

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: Pacific Operations Division

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| TA No. Country and Name | | | Amount Approved: 500,000 | |
| TA 3827-PNG : Preparing the Gender and Population Project | | | Revised Amount: 500,000 | |
| Executing Agency: Department of National Planning and Monitoring | Source of Funding: JSF 04 Women-in-Development Fund | | Amount Undisbursed: 275,577 | Amount Utilized: 224,423 |
| TA Approval Date: 21 Dec. 2001 | TA Signing Date: 16 Jan. 2002 | Fielding of First Consultant: March 2002 | TA Completion Date Original: 31 Oct. 2002 Actual: 30 June 2003 Account Closing Date Original: 31 Oct. 2002 Actual: 25 May 2005 | |

Description

The last census undertaken in July 2000 counted 5.130 million people in Papua New Guinea (PNG), which represents an increase of 36.4% since 1990. The average annual growth rate over the past 20 years is 2.7%. Annual growth rate since the 1990 census is higher (3.1%) but is probably artificially inflated because of under-counting in the 1990 census and improvements to the 2000 census coverage methods. Around 85% of the population lives in rural areas. Concerns about the balance between the population growth and issues of environment, employment, urbanization and basic services delivery have led the Government to prepare and adopt a National Population Policy (NPP). The NPP 2000–2010 represents a major revision of PNG's first population policy, which was adopted by the Government in June 1991. While the first NPP emphasized the "family planning" approach, the proposed Project was aimed at strengthening the focus on awareness, participation of civil society and empowerment of women, in line with the principal goal of the NPP, which is to improve the quality of life and accelerate the pace of development in the country. The Government has acknowledged in the NPP that there is a positive relationship between the economic status of women and their fertility and mortality patterns. Gender inequality in PNG is widespread and achievements to date have been poor. PNG ranks 107 out of 143 countries for the Gender-related Development Index (GDI)¹ and 91 out of 102 countries for the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM).² The Department of National Planning and Monitoring (DNPM) has the overall responsibility to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the NPP, and as such was the Executing Agency for the TA.

Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs

The expected impact was to improve the quality of life and accelerate the pace of human development in PNG, particularly for women. The outcome was to prepare a government endorsed gender and population project. The outputs included (i) identification of the priority targets and the most efficient modalities to assist the Government in implementing activities selected in the NPP in the field of information, communication, and women empowerment; (ii) identification of project components for possible ADB financing including preparing ADB's assistance for the 2005 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS); (iii) identification of the direct support to be provided to the DNPM to assist in the implementation of the NPP; and (iv) detailed costing of the activities and investments required.

Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities

The original inputs included (i) 14 months of international consultants, (ii) a series of workshops and seminars in the provinces to ensure the broad participation of both government and non-government representatives in the design stage, (iii) a detailed work program to identify the tasks, deliverables and milestones of the project.

All 4 international consultants were mobilized in the field in 2002 (2 were in Feb and March, 1 in June, and 1 in December 2002). A communication plan was prepared in collaboration with the Department of National Planning and Monitoring (DNPM), with a first draft prepared in January 2003. The draft was based on observations from field visits, a review of documents and discussions with a wide range of informants, including government officials, church and NGO representatives, private sector managers and staff of the Asian Development Bank as well as other development partners of the PNG Government. An important preparatory step was a brainstorming session in August 2002 at which 18 participants from line ministries, donor agencies, NGOs and the private sector agreed on the key elements of the communication strategy. Plan preparation also benefited from inputs from the gender and NGO advisers who joined the technical assistance team in December 2002, as well as from consultative meetings with the Departments of Agriculture and Livestock (DAL) and Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). A final round of consultations was held in March 2003 when the draft was discussed in a one-day workshop with 17 representatives of government departments, the church, private sector, NGOs and development partners. This resulted in a communication plan agreed to by all participants, including an implementation mechanism and estimated costs.

In parallel, the component covering the DHS was discussed primarily among Development Partners. This was led by an international consultant, Demographer. A major concern centered on the tight schedule of several planned surveys. The

¹ GDI includes life expectancy, educational attainment and income.

² GEM measures inequality between men and women in key areas of economic and political participation and decision-making.

provisional overall work plan of the National Statistics Office (NSO) for the period 2002–2004 included (in order of starting time) the following projects: (i) the Analysis and Dissemination of the 2000 Census results (in combination with the Household Survey data from the 1996 DHS); (ii) the planning and implementation of a UNFPA funded and NSO/National Department of Health (NDOH) executed Reproductive Health Survey (RHS) in the four UNFPA provinces scheduled for 2002–2003; (iii) the planning and execution of a Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) possibly combined with a Living Standard Measurement Survey (LSMS) scheduled for 2003; and (iv) the planning and execution of the DHS scheduled for 2005. In order to accommodate the crowded schedule, the consultant proposed an Integrated Household Survey (IHS) which packaged the HIES, the LSMS and the DHS together. This initiative appears to have been engineered and promoted by the development partners in early 2003. Indeed, the consultant reports and presentations addressed the technical efficiencies and the predicted quality of information as a result of this innovation. However, all available reports and presentations lacked PNG context, and did not mention government consultation and input.

From communication with another consultant (May 2003), referring to the management of the NSO, the consultant suggested that Government was simply waiting for the Development Partners to arrive at a consensus and to inform the EA. In mid 2003, the Project Officer prepared a position paper to review with the Department of National Planning and Monitoring “the position of the Government on the inclusion of statistical work in the project”. The position paper offered three levels of involvement: (i) no surveys, (ii) DHS only, and (iii) full IHS. Financing for the survey(s) was through lending and counterpart funds. In August 2003, the Government indicated it preferred to finance the surveys with grant money.

In November 2007, the Department of National Planning and Monitoring indicated the Gender and Population Project was abandoned in 2003 because it did not conform to the seven priorities under the Government’s Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) which was also under development at the time. Since the drafting of the 2004 budget was meant to reflect the MTDS priorities, advice from the DNPM Policy Division was to not pursue the Project.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome

The Report and Recommendation to the President was about 85% completed (last draft copy dated June 2003). 50% of TA budget was not utilized because 89% of Training and Seminar budget, 46% of consultant budget, and 100% of contingency were not used. In addition, as the project was delayed 24 months, the project was not efficient in the production of outputs. 3 out of 4 consultants were rated as “excellent” and one rated as “satisfactory”. They delivered the reports and conducted consultations. However, as the government lost interest in financing the project, the TA was not effective in meeting the project purpose and did not satisfy the client.

Overall Assessment and Rating

Unsuccessful. The Government abandoned the proposed Gender and Population Project. The government preferred to finance the surveys with Grant money and expressed its reluctance to further process the Gender and Population Project if it is a Loan project.

Major Lessons

- Greater consultation with the Government, especially the EA and IAs, is essential to ensure ownership.
- Development partner innovations tend to cater to self-interest resulting in one or more development partners driving an agenda to the virtual exclusion of Government and/or national stakeholders. This is a particular danger in PNG where Government will not manifest its position/views, even when prompted, until official commitment is required.
- Information of the type sought by modern survey methods is foreign and poorly understood by Government and national stakeholders. PNG cannot yet be qualified as an “information user society” as understood by developed nations. Few value the information produced by a DHS or HIES.
- Government understands the value Development Partners place on reliable information. Government’s position is that if the Development Partners want the information, then let them pay for it. It is very unlikely Government will ever borrow to carry out expensive surveys.
- Keep it simple; build capacity as you go; be patient.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

This TCR is largely a forensic exercise. Official documentation is sparse. Most information was obtained through the Project Officer’s archives. Too much time has lapsed since the Government’s decision not to follow-up with a Project.

Survey results, where they are successfully produced, should be translated into simple pamphlets which address core policy issues for large scale dissemination among middle and senior government managers in all three levels of government: national, provincial and district. Building an information user society should be deliberate and in measured steps promoting the utility/value of information.

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