowerment of women and girls. To achieve this, such projects would typically address one or more of the five areas and/or dimensions of gender equality below and women’s empowerment, either (a) as part of the overall outcome of the project (referred to by ADB as a “gender equity theme” project) or (b) by incorporating them into specific project components (referred to by ADB as an “effective gender mainstreaming” project).</p>
<h2>Gender considerations in the use of proceeds</h2>	<p>The five areas and/or dimensions of gender equality and women’s empowerment described by the issuer are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Women’s economic empowerment. Access to finance and/or credit; micro, small and medium-sized enterprise development; agriculture development; value chain support; financial literacy; and entrepreneurship training. 2. Gender equality in human development. Education, skills development, and technical and vocational education and training, including “nontraditional” female subjects and/or job sectors such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics; sexual and reproductive health and rights; sanitation; and prevention of gender-based violence. 3. Reduced time poverty of women. Reduced drudgery and time spent on unpaid care and domestic work through infrastructure (transport, water, sanitation and energy) or affordable child, elderly or family care support. 4. Participation in decision-making and leadership. Through community groups, local governments, and public and private sector management. 5. Women’s resilience against risks and shocks including climate change and disaster impacts. Environmental protection and/or rehabilitation, flood and disaster risk management, budget support and social protection.



Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



SDG targets that the bond addresses



Target 5.1

End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

Target 5.2

Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

Target 5.3

Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

Target 5.4

Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.

Target 5.5

Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

Target 5.6

Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.

Target 5.a

Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

Target 5.b

Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.

Target 5.c

Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.



Target population	Women, primarily located in Asia and the Pacific
Indicators related to gender equality	<p>Example of a project in India: Assam Skill University Project:⁶ In Assam, the largest state in India’s northeast, gender disparities in the labour force are stark. As of 2018, the labour force participation rate for women was 13 per cent compared to 78 per cent for men; the unemployment rate was 27 per cent for women compared to 4 per cent for men; and 30 per cent of women employed were in farm employment compared to 22 per cent of men.</p> <p>To create pathways for skills progression and mobility to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of Assam’s economy and industries, ADB committed US\$112 million in December 2021 to a project that will assist the government in strengthening its skills education and training system to ensure decent employment for all and accelerate sustainable and inclusive infrastructure and industrial development.</p> <p>Complemented by an additional US\$1 million grant from the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction and US\$150,000 from the Climate Change Fund, the project will especially improve skills and employability of women and disadvantaged groups, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. It will support the design and delivery of industry-aligned and flexible skills education and training programmes, including cutting-edge digital skills programmes, career development programmes and services, and continuing education programmes benefiting at least 3,600 young women and adults to support their transition into the workforce.</p>
International standards alignment	ADB did not report alignment with specific international standards
Link to framework	Refer to the previous “Use of proceeds” and “Gender considerations in use of proceeds”



Link to Second Party Opinion	None
Second Party Opinion provider	Not applicable
Credit enhancement <i>(yes or no)</i>	Not applicable
Was the bond oversubscribed and were there any special considerations?	Not applicable
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP (legal advisers)• Citibank, N.A., London Branch (global agent)• BNP Paribas Securities Services (Luxembourg listing agent)• Federal Reserve Bank of New York (fiscal agent)• Deloitte Touche LLP (auditors)



Lessons learned

Accelerating progress in gender equality in Asia and the Pacific is one of the seven operational priorities in the Strategy 2030 of the Asian Development Bank. ADB recognizes that gender equality is critical in its own right as well as for helping realize socioeconomic development. ADB is committed to support gender equality through gender-inclusive project designs in at least 75 per cent of its sovereign and non-sovereign operations by 2030.⁷ The scalability of gender bonds was an important lesson for ADB. ADB has experienced the growth of gender bond issuances across currencies and product types, with the volume of issuances growing from US\$90 million in 2017 to US\$3.3 billion in 2022.

Endnotes

1. Asian Development Bank (ADB). “Who We Are.” <https://www.adb.org/who-we-are/about>
2. ADB. “Investor Relations.” “ADB Theme Bonds for Sustainable Development.” <https://www.adb.org/work-with-us/investors/adb-theme-bonds>
3. Luxembourg Stock Exchange. “Asian Development Bank.” “Securities.” <https://www.luxse.com/issuer/ADB/26709>
4. ADB. 2022. ADB Theme Bonds for Sustainable Development. Issue No. 3. July, p. 2. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/655806/adb-theme-bonds-sustainable-development.pdf>
5. Luxembourg Stock Exchange. “Asian Development Bank.” <https://www.luxse.com/issuer/ADB/26709>
6. ADB. 2022. ADB Theme Bonds for Sustainable Development. Issue No. 3. July, p. 8. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/655806/adb-theme-bonds-sustainable-development.pdf>
7. ADB. 2019. Accelerating progress in gender equality, 2019–2024: Strategy 2030 Operational Plan for Priority 2. September, p. 1. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/495956/strategy-2030-op2-gender-equality.pdf>

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DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY AND
THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN.
A GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND
GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED TO
ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON MEETING
THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.**

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities: Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems; Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy; All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence; Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



220 East 42nd Street
New York, New York 10017, USA
Tel: 212-906-6400
Fax: 212-906-6705

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