

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: PAHQ

TA No., Country and Name: 4653-RMI: Increasing Ownership of and Effective Demand for Improved Urban Waste Management		Amount Approved: \$300,000 Revised Amount: N/A	
Executing Agency: Majuro Atoll Government (MALGOV)	Source of Funding: Poverty Reduction Cooperation Fund	Amount Undisbursed: \$37,166.05	Amount Utilized: \$262,833.95
TA Approval Date: 22 September 2005	TA Signing Date: 8 March 2006	Fielding of First Consultants: June 2006	TA Completion Date Original: 31 May 2006 Actual: 31 December 2007 Account Closing Date Original: 31 May 2006 Actual: 30 April 2008

Description. The lack of ownership of and effective demand for the disposal and management of solid waste on the increasingly urbanized atolls of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) has led to a degradation of the natural environment, including poisoning scarce groundwater resources and fragile island environments. This has created health hazards, and erosion of subsistence and formal economies (including negative impacts on fisheries and tourism). Prior to the TA no sustainable solution had yet been found for urban waste management in the RMI. The poorest of the poor were the most affected. Some of the urban solid waste in Majuro is disposed of in a landfill on reclaimed land. Other waste had been disposed of by dumping it into the lagoon, ocean or in illegal informal dump sites. The retaining wall of the disposal site had been broken by waves with tons of waste washed out to sea and a risk of coastal pollution. There was no organized waste recycling program. Waste management was confused with four agencies involved in urban waste management on Majuro atoll. Urban waste management in RMI has long been top-down, supply-driven, highly subsidized and very expensive with a total budget of about \$1.2 million per year. Little attention had been paid to public awareness, ownership of and demand for continued and sustainable waste management. Improved waste management was prioritized during participatory preparations for the Asian Development Bank (ADB)'s country strategy and program update during 2003 and 2004. Ownership for a full solution through participatory processes leading to understanding of parameters of demand and design of technical solutions were deemed to be needed. The technical assistance (TA) was to support a series of informed and facilitated participatory planning exercises that would bring all relevant stakeholders to discuss current status and trends, principles and issues, and to design solutions to improve urban waste management including proposed institutional improvements, for subsequent funding by ADB or other donors and the Government.

Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs. The ultimate outcome of the TA was to be sustainable urban waste management and environmental improvement in the RMI. The TA would (i) promote public awareness and ownership of urban waste management through extensive informed participatory planning processes, (ii) improve institutional arrangements for urban waste management, and (iii) design a sustainable solution to urban waste management. It was to lead to a community-designed and community-owned waste management system established by the Government and assisted by ADB and/or other international financial institutions. Key outcomes were to be (i) greater community awareness of urban waste management through educational materials, including videos, radio programs, drama and articles; (ii) more participation by communities, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), government agencies, and other stakeholders in urban waste management; (iii) a stronger institutional framework for urban waste management; (iv) stakeholder recommendations and community design of urban waste management; (v) pilot activities to test the participatory approach to establishing an urban waste management system; and (vi) recommendations for the proposed project preparatory technical assistance on urban waste management in RMI.

Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities. The three implementing consultants (Participatory Planning Processes (PPP) Specialist/Team Leader, Urban Waste Management Specialist, and Community Development Specialist) were all recruited on time. The PPP Specialist/Team Leader and Community Development Specialist fulfilled their terms of reference on time. The Urban Waste Management Specialist was recruited through a consultancy company and was unable to devote sufficient time to the TA as required. The first consultant to be recruited as Independent Monitoring specialist could not undertake the work as she was subsequently hired to a full-time position with Government. This delayed this input until her employment position was clarified and another consultant recruited. A total of 19.3636 person-months were used for implementing the TA, as against 14.6 person-months initially planned. The additional consultancy inputs were due to the following: (i) research/review/update alternative solutions to urban waste management, (ii) additional stakeholder consultations, (iii) additional engineering

inputs, (iv) assistance in MAWC's collection option plan, and (v) finalization of publishable version of project case study. The Executing Agency (EA) for the TA was the Majuro Atoll Local Government (MALGOV), in coordination with the Ministry of Public Works, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Marshall Islands Visitors Authority. Inception and three review missions were conducted. The existing Solid Waste Task Force acted as the Steering Committee which was proposed under the TA. While a series of meetings with the EA and other relevant stakeholders were held, MALGOV did not give the direction to TA implementation as agreed. TA commencement was delayed from October 2005 to May 2006 when all consultants could be fielded together. Although the TA was substantially completed by 22 February 2007 with submission by the Team Leader of the final report, full completion had to be extended from May 2006 to December 2007 to allow for the Majuro Atoll Waste Company (MAWC) to be approved and established, and to also allow the MAWC to survey waste collection and commence implementation of the pilot waste collection system. The TA was otherwise adequately formulated.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome. Inception, midterm, draft final and final reports were all produced as required. All these reports were very well prepared. The final independent report on the entire exercise was produced in October 2007. TA Inception agreed that the priority requirement for improved solid waste management was the creation of a single waste management authority. This was created in the form of the MAWC. TA consultants argued, and EA and ADB agreed, that preparation of videos, radio programs, and drama would be better timed to coincide with the implementation of new solid waste services by MAWC. Rather, extensive consultations were held, articles were prepared and published in the local newspaper, and awareness-raising of issues and alternative solutions was highly satisfactory. Guidelines on participatory processes were not prepared. Pilot solid waste collection activities were undertaken at a late stage of the TA. The design of further projects in support of waste management and disposal were assessed. Though unrelated to this TA, ADB subsequently agreed with the Government not to program further ADB loans for the period of the current country strategy; i.e., from 2007 to 2011. In part, this was due to the failure of government to meet ADB loan repayments, but was also due to the poor outcomes of earlier ADB loan projects. During the latter part of 2006, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) commissioned a technical study of the feasibility of constructing a new dump site and reclaiming of land in the Jenrok area. A JICA mission visited the RMI in December 2006. This engineering project was subsequently assessed as not a current priority. This was largely due to the information provided to JICA by the TA.

Overall Assessment and Rating. At this stage of the implementation of improved waste management, the TA is assessed as successful, bordering on highly successful.

Major Lessons. Extensive participation can work in the Pacific islands to help garner support of society at large for difficult development decision-making by the leadership, but more time is needed for all the leadership to be able to resolve personal and political conflicts of interest.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions. The story of this TA is being prepared for publication and for wide dissemination within both the RMI and ADB.

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