

CITIZENS' ATLAS ON FALSE CLIMATE AND CIRCULARITY SOLUTIONS



In Focus: Asian Development Bank

This factsheet assesses **49 false solutions** projects by Asian Development Bank (ADB) that were active, proposed, or approved between 2015 and 2025. It highlights total financing per false solution type, recipient countries, the largest funded projects, funding types, and financial instruments, project timelines, and environmental and social risk categories. Just transition is examined through the elements of gender, waste worker inclusion, and resettlement.

PROJECT COMPOSITION: FALSE SOLUTIONS



41 out of 49

support waste incineration with or without energy conversion, including pyrolysis and gasification



4 out of 49

refuse-derived fuel or processed waste to be sent for co-firing in cement factories



5 out of 49

are false plastic solutions

- 2 Recycling with plastic pellets/ advanced recycling
- 1 Refuse-derived plastic
- 1 Plastic to nuclear energy
- 1 Plastic credits



49 TOTAL PROJECTS



HOW RISKY ARE THESE PROJECTS?

	Category A	Category B	Category C	Financial Intermediary
Environment	4	28	2	4
Involuntary Resettlement	2	16	15	3
Indigenous Peoples	0	7	27	3

**There are a number of projects excluded from the table above belonging to the Technical Assistance (TA) category, where a safeguard categorization is not applicable under ADB guidelines.*



Financial Intermediary projects often bypass the compliance standards tied to “A” or “B” classifications. Regulatory criteria are typically applied by actors other than the IFI and are not published on project pages, creating gaps in traceability and comparability across compliance regimes—an issue that can be exploited in countries with weak environmental or social oversight.

HOW ARE FALSE SOLUTIONS FINANCED?

ADB Financing Snapshot

-  **Loans - 24 projects**

-  **Equity - 2 projects**

-  **TA - 26 projects**



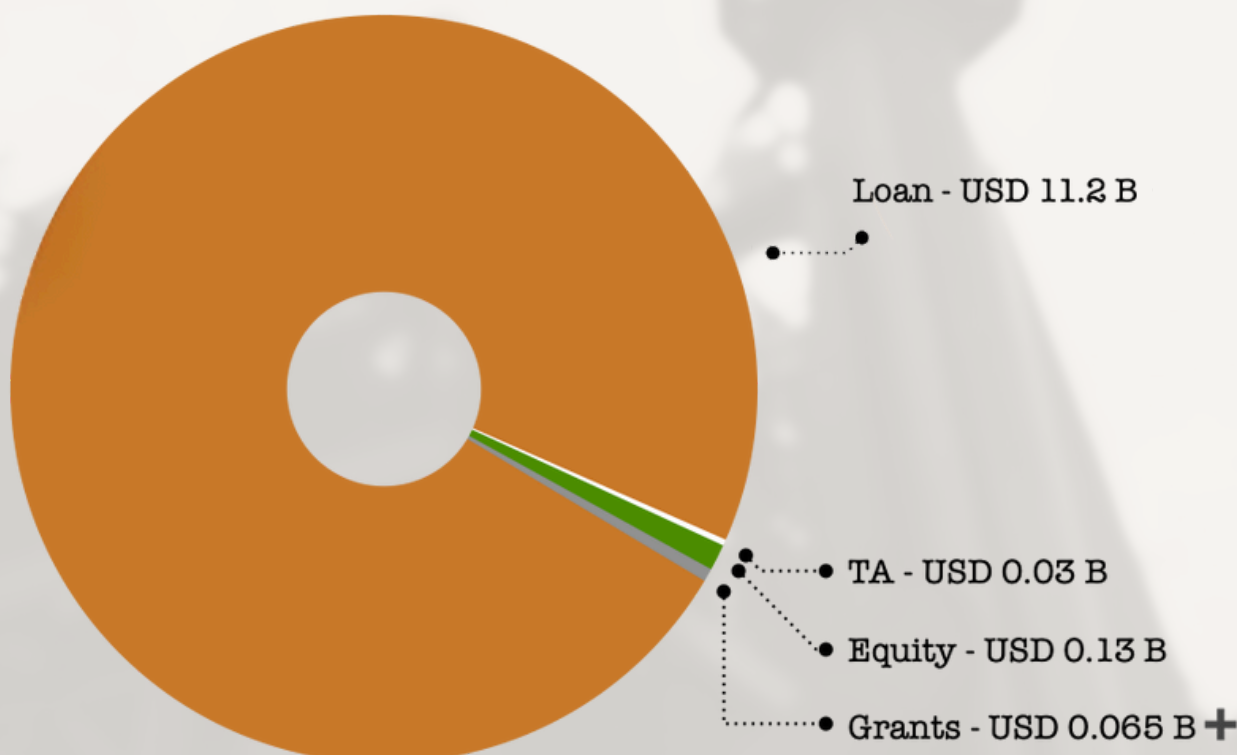
- Many projects combine multiple financial instruments



- TA is often used for policy reforms, private sector support, or WTE (waste-to-energy) pilots



- Most projects do not disclose exact amounts per instrument



HOW IS JUSTICE ADDRESSED IN TRANSITION PLANS?



Gender

Only 6 out of 49 projects explicitly mention or have implemented Gender Action Plans

- In the six projects with Gender Action Plans (GAPs), interventions included health and social services, provision of protective equipment, and training for alternative livelihoods. Some waste projects engaged female waste pickers and integrated them into value chains. Other projects incorporated gender mainstreaming elements but lacked formal GAPs. These included job creation, training, gender-sensitive infrastructure, and advocacy campaigns, although targets were often missed and impacts remained unclear.
- The majority of projects mentioned only indirect benefits, overlooking women's central roles in waste management, sanitation, and household contexts. Some TA projects deferred gender planning to later studies, leaving implementation vague.



Waste worker inclusion

Only 5 of 49 projects mention reabsorbing informal waste workers or addressing child labor and bonded labor risks.

- Majority of ADB projects do not mention waste workers despite their central role in solid waste management in Asia. Where mentioned, focus is narrow (short-term mitigation, resettlement, or limited PPE provision). In projects where they are recognized, support tends to be ad hoc and limited to provision of personal protective equipment, resettlement, short-term jobs rather than systemic integration into sustainable waste management.
- Child labor, forced labor, unsafe conditions are flagged in audits and safeguards assessments but no projects propose structural solutions beyond monitoring. There is scattered recognition of female waste pickers but these projects often lack concrete action in terms of protections and compensation.



Involuntary Resettlement

Only 3 have resettlement action plans although 21 projects are at high or moderate risk of resettlement.

- In large-scale displacement from private sector-led projects, resettlement is managed by governments under concession agreements. Related plans and reports are rarely published. Many "moderate" risk projects only cite potential risks without data deferring planning and offering limited attention to vulnerable groups.

