Validation Report

Reference Number: PVR-328
Project Number: 39144
Loan/Grant Numbers: 2167 and 0006
October 2014

Sri Lanka: Tsunami-Affected Areas Rebuilding Project

Independent Evaluation Department
Asian Development Bank
ABBREVIATIONS

ADB – Asian Development Bank
DMF – design and monitoring framework
km – kilometer
PCR – project completion report
PMU – project management unit
WRDS – women’s rural development society

NOTE

In this report, “$” refers to US dollars.

Key Words

adb, asian development bank, independent evaluation department, lessons, performance evaluation, project completion report, roads, sri lanka, tsunami

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### I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### A. Rationale

1. Tsunami waves caused by a 9.0-magnitude earthquake near Sumatra affected over two-thirds of Sri Lanka’s coastline and caused catastrophic destruction on 26 December 2004. More than 31,000 people died, thousands went missing, about 440,000 people were displaced, and an estimated 1 to 2 million of the 19 million people were affected. About 100,000 houses were destroyed and 46,000 were damaged. Infrastructure and fishing industry assets such as boats...
were damaged or lost, with about 60% of the damage in the east and northeast coasts.

2. The coastal areas of the northern and eastern provinces were recovering from the effects of nearly 20 years of civil conflict when the tsunami hit. Many villages and much of the coastal infrastructure rebuilt after the cease-fire were destroyed, including other assets that had withstood the conflict. The pre-tsunami conditions and the situation in the northeast made it difficult to demarcate tsunami- and conflict-related rebuilding efforts.

3. A joint tsunami needs assessment\(^1\) estimated tsunami-related financing needs for rebuilding at approximately $1.5 billion. In the short term, housing, transportation, institutional and community infrastructure, livelihood restoration for fishermen and small-scale farmers, and small and micro-enterprise assistance were the major concerns. During the development of a comprehensive recovery strategy, the tsunami needs assessment emphasized the importance of key guiding principles such as conflict sensitivity, subsidiarity, community empowerment, transparency, multi-hazard risk management, and coordination between stakeholders.\(^2\)

B. Expected Impact

4. The expected impact of the project, as indicated in the design and monitoring framework (DMF), was improved living conditions and well-being of a significant number of people in the tsunami-affected areas. Impact performance indicators were reduced poverty and improved living standards in the tsunami-affected areas.

C. Objectives or Expected Outcome

5. The expected outcome of the project was the restoration of basic social infrastructure, community services, and livelihood. Outcome performance indicators were improved basic social infrastructure in more than 150 villages, access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities for more than 5,000 families, reduced travel time in the rural areas by about 30%, and reduced maintenance cost of national and access roads by about 15%.

D. Outputs

6. The project had eight components. Component A (Legal Assistance, Governance, and Anticorruption) aimed to assist tsunami victims in restoring their legal identities (including legal assistance relating to loss of documentation and identity papers; dispute resolution and grievance review and mediation; restoration of birth, death, and marriage certificates, and other pertinent documents); and providing financial support and cash grants to orphans and injured victims. The planned outputs for this component were: (i) provision of tsunami-related legal facilitation and assistance; (ii) establishment of a decentralized system of public grievance review and private resolution of disputes; (iii) capacity building of judicial and enforcement officers to respond in the event of a tsunami; and (iii) modernization of record keeping and retrieval for specific government departments.

7. Component B (North East Coastal Community Development) was designed to help

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\(^1\) This was a joint cooperation between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Task Force for Rebuilding the Nation together with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank, the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, and other United Nations agencies.

reconstruct basic infrastructure in the tsunami-affected coastal communities of Ampara, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, and Trincomalee districts. Envisaged outputs were assistance to rebuild damaged livelihoods, create new opportunities and small enterprises for vulnerable groups, and develop a coastal resources and environmental management plan. The third component (Component C or Road Rehabilitation and Reconstruction) aimed to reconstruct A and B class national roads, culverts, bridges, including improvements to drainage and road safety. This component also aimed to reconstruct C, D, and E classes of access roads, local roads, culverts, irrigation, and village roads.

8. Component D (Water Supply and Sanitation) was designed to repair, expand, and improve water and sanitation systems in coastal communities, villages, and towns where the tsunami damaged water supply systems. Expected outputs were the expansion of distribution schemes to cover newly resettled areas, and provision of community-based common wells, small schemes, and individual sanitation facilities. The fifth component (Component E or Southern Province Reconstruction) aimed to restore access to basic services, including rehabilitation of local roads, culverts and drains, small-scale water supply, sanitation and solid waste management facilities, village markets, medical clinics and dispensaries, children’s playgrounds, and community buildings. Envisaged outputs were reestablished community-based organizations, reconstructed basic infrastructure facilities in villages, and shelter provided to tsunami-affected communities. Small enterprises for vulnerable groups and reconstruction of damaged local government district offices were also targeted.

9. Component F (Coastal Resources Management) was an attempt to repair the damage to coastal stabilization structures, the breakwater, the fishing boat anchorage, fisheries-related markets, and buildings used by fishermen societies for equipment storage and repair. Planned outputs were the repairs and extension of coastal stabilization structures and fisheries harbors, and replanting in coastal areas. Other envisaged outputs were the provision of boats and fishing gear to fishermen and establishment of fisheries-related ancillary units such as boat-building yards. Component G (Rural Finance) aimed to provide noncommercial credit to restore livelihoods, support microenterprise training, and provide support for operational costs and rebuilding physical assets of microfinance institutions. Planned output was microcredit assistance to more than 8,000 families.

10. The last component (Component H or the North East Community Reconstruction and Development) was designed to reconstruct physical infrastructure, support community development, and help regenerate economic activity in the damaged coastal communities. Envisaged outputs were the reconstruction of new local government and district offices, basic community infrastructure, small and medium-sized town schemes, and provision of community-based common wells, and small schemes and individual sanitation facilities. Other envisaged outputs were to establish community-based organizations and common recreation facilities, reconstruct basic infrastructure facilities in villages, and provide shelter to conflict- and tsunami-affected communities.

E. Provision of Inputs

11. The total cost of the project was estimated at $259.3 million equivalent, including taxes and duties of $36.7 million. The assistance was a combination of grant and loan financing. The Asian Tsunami Fund Grant was tapped to provide $150.0 million for rebuilding infrastructure, livelihoods, and related activities damaged or lost as a result of the tsunami, in both the northeast and the south of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka was eligible to receive tsunami grant funds under the terms approved by the Board under the Asian Tsunami Fund. Other funding
requirements were sourced from portfolio restructuring with the cancellation and reallocation of Asian Development Bank (ADB) surplus loan proceeds in the following projects: North Central Province Rural Development Project ($0.5 million), Water Resources Management Project ($5 million), and Plantation Development Project ($1.5 million). These surplus loan funds amounted to $7 million and were earmarked as a loan for credit facilities established under component G (Loan 2167). This loan from the portfolio reallocation was on concessional terms permitted under ADB’s Disaster Policy. The borrower was the Government of Sri Lanka. This validation observed only a slight increase in the project’s actual cost by about $2 million or from the appraisal estimate of $259.3 million to actual project cost of $261.7 million.

12. The European Commission was to provide a grant of €40 million to rehabilitate roads in the southern portion under component C to be administered by ADB in accordance with the terms and conditions agreed upon between the European Commission and ADB. The government was to allocate additional funding to finance the remaining cost of $39.1 million.

13. Approximately 115 person-months of international and 881 person-months of domestic consulting services were to be required. Consulting services were required to develop detailed designs and contract packages, plan community development in several components, and provide project management and overall monitoring responsibilities to the government’s implementing structures being formed at national and regional levels. Consultants for component C were to be selected from among consultant design firms already engaged in ongoing road sector projects. Consulting design services required for components D and F were to be engaged through direct selection, and existing contracts under the Secondary Towns and Rural Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation ³ and the Coastal Resources Management Project⁴ were to be extended.

14. Individual consultants, primarily in accounting and general engineering, were to be selected and engaged for all components. Nongovernment organizations were to help implement village and community development subprojects. The project completion report (PCR) indicated that consultants recruited under the project generally performed satisfactorily. Many nongovernment organizations did not have enough experience and capacity, which slowed down subproject planning and design.

F. Implementation Arrangements

15. Several ongoing ADB projects at that time were able to help in meeting the needs that resulted from the tsunami. These projects included the Road Network Improvement Project,⁵ the Coastal Resources Management Project, the North East Community Restoration and Development Project,⁶ the Southern Province Rural Economic Advancement Project,⁷ the

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Secondary Towns and Rural Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation Project, the North East Coastal Community Development Project, and the Rural Finance Sector Development Program. A project office led by the component A coordinator and director was to be established within the Ministry of Justice. For components B through H, the project management units (PMUs) then were to be strengthened to accommodate the additional workload—including accounting staff and engineers who were to implement the project. Given the urgent assistance required, the implementation arrangements took advantage of PMUs of ongoing ADB projects. This significantly reduced the time it took to mobilize the assistance because these PMUs were already functional, had the minimum staff required, and had first-hand knowledge of the situation and specific needs. This was more than sufficient for a timely response to the post-disaster situation.

16. Of 34 loan covenants, 31 were complied with, while 3 were not fully complied with. The covenant on ensuring reasonable access to the project areas was not fully complied with because of the resumption of hostilities in these areas. The covenant that required strengthening against high winds, earthquakes, and flooding to be included in the design of all new structures under the project was not complied with for some local government buildings in the Southern Province. The local authorities insisted on using standard designs for provincial building departments. The covenant on the conduct of a special independent post-completion audit for each project was not complied with as it was not practiced in any of the projects.

II. EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE AND RATINGS

A. Relevance of Design and Formulation

17. The PCR rated the project highly relevant. It indicated that the project incorporated requirements to adjust the specific programs and works as details from site surveys and evaluations became available and as local beneficiaries and authorities established priorities. It was designed to meet the requirements of tsunami recovery, as determined by the joint needs assessments and support the government’s reconstruction and rehabilitation plan. This validation noted that the project was aligned to the purpose for which the Asian Tsunami Fund was established. The fund was to be used exclusively for the prompt restoration of services to the affected population and would not attempt to address long-term economic rehabilitation investments or sector or institutional problems unrelated to the tsunami disaster. All the project components were consistent with the sectors for which financing was being made available.

18. The PCR indicated a major change in component G. Under this component, only about 28% of the allocated funds were used due to lack of formal credit facilities for the tsunami

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10 The Asian Tsunami Fund was established to respond to the special circumstances surrounding the developing member countries (DMCs) that were stricken by the tsunami on December 2004. The fund provided ADB with a dedicated source of grant financing to support priority rehabilitation and reconstruction needs on a multisector basis. The objective of the fund was to pool and deliver emergency grant financing promptly and effectively to affected DMCs for technical assistance and investment projects to support reconstruction, rehabilitation, and associated development activities following the tsunami disaster. Resources from the fund were to be available to central governments and other suitable entities including, where appropriate, nongovernment organizations, for activities in each of the tsunami-affected DMCs that have requested ADB assistance—India, Indonesia, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Australia and Luxembourg support the fund.
victims to commence livelihoods (PCR, para. 32) and the rest was transferred to component C (PCR, para. 10 [vii]).

19. Some minor changes were noted. For example, the requirement to rehabilitate and reconstruct tsunami-affected houses and urban and municipal infrastructure with strengthened high wind (cyclone), earthquake and flood resistance provisions could not be implemented because of design regulations. The government passed the new specifications only in 2009. For component B, few tenants were willing to lease the constructed market stalls. For component H, the two-story Department of Agriculture office and the school building were not utilized. For component E, some of the fish and market stalls were not used due to lack of interested parties. The short assessment period due to the urgency of the needs could have been because some project design aspects were overlooked.

20. This validation is of the view that although a few structures were not constructed or could not meet original design specifications, these occurrences could be expected from an emergency assistance. However, given the number of changes in components during implementation, this validation rates the project design and formation relevant.

B. Effectiveness in Achieving Project Outcome and Outputs

21. The PCR rated the project effective in achieving project outcomes and outputs. It noted that the project’s emergency nature meant that adjustments to targeted works were sometimes necessary. The PCR noted that the restoration of identity and legal documents and thousands needing dispute mediation and resolution under component A were achieved. Component B restored essential infrastructure for 322 villages, indirectly benefiting an estimated 117,000 people. Under component C, 234 kilometers (km) of national roads and coastal highways were reconstructed compared with the 225 km target, and 144 km of related access roads compared with the 200 km target. Under component D, the expansion of water supply and distribution systems to connect the new resettlement sites with the regional water supply and the replacement of tsunami-damaged piping and house connections in coastal areas were completed. Under component E, the completed community infrastructure in the Southern Province through 291 subprojects in 46 villages and towns benefited more than 100,000 people. Under component F, the damaged coastal breakwater, the fishing boat anchorage, and revetments to protect the national coastal highway and coastal towns from wave, tidal, and littoral current erosion were rebuilt.

22. Component G was to follow the government procedures for microfinance with fundscoursed through the Ministry of Finance and Planning and the National Development Trust Fund, the Sri Lanka Savings Bank, and then to local microfinance institutions for on-lending to beneficiaries. The PCR finding was confusing as it attributed the low utilization rate of component G funding to the absence of formal credit facilities for the tsunami victims to commence livelihoods. Yet, the component did provide microfinance to 7,750 beneficiaries against the target of 8,000 through 31 local microfinance institutions. While component G failed to meet its fund utilization rate, it extended 7,750 loans, a little lower than the 8,000 targeted at appraisal (PCR, para. 10 [vii]).

\[\text{This validation noted that the PCR reported two different figures for fund utilization under component G: 28\% in para. 10 (vii) and para. 32, and 25\% in para. 40.}\]
23. This validation notes that the project, in most cases, exceeded targets set at appraisal, except for (i) component B (coastal management), which was already being undertaken under a separate project; (ii) component C where only 144 km of access roads was constructed as against the targeted 200 km; and (iii) component G where only about 28% of the allocated fund was used. This validation notes several discrepancies between the PCR’s main text and its DMF in achieving output indicators. For example, the main text stated that 5,500 children were brought under the protection of the National Child Development Authority under component A, while the DMF indicated only 4,146 children. Also, the main text stated that 322 villages were assisted under component B, which was higher than the figure indicated in the DMF (96 villages). Under component D, the PCR indicated that 571 common wells were constructed, as compared with the 71 wells mentioned in the DMF. Moreover, the PCR neglected reporting on the project’s four outcome indicators (para. 5 above), concentrating instead on the number of project beneficiaries. Nonetheless, the project generally succeeded in providing basic social infrastructure and community services, and restoring livelihood in the project areas. This validation rates the project effective, the same as the PCR rating.

C. Efficiency of Resource Use in Achieving Outcome and Outputs

24. The PCR rated the project efficient in achieving its outcome and outputs. Implementing several components through the PMUs of ongoing ADB-financed projects reduced implementation costs and required lesser additional staff resources. This resulted in a quicker response to reconstructing damaged infrastructure, restoring government services, and creating new livelihood opportunities. Implementation delays were attributed to the ambitious implementation schedule. Planning and preliminary design preparations usually undertaken before loan appraisal were conducted during implementation. Implementing partner nongovernment organizations were not familiar with the project area and in planning and designing community infrastructure. Community-based organizations required training in construction techniques and billing procedures. Small contractors were not familiar with ADB procurement procedures, which disqualified them and caused rebidding and slow mobilization. Economic analysis was not undertaken at appraisal because of the urgent nature of the assistance. Surveys to establish baseline data were not undertaken because of insufficient time and the need to respond quickly.

25. For most of the components, the project delivered more than the target outputs (para. 23). This validation shares the PCR’s view that the improved basic services indirectly benefited several hundred thousand people while the restoration of legal identities, self-help groups, and work on various infrastructures under the project benefitted tens of thousands. This validation is of the view that the allocated financial resources benefited far more beneficiaries than estimated at appraisal. Thus, this validation rates the project efficient, the same as the PCR rating.

D. Preliminary Assessment of Sustainability

26. The PCR rated the project likely sustainable. The major infrastructure reconstructed under components B, C, D, E, F, and H were expected to be maintained by the appropriate agencies using their own budgets. Smaller community structures and facilities rehabilitated or built under components B, E, and H were to be maintained by the beneficiary villages, which they actually have undertaken. For other government infrastructure such as divisional secretariats, maintenance depended on the local governments. For components B, E, and H, 85%–90% of the 100 women’s rural development societies (WRDSs) were active with the project-trained rural development officers, regularly visiting them and providing technical support in marketing their products. The communities maintained a large percentage of
community infrastructures such as multipurpose buildings for training, meetings, preschools, and handicrafts.

27. This validation notes that for components where existing ADB-project PMUs were the implementing agencies, sustainability of the subprojects may be assured through the executing agencies as required under the loan. For component A, the Ministry of Justice is responsible for operating and maintaining the system. Considering that the system is inherent to its functions, the ministry should assure the availability of financial resources for the component.

28. However, Appendix 9 of the PCR identified 12 subcomponents in components B, E, and H that were either unutilized or not properly utilized. These subcomponents were built at an estimated cost of $0.91 million and could be considered not sustainable. Except for these, this validation rates the project likely sustainable, on the whole.

E. Impact

29. The PCR noted the impact of the project in improving living conditions and well-being of a substantial number of beneficiaries in the tsunami-affected areas (PCR, DMF). It also noted that the project addressed the safeguards measures incorporated in the initial environmental examination, resettlement and indigenous peoples’ framework, and gender action plan, although the project had no environmental impacts, land acquisition, or resettlement. The PCR indicated that all covenants related to safeguards were complied with (PCR, para. 20). The WRDSs support continued to benefit participating women and their family members with increased incomes and better quality of life. Consultation with beneficiary groups indicated that many households improved their standards of living as reflected in higher employment and entrepreneurial activity, savings rates, and quality of life. The final report of the project performance audit concluded that, overall, subprojects under the components have notable impacts on the affected areas and people. However, the PCR did not provide data on the extent to which the two impact indicators (poverty reduction and improved living standards) were achieved. Instead, the PCR provided detailed information on the number of project beneficiaries, which was not an impact indicator. Nonetheless, this validation views the project’s impact to be significant.

III. OTHER PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

A. Performance of the Borrower and Executing Agency

30. The PCR rated the performance of the borrower and executing agencies satisfactory. There were six (not eight as mentioned in the PCR) ministries acting as executing agencies. Except for component A, five executing agencies have had extensive experience with ADB-financed projects and implemented the project through PMUs already in place for ongoing loan projects. There were seven implementing agencies, with the North and East Provincial Councils implementing components B and H. There were six PMUs implementing seven components. The Ministry of Justice implemented component A. The PMU of the North East Coastal Community Development Project implemented components B and H. ADB conducted 34 training sessions to introduce the special requirements of the project and train new staff of the PMUs. The independent project performance audit conducted every 6 months identified weaknesses, which ADB staff and support from missions addressed through training. Quality control was another area of concern because small, inexperienced contractors and community-based organizations were used in components B, E, and H. These were improved through
training and spot-checks on quality. This validation rates the performance of the borrower and executing agency *satisfactory*.

**B. Performance of the Asian Development Bank**

31. The PCR rated ADB’s performance *satisfactory*. ADB provided administrative support and 34 training sessions (PCR, para. 26) to the executing agencies and PMUs, mostly through the resident mission staff. ADB’s emergency procurement policies saved considerable time by allowing ex post facto approval of small contracts. ADB conducted 14 official missions involving more than 800 person-days over the 58 months of project implementation. ADB staff members attended most of the provincial project coordination committee meetings. ADB also funded an independent audit of the PMUs’ accounts every 6 months (PCR, para. 28).

32. The executing agency and PMUs expressed appreciation for the support of ADB staff to all implementing agencies. The representatives of the WRDSs also appreciated ADB support and visits. This validation rates ADB’s performance *satisfactory*.

**IV. OVERALL ASSESSMENT, LESSONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**A. Overall Assessment and Ratings**

33. The PCR rated the overall performance of the project *successful*. It was *highly relevant*, *effective*, *efficient*, and its benefits *likely sustainable* (see table). The PCR indicated that the project was implemented as conceived, although some adjustments in scope were made to deal flexibly with post-appraisal implementation issues. This validation notes that the utilization of the PMUs of ongoing ADB-funded projects was appropriate and delivered project outputs within the shortest time. This validation rates the project *successful*.

### Overall Ratings

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<th>Criteria</th>
<th>PCR</th>
<th>IED Review</th>
<th>Reason for Disagreement and/or Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>Highly relevant</td>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td>Some scope changes were made during implementation (see para. 18).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effectiveness in project achieving outcome and outputs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Efficiency in achieving outcome and outputs</td>
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<td>Preliminary assessment of sustainability</td>
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<td>Likely sustainable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall assessment</td>
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<td>Successful</td>
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<td>Borrower and executing agency</td>
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<td>Performance of ADB</td>
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<td>Impact</td>
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<td>Quality of PCR</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
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B. Lessons

34. The decision to use the PMUs of ongoing ADB-funded projects with minor increase in staff expedited reconstruction. This ensured that field staff members who were familiar with the area were already on-site, thus shortening the assessment time required for the assistance.

35. In emergency situations, requiring design changes that are inconsistent with existing regulations should be avoided no matter how appropriate. While the government agreed to these new design changes, they had to be formalized and communicated to all, which could not be readily achieved in an emergency where institutions are still being rebuilt.

C. Recommendations for Follow-Up

36. ADB’s Sri Lanka Resident Mission could continue to monitor the use and maintenance of the reconstructed infrastructure under the project. In addition, the constructed markets should be monitored to determine improvements in utilization levels.

37. The activities of the WRDSs could also be monitored to ensure that these are still operating and achieving benefits as intended. These community-based organizations contribute to a sustainable mechanism for improving economic activities while concurrently empowering women by increasing their income, confidence, and quality of life.

V. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS AND FOLLOW-UP

A. Monitoring and Evaluation Design, Implementation, and Utilization

38. The government required each executing agency or implementing agency through their respective PMUs, to update or develop a project performance monitoring and evaluation system. The substantial information in the PCR indicated that a monitoring system was in place during implementation. A consultant was hired to conduct an independent performance audit every 6 months during implementation. The PCR did not indicate whether a benefit monitoring and evaluation system was also established to measure benefits during project operation.

B. Comments on Project Completion Report Quality

39. The PCR quality is rated satisfactory. It provided substantial information although the large number of project components may have caused some problems as to which component the PCR’s discussions should focus on. Despite its generally acceptable quality, several weaknesses were noted in the PCR. First, the PCR did not sufficiently analyze or comment on project design issues. The PCR repeated the emergency and urgent nature of the project several times, but was weak in analyzing implementation issues. Analysis on the appropriateness of the project design was not made such as identifying specific areas where a different approach could have yielded better results. This could have been invaluable and could have provided important lessons in formulating ADB’s disaster response in the future. Second, as mentioned in paras. 18 and 23, the PCR contained several discrepancies in the main text and in the DMF in achievement of output indicators and targets. Third, as mentioned in para. 29, the DMF neglected to report against the project impact indicators.
C. Data Sources for Validation

40. Data sources for this validation included the project’s report and recommendation of the President, the PCR, and back-to-office reports of the missions by the Sri Lanka Resident Mission. While a review of ADB’s Country Strategy and Program for Sri Lanka was made, it was not relevant to the project.

D. Recommendation for Independent Evaluation Department Follow-Up

41. Given the numerous components, the different types of subprojects, and the absence of baseline data for each project, a follow-up action is not recommended.