

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: PAHQ

TA No., Country and Name: TA 4109-PNG: Preparing the Literacy is for Everyone Project		Amount Approved: \$600,000	
		Revised Amount: \$455,427	
Executing Agency: Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)		Source of Funding: Japan Special Fund (JSF)	Amount Undisbursed: \$144,572.93
			Amount Utilized: \$455,427.00
TA Approval Date: 9 May 2003	TA Signing Date: 13 May 2003	Fielding of First Consultant: 1 July 2003	TA Completion Date Original: 30 September 2004 Actual: 31 December 2006
			Account Closing Date Original: 30 September 2004 Actual: 14 August 2006

Description

Papua New Guinea (PNG) has been lagging far behind other Pacific countries in achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).¹ The development of human resources was considered a crucial part of the Government's overall development policy. This was reflected in the Government's commitment to "Education for All," which includes a 50% improvement in the level of adult literacy by 2015. As a result, the gross enrollment rate has significantly increased over the past years. In 2002, the enrollment rate was estimated at 81% compared to 68.2% in 1985. Despite the improved enrollment rates, about 19% of the children remained outside the education system, and many who enrolled dropped out without completing the cycle. The low enrollment and completion rates contribute to the low literacy rate, particularly among women, in rural areas, and in the highland regions. On average, 51.9% of adults aged 25 years and above were illiterate, ranging from the highest illiteracy rate of 72.2% among women in rural areas in the highland province of Enga to the lowest illiteracy rate of 5.3% among women in the island province of Manus. A significant gender gap exists, with literacy levels of women being 14% lower than those of men. Over 2,000 community-based adult literacy sites exist in PNG with an estimated enrollment of 30,000 students.² NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), and churches are the main supporters of community-based adult literacy sites and programs. Government assistance for adult literacy is very limited and comprises occasional teacher training, curriculum development, provision of learning material, and awareness-raising. A consistent system to promote adult literacy does not exist, and the quality and quantity of support differ from province to province. During the Country Programming Mission in 2000, the Government of PNG and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) agreed that ADB will provide a grant funding for technical assistance (PPTA) in 2003 to prepare a project for possible ADB funding in 2004.

Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs

The intended impact was to help most adults to improve their livelihood and participate in and contribute to the development of PNG. The outcomes were (i) a strategy to further adult literacy at national, provincial, district, and local levels; and (ii) a proposed loan project jointly developed and agreed by key stakeholders. The TA had the following outputs (i) design and pilot testing of (a) a national adult literacy campaign, and (b) a strategy to create awareness among the communities; (ii) a proposal for an amended national literacy policy clarifying roles and responsibilities at all levels of government; (iii) an outline for an institutional capacity building strategy for core divisions and departments responsible for adult literacy; (iv) the design of an information system on adult literacy; (v) the design of a trainer and teacher training system; (vi) pilot testing of new methods and materials to further adult literacy; and (vii) a proposed project design. The TA was to be implemented in four provinces: Eastern Highlands, East Sepik, Enga, and Madang and was to target communities in remote areas and women on a pilot basis.

Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities

The TA commenced with a series of provincial literacy awareness workshops in July 2003 with participation from a wide range of stakeholders and practitioners. Field surveys covering four provinces³ were carried out to (i) assess the awareness of literacy; (ii) test new methods and materials to further adult literacy; and (iii) appraise the capacity of stakeholders to support and conduct literacy activities. The resulting report was discussed during a participatory project planning workshop in April 2004, during which, the goal-oriented project planning (ZOPP)⁴ method was applied and resulted in the project design and monitoring framework. Participants included representatives from national, provincial, district and local level government (LLGs), nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and churches delivering adult literacy training and academic and research institutions.

¹ ADB. 2003. *Millennium Development Goals in the Pacific—Relevance and Progress*. Manila.

² Data and information on adult literacy required by policy makers, support providers, and literacy implementers are scarce and scattered, collected on an ad hoc basis, and are often out of date and inconsistent, which makes planning and monitoring difficult.

³ The TA was implemented in Eastern Highlands, East Sepik, Enga, and Madang and focused communities in remote areas and women.

⁴ ZOPP, from the German term "Zielorientierte Projekt Planung" is a project planning and management method that is based on two techniques—matrix building and stakeholder workshops. The main output of a ZOPP session is a project planning matrix equivalent to a project logical framework, to provide in-depth analysis of project objectives, outputs, activities, and performance indicators and risks. It encourages brainstorming, strategizing, information gathering, and consensus-building among stakeholders.

The TA was implemented from May 2003 to August 2006. The TA completion date was extended twice from the original closing date of September 2004: first to 31 March 2005, and second to 31 December 2006. The first extension was to allow for undertaking of additional activities with regard to stakeholder participation in project design; the second extension was to allow for use of remaining uncommitted funds to finance additional services to prepare the Literacy is for Everyone Project.

Implementation was carried out in cooperation with the National Literacy and Awareness Secretariat (NLAS) and the focal points for adult literacy at the provincial level. Collaboration with national, provincial, district and local level government with civil society worked well. All inputs were considered to be cost-efficient. Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the executing agency, established a project management unit with qualified counterpart staff, and provided office space, transport and communication facilities. The Minister for the Community Development took an active part in implementation of the TA. Performance of EA is rated as satisfactory.

ADB performance is rated as satisfactory. Review missions were conducted on a regular basis by the Project Officer and much hard work was invested in project preparation. Although the TA did not result in a loan project as originally envisioned, ADB assisted the Government (with remaining uncommitted TA funds) to repackage the initiative for potential grant funding once the decision was made by Government to shift borrowing priorities. Stronger policy dialogue might have been warranted by ADB to encourage Government to stick to prior agreement to borrow for the Literacy is for Everyone Project. However, given expressed need for debt containment, strong policy dialogue would not have guaranteed that Government would abide by prior agreement.

The TA provided 15.5 person-months of international consultants specialized in (i) education policy and organizational development, (ii) community awareness and social mobilization, (iii) information management in education, and (iv) participatory planning. The consultants were recruited as individuals. Submission of consultant reports and completion key activities were timely. All consultants' performance was considered as satisfactory.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome

The TA is rated as satisfactory in adequate delivery of outputs and achievement of some outcomes. All required reports were produced. The TA succeeded in delivering all the outputs, including developing an Education, Management, Information System (EMIS) to collect baseline data, and literacy training tool kit. All levels of Government were made aware of the importance of adult literacy. Motivating factors for adults to become literate have been identified. Roles and responsibilities of all Government stakeholders were assessed. A draft institutional capacity building strategy was developed for the core departments and divisions responsible for adult literacy at both national and provincial levels. An information system on adult literacy designed to enable cooperation and coordination among Government, support organizations, training providers, and training of staff was completed. The EMIS system has been running. A system was designed for training of trainers, teacher training, in-service training and material production in adult literacy. New suitable methods and materials to further adult literacy have been identified. The Enga Newspaper has been re-launched and 'story books' were tested. In addition, a loan project was designed; however, at the final stage of project preparation, the Government changed its priority and decided to borrow for a road project. Hence, the TA did not result in an actual loan project as originally intended as a key outcome. Nonetheless, two of the outputs under the TA were effectively used beyond the TA life. These are the EMIS which has been fully-operational, and the literacy training kit which has been used by the Summer Institute of Linguistics and widely distributed throughout the country. Adult literacy remains a priority issue for the country. With shift in Government borrowing priority, the initiative was repackaged for potential grant funding. The New Zealand government took an active interest in the project design and was considering implementing some elements of the proposed project.

Overall Assessment and Rating

The TA was successful in achieving a number of results, including capacity building, development of EMIS, and introducing tool kit for literacy training. It resulted in a loan project proposal that was jointly developed and agreed by key stakeholders. However, the TA did not result in an actual loan project as it failed to secure an agreement with the Government on loan funding. The TA, although satisfactory in the delivery of outputs and other outcomes, is therefore rated as 'partly successful' in the overall assessment.

Major Lessons

The following lessons are learned (i) It is critical to have multi-stakeholders' workshop to design a project to create ownership, (ii) awareness campaign should be included at the PPTA stage, (iii) MIS system should be setup to collect baseline data and for program monitoring and evaluation, and (iv) some of the activities, e.g., capacity building, should be included at the PPTA stage to have lasting impact so that even if the PPTA does not result in an ensuing loan, it will still have some long lasting impact on the sector.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

(i) There should be a firm commitment from the Government to invest in the priority areas of the Government policy and program; (ii) ADB should have stronger policy dialogue with Government to invest in the priority areas as jointly defined under the Country Strategy Partnership agreement and to ensure subsequent investment in the PPTA; and (iii) ADB should have followed-up with the New Zealand Government on potentially implementing the proposed Project.