

TA COMPLETION REPORT

MASTER COPY

Division: OEWD

TA NO./NAME: TA 2810-SRI: Strengthening Project Performance Evaluation Capability of the Ministry of Plan Implementation and Parliamentary Affairs				TA AMOUNT APPROVED: \$350,000.00	
				REVISED AMOUNT: \$350,000.00	
EXECUTING AGENCY: Ministry of Plan Implementation and Parliamentary Affairs				TA AMOUNT UNDISB.: \$45,000	TA AMOUNT UTILIZED: \$305,000
DATE: 22 Oct 1999	APPROVAL: 16 Jun 1997	SIGNING: 24 Jul 1997	FIELD: 11-16 Aug 1997	CLOSING ORIGINAL: Dec 1998	ACTUAL: Dec 1999

TA DESCRIPTION

Sri Lanka has relied substantially on external assistance for funding its public investment program. Significant progress was made in the past in improving capabilities in on-going evaluation/monitoring, but integrative institutional framework matched with appropriate policy initiatives was not in place to carry out performance evaluation activities and derive lessons from experience in the central, ministerial, and department levels. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) provided a small-scale technical assistance (TA) in 1991 under which a Postevaluation Unit (PEU) within the Ministry of Plan Implementation and Parliamentary Affairs (MPI) was established. This TA was a follow-up of that earlier small-scale TA and was designed to sustain its benefits. It emphasized the establishment of a close and interactive link between MPI on the one hand, and External Resources Department (ERD) and National Planning Department (NPD) of the Ministry of Finance and Planning on the other towards building a more effective and efficient integrated project performance management system (PPMS). It proposed to expand the performance management scope of the earlier small-scale TA to one that covered inputs, outputs, effects, and impacts at each stage of the project cycle.

TA OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The TA aimed to enhance the project performance evaluation and quality assurance capability in MPI, NPD, and ERD. On a broader basis, it was designed to support the Government's efforts to foster results-oriented and indicator-based PPMS as part of its efforts in administrative reform. The scope of the TA included both institutional development and training components. The institutional development component provided the services of an international consultant and included: (i) an action plan for institutionalizing a more effective PPMS including establishing sectoral performance indicators; (ii) system procedures that would make the results of evaluation work available to those involved in the earlier stages of the project cycle and effectively link the project quality assurance structures in NPD and ERD; (iii) guidelines for each operational unit involved in the PPMS within MPI, NPD, and ERD and a system for setting and reviewing the indicators used to monitor progress and achievements from projects and programs; (iv) an equipped documents center in Monitoring and Project Review Division (MPRD), MPI; and (v) a strengthened Postevaluation Information System. The training component on the other hand included the preparation of training materials and manuals, a seminar to orient senior officers on the PPMS, an in-country training course, international training for MPRD staff in more advanced monitoring and evaluation techniques and methodologies at an academic institution, and fellowships for senior staff of MPI, NPD, and ERD to study PPMS and project quality assurance systems in regional economies.

TA INPUTS EVALUATION

A team of two consultants experienced in conducting ex-post evaluation of development projects was engaged for eight person-months for the implementation of the TA, namely, an Institutional Development Specialist (IDS) and an Evaluation Training Specialist (ETS). The IDS was very knowledgeable on the computer aspect and imparted knowledge to the counterpart staff of MPI, NPD, and ERD regarding institutional framework and procedures needed to better integrate the evaluation work with project identification and design, and with project management and monitoring activities under an improved PPMS. The IDS experienced difficulties in preparing the action plan and other documents on time partly due to his illness and the dislocation arising from the bombing incident near his hotel. General guidelines for the relevant sections in NPD and ERD were prepared instead of a detailed one specified in his terms of reference. NPD and ERD subsequently improved upon the general guidelines themselves with input from those trained under the TA. The ETS, on the other hand, reviewed the existing PPMS activities in Sri Lanka and ADB's PPMS, and effectively developed training manuals and conducted in-country training programs. The ETS performed very well and interacted closely with the counterpart staff.

Procurement of equipment and internet facilities was completed on schedule in accordance with ADB procedures. Nine computers, 3 printers and accessories, 2 multimedia projectors, 1 laptop computer, and 3 Internet and email facilities were procured for training purposes. A total of \$305,000 was utilized. Cost savings amounting to \$45,000 from the study on the regional PPMS, conduct of in-country training, and equipment procurement sub-components are mainly due to lesser number of participants and lower procurement costs.

TA OUTPUTS EVALUATION

The Project Performance Evaluation Information System (PPEIS) was expanded to provide a feedback mechanism to the line ministries and other key agencies through the installation of internet and email facilities to ERD, NPD, and MPI. A Postevaluation System web-site was established at MPI and is maintained by an Assistant Director. This greater connectivity enabled the key agencies and line ministries to learn from past project experiences and improve the quality of ongoing and future projects. MPI also provides project performance reports to the President of Sri Lanka using the PPEIS. The system is sustainable judging by the availability of budgetary funds and the use of such facilities by all ministries concerned.

A Documentation Center was established in MPI with modern electronic equipment and library designed to augment the PPMS. Two staff were assigned to this center which now has reached a membership of 300 government officials. Project-related and other useful development-related documents have been forwarded to this center enabling wider usage among professionals involved in development. Procurement of additional reference materials is in progress.

A two-day regional workshop on PPMS comprising 38 participants (including 3 foreign participants from Nepal, Philippines, and Thailand) from various ministries, other donor agencies, and the private sector was held in Colombo in September 1999. The workshop allowed for an exchange of experiences in PPMS in the four countries concerned as well as the formulation of recommendations on the future directions and strategies to be taken.

The in-country training for senior officials and workshop for policy makers on PPMS were completed as planned. Twenty-two of the original target of 30 participants attended the senior officials training, while 85 participants against the original target of 30 attended the workshop for policymakers held in December 1997. To ensure sustainability of TA benefits, participants were selected from the Sri Lankan Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA) to attend the workshops and to work closely with the ETS in the development of curricula and course contents on PPMS tenable at the Institute. SLIDA has incorporated PPMS into their regular training programs. The workshop generated much local media publicity resulting in requests from other line agencies for training in PPMS. The seminar was effective in introducing the PPMS and in highlighting the weaknesses in the existing Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) system. Training is still being conducted within MPI and other key agencies.

The five-man regional study tour on PPMS led by the Minister of MPI covered visits to the People's Republic of China, Philippines, and Thailand. Lessons of experience derived from the countries visited enabled the participants to frame a suitable plan of action for Sri Lanka. Through a presentation made by the Minister to the Cabinet of Ministers, a decision was reached for the development of performance indicators for all the 22 development ministries to review their performance. MPI sought the assistance of the United Nations Development Program to further develop the results-based M&E system with performance indicators.

Three MPI staff were sent under the component on international training in advanced monitoring and evaluation techniques. Deputy Director, MPI attended a 2-month course on Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Sector Projects and Programs at the University of East Anglia, United Kingdom while two other MPI senior officers completed the course on Impact Evaluation at the International Development Center, University of Reading, United Kingdom. These programs enabled the officers to discuss the different evaluation methodologies and approaches used by other donor agencies and non-government organizations. The three trained officers served as resource persons in over 20 training programs conducted by SLIDA, NPD, and other line ministries, and introduced PPMS to over 600 government officials at the national, provincial, and divisional levels. Increased demand for such training programs was received from various government agencies and actually conducted in the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, the Integrated Rural Development Project at Monoragala and Badulla, Ceylon Fisheries, Harbor Corporation, National Institute of Fisheries Training, and other development officers of MPI. The skills obtained from the TA widened the functions of the PEU to cover ongoing evaluation, diagnostic studies, and sustainability assessment. MPI also participates in the project performance review meetings conducted by ADB's Sri Lanka Resident Mission and ERD. NPD, on the other hand, has improved and expanded their project-screening format incorporating the PPMS and covering logframe based project-planning matrix. The institutional strengthening efforts of ADB improved evaluation capability and skill development resulting in quality evaluation.

TA OVERALL ASSESSMENT/ RATING

The TA is rated as generally successful as it achieved the envisaged objectives set out in the TA paper. TA components were well balanced in providing consultancy, training, institutional development, and awareness creation. The PPEIS was successfully strengthened and made a significant impact in the public sector where PPMS is being institutionalized within the public sector project cycle. Postevaluation has become a locally demand-driven exercise rather than donor-driven imposition. Greater numbers of postevaluation reports have been completed. The modern technological facilities provided by the TA are being used effectively for development management.

MAJOR LESSONS LEARNED

The successful implementation of the TA depends largely on (i) conscious effort by ADB staff in maintaining close contacts and relationship with the implementing agencies and the periodic informal monitoring and facilitation role; (ii) the political commitment accorded to it; (iii) availability of strategic information; and (iv) skilled manpower to carry out the tasks. The continuous effort to create and sustain awareness among the policy makers, planners and senior public servants about the importance of postevaluation as a lesson learning tool towards improving performance accountability enables the institutionalization of postevaluation system in the public sector project cycle. Advanced training of officers creates a multiplier effect especially where trained officers act as resource speakers in M&E training programs.

FOLLOW-UP ACTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that ADB maintain close contact with MPI to monitor and exchange information on lessons from project management. In order to ensure long-term sustainability of training on PPMS, other agencies should be made aware of the importance of PPMS during processing of future loans from ADB and coordination among ERD, MPI, and NPD strengthened by more systematic exchange of information among these institutions.

Prepared by: Chi-Nang Wong

Designation: Senior Evaluation Specialist