

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division : COSO

TA No., Country and Name			Amount Approved: \$800,000	
TA 6211-REG: Capacity Building for Project Implementation & Administration 2005-2006			Revised Amount: N/A	
Executing Agency Asian Development Bank (ADB)		Source of Funding ADB TA fund	Amount Undisbursed: \$46,609.76	Amount Utilized: \$753,390.24
TA Approval Date: 17 December 2004	TA Signing Date: N/A	Fielding of First Consultant: 25 May 2005	TA Completion Date Original: 31 December 2006      Actual: 31 December 2007 Account Closing Date Original: 31 December 2006      Actual: 16 June 2008	
<p><b>A. Description:</b> Improving project implementation performance continues to be a priority concern of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). As ADB identifies new projects as well as new modalities to assist developing member countries (DMCs), the need for more capacity building for executing agency (EA) staff becomes apparent. Since the inception of these regional and country project implementation and administration seminars in 1978 funded by Technical Assistance (TA) grants, ADB has helped borrowers and EAs strengthen their capabilities to manage project implementation. Senior and middle-level officials of EAs, central ministries, and state banks from 34 DMCs have participated in these training programs. Meanwhile, resident and regional missions have continued to transmit to ADB headquarters requests by various DMCs for EA staff training. Training programs provided under this TA<sup>1</sup> are based on a systematic and long-term approach to capacity building for project implementation in DMCs. The TA fulfills two capacity-building objectives: institutional strengthening and human resources development. The training programs indirectly support other governance strategies like improved accountability, transparency, and anticorruption efforts.</p> <p>Country portfolio review missions routinely conclude that delays in project implementation are largely caused by a lack of understanding of, and unfamiliarity with, ADB's requirements and guidelines. The TA training programs are designed to address these deficiencies by upgrading project implementation skills of EA personnel and to improve familiarity with, and application of, guidelines, policies, and procedures on procurement, consulting services, and disbursements. Awareness of new procurement approaches that are gaining prominence internationally, including electronic, "green," and socially responsible procurement, should be raised. Good practices in these aspects of procurement would likely be incorporated into the regular seminar curriculum, and international conferences would provide a forum to exchange experiences in such practices to identify the key elements that can lead to further improvement of procurement procedures in DMCs.</p> <p>Since 1990, over 5,500 project-related personnel have participated in the seminars so far conducted. Evaluation and feedback from seminars indicate that the training programs strengthen participants' professional skills and increase their understanding of ADB's requirements for project implementation and administration. Lessons learned from these seminars have led to amendments to clauses in the standard bidding documents, as well as changes in the content and focus of the seminars' case studies and exercises. The seminars' structure and content are continually revised and improved based on suggestions from participants and in response to the changing needs of EAs and ADB.</p> <p><b>B. Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs:</b> The seminars were intended to improve the skills of project directors, managers, and other key staff members of EAs in project implementation and administration, and improve their understanding of ADB's guidelines and procedures related to procurement of goods and works, selection and engagement of consultants, disbursements, and knowledge of updated principles and techniques derived from accepted international practice. Officials attending the special procurement conferences would become familiar with new topics in the broad field of procurement and project implementation. The new stock of knowledge gained by personnel and officials will upgrade the implementing capacity of EAs and DMCs in general, while the special procurement conferences are expected to lead to the adoption of policies and/or programs of appropriate elements of electronic, "green," and socially responsible procurement for specific DMCs. The outputs expected were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- one regional Seminar on Project Implementation and Administration (PIA) at ADB headquarters,</li><li>- nine country Seminars on Project Implementation and Administration and</li><li>- three regional conferences on electronic, green and socially responsible procurement.</li></ul>				

<sup>1</sup> The TA first appeared in *ADB Business Opportunities* (Internet edition) on 29 March 2004.

**C. Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities:** The Central Operations Services Office (COSO) implemented the TA activities in coordination with the Controller's Department that delivered the disbursement module. Nominations for participation of EA staff involved in ongoing ADB funded projects were solicited from the Regional Departments (RDs) and Resident Missions (RMs). After receiving and finalizing the nominations, the list of ADB-recommended nominees was submitted to the concerned Governments for consideration and endorsement. RMs assisted in identifying as well as negotiating the commercial terms for the venues where the seminars were delivered. Resource persons for the country and regional seminars were mainly from ADB, particularly Procurement Specialists from COSO and Financial Control Specialists from the Controller's Department. Other than this, one external resource person and one local consultant for HQ were hired under this TA. Recruitment of both, external resource person and consultant was timely. The resource person was rated as excellent and the consultant was rated satisfactory.

The TA design was relevant to the objectives of the TA. Implementation arrangements, stakeholder's participation and ownership were commendable, which encouraged similar follow-on TAs.

**D. Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome:** The number of CPIA seminars conducted exceeded the planned figures i.e., 19 seminars were conducted against 9 originally planned during the period from 2005 to 2007. Almost 772 government officials attended these seminars. Government officials included Project Directors, Managers as well as project officers. A regional seminar was held at ADB HQ during the duration of this TA, however it was financed from RETA 6111. An additional regional seminar took place in Fiji and covered Pacific DMC's. Demand for electronic, green and socially responsible procurement seminars was lower than expected mostly due to the fact that the institutional set up was not ready in some of the targeted DMC's and because of a lack of interest. As a result, those seminars were not held and postponed. It should be noted however that in recent years a substantial increase in interest in these areas of procurement was observed and ADB has been proactively engaged since then. The seminars were perceived by participants as relevant to their project implementation activities while presentation skills of the resource persons were rated satisfactory to excellent. Other comments included the quality of the translation of training materials and a preference for the delivery of more project specific training rather than general training.

Overall the EAs were highly satisfied with the seminars and indicated strong interest for frequent future trainings. As targeted, more than 75% of the participants rated the seminar topics totally relevant or mostly relevant to their work and 75% of the participants rated the quality of presentations and resource speakers as excellent or good. The performance of ADB was rated satisfactory.

**E. Overall Assessment and Rating: The TA is considered as successful.** Outputs, outcome and targets were fully met.

**F. Major Lessons:**

- Involvement of RMs in the coordination of implementation arrangements with the EAs is paramount to the success of these seminars.
- Participant selection in terms of their engagement level (direct or indirect) in ADB project implementation is crucial to the success of CPIA seminars.
- Participants appreciated case studies and requested ADB to include more in future CPIAs.

**G. Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions:** Continue with project implementation and administration seminars. Translate training materials, especially case studies, into local language, and prepare more case studies with country relevant procurement and project implementation related issues.

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