

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: Nepal Resident Mission

TA No., Country and Name: TA 4353–NEP: Promoting Pro-poor and Gender Responsive Service Delivery		Original Amount: \$200,000 Revised Amount: \$200,000					
Executing Agency: Department of Women Development	Source of Funding: Poverty Reduction Cooperation Fund	Amount Undisbursed: \$60,916.11	Amount Utilized: \$139,083.89				
TA Approval Date: 7 July 2004	TA Signing Date: 31 August 2004	Fielding of First Consultant: 16 June 2005	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;">TA Completion Date Original: 31 January 2006</td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;">Actual: 15 December 2006</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Account Closing Date Original: 31 January 2006</td> <td style="border: none;">Actual: 18 July 2007</td> </tr> </table>	TA Completion Date Original: 31 January 2006	Actual: 15 December 2006	Account Closing Date Original: 31 January 2006	Actual: 18 July 2007
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<p>Description</p> <p>The socioeconomic advancement of the poor and disadvantaged through their effective participation in the development process has been one of the main challenges faced by Nepal. Gender, ethnicity and caste discrimination mainly in rural communities has been a particular constraint on their advancement. Although 38% of the country's population was living below the poverty line at the time the TA was designed in 2004, the severity of poverty among women from disadvantaged communities and ethnic groups was much higher. The TA was thus designed to enhance participation of poor and disadvantaged women and men through gender responsive service delivery in Lamjung and Nawalparasi districts to provide a basis for broad replication. The TA objective was to identify and pilot-test effective approaches to inclusive poverty reduction, which was consistent with the thrust of the Government's Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-2007) – reducing poverty by gradually eliminating gender, ethnicity and caste-based discrimination – and also ADB's Country Strategy and Program (2003-2005) for Nepal, which aimed to reduce poverty through more inclusive development. The TA intended to identify target groups, assist them in forming community-based organizations (CBOs) by providing required training and support, and develop replicable income generation activities with financial support from qualified local NGOs.</p>							
<p>Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs</p> <p>The expected TA impact was an institutionalized approach to pro-poor and gender-responsive service delivery. The expected outcome was to develop the capacity of poor and disadvantaged women and men, central and district level government agencies, and locally elected bodies to support pro-poor and gender-responsive service delivery in the livestock and agriculture sub-sectors. The expected outputs were (i) improved income and livelihoods of poor rural households through implementation of quick impact homestead livestock and crop enterprises; (ii) improved institutional capacity of NGOs and CBOs; (iii) strengthened central and district level government agencies and local bodies; and (iv) an identified approach that effectively promotes participation of the poor and disadvantaged in local development by systematically mainstreaming gender.</p>							
<p>Formulation, Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities</p> <p>The TA was properly designed. A steering committee chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare was established with representation from sectoral ministries and departments. The Department of Women Development (DWD) was the TA executing agency (EA). District Women Development Offices (DWDOs) were the implementing agencies (IAs). A group management and coordination committee was established for each district chaired by the DWDO with representation from district offices for livestock and crops, representatives from the district development committee and concerned village development committees (VDCs), and partner NGOs. A memorandum of understanding was signed between the DWD, Department of Livestock Services (DLS) and Department of Agriculture (DOA) outlining the roles and responsibilities of the departments and their district offices.</p> <p>The TA supported inputs from four consultants – Project Advisor (national, 18 person-months), Poverty and Social Development Specialist (national, 8 person-months), Participation Specialist (national, 4 person-months), and Project Management Specialist (international, 1 person-month). The consultants' TOR were generally consistent with the TA objectives. DWD and ADB assessed the consultants' performance as satisfactory.</p> <p>The TA was designed to be implemented jointly with Loan 2071–NEP: Community Livestock Development Project (CLDP). CLDP could deliver the intended support only partially due to delays in loan effectiveness. Nevertheless, about 80% of the targeted training, small animal extension services, and other income generation activities were delivered. Beneficiaries producing seasonal and off-seasonal vegetables received extension services from DOA's district offices. ADB and DWD reviewed the TA twice.</p>							

DWD assigned a full time Project Manager and a Desk Officer for the TA. DWDOs assigned two field staff in each district to support field implementation. The DWDOs also monitored the field programs. The EA and IA provided furnished and equipped office space to the consultants at the center and district offices.

Originally, Doti and Kanchanpur in the Far-Western Development Region were identified as the TA districts. However, due to security reasons, these districts were changed to Lamjung and Nawalparasi in the Western Development Region. There was no major change in the TA design during its implementation.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome

The EA and consultants submitted inception, trimesterly, annual, and TA completion reports generally on time. Fourteen NGOs (six in Lamjung and eight in Nawalparasi) were engaged for TA implementation, which facilitated formation of 16 CBOs (eight in each district) comprising 800 households in eight VDCs (with each CBO consisting of 50 households). Most of the important workshops and training activities were conducted, including project orientation workshops for district level stakeholders, NGOs and CBOs; capacity development training for NGOs and CBOs; technical training to CBO members in goat-raising, piggery, vegetable cultivation, and fish-farming (for 200 CBO members in Lamjung and 100 in Nawalparasi); and gender mainstreaming training (two at central level and one at district level). Out of 800 CBO members, the majority (746) raised goats followed by vegetable cultivation (29), fisheries (20), and piggery (5). About 80% of the CBO members were women with nearly 74% of them from disadvantaged ethnic groups and castes, nearly meeting the TA targets.

The TA activities were monitored and coordinated at central and district levels. Two PSC meetings and six GMCC meetings were held at the center and districts, respectively. At the time of TA completion, average income per beneficiary household was NRs3,000, with potential for further increases. Beneficiary groups utilized the income for food, child education and family healthcare. CBO members had collected NRs5 – NRs30 as group savings per month and mobilized the funds for meeting their incidental expenses. Although the targeted training and support for pro-poor and gender sensitive service delivery was substantially delivered to the concerned central departments, their district offices and partner NGOs, such inputs could not be delivered to local bodies due to the absence of elected representatives.

Overall Assessment and Rating

The TA improved capacity and technical skills of partner NGOs and CBOs. There were positive impacts on gender and social inclusion in the CBOs and income generation benefits of members through quick-income generating schemes. The CBO members were confident to continue practicing inclusion in their operations. The TA provided an opportunity for DWD and its field offices to practice new approaches for improving the livelihoods of poor and disadvantaged communities. The TA also served as a vehicle to further DWD's mandate to mainstream gender concerns in their operations by experimenting on useful tools and approaches that can be replicated. DWD also established institutional linkages with other departments, NGOs and CBOs, and performed as the focal organization for gender mainstreaming. DWD also practiced how to select target groups by applying a participatory wealth-ranking method, organized beneficiaries to choose income generation activities, monitored field activities jointly with concerned stakeholders, and was committed to replicate the approach.

However, only 80% of the targeted program and 70% of the total TA funds could be delivered mainly due to the conflict situation (during 2004 – 2005) resulting in delays in mobilization of consultants; commencement and smooth implementation of TA activities; difficulty in field monitoring due to poor security conditions; and extremely slow submission of statement of expenditures to ADB by DWD for liquidation of advances. In particular, DWD could deliver only 88% of the funds committed for CBO members to undertake income generation activities and NGOs for their services, and could not complete the gender mainstreaming training targeted for district level government offices. However, DWD arranged funds from government resources to meet its commitment for payments to CBOs and NGOs, and CLDP has provisioned budget to organize the remaining gender mainstreaming training in 2008. The overall performance of the TA is assessed as partly satisfactory.

Major Lessons

NGOs can play effective catalytic roles in identifying target groups, mobilizing them, and implementing poverty reduction programs effectively. However, they should be provided proper orientation before commencing implementation of field programs. Skills oriented exposure is more useful for beneficiary groups than formal training. ADB's current funds flow and advance liquidation procedures need to be simplified for smooth TA implementation and achievement of the desired results. Effective gender mainstreaming is possible by sensitizing government's central departments and their district offices and targeting both women and men in the community. Group savings play important roles for group cohesion and sustainability. The one-and-half year project duration is too short to fully realize capacity development of government agencies, NGOs and CBOs.