

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: Environment and Safeguards

TA No., Country and Name			Amount Approved: \$3,920,000	
TA 6150-REG: Poverty and Environment Program			Revised Amount: (not applicable)	
Executing Agency Asian Development Bank	Source of Funding Poverty and Environment Fund and TASF		Amount Undisbursed: \$652,236	Amount Utilized: \$3,267,764
TA Approval 16 December 2003	TA Signing n/a	Fielding of First Consultants: April 2004-December 2008	TA Completion Date Original: March 2008	Actual: December 2008
			Account Closing Date Original: September 2008	Actual: March 2010

Description

ADB's Environment Policy (2002) recognized the need to promote environmental and natural resource management interventions to reduce poverty and integrate environmental considerations into development planning and management both within ADB itself and in its client countries. The policy also acknowledged that a broad approach to environmental management and poverty reduction needs to involve the public and private sector as well as civil society. This approach needed to be tested to demonstrate effective solutions to local environmental problems affecting the poor which can be upscaled and replicated.

With funding of \$3.92 million—comprising \$3.42 million from the Poverty and Environment Fund (PEF), funded by the Governments of Norway and Sweden, and \$500,000 from ADB's technical assistance special funds (TASF), the Poverty and Environment Program (PEP) was established as a structured institutional learning program to enhance the effectiveness of poverty reduction efforts through sound environmental management. This is to be achieved by drawing out lessons and experiences from replicable on-the-ground interventions, targeted analytical studies and information dissemination activities and systematically capturing and disseminating knowledge on poverty-environment relationships and appropriate responses. PEP focused on three focal areas: (a) natural resources management and sustainable livelihoods; (b) pollution and health; and (c) environmental vulnerability. It was conceived to accelerate the mainstreaming of environmental concerns into the ongoing and future operations of ADB and most importantly into development and poverty reduction programs within ADB's developing member countries (DMCs).

Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs

Impact: The TA was expected to impact on poverty reduction through effective environmental management by providing examples of locally specific actions and responses to address poverty-environment issues and lessons from their implementation. These impacts and lessons are expected to feed into ongoing and future projects and programs of ADB and lead to increased integration of environmental considerations in ADB operations (country partnership strategies (CPS), and program and project design).

Outcome: Effective environmental management approaches to poverty reduction demonstrated through subproject implementation are replicated and upscaled in ADB operations and better integrated in ADB business processes.

Outputs: The outputs of the TA are (i) identification and demonstration of self-sustaining environmental management interventions to reduce poverty; and (ii) systematic capture of knowledge on poverty-environment relationships to improve ability to design and implement effective environmental management approaches

Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities

PEP had grant inputs of \$3.92 million primarily used for the implementation and completion of 15 subprojects (12 pilot interventions, 2 analytical studies, and 1 information dissemination) consulting services, establishing the Poverty Environment (PE) Net website (www.povertyenvironment.net), capturing and disseminating knowledge on poverty-environment linkages and producing knowledge products.

Nine nongovernment organizations (NGOs), 6 local governments, and 1 research institution participated in the TA as implementing agencies of the subprojects under the supervision and monitoring of Project Officers from the relevant departments.

Most NGOs were actively involved in conceptualizing the subprojects and this has led to enhanced engagement of ADB with NGOs interested in poverty-environment issues and actions. Also, these NGOs have partnered with local governments and local organizations in subproject implementation which encouraged better interactions among stakeholders.

An administration specialist assisted in TA implementation from start to finish, supporting the TASU Officer assigned to manage the TA and ensure it achieved its objectives. A web-design specialist developed the PE Net website and provided system maintenance and technical support. Also, a website administrator was hired to regularly update, maintain and edit the site contents.

An international consultant captured and synthesized the knowledge and lessons learned through the implementation of 15 PEP subprojects and similar projects supported by other organizations. A film production company prepared an institutional video and separate videos for 3 selected subprojects as educational and promotional materials on how local environmental management contributes to sustainable poverty reduction.

Consultants were also hired for the subprojects to provide technical support and assist in implementation, supervision, monitoring and preparing progress and completion reports. A total of 26 consultancy contracts were issued under the TA and 25 of these are on individual basis. Most of the consultants were rated excellent/satisfactory after completion of work.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome

The TA achieved its objectives of enhancing the integration of environmental concerns into the ongoing and future work of ADB and into development programs in ADB's DMCs by improving knowledge about poverty-environment linkages and effective approaches for poverty reduction.

Subproject Implementation

Fifteen subprojects were successfully implemented under the TA. A subproject was not implemented (Sri Lanka) due to the volatile security situation in the country making it difficult to field consultants to work on the project. Through the implementation of the subprojects, the TA was able to identify and demonstrate self-sustaining environmental management interventions to reduce poverty for possible replication and/or upscaling. More importantly, the subprojects have demonstrated in varying degrees their relevance in ADB operations and influence in integrating environmental considerations in ADB's business practices by providing inputs on the design of projects and CPS preparation.

Knowledge Capture and Dissemination

Knowledge capture and dissemination activities of PEP have been fully satisfactory with initial efforts focusing on the development of the PE Net website and later turning to the completion of other knowledge products.

The PE Net website that was established under the TA has continued to be a primary knowledge repository of poverty-environment documents, not only in Asia but globally, and became a top-ranked site for this specific topic based on several Internet search engines. It has served as a medium of communication among the members of the Poverty Environment Partnership by announcing Partnership events, publications, and event-related documents and through the creation of on-line "working groups". The website is now being maintained through TA 6422: *Mainstreaming Environment for Poverty Reduction*, also financed under PEF.

The publication, *Nature and Nurture: Poverty and Environment in Asia and the Pacific*, was prepared under the TA. It compiles and synthesizes the experience and lessons learned from subproject implementation, through the presentation of case studies and how such knowledge are feeding into ADB's ongoing projects and programs. These case studies, together with case studies from other organizations, were discussed at the 13th Poverty Environment Partnership meeting at ADB in Manila in June 2008 which was also funded under the TA.

A set of documentary films on selected PEP subprojects was prepared to illustrate the challenges, as well as success stories, in addressing poverty and environment issues at the local level. The videos highlighted the important lessons from PEP subprojects implementation which are relevant to countries and peoples of the Asia-Pacific region and useful for policy- and decision-makers, the international donor community, other poverty-environment stakeholders and the general public. These videos were widely distributed across the region and featured in ADB and PE Net websites.

The PEP has also supported other publications such as the *Poverty, Health and Environment* book co-published by the members of the Poverty and Environment Partnership including ADB, and various meetings with partners for knowledge capture and dissemination.

Overall Assessment and Rating

The TA was highly successful and proved to be a useful mechanism for accelerating learning about poverty-environment linkages and effective approaches for poverty reduction. The experiences and lessons from subproject implementation on how local actions can lead to reduction in poverty and environmental improvements fed into ADB's operations by providing learning opportunities for project design and influencing the development of country strategies.

Major Lessons

The implementation of 15 subprojects under PEP demonstrated the links between poverty and environment in various situations and showed how local actions can lead to sustainable benefits in poverty reduction while simultaneously improving the environment. Also, they provided opportunities to demonstrate that community-based environmental management approaches can be scaled-up and/or replicated and influence the mainstreaming of environmental aspects into ADB's business processes.

Through PEP, ADB pursued a limited part of environment mainstreaming objectives of PEF. PEP implementation paved the way to learn that there is a growing range of opportunities to expand learning about the relationship between poverty and environment. Expanding the activities that PEF supports, other than those of PEP, could provide other avenues to further promote effective environmental management approaches that reduce poverty.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

Based on PEP implementation, it is important to consider how activities to be funded by PEF can be configured to further catalyze and strengthen environmental mainstreaming and further contribute to ADB operations.

Future TAs to be funded by PEF need to consider providing budgetary support for fact-finding and implementation review by Project Officers and the Secretariat in order to improve the process of developing proposals and reviewing implementation progress. Actively encouraging proposals from resident missions could also improve ownership and efficiency in project preparation and implementation.

Currently, ADB is implementing RETA 6422 which expands the scope of PEP activities and opening new opportunities for environment mainstreaming. Learning from lessons of PEP implementation, the RETA adopts an improved process of approval and implementation, provides budgetary support for Project Officers to conduct fact-finding and implementation review missions, and gives flexibility and ownership of subprojects to the resident missions.

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