

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT¹

Division : Transport and Communications Division

TA No., Country and Name			Amount Approved: \$230,000.00	
TA 3922-MLD: Transport Master Plan			Revised Amount :	
Executing Agency Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MOFT)		Source of Funding: Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF)	Amount Undisbursed: \$16,629.76	Amount Utilized: \$213,370.24
TA Approval Date: 6 Sep 2002	TA Signing Date: 29 Dec 2002	Fielding of First Consultants: 1 July 2003	TA Completion Date Original: 30 April 2003 Actual: 30 June 2006 Account Closing Date Original: 30 April 2003 Actual: 30 June 2006	
Description ADB's past assistance in the transport sector proved successful in extending the physical capacity of Malé Port and upgrading its institutional capacity. However, unbalanced development between Malé and the outer atolls hindered the establishment of an integrated transport network in Maldives. In addition, limited transportation opportunities caused uneven socioeconomic growth among Maldivians. To address this disparity, the Government shifted its development strategy to regional development and recognized that an efficient and effective transport network will be key to ensuring equitable distribution of economic and social services. In line with ADB's country strategy and Project Performance Audit Report for the Second Malé Port Project, the Government requested ADB to provide technical assistance (TA) to develop a transport master plan (TMP) that will guide institutional capacity building and future sector investments from a long-term perspective.				
Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs The TA was to (i) develop national transport policies to direct transport sector development in the next 10 years, (ii) formulate strategies in line with the Government's national transport policies, (iii) prepare a transport master plan with a time-bound action plan for sector reforms, institutional capacity building, human resources development and a series of investment projects to achieve sector objectives for the next 10 years and (iv) develop a transport sector regulatory framework in support of the identified policies and strategies.				
Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities ADB engaged a consulting firm with a requirement of 6 person-months of international consulting services and 9 person-months of domestic consulting services. After unsuccessful negotiations with the first-ranked firm, which refused to replace a team member as requested by ADB, the second-ranked firm was engaged on 24 June 2003. The consultants were fielded on 1 July 2003, 5 months behind original TA schedule. The inception report was submitted on 29 July 2003. A workshop was carried out on 20 August 2003 to discuss the inception report. The draft final report was submitted less than a month behind submission date on 26 October 2003 and the final report was submitted to ADB on 1 July 2005. Six TA variations were approved resulting in TA completion date extension of 38 months, contract extension of 33 months and a contract amount increase of 17%. The significant delay in TA implementation is attributable in part to the prolonged recruitment process but essentially to lengthy discussions on the consultant's draft final report. Although the consultant provided the reports as per contract TOR, the Government considered that the final report did not meet the standards required for a National Transport Master Plan and informed ADB on 6 April 2006 that it was rejected. However, the Government suggested that it could serve as a Technical Study for the Domestic Maritime Transport. By fax dated 21 April 2006, ADB replied that it did not object the Government's decision.				

¹ In preparing any country program or strategy, financing any project, or by making any designation of or reference to a particular territory or geographic area in this document, the Asian Development Bank does not intend to make any judgments as to the legal or other status of any territory or area.

Accordingly, the consultant's performance was assessed as unsatisfactory by the Government and the TA outcome was not reached. TA efficiency, meaning adequate use of TA resources (cost and timeliness of delivery) in achieving outcome, is therefore unsatisfactory.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome

The TA outputs were completed (all required reports were provided) but quality was unsatisfactory. Since TA outcome was not delivered, the TA is rated ineffective. Additionally, as there's no outcome to maintain, the TA cannot be assessed as sustainable.

Nonetheless, the TA provided a basis for the currently on going Domestic Transport Maritime Project in the Maldives comprising a capacity building component partially based on the principles of the TMP.

Moreover, previously unavailable data on transport sector in the Maldives was collected and may be useful for future projects.

Overall Assessment and Rating

The TA is considered unsuccessful. While the TA was highly relevant as it was in line with the Government's strategy and ADB's country strategy as well as incorporated major lessons from previous projects, the TA was inefficient, ineffective and lacked sustainability.

Furthermore, the EA performance was only partially satisfactory as it was unable to gather consensus from concerned agencies on the Transport Master Plan which resulted in its rejection. ADB's performance was also partially satisfactory because the consensus based cultural context of the Maldives was not sufficiently taken into account.

Major Lessons

When considering switching to second-rank firm, ADB should assess carefully the benefits and disadvantages. In this case, the deteriorated relationship between the consultants and the Government was an important factor in the TA failure.

Additionally, the estimated inputs (cost estimate, estimated timing, etc.) of the TA was not optimal for the expected outcome which comprised assistance to advice on the entire sector reform including a regulatory framework of the sector, institutional restructuring and capacity building.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

Considering the consensus based cultural context of the Maldivian Government, ADB should (i) allow more time for TA and project implementation and (ii) be selective in its assistance, perhaps by providing smaller and more focused TAs, especially ADTAs.

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