

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: VRM

TA No. 4452-VIE:			Amount Approved:	
			US\$250,000	
Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan in Agriculture and Rural Development			Revised Amount:	
			US\$250,000	
Executing Agency:		Source of Funding:	Amount Undisbursed:	Amount Utilized:
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)		Gender and Development Cooperation Fund: USD250,000	US\$85,027	US\$164,973
TA Approval Date:	TA Signing Date:	Fielding of First Consultant(s):	TA Completion Date	
26-Nov-04	11-Aug-05	02-Jan-06	Original: 30-Apr-2006	Actual: 31-Dec-2007
			Account Closing Date	
			Original: 30-April-2006	Actual: 13-May-2008
Description:				
<p>Viet Nam is an agricultural country with almost 80 percent of its population live in the rural areas. Women make up more than 50 percent of labor force in agriculture. During the past decades, Viet Nam implemented a number of policy reforms to empower farming households as self-administered units. However, the policies have often targeted men as heads of households that could create overall development constraints in the agriculture and rural development sector. Greater efforts were required to develop the potential of rural women, help them quickly gain the capacity and confidence to play a key role in the sector, and empower them to be effective and equal partners of men.</p> <p>Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) faced various institutional constraints in mainstreaming gender in policies and operations, including: (i) a lack of human and financial resources, institutional procedures, norms, and organizational culture; (ii) limited capacity to undertake gender responsive operations within MARD's functional and management departments; (iii) a lack of gender-sensitive planning, monitoring, and evaluation system; and (iv) under-representation of women staff in decision-making process in MARD.</p> <p>During 2002-2004, an ADB financed Technical Assistance (TA)¹ was implemented to support MARD to develop a gender strategy and implementation plan for agriculture and rural development. As a follow up, this TA was developed to support implementation of two of three objectives set out in the action plan, namely: (i) increase MARD's commitment to implementing gender equality, and (ii) strengthen the capacity of officials and public service providers at all levels of MARD-related departments and agencies in gender mainstreaming.</p>				
Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs:				
<p>The TA design is relevant and it was formulated in consultation with stakeholders. The TA was line with the Government's National Action Plan for the Advancement of Women and ADB's Country Strategy and Program for Viet Nam. This and the earlier TAs supported MARD's commitment to plan and implement the gender strategy. The expected impact of the TA was for the national agricultural development policies and programs to contribute to increased incomes and reduction of rural poverty to also support women and men to be on equal footing. The expected outcome of the TA was to support the Government to achieve the overall objective of the gender strategy and implementation plan: to integrate gender into MARD's plans, programs, and projects in order to achieve equality in socio-economic benefits for women and men. The expected outputs were: (i) MARD's annual plans with gender-disaggregated targets; (ii) integration of gender into MARD's public service provision; (iii) a training framework, modules and curriculum applied in MARD-related schools; (iv) gender training geared to different roles and responsibilities of offices and units; and (v) a network for gender integration for the programs and projects of MARD across the board.</p>				
Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities:				
<p>The terms of reference for each consultant position were developed with adequate consultation with the Government. Two international consultants and three national consultants were recruited. Total inputs were 6 person months (pms) for international and 13 pms for national consultants as compared to 6 pms and 20 pms for international and national consultants that were envisaged. The input from national consultant on gender-sensitive agricultural extension services was reduced by 3 pms because the consultant's contract was terminated due to her health problem. Her remaining tasks were taken over by the on-going government program under Agricultural Extension Center. The input from management and coordinator consultant was reduced by 2 pms due to the personal problem and MARD agreed to manage and coordinate the TA without recruiting a new consultant taking into account the fact that the remaining work was not very heavy. National training consultant (2 pms) was not recruited as MARD mobilized the trainers of its Management Schools to implement training activities. The international consultant on gender disaggregated data could not complete her task due to family issues and the national consultant on gender disaggregated data/statistician continued to work to complete</p>				

¹ ADB. 2002. *Technical Assistance to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for Gender Strategy and Implementation Plan for Agriculture and Rural Development*. Manila.

the assignment. The economy of input provision was satisfactory. Although there was some deviation from planned inputs, the quality and productivity of the inputs provided by MARD were satisfactory.

MARD, as an executing agency (EA) showed a high level of ownership of the TA. Counterpart staff provided by the EA worked closely with the consultants during TA implementation. Committee for the Advancement of Women (CAW) and the Project Steering Committee provided timely guidance on TA implementation. They contributed to finalization and approval of the guidelines and handbooks on gender mainstreaming for staff of functional and professional departments within MARD. The EA provided additional resources to compensate the reduced inputs and poor performance of the consultants and to ensure the quality of TA outputs. The performance of the EA was satisfactory.

The consultants began field work on 2 January 2006 and the TA was completed on 31 December 2007. Originally the TA was to be implemented from November 2005 to December 2006. Due to the delays in signing the TA letter and mobilizing the consultants, TA completion was delayed by 20 months.

ADB headquarters administered the TA for the first 4 months until March 2006 and it was then delegated to Viet Nam Resident Mission. ADB provided regular guidance to TA implementation, helped resolve issues, and carried out an inception mission and regular review meetings. In particular, ADB coordinated closely with the EA in seeking solution to supplement the consultants' inputs. The EA appreciated daily interactions with ADB staff and considered the number and timing of the mission and meetings appropriate. ADB's performance was satisfactory.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome:

Of the five intended outputs, four were fully delivered except gender mainstreaming into public service provision (output 2). The national consultant responsible for this output could not complete her task due to health problem. MARD and ADB agreed that output 2 would be dropped from the TA scope, but MARD would continue working on this output through Administration Reform Program which was being implemented by the Agricultural Extension Center under MARD. Other four outputs were delivered as envisaged: (i) MARD officially approved a set of gender-responsive planning indicators, (ii) MARD approved the gender training manual and curriculum for official training program at the Management Schools under MARD, (iii) Training courses were carried out for officials and public service providers at MARD-related departments and agencies, and (iv) a network for gender integration in MARD was set up and a gender website was developed and maintained by CAW and Informatics Center of MARD. These four outputs achieved the expected levels of quality. As they were institutionalized in the MARD's planning process and training programs, TA results are likely to be sustainable.

The expected outcome to help the Government integrate gender in MARD's plans, programs and projects in order to achieve gender equality in availing of socio-economic benefits was achieved through establishment of planning indicators, training framework, and human resource network for gender mainstreaming. The other expected outcome to support the Government to achieve the overall objective of the gender strategy and implementation plan was partly achieved as one of the outputs was not delivered. MARD satisfied with TA outputs and outcomes.

Overall Assessment and Rating:

In general, the TA produced expected results and met the target. However, TA outcome was not fully achieved and one of five expected outputs was not delivered. The TA is rated partly successful.

Major Lessons:

A two-step approach comprising development of a strategy and implementation plan followed by concrete actions, is effective in enabling the Government to identify and structure appropriate policy packages to integrate gender into MARD's plans, programs, and projects. This approach also contributed to ensuring continuation from the strategy and planning stage to the implementation stage, and smooth start-up of the long-term process of implementation of the gender strategy and implementation plan.

The TA aimed to change the EA's planning process. Such changes to introduce participatory planning and stakeholder consultation require long-term efforts. The original TA period of one year was not sufficient to initiate the expected changes in the EA. For future TAs that aim to revise the government's policies, strategies, and plans should be designed for longer TA implementation period.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions:

Implementation of the gender strategy and its implementation plan requires long-term efforts and strong leadership of MARD. It is recommended that (i) CAW will monitor the implementation of the gender training for staff under Management Schools, as well as the use of the gender planning indicators and the gender handbooks, (ii) MARD will continue to provide gender training to all levels of offices and units related to MARD, and (iii) MARD will provide human and financial resources to maintain and update the CAW web and widely disseminate the gender handbooks. ADB discussed these points with MARD and MARD agreed to take necessary action to follow them up.