

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: RSGS

TA No., Country and Name			Amount Approved: \$980,000	
TA 6270-REG: Facilitating Knowledge Management for Pro-Poor Policies and Projects			Revised Amount: n/a	
Executing Agency: ADB		Source of Funding: PRF	Amount Undisbursed: \$283,277.03	Amount Utilized: \$696,722.97
TA Approval Date:	TA Signing Date:	Fielding of First consultants:	TA Completion Date	Actual: 31 December 2007
23 November 2005	n/a	22 February 2006	Original: 31 December 2007	
			Account Closing Date	Actual: 17 June 2008
			Original: 31 March 2008	
<p>Description: ADB adopted Poverty Reduction Strategy in November 1999 and identified poverty reduction as its overarching goal. The Cooperation Fund in Support of the Formulation and Implementation of National Poverty Reduction Strategies (NPRS), established in November 2001 with financing from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Poverty Reduction Cooperation Fund (PRF), established in July 2002 with financing from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), were among the trust funds intended to help ADB attain the objectives of the PRS. Over the past six years the NPRS and PRF together supported 119 TA projects totaling about \$63 million. As the implementation of these two trust funds progressed, donors and ADB became aware of the increasing needs in the developing member countries (DMCs) supported by these funds for (i) a systematic approach to capture, synthesize, enhance, and disseminate the knowledge and experience gathered from these projects; and (ii) feedback loops to the operations in ADB's DMCs. This regional technical assistance (RETA) was developed to respond to these needs.</p> <p>Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs: The expected impact of the RETA was to increase the pro-poor emphasis in DMC policies and projects. The intended TA outcome was to strengthen awareness and institutional capacity of ADB and DMCs to use the knowledge generated from NPRS-PRF projects for pro-poor policy and project development. The four outputs envisaged were grouped into two parts: Part A Knowledge Products Development—(i) quality NPRS-PRF knowledge products with strategic influence on policies and projects, i.e., development, production, and dissemination of 80 short and 15 in-depth case studies, 7 thematic synthesis papers, and 20 feature articles, newsletters, and other publications; and Part B Knowledge Management Coordination—(ii) in-country knowledge feedback and institutionalization, i.e., demand-driven advisory support to project officers to develop strategies to communicate TA results, translation support, and DMC stakeholder conference participation support; (iii) reaching the broad community of practice, i.e., communication and dissemination activities, a regional workshop in Manila, proactive media events, and marketing of knowledge products to reputable development knowledge networks; and (iv) knowledge management system and program management, i.e., database management, and NPRS-PRF project tracking activities. Part A was assisted by a consulting firm and Part B by a group of individual consultants located in the NPRS-PRF secretariat in ADB's Regional and Sustainable Development Department, Manila. The demand-driven nature of RETA design, drawing upon extensive consultations with NPRS-PRF project officers and donors, is considered highly relevant.</p> <p>Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities: The Part A consultant team comprised two international consultants stationed in the United Kingdom (UK) and one national consultant stationed at ADB headquarters. Seven additional short-term international consultants were engaged to strengthen expertise on thematic papers on such topics as poverty reduction strategies, pro-poor infrastructure, regional cooperation, environmental poverty, equity and inclusion, and change management. In total, the international and national consultant inputs were 13 person-months and 18 person-months, respectively. The selection of case study TAs was carefully done jointly by ADB and the consultant team based on the implementation status of TAs and the country clusters. The timing of delivery and the number of outputs were adjusted a few times to respond to the slower than expected progress in implementation of NPRS-PRF TAs. In addition to two Manila visits, four country visits were planned in the beginning, but only two materialized to People's Republic of China and Cambodia, where substantial data on the ground was collected. Pakistan declined to participate in the RETA, and implementation of the projects in Lao People's Democratic Republic were not advanced enough when the consultant visit was scheduled. Overall, the Part A consultant team flexibly adjusted to the changing circumstances. However, leadership, communication and initiatives from the team leader were limited. For example, minimum efforts were made to communicate with clients (i.e., ADB's NPRS-PRF project officers) for collecting and verifying information for case studies and with the other team members to engage in teamwork. ADB staff, the Part A national consultant and the Part B consultants eventually needed to fill these gaps. The administrative backup from the firm in London was marginal. Submission of claims and variation requests were often significantly delayed.</p> <p>Part B consultants comprised two full-time consultants (an international team leader and a national analyst) and three part-time consultants (an international editor, a national media specialist, a national newsletter writer), all based in Manila. Altogether, 22 person-months of international and 32 person-months of national consulting services were provided. Together with two ADB staff (one international NPRS-PRF coordinator and one senior operations</p>				

assistant), Part B consultants constituted the 'NPRS-PRF secretariat' in RSGS responsible for portfolio and knowledge management of the two funds. Deliveries of inputs by Part B consultants were, overall, efficient and timely. At times, however, the required daily attention to portfolio management shifted the team's focus away from the need to regularly cultivate demand for knowledge management services (e.g., communication strategy, support to DMC officials' conference participation) resulting in fewer activities than expected in outputs (ii) and (iii).

Part B provided \$56,000 to organize a two-day high level Forum on Inclusive Growth and Poverty Reduction on 8-9 October 2007 in Manila (<http://www.adb.org/Documents/Events/2007/Inclusive-Growth-Poverty-Reduction/>), involving nearly 100 professionals from within and outside the region. The preparation and conduct of the Forum was highly successful with quality discussion papers and presentations provided by participants. Four NPRS-PRF case studies were shared and discussed in one of the sessions. The Forum provided important inputs to ADB's Strategy 2020.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome On average, quality outputs were provided in all four areas. These quality outputs have contributed to RETA's intended outcome of the enhanced awareness and knowledge of pro-poor policies and projects by ADB. Outreach to a broader community of practice was successful, based on the frequent hits of the NPRS-PRF websites. It was, however, less successful in DMCs, due partly to the fact that much of in-country knowledge activities are carried out within the scope of each NPRS-PRF TA. Appendix shows the summary of planned and actual outputs. Among the key RETA outputs, short case studies and *Poverty Matters* quarterly e-newsletters (including featured articles) were most popular among website readers and ADB staff. The less than expected quantity of some of the products (i.e., short case studies, academic papers, and on-demand support) was mainly due to the fact that the total number of completed and nearly completed NPRS-PRF projects was far less than had been assumed at the start of RETA implementation. The RETA closing date of 31 December 2007 was strictly set by the PRF donor and could not be extended to accommodate delays in these projects. Due to this time pressure, the RETA was unable to generate sufficient demands for post-TA knowledge dissemination and academic paper preparation. Unfortunately, the time pressure towards the end of the RETA required prioritization of case studies and thematic papers over other outputs. All these resulted in the lower than expected disbursements.

Overall Assessment and Rating Output 1, knowledge products, was successful (with short case studies as highly successful and others as partly successful); Output 2, in-country support, was partially successful because the actual number of outputs were less than expected; Output 3, outreaching broader communities of practice, was successful (with the website, e-newsletter and regional workshop highly successful); and Output 4, knowledge management system development, was highly successful. The overall rating of the RETA is successful.

Major Lessons The major lessons that can be drawn from this RETA are:

- **Timing.** Ideally, a RETA of this nature should take place a little later when there are a sufficient number of projects with outcomes that can be meaningfully documented. The slower than expected portfolio progress of NPRS-PRF TAs that affected the RETA's overall effectiveness. A number of requests for in-country knowledge dissemination assistance were received after the RETA closed.
- **Format.** After piloting a range of formats for knowledge products, there was a higher demand for punchy, short (2-3 page) case studies and e-newsletters, and this format was more effective in putting across messages from the projects.
- **Disseminating knowledge to DMCs.** Knowledge products were effectively disseminated within ADB and the broader community of practice, but less so in DMCs. ADB needs to be proactive in approaching DMCs in knowledge dissemination efforts, and the key to doing so is the active role played by resident missions, as evidenced by the successful case in the People's Republic of China.
- **Team work.** Linking the communication between the UK-based team and Manila-based team was a challenge. Working with a consulting firm experienced in cross-continental team management is important.
- **Commitment by ADB project officers.** Quality of knowledge products heavily depended on the level of inputs and speedy response by ADB project officers.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions. With the closure of NPRS and PRF funds in 2008, no follow-up RETA is planned. However, the following actions are being considered: (i) the popular *Poverty Matters* e-newsletter will be continued by RSDD's Poverty Unit but with a focus on matters other than NPRS-PRF projects; (ii) a synthesis paper will be published in 2008 that features case studies on influencing policies and projects to make them pro-poor and the analysis of factors that enhance or discourage such influence; (iii) the concept and principles for knowledge management developed and piloted in the RETA are relevant to knowledge management in other areas. RSDD-KM should synthesize similar experiences from other ADB-wide knowledge management initiatives, including the roles played by resident missions; and (iv) additional case studies are being produced. Further marketing of these case studies through regional research institutes such as the Asian Institute of Management will be explored.

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Summary of Key Outputs

Outputs	Plan	Actual	Remarks
Part A: Knowledge Products Development			
Output 1 : Knowledge products			
1.1 Short case studies	80	57	Only 57 TAs were at the documentable implementation stage.
1.2 In-depth Case Studies	15	17	Involved country visits.
1.3 Thematic synthesis papers	7	6	Drafts only.
1.4 Support to academic articles (in the reputable periodicals)	5	0	Project officers did not find this as a priority.
Part B: Knowledge Management (KM) Coordination			
Output 2: In-country KM support			
2.1 Support to develop in-country TA results communication strategies	20	3	22 other projects requested support but did not materialize as project officer did not have sufficient time to guide a consultant
2.2 DMC champions' participation in regional or international conference of relevant topic	5	2	Two representatives involved in the implementation of a project in Nepal using conditional cash transfer were financed to present in a global conference. Their learning contributed to the implementation of the project. Identification of matching conferences in the right timing was difficult.
2.3 Feasibility assessment of interest in Resident Mission (RM)-based poverty knowledge database development	No number	4 RMs	Demands assessed in the initial 4 RMs. Concerns were expressed on lack of resources in RMs to maintain database. With the departure of RM-mission based poverty consultants, development of database became impossible.
2.4 Publication translation budget support	5	2	Viet Nam and PRC
Output 3: Outreaching a broader community of practice			
3.1 Developing Knowledge Dissemination and Communication (KnoDisComm) Plan for NPRS-PRF TAs	1	1	The plan resulted in a range of media products that were disseminated widely.
3.2 Media campaigns to promote NPRS-PRF	No number	0	A joint decision with Department of External Relations was made that these should be replaced with less expensive promotional means such as website and feature articles.
3.3 Media & feature articles and brochure	20	50	Disseminated through e-newsletter, ADB Today, ADB Review, and websites.
3.4 Poverty Matters e-newsletter (quarterly)	6	6	Popular means to disseminate TA results.
3.5 Revamped NPRS and PRF websites	2	2	Each website updated at least monthly.
3.6 Support to seminars and workshops	15	12	
3.7 Regional Forum on Inclusive Growth and Poverty Reduction (October 2007)	1	1	Involved about 100 professionals. Highly successful in promoting discussions on inclusive growth. The keynote paper was published as an RSDD Technical Note. The discussions at the Forum contributed to the formulation of ADB's new long-term strategic framework or Strategy 2020.
Output 4: Knowledge management system			
4.1 NPRS-PRF portfolio monitoring and tracking system	1	1	
4.2 Status reports (annual, semi-annual, quarterly financial)	2, 4, 8	2, 4, 8	All available at websites
4.3 NPRS-PRF knowledge database	1	1	Being transferred from G-drive to C-Cube