

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT¹

Division : RSGS-Poverty Unit

TA No., Country and Name		Amount Approved: \$350,000	
TA 6197-REG: Supporting the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Asia-Pacific Region		Revised Amount:	
Executing Agency Asian Development Bank	Source of Funding TASF	Amount Undisbursed: \$39,044.74	Amount Utilized: \$310,955.26
TA Approval Date: 4 November 2004	TA Signing Date: n/a	Fielding of First Consultant(s): n/a	TA Completion Date Original: 31 December 2005 Actual: 31 December 2007 Account Closing Date Original: 31 December 2007 Actual: 31 December 2008
Description <p>The TA is an important collaborative exercise between ADB, UNESCAP and UNDP. Given the magnitude of tasks necessary to meet the MDGs, and their importance for the region, ADB's participation in a regional partnership to support MDG achievement was considered imperative. The TA was approved on 4 November 2004 for a total project cost of \$1.4 million of which ADB's contribution was \$350,000. The TA was designed to run for 15 months. The original completion date of the TA was 31 December 2005. The TA began, however, a little later than anticipated. Due also to (a) delays in the finalization of the MOU among ADB, UNESCAP and UNDP, and (b) completion of dissemination activities the TA was extended by two years to 31 December 2007.</p>			
Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs <p>The TA's main goal is to assist in achieving the MDGs, particularly in countries of the Asia-Pacific region that are currently at risk of not achieving the MDGs and where special efforts are necessary. The TA was designed to raise awareness, initiate policy, investment and capacity building actions at the developing member country (DMC) level, particularly in DMCs that are at risk of not meeting the MDG targets. The main outputs of the TA were (i) a major regional MDG report to be prepared by the tripartite partnership (MDG report II scheduled for completion by September 2005); (ii) a subsequent MDG report (MDG report III scheduled for 2007); (iii) background and supporting technical papers; and (iv) dissemination of these reports and papers to appropriate audiences in DMCs so that greater awareness is created, and necessary action initiated by governments and all stakeholders for MDG attainment.</p>			
Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities <p>As specified in the TA's implementation arrangements and signed MOU, part of the TA budget was provided to UNESCAP for the implementation of activities pertaining to enhancing the quality of MDG data, preparation of regional reports and conduct of MDG forums and workshops. In addition, additional inputs including technical and budgetary support were also provided by UNESCAP and UNDP in the conduct of forums and workshops. The TA funds directly administered by ADB on the other hand were used for hiring consultants for the preparation of several background papers as input to the second Regional MDG report – A Future Within Reach. Part of the funds were also utilized to support the participation of DMC officials for the high level launch of the MDG report in ADB Headquarters in September 2005.</p> <p>Among the notable activities resulting from the regional MDG partnership and supported by the TA were (i) the High Level Ministerial meeting in Jakarta in August 2005 (which adopted the Jakarta Declaration on MDGs); (ii) high level launches of the 2nd MDG regional report at the ADB headquarters and in New York at the sidelines of the UN General Assembly Summit on the MDGs in September 2005; (iii) a film made on the report (A Future Within Reach) that received the bronze prize at the UN Documentary Film Festival. Altogether, about 1,000 high level participants took part in the dissemination activities organized and events included under this phase of the TA. The consultants' inputs in various stages and activities of the TA implementation have been of high quality and outputs were</p>			

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submitted timely. The TA's physical completion date was extended for two years in order to adequately utilize the TA budget for the dissemination activities including the workshop on statistics which were highly relevant for the ongoing implementation of the Phase II of the TA.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome

Considerable work has been undertaken under the TA through the modest contribution made from ADB's side by leveraging the resources of two major UN agencies, namely UNDP and UNESCAP for the MDG effort in the region. All outputs and activities envisaged under the TA were achieved. These included:

- (i) the **Joint MDG Report** entitled, "*A Future Within Reach – Reshaping Institutions in a Region of Disparities to Meet the MDGs in Asia and the Pacific*" which was launched in September 2005;
- (ii) **Technical Background Papers** on (a) *Pursuing Gender Equality through the MDGs in the Asia and the Pacific*; (b) *Voices of the Least Developed Countries in Asia and the Pacific*; (c) *Supporting the Achievement of the MDGs in Central Asian Republics Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Countries*; (d) *2006 MDG Progress Report*; (e) *Achieving the MDGs in Asia: A Case for More Aid*; (f) *Achieving the Health Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: Policies and Actions within Health Systems and Beyond*; and (g) several technical background papers for the MDG II Report such as a study of disparities between countries, imputation methodologies for calculating regional aggregates, and MDG indicator data availability and stability; and
- (iii) **Consultation and dissemination activities.** These included (a) country consultation seminars including one on 23 February 2005 at ADB Headquarters and the High Level Ministerial meeting in Jakarta; (b) MDG report launches on 7 September 2005 at ADB Headquarters and at the sidelines of the UN General Assembly Millennium Summit on 13 September 2005 in New York; and (c) MDG regional Workshop on Statistics for Monitoring the Achievement of the MDGs; and a training course held in the Pacific.

All these outputs and activities were of high quality; received considerable attention of national, regional and international media; have contributed to raising awareness on the issues surrounding MDG attainment in the Asia-Pacific region, particularly through the reporting on countries which are off-track or at risk of not meeting the MDG targets by 2015. Countries' interest and awareness has been reflected also through the many ESCAP Commission Resolutions (included in the 2006 (62/1), 2007 (63/6) and 2008 (64/6) Annual Reports of the UN Economic and Social Council) agreeing to intensify efforts by them to achieve the MDGs in the region. MDG related data collected and reported under the many documents produced through this TA has also been useful for ADB's internal operations, policy and strategy documents. The increased regional reporting on the MDGs and special efforts at capacity building has helped improve quality and coverage of MDG data. The regional MDG website maintained by ESCAP has more fuller MDG data, including national data, and is being increasingly accessed. The 'Workshop on Statistics for Monitoring the Achievement of the MDGs in Asia and the Pacific' has contributed to higher priority being given to MDGs by countries in their data collection activities. Over a thousand copies of the 2006 MDG progress report were printed and distributed in the region. There is much more reflection of the MDG priorities in national development plans and strategies (as reported in the third regional MDG Report).

Overall Assessment and Rating

The project contributed to the enhancement of the quality of MDG data, deepening the analysis pertaining to MDG issues and strengthening the dissemination and advocacy activities through: (a) an updated and improved data quality and coverage; (b) the production of technical papers; (c) the organization of the MDG regional Workshops on statistics; (d) the production of the MDG regional report and progress reports; (e) the analysis of disaggregated data on household surveys that are being left behind in their MDG target attainment. Although much work is left to be accomplished for the attainment of the MDGs in the region, efforts are continuing under the ongoing Phase II and III of the MDG TA. In view of all the accomplishments cited, the TA is rated highly successful.

Major Lessons, Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

While considerable work has been initiated at the regional level, there is a need to translate these into more concrete actions at the country level through ADB and UNDP's country level assistance. A particular area of weakness that needs to be addressed is the quality and coverage of data on MDGs, including disaggregating such data by gender and subnational geographical categories. The problem of data coverage is particularly problematical in weaker DMCs. These will require strengthening the statistical capacities of DMCs. Given the scale of resources that may be needed, more attention and mainstreaming support through individual country programs in ADB is called for.