

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: PAHQ

TA No., Country, and Name			Amount Approved: \$500,000	
TA 6175-REG: Making Resource Allocation Pro-Poor and Participatory in the Pacific			Revised Amount: Not applicable	
Executing Agency Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Source of Funding Poverty Reduction Cooperation Fund	Amount Undisbursed: \$150,201.99	Amount Utilized: \$349,798.01	
TA Approval Date: 16 June 2004	TA Signing Date: N.A.	Fielding of First Consultants: November 2004	TA Completion Date Original: 31 December 2006 Actual: 30 April 2007	
			Account Closing Date Original: 31 December 2006 Actual: 24 October 2007	
Description				
<p>The TA aimed to (i) improve civil society's capacity to engage more constructively and proactively in resource allocation prioritization and decision making and in monitoring service delivery, and (ii) encourage governments in the two pilot countries (Fiji Islands and Vanuatu) to become more responsive to the participation of civil society in the resource allocation process.</p>				
Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs				
<p>The expected impact was improved access of poor and marginalized to quality social services. The expected outcome was that civil society would engage more constructively and proactively in resource allocation decisions and monitoring of service delivery. Governments in pilot countries would also be more responsive to participation of civil society in resource allocation processes. The expected outputs were: (1) a report on assessment of regional practices on participation in resource allocation process and recommendations for improvement; (2) training materials; (3) civil society organizations (CSOs) more pro-active and constructive in their engagement in resource allocation decisions and monitoring government service delivery; (4) government officials of the pilot ministries, elected officials and traditional leaders more aware of benefits of civil society engagement, with better understanding of participatory methodologies, and encouraged to institutionalize approach; and (5) a scale-up plan to replicate the participatory approach.</p>				
Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities				
<p>A total of 150 person-months of expert services were utilized, of which 24 and 126 were international and national respectively. Implementation of the regional technical assistance (RETA) did not exemplify efficient execution of assigned tasks and effective delivery of the expected outputs in total. Timely and regular submission of required reports and outputs from the consultants was a particular difficulty, with tardiness and repeated follow-up.</p>				
<p>There was some discrepancy between the TA paper and methodology employed by the consultant nongovernment organization (NGO), and the TA paper terms of reference were not always followed and additional activities undertaken. Consultant TA activities focused on some TA outputs (training and production of training materials) over other outputs (engaging CSO/community representatives and government). The methodology adopted appeared to closely align with the NGO consultant Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)'s broader governance work agenda, which is funded by several non-ADB donors.</p>				
<p>There was one contract variation: the proposed TA activity to conduct outreach seminars—bringing together CSO, media, government, and traditional leaders—outlining the benefits of a participatory approach was not achieved and was replaced with the less ambitious, but more realistically achievable (due to FSPI's limited resources) activity of preparing a document on "lessons learned" for distribution to governments and stakeholders.</p>				

The NGO consultant lacked administrative capacity to implement the TA. Its project consultants required assistance to be able to follow ADB's complex processes and guidelines agreed during contract negotiations. There was delay with submission of required documentation (reports, contract variation justification, expense claims). There were no inception or review missions until the last 2 months of the project, with supervision largely provided by e-mail/telecom from headquarters.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome

While training was conducted and training materials produced (Training of Trainers Manual and Community Information/Resource Handbook) and tested with pilot communities in both countries, there was less focus on the more difficult task of engaging government and traditional elders in project objectives and activities. Follow-up with helping communities make submissions to government was also limited. Efforts to engage governments in project activities had mixed success. A thin report on regional practices and detailed scale-up plan was produced. The project met some success producing a report on regional practices and training materials (outputs 1 and 2), assisting civil society organizations with engagement in resource allocation decisions (output 3) and producing a scale up plan (output 5), but limited success with making government officials, elected officials and traditional leaders more aware and encouraged towards institutionalized participatory approaches (output 4).

Overall Assessment and Rating

The TA is rated partly successful, as progress was made on providing the materials for NGOs and civil society to engage in resource allocation decision-making. There was also some limited engagement with government officials, elected officials and traditional leaders to encourage and institutionalize this approach.

Major Lessons

An inception and/or review mission early on in the project could have identified and addressed the disconnect on methodology, as well as NGO consultant administrative weaknesses and unfamiliarity with ADB procedures and processes. Such circumstances could be addressed in the future by close ADB supervision and assistance in future projects, including through additional resources to ensure NGOs understand and can implement ADB guidelines. The NGO Center should be consulted at the HQ end. The Pacific Subregional Office (SPSO) in Suva should provide ongoing liaison support to address FSPI knowledge gaps on the ground. Any follow-on projects should focus on seeking to engage government officials, elected officials, and traditional leaders in civil society training and discussions on resource allocation decision-making.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

ADB has an important role in helping NGO consultants familiarize themselves with ADB guidelines and processes, particularly when the NGO has not played this role before. It will be important to address the lack of capacity for ADB project management on the NGO side in the event it is selected for future projects. ADB should also seek to ensure close supervision and review missions, where possible, from the ADB side in order to ensure the NGO complies with agreed TOR.

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