

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: PAHQ

<b>TA No. and Name</b> 6047-REG: Preparation of National Poverty Reduction Strategies in Pacific Developing Member Countries			<b>Amount Approved:</b> \$500,000	
<b>Executing Agency:</b> ADB			<b>Revised Amount:</b>	
<b>Source of Funding:</b> Cooperation Fund in support of the Formulation and Implementation of National Poverty Reduction Strategies		<b>TA Amount Undisbursed</b> 29,351.60	<b>TA Amount Utilized</b> 470,648.40	
<b>Date</b>			<b>Completion Date</b>	
<b>Approval</b> 6 Sep 2002	<b>Signing</b>	<b>Fielding of Consultants</b> 14 Nov 2002	<b>Original</b> 30 September 2003	<b>Actual</b> 31 October 2005
			<b>Closing Date</b>	
			<b>Original</b> 30 September 2003	<b>Actual</b> 10 August 2006
<b>Description</b> 6047-REG continued the work of earlier technical assistance (TAs), especially that of 6002-REG: Consultation Workshops for Poverty Reduction Strategies in Selected Pacific Developing Member Countries (PDMCs). At the time of TA design as with 6002-REG, the concepts of poverty and hardship were still very new to the Pacific region. Region-wide traditions and cultures supporting extended family, villages and islands could not accept that poverty and hardship could exist in the region. Although the ADB has now carried out, over the past 4 years, extensive work on better understanding and dealing with poverty there remain many in the leadership, in government, and in civil society who find it difficult to accept that hardship and poverty is both significant and increasing. TA 6047 continued the work of TA 6002 that aimed to foster a country-owned process to prepare national poverty reduction strategies. This process and the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS) would also strengthen ADB country strategies and programs. Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Samoa, and Vanuatu were covered under TA 6002 while the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji Islands, Tonga, and Tuvalu were covered under TA 6047.				
<b>Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs</b> The ultimate goal of the TA was to increase the impact of national development interventions in the PDMCs in favor of Pacific peoples who are disadvantaged, vulnerable, in the lowest income brackets, and might otherwise be considered relatively poor. The TA supported increased awareness and capacity building for improved assessment and understanding of poverty, discussion of poverty, formulation of NPRSs, their incorporation into national development strategies, the finalization of Poverty Partnerships, the establishment of poverty reduction MDG-related performance indicators, and commitment to the implementation and monitoring of the same in selected PDMCs.				
<b>Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities</b> A development economist (initially 8 person-months) and a Social Development Analyst (initially 6 person-months) were recruited to conduct the quantitative and qualitative, participatory assessments of poverty, hardship, and to critique and help prepare national poverty reduction strategies. A regional forum was held at the beginning of the TA to share experiences, compare poverty reduction strategies, compare MDG performance indicators, discuss and revise the TA program, and otherwise discuss the best means of institutionalizing a stronger focus on poverty. Pacific islanders who had already worked on these issues under TA 6002 were to make presentations to their colleagues. There was much donor interest, and increasing country interest, in poverty and the MDGs at this time and this allowed for a much larger meeting to be held covering most of the countries in the Pacific region. The earlier work of ADB brought the first practical case studies and evidence of poverty, or hardship, to regional attention. Following the forum, the consultants proceeded to undertake their work in each individual country (FSM, Fiji Islands, Tonga, and Tuvalu).  As with TA 6002, the participatory assessments of poverty, hardship and subsequent in-country workshops helped create ownership and commitment to the new understandings of poverty, helped to raise attention to policies and strategies required to reduce poverty, and also helped to clearly prioritize the needs of the poor. Consultancy inputs were completed largely on time, and the inputs were most economic and productive.  As with TA 6002, the issue of poverty and required policy dialogue is a sensitive issue. For some PDMCs, this attention to poverty and hardship raised some cultural sensitivities. But all these concerns were well dealt with by consultants, relevant Governments, and by ADB. The direct support and performance of the four PDMC Executing Agencies (EAs) varied. Overall EA performance is rated as satisfactory. ADB could have supported greater in-country review and				

participation. Performance of ADB is also rated as partly satisfactory.

#### **Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcomes**

Assessments of hardship and poverty, strategies for equitable growth and hardship alleviation, and priorities of the people were produced and distributed, with "priorities" published, for all four PDMCs covered by the TA. Poverty consultation workshops were held in all 4 countries. The ADB poverty database was provided with relevant PDMC data and consistently updated. In turn, this database helped ADB to provide improved input to annual meetings, annual development outlook, the preparation of Country Strategy and Program and CSP Update CSP(U)s and other relevant documentation. Though variable in impact by country, the outputs of the TA have helped to direct future PDMC policies and strategies and future ADB regional and country priorities, strategies, policies, and programs. The output of this TA together with earlier TA (RETAs 6002 and 5097, and PNG TA 3667) all had a significant impact in setting the priorities for the new Pacific Strategy for 2005 to 2009, entitled "Responding to the Priorities of the Poor". The output of this TA also led to the design of a further regional TA 6157, managed by the Secretariat to the Pacific Community. TA 6157-REG will continue the same work, aiming to build both the demand for better understanding of poverty and policies and strategies to deal with poverty. At the same time TA 6157 also aims to build both regional and national capacities in assessing and formulating required policy and strategy.

All four governments provided key staff who assisted the conduct of participatory poverty assessments. TA closure was substantially delayed owing to the inability of the accounts department of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to fulfill ADB accounting requirements.

#### **Overall Assessment and Rating**

The TA formed another significant component in the ADB's work on poverty in the Pacific region. It helped both the Pacific and the ADB to better understand poverty and hardship in the Pacific, to prioritize needs, and to assess answers to reducing poverty. The TA is rated overall as successful.

#### **Major Lessons**

The results of the qualitative participatory poverty assessments again provided a highly effective complement to the more quantitative analyses of poverty and hardship and the assessments of government policies and strategies. Inclusion of EA key staff in the planning and actual conduct of participatory assessment provided a very good learning opportunity for these staff as well as ensuring ownership of the results after study completion.

#### **Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions**

The TA helped guide the design of a follow-up regional TA 6157 Strengthening Poverty Analysis and Strategies in the Pacific. The latter TA has established a multi-donor funded Pacific Poverty Program that is being executed by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community that will essentially continue, expand, and improve on the work of regional TAs 6047 and 6002.

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