

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: PAHQ

<b>TA No. and Name</b> TA 6002-Consultation Workshops for Poverty Reduction Strategies in Selected Pacific Developing Member Countries			<b>Amount Approved:</b> \$300,000	
			<b>Revised Amount:</b> \$300,000	
<b>Executing Agency:</b> ADB		<b>Source of Funding:</b> TASF	<b>TA Amount Undisbursed</b> \$13,702.71	<b>TA Amount Utilized</b> \$286,297.26
<b>Date</b>			<b>Completion Date</b>	
<b>Approval</b> 11 Oct 2001	<b>Signing</b> 11 Oct 2001	<b>Fielding of Consultants</b> 1 Feb 2002	<b>Original</b> 30 Sep 2002	<b>Actual</b> 21 Apr 2005
			<b>Closing Date</b>	
			<b>Original</b> 30 Sep 2002	<b>Actual</b> 30 Sep 2004
<p><b>Description</b> At the time of TA design the concepts of poverty and hardship were very new to the Pacific region. Region-wide traditions and cultures supporting extended family, village and island caring and reciprocity 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. The work of TA 6002 followed on from desk studies of the poverty situation of the Pacific DMCs completed under TA 5097-REG: Poverty Assessment in Pacific Developing Member Countries approved on 28 March 2000. TA 5097 produced a set of discussion papers, one for each PDMC, describing the poverty situation, a description of the nature and causes of poverty, a framework for analysis, a poverty profile, and presenting a preliminary national poverty reduction strategy. A country-owned process aimed at the preparation of national poverty reduction strategies (NPRS) was seen to be necessary. This process and the NPRS would also strengthen ADB country strategies and programs. Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Samoa, and Vanuatu were initially selected based on cultural diversity, perceived level of poverty, availability of poverty analysis, and other analyses already planned. Poverty consultation workshops, the preparation of a national poverty reduction strategy, and the poverty task force formed in PNG initiated under TA 5097, also provided guidance and direction to TA 6002.</p> <p><b>Objectives and Scope</b> The TA aimed to initiate broad-based poverty consultations and to formulate country-owned poverty reduction strategies. ADB's Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the country assessments completed under TA 5097 were to be discussed. Group discussions were to lead to the formulation of a national poverty reduction strategy, a poverty task force was to be established and integrated into the country's national development strategy. Poverty assessments prepared under TA 5097 were also to be updated. TA design was well guided by earlier TA (5097) and by ADB's Poverty Reduction Strategy, objectives were appropriate, but stakeholder participation and ownership through national poverty task forces was not forthcoming in three of the four PDMCs (the exception being Samoa). This led to a change in scope and the inclusion of participatory poverty assessments (undertaken in RMI, Samoa, and Vanuatu; the change in scope was too late to include Kiribati) to complement the more quantitative poverty analyses and strategy formulation.</p> <p><b>Evaluation of Inputs</b> Initial TA design allowed for 7 person months for an international consultant economist, for local workshop facilitators in each PDMC covered, and for a total of 10 person months for an administrative research assistant based in Manila who would help manage the TA and update the Pacific poverty database. TA inputs were altered to allow for the inclusion of participatory processes specialists who would carry out participatory assessments of poverty in each PDMC. This additional input necessitated an extension in the completion date but 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. The TA also provided experience and confidence to selected government personnel that would allow for conduct of similar exercises in the future. All consultancy inputs were completed, though over an extended period of time. Further extension in TA completion was required to finalize publications, both in English, and in the languages of the Pacific to improve dissemination of TA results. Although consultancy inputs were extended in time, the inputs were most economic and productive.</p> <p>Required TA policy dialogue is always a most sensitive issue. What for some PDMCs might be considered as the first attention to poverty and hardship did raise some cultural sensitivities. But all these concerns were well dealt with by consultants, by relevant Governments, and by ADB. The direct support and performance of the four PDMC Executing Agencies 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 satisfactory.</p>				

**Evaluation of Outputs** 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 the 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 CSP(U)s and other relevant documentation. With the exception of Samoa, the poverty task forces did not function as well as was intended. 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 subsequent TA (RETA 6047 and TA 3667) had a most significant impact in setting the priorities for the new Pacific Strategy for 2005 to 2009 that is currently being finalized. Local Workshop Facilitators were a combination of EA representatives teamed up with local consultants experienced in conducting community consultations who were either university lecturers (PNG) or local consulting firms (Samoa) and individual consultants (Vanuatu). The teaming up of EA representatives and local consultants was found to be very effective due to the complementarity of skills and networks. The EA representatives managed official formalities, organized the community and national workshops while the local consultants took charge of actual consultations with support from NGOs, community based organizations and EA representatives.

Government provided key staff who assisted the conduct of participatory poverty assessments.

**Overall Assessment and Rating**

The TA formed a most significant component in the ADB's work on poverty in the Pacific region. It greatly 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 highly successful.

**Major Lessons Learned** The results of the qualitative participatory poverty assessments 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, 6047, that extended the same work to four more PDMCs (Fiji, FSM, Tonga, and Tuvalu). TAs 6002, 6047, and 3667 (PNG) all led to the design of TA 6157-REG: 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 TA 6002.

Prepared by Stephen J. Pollard Designation Principal Programs Coordination Specialist