

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: COPP

Division: COFF

TA No. and Name TA 5834-REG: 1999 Seminars on Project Implementation and Administration.		Amount Approved: \$800,000	
		Revised Amount:	
Executing Agency: Asian Development Bank	Source of Funding: TASF	TA Amount Undisbursed 752	TA Amount Utilized 799,248
Date		Completion Date	
Approval 25/02/1999	Signing -	Original 31/12/99	Actual 30/June/2003
Fielding of Consultants 26/01/2001		Closing Date	
		Original 31/12/99	Actual 13/04/2005
Description: Since 1978, ADB has been helping Borrowers and Executing Agencies (EAs) strengthen their capabilities to manage and implement projects through regional and country training programs on project implementation and administration under regional technical assistance grants (RETAs). Up to 1999 ADB had conducted 149 training programs under RETAs and 4,332 senior and middle-level officials of EAs, central ministries and state banks from 30 developing member countries (DMCs) have participated in these training programs. Although many DMC officials have acquired substantial project experience and knowledge of ADB's policies and procedures, there was still a demand for more training in procurement and other project administration activities for new project managers and EA staff. This is evidenced by delays in project implementation caused in part by a lack of understanding and familiarity with ADB's policies and procedures.			
Evaluation and feedback from past RETA seminars indicated that the training provided had been successful in strengthening participants' professional skills and increasing their understanding of ADB's policies and procedures. Building on experience gained, the RETA was formulated to continue building the project implementation skills of EA personnel on ADB's policies and procedures for procurement, selection and engagement of consultants and disbursement. The RETA was also designed to address the continuing need for training new EAs. These actions were supported by ADB's <i>Task Force on Improving Project Quality</i> report which called for a greater effort on the part of ADB to support DMC ownership of projects and capabilities for project implementation.			
Objectives and Scope: The objectives of this RETA were to provide key staff of EAs with an accurate understanding of modern principles and techniques in project administration and management and to acquaint them with ADB's policies and procedures for procurement, selection and engagement of consultants, disbursement and other aspects of project implementation. The RETA was formulated to conduct 3 regional seminars (2 in Manila and 1 in Fiji), and 11 country project and implementation (CPIA) seminars in Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, People's Republic of China, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam.			
<u>Harmonizing policies:</u> A minor change was introduced in the RETA's scope to cover the services required to assist a working group of Multilateral Development Banks (MDB) in harmonizing policies. The objective of harmonization is to reduce transaction costs as many government agencies of DMCs are concurrently responsible for implementing ADB-financed projects as well as those financed by other MDB. Following a request of the MDB working group, an individual consultant was hired to assist in harmonizing procedures and guidelines for procurement of goods and works and recruitment of consultants.			
Evaluation of Inputs: Due to the significant savings made in the previous RETA, 4 of the planned CPIAs: Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Thailand and Uzbekistan were funded by RETA 5782. ¹ The following seminars were conducted under this RETA from 2000 to 2003: two Regional PIA, one in the Philippines and in Papua New Guinea respectively, and 14 Country PIA, Bangladesh, India (3 seminars), Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Lao PDR, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, PRC (two seminars), Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam.			
The regional seminars focused on the project manager's responsibilities for planning, organizing, budgeting, scheduling, directing, monitoring, controlling and evaluating project implementation. The selection of the countries for the CPIA seminars was based on factors such as (i) new borrowing DMCs, (ii) DMCs in which loans approved in 1998 involved new implementing EAs, (iii) DMCs receiving a large number of loans annually, and (iv) DMCs that requested inclusion. The scope and content of the CPIA seminars was generally the same as the regional seminars with some adjustments to meet the country-specific requirements. The Seminars lasted 10 working days and the method of instruction included lectures, cases studies, exercises and workshops. Translation services were required for the seminars carried out in PRC, Viet Nam and Kazakhstan. The resource speakers were ADB staff: procurement			

¹ ADB. 2004. *Technical Assistance Completion Report on 1998 Seminars on Project Implementation and Administration*. Manila.

and consulting services specialists from COSO and staff from the Controller's Department. In the CPIA seminar held in PRC, five resource speakers, trained under a Training of Trainers Program (RETA 5732²), were invited to conduct lectures and provide translations services for some seminar modules. PNG's regional PIA seminar was attended by 38 participants from East Timor, Cook Islands, Kiribati, PNG, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu. This regional seminar also included a presentation on ADB's operations in the Pacific.

The Regional PIA seminar held in Manila was attended by 47 participants from 17 DMCs and involved 17 ADB resource speakers. All seminar programs were appropriately formulated and the resource speakers performed well. The seminar arrangements were adequately addressed by liaising with DMC government officials and EA staff on administrative issues (arranging venue of seminars, hotel bookings, travel arrangements, payment of per diem) and personnel issues (shortlisting of participants, securing endorsement of government for participation of selected candidates, etc.). Resident Missions (RM) played a critical facilitating role in organizing the seminars and selecting the participants.

Harmonizing policies: An individual consultant (Procurement Specialist) was recruited for 74 days to help the working group complete the documents for prequalification for civil works and recruitment of consultants as well as to incorporate updates in the master bidding documents for the procurement of goods. The consultant reviewed the Master Bidding Documents and held discussions and meetings with the working group and with the heads of procurement of WB/IDB in Washington.

Evaluation of Outputs: Four of the seminars planned under this RETA were funded by RETA 5782. In order to fully utilize funds, it was necessary to extend the completion date of this RETA to June 2003. Approximately 600 participants and observers from 26 DMCs and from some Resident Missions participated in the regional and CPIA seminars. Most of the participants were senior-level staff involved in ADB-funded projects. They commented that the seminars were a valuable tool for learning and developing a better understanding of general and specific project implementation responsibilities. Due to the continuous demand, the seminars continue to provide a good vehicle for delivering training to EA staff on ADB's policies and procedures relating to procurement, consulting services and disbursement.

Harmonizing policies: The consultant helped the MDBs prepare (i) a framework for harmonization of MDBs procurement policies; and (ii) draft master prequalification document for the procurement of works and draft master documents for recruitment of consulting services.

Overall Assessment and Rating: This RETA exceeded by 2 the number of seminars initially planned. Most of the seminar participants were satisfied with the overall quality of the seminar venues, course content and presenters. Based on standardized questionnaires distributed at the end of each seminar, on average 90% of the participants indicated that the seminars were totally or mostly relevant to their work. Participants in general requested more case studies and more time for discussion. Participants from PRC, Viet Nam and China requested seminars on an annual basis. Using the participant's response as a proxy, the RETA is rated highly successful.

Harmonizing policies: The framework for MDBs procurement policies prepared by the consultant lacked the clause-by-clause comparison of MDB's procurement policies which was subsequently prepared by the World Bank. The RETA's closing was delayed due to difficulties encountered in obtaining the signed certificate of full payment from the consultant. The consultant's performance is rated as partly successful.

Major Lessons Learned: The frequency of regional and CPIA seminars should normally be based on (i) the frequency of DMC staff transfers; (ii) the requests received from projects divisions concerned; and (iii) availability of budget and competing demands on staff resources. In non-English speaking countries the seminar program should be reviewed taking into account the time needed for translation. ADB's capacity to deliver seminars and DMC demand should be carefully assessed when formulating seminar programs and structuring training programs. In many cases, participants requested case studies related to projects executed in their home countries. Also participants suggested allocating more time for cases studies. While adjustments were made to provide more case studies, this adjustment impacted the time available for the rest of the seminar program. Some redesign of the seminar program and materials would be appropriate to provide greater training flexibility to presenters. There is also a need to be more realistic in balancing the funding allocation with the implementation period. In hindsight, a longer implementation period should have been adopted for the funds allocated or alternatively fewer funds should have been allocated.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions: The seminars provided through this RETA facilitated implementation of ADB-financed projects and warrant continued support. For future seminars, alternative training modalities should be developed along with improved seminar material. The use of case studies should be expanded and more time should be allocated for participants to discuss problems encountered during project implementation.

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² ADB. 2003. *Technical Assistance Completion Report on 1997 Seminars on Project Implementation and Administration*. Manila.