

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: PLCO/PARD

TA No. and Name: TA No. 3243-FIJ: Urban Sector Strategy Study		Amount Approved: \$670, 000	
		Revised Amount: : –	
Executing Agency: Ministry of Local Government, Housing Squatter Settlements and Environment	Source of Funding: TASF	TA Amount Undisbursed \$9,176.25	TA Amount Utilized \$660,823.75
Approval:	Signing	Date	Fielding of Consultants
18 August 1999	7 June 2000		September 2003
Completion Date			
Original		Actual	
31 August 2000		04 Jan 2005	
Account Closing Date			
Original		Actual	
31 August 2000		23 November 2005	

Description

The TA's long-term goal was to facilitate economic growth while enhancing access of the poor to urban services and sustaining the environment. The TA included a review of urbanization issues and influence on these to economic development, urban service delivery, and urban growth management. Issues studied and analyzed included economic management, housing, institutional arrangements, transport systems, environmental conditions, financial management (financing of urban service delivery and urban management systems), structural issues (e.g. land availability, building codes, etc). The TA developed an Urban Policy and Action Plan (UPAP) to ensure urban planning and management would be integrated across sectors and supported by official Government Policy. The TA also developed a Suva-Nausori Urban Growth Management Plan (UGMP), as specific sample application of the UPAP. As noted below, a major change in scope was approved that significantly changed the TA scope but the original goal remained as stated above.

The Government has endorsed the UPAP and the Suva-Nausori UGMP at the Cabinet level and has supported their implementation through funding of a consultancy to develop a detailed implementation plan and directing the Ministry of Finance to support inclusion of further urban development initiatives in ADB assistance requests. The Ministry of Local Government, Housing Squatter Settlements and Environment's urban planning and management capabilities were strengthened in tangible ways through the enhancement of geographical information systems and in less tangible ways through enhanced understanding of urban planning and management needs and available tools.

Objectives and Scope

The TA objective was to provide Fiji with an urban development strategy that would facilitate economic growth while sustaining the environment and enhancing the access of the poor to urban services. Its scope included a review and assessment of (i) urbanization trends in the context of national economic trends. Macroeconomic conditions, urban employment patterns and opportunities and potential for urban industrial and commercial growth, population statistics and trends, (ii) institutional capacities of central and local government agencies, (iii) low-income housing programs, (iv) landownership and tenure patterns, and (v) financing requirements for infrastructure development and maintenance. Outputs as described in the TA paper comprised: (i) an urban policy action plan, (ii) an urban finance plan, (iii) a low-income settlement plan, (iv) recommendations for improving selected operations for local governments, and (v) proposals for updating the local Government and Town Planning Acts. TA implementation, however, was delayed significantly by a coup attempt and subsequent civil unrest. In addition, though the Government had signed the TA letter, they expressed concern to multiple ADB missions during 2000 and 2001 that the TA as originally conceived was too complex, too broad in scope, and not focused. In July 2002 a major change of scope was approved that focused the TA on local issues. The issues reviewed and assessed remained similar to the original scope but with a focus on supporting the development of broader policy and planning advice through the UPAP and provide an example application of the UPAP through the Suva-Nausori Growth Management Plan. Rather than development of a broad range of specific recommendations in multiple areas such as for building codes, structural plans, environmental management, legislative changes, tax system reform, etc. The revised TA had three key outputs: an UPAP, a regional structure plan (broad location plan for physical infrastructure and land uses) for the Suva-Nausori region, and (iii) a district plan for the Suva-Nausori-Navua foreshore. During TA inception, the Government and ADB agreed that the latter two outputs would be further consolidated into one output: Suva-Nausori UGMP.

Evaluation of Inputs

A total of 25 person-months of international and 6 person-months of domestic consultants were provided. The consultants provided expertise in the fields of urban management, sanitation engineering, financial analysis, environment, institutional strengthening, Geographic Information System technologies, legislative drafting, and community development. Once consultant selection was initiated, the TA was implemented for about 15 months.

In general, consultants' inputs were efficiently performed. Consultant inputs are rated satisfactory. The constraints of multiple individual consultants hampered implementation efficiency since (i) it required oversight of multiple individual contracts and sometimes multiple contract variations to effectuate any given resource need, (ii) team leadership not clearly defined, (iii) coordination of inputs and supervision of the individual specialists more difficult since the individual specialists were not contractually bound to the others, and (iv) guidance to local consultants by international consultants complicated since the local consultants often supported multiple specialist areas.

The EA and TA steering committee members actively participated in and contributed to the TA. The Department of Town and Country Planning and the Department of Housing were particularly and appropriately engaged. Government performance is rated satisfactory both for strong local support of the TA, excellent counterpart staff participation, and follow-on activities to support TA outcome sustainability.

Review Missions were adequate and allowed for productive tripartite discussions that facilitated development of Government urban policies. ADB performance is rated only partly satisfactory because of the (i) long delays in processing the major change in scope, (ii) long delays in consultant recruitment, even after the approval of the major change of scope due to lack of ADB staff attention with no evident reason for the lack of attention, and the (iii) TA design that included all individual consultants. The rationale for the use of individual consultants rather than a firm is not apparent as it provided no added value in technical quality and resulted in time-consuming and tedious TA administration. Once consultants were fielded ADB performance was fully satisfactory.

Evaluation of Outputs

The TA generated an UPAP and UGMP for the Suva-Nausori Region that had broad Government and other stakeholder support. The plans were of good quality and prepared in form and level of detail appropriate for the country situation. With all individual consultants, no provision was made for TA progress reports ((e.g. inception, interim, and final). The EA has obtained formal Government endorsements of the outputs, i.e. Cabinet has endorsed the outputs, established a special Cabinet Subcommittee to advance the policy implementation, and provided funding for a consultant to assist in development of a detailed implementation plan.

Overall Assessment and Rating

The TA is rated as successful. The TA has been of significant value to the Government in its development urban planning and management policies and action plans that will ultimately facilitate economic development. Outputs and outcomes may have warranted a higher rating had the TA been implemented in a timelier and less complex manner by ADB and Government.

Major Lessons Learned

The TA demonstrated the value of urban planning and management to a variety of sectors and the broad ownership such planning can garner with a participatory approach. In terms of TA administration, the TA was overly complex and overly time consuming to implement due to the use of multiple individual domestic and international consultants with no consultant responsible for material purchases. The multiple individual consultancies also resulted in difficulties in establishing sound team leadership, management and overall TA quality. Thus, the lesson learned is that multiple individual consultants should only be used when there is clear added technical value. The TA administration and review would have been enhanced by a provision for typical TA progress reports.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

The development and execution of the UPAP implementation plan, which the Government is self-funding, should be closely monitored and considered in the development of the proposed urban development-related ADB assistance.