Rapid gender assessments of 12 projects in four countries were undertaken as part of the Asian Development Bank's commitment to improving aid effectiveness. The assessment of three loans in Sri Lanka found that positive gender equality results were achieved due to the implementation of gender action plans and provisions. Gender action plans were effective tools for ensuring that both women and men participated in and benefited from projects. Gender equality results and gender action plans contributed directly to achieving loan outcomes and improved project effectiveness.

This report then discusses the gender equality results achieved for each project, summarizes factors that enhanced the quality of project design and implementation, and makes recommendations to maximize gender equity as a driver of change.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB's vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries substantially reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region's many successes, it remains home to two-thirds of the world's poor: 1.8 billion people who live on less than $2 a day, with 903 million struggling on less than $1.25 a day. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.
GENDER EQUALITY RESULTS IN ADB PROJECTS

Sri Lanka Country Report

Helen T. Thomas
Juliet Hunt

Asian Development Bank
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Acknowledgments

This report is one of a series of four country reports and one synthesis report presenting the findings of rapid gender assessments (RGAs) of selected loan projects financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in four developing member countries: Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Viet Nam, and Indonesia. This series follows the first round of RGAs carried out in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, and Pakistan in 2004–2005. This report was prepared under the overall guidance of Shireen Lateef, director, social sectors, Southeast Asia Department, and chair, Gender Equity Community of Practice, ADB; and Sonomi Tanaka, principal social development specialist, gender and development, ADB. The RGA team leader and editor of the country reports was Juliet Hunt. National dissemination workshops were conducted in Colombo on 31 August and 1 September 2009.

The authors acknowledge the assistance provided by staff working on the projects in this assessment. Nelun Gunasekera, the ADB resident mission gender specialist in Sri Lanka, provided extensive support. She prepared travel arrangements for the fieldwork, accompanied the authors, translated where necessary, provided guidance, assisted with verification, and ensured that stakeholders had an opportunity to comment on the findings. The authors thank other ADB staff at the Sri Lanka resident mission, including Country Director Richard Vokes and others, who provided valuable feedback and comments on the RGA report during its development. Aldrin Roco assisted in production.

The authors hope that the report will be useful to governments, nongovernment organizations, development practitioners, researchers, and other individuals working in the field of gender and development.
# Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>community-based organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMF</td>
<td>design and monitoring framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAP</td>
<td>gender action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP–NGO</td>
<td>implementing partner–nongovernment organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEDS</td>
<td>livelihood and enterprise development services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NECCDEP</td>
<td>North East Coastal Community Development Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NECORD-II</td>
<td>North East Community Restoration and Development Project-II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>nongovernment organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWSDB</td>
<td>National Water Supply and Drainage Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNA</td>
<td>participatory needs assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDO</td>
<td>rural development officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDS</td>
<td>rural development society (men only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGA-I</td>
<td>rapid gender assessment—first series, conducted in 2004 and 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGA-II</td>
<td>rapid gender assessment—current series, conducted in 2008 and 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLF</td>
<td>revolving loan fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRP</td>
<td>report and recommendation of the President (loan document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRCBWSS</td>
<td>Secondary Towns and Rural Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAARP</td>
<td>Tsunami-Affected Areas Rebuilding Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDP</td>
<td>village development plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDO</td>
<td>women development officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRDS</td>
<td>women’s rural development society (NECCDEP and NECORD-II)</td>
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</table>
Executive Summary

Rapid Gender Assessments

Rapid gender assessments (RGAs) of 12 loans in four countries (Indonesia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam) were undertaken as part of the ongoing commitment of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to aid effectiveness and the assessment of gender equality results. With three loans selected from each country, the RGAs were not designed to meet the broad range of criteria for an evaluation. The aims were to assess the extent to which project-specific gender action plans (GAPs) or gender provisions in ADB loans contributed to gender equality results and overall project outcomes, and to share knowledge on the key features of GAPs and gender provisions that contributed to these results.

The three loan projects assessed in Sri Lanka were

(i) North East Coastal Community Development Project (NECCDEP), loan 2027, approved November 2003 for $20.0 million, anticipated completion, June 2010;

(ii) Secondary Towns and Rural Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation Project (STRCBWSS), loan 1993, approved December 2002 for $60.3 million, anticipated completion, June 2010; and

(iii) North East Community Restoration and Development Project-II (NECORD-II) and Tsunami-Affected Areas Rebuilding Project (TAARP), loans 2167/2168, approved April 2005 for NECORD-II for $40 million (grant and loan) and TAARP for $157 million (grant and loan, disbursed through seven ADB loan projects including NECORD-II, NECCDEP, and STRCBWSS), anticipated completion, March 2010 (NECORD-II) and December 2010 (TAARP).

This report is one of a series of four country reports that assess gender equality results in the following areas: participation in project activities; access to resources; practical benefits delivered to women; and changes in gender relations at individual, household, community, and institutional levels. A synthesis report compares results and summarizes lessons across all four countries. It also provides recommendations to assist ADB to meet its commitments to gender equality as outlined in Strategy 2020: The Long-Term Strategic Framework of the Asian Development Bank 2008–2020 (Strategy 2020). This is the second round of RGAs (RGA-II) carried out by ADB. The first series (RGA-I) was undertaken in 2004 and 2005 and reviewed 12 loans in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, and Pakistan.

Findings for Sri Lanka

Positive Gender Equality Results were Achieved due to Gender Action Plans

Each of the three projects achieved positive results for women that contributed to gender equality. These ranged from practical benefits to results associated with women’s empowerment and changes in gender relations. The three projects took a community-driven approach to improving living conditions through investments in small infrastructures and livelihoods. A social mobilization process undertaken by implementing partner–nongovernment organizations (IP–NGOs) organized communities into three types of community-based organizations (CBOs): rural development societies (RDSs), for men; women’s rural development societies (WRDSs in NECCDEP and NECORD-II); and women’s societies (in STRCBWSS). Within these groups, communities developed village development plans (VDPs) that prioritized their needs and identified village infrastructure subprojects for funding through each project. Group members then committed to contributing labor to civil works, and in the case of STRCBWSS, additional cash contributions. Microfinance services to improve livelihoods using revolving loan funds (RLFs), backed up with skills training, were also provided through CBOs. All three projects identified widows and households headed by women as a specific target group to achieve poverty reduction objectives. Two projects, NECCDEP
and NECORD-II, were implemented in conflict- and tsunami-affected areas that presented a very challenging implementation environment. The needs within these communities were immediate and included shelter as well as the restoration of basic infrastructure for roads, schools, and health services.

Due to the implementation of NECCDEP’s GAP, CBOs mobilized through the project had equal membership by women and men in almost all communities. However, the participation of women in the steering committees established at the district secretariat level was low. Through participation in CBOs, women gained the skills and confidence to contribute to community decision making, including the development of VDPs, a new experience for women. Infrastructures prioritized by women included multipurpose buildings where they could meet, carry out income-generating activities, and attend health clinics; roads; and water and sanitation. Some women reported increased income due to the provision of credit and skills training. All these practical benefits were highly valued by women. Changes in gender relations also occurred—women cooperated with their husbands on civil works; attended meetings with local government officers for the first time (on behalf of their CBOs); and in a few cases bid for other civil works projects (not associated with NECCDEP) without their husbands and won and successfully completed the contracts, again for the first time. Women also were managing the community multipurpose buildings constructed by the project, a task that was previously undertaken by men.

Participation of all women in STRCBWSS rural activities was comprehensive due to the implementation of GAP provisions, and included participation in CBOs as well as in higher-level decision-making forums. Women effectively contributed to the planning and management of civil works for rural water supply and sanitation investments, and stated that their needs were reflected in the design and placement of infrastructures that were of enormous practical benefit. Skills and confidence for community decision making increased considerably. Women’s livelihoods improved through the RLF activities offered to CBO members, although several women indicated that loans were too small to establish viable enterprises. Considerable time savings associated with water management were noted by all women interviewed, but the project was not collecting quantitative data on this result at the time of the RGA.

The productivity of home gardens increased due to the ready availability of water. It was too early to assess improved health outcomes due to the investments in water supply and sanitation infrastructure; however, women stated that they appreciated the health and hygiene training associated with the construction of latrines and other sanitation infrastructure. Project beneficiaries identified changes in gender relations associated with their involvement in the project similar to those in NECCDEP, including increased involvement of women in the planning and management of community infrastructure and increased engagement with local government on planning and the identification of community needs. In addition, a new cohort of nontraditional leaders emerged from the community mobilization process, including young women and men with the confidence and capacity to engage in decision making on community issues.

Comparative data on women’s and men’s participation in NECORD-II activities were not included regularly in quarterly or annual project reports. This meant it was not possible to assess the extent to which the GAP was implemented, whether women benefited equally with men, whether the project’s social inclusion objectives were met, or whether training and civil works responded specifically to women’s needs. However, although the scope of benefits could not be verified with quantitative data, interviews with individual women demonstrated that practical benefits were achieved, such as basic shelter, access to food crops, and use of multipurpose buildings; and loans and livelihood training were provided through CBOs. In some communities women had taken up nontraditional activities such as carpentry, plumbing, and welding, skills that can bring them a better return on their labor than most other income-generating activities undertaken by women. No quantitative data were provided to the RGA team regarding this interesting achievement. There was also some evidence of changes in gender relations at the community level—as with NECCDEP, one NECORD-II WRDS had successfully bid on a civil works contract beyond those obtained within the project. Women reported that they attended planning meetings with government officials regularly and they now knew how to put forward their proposals, so they believed that their voices were being heard. Before participation in NECORD-II these kinds of interactions did not take place.
Gender Equality Results and Gender Action Plans Contributed to Overall Project Outcomes, Effectiveness, and Sustainability

The implementation of GAPs and the achievement of gender equality results contributed directly to the goals of poverty reduction, improved living conditions, and increased access to basic needs and infrastructure that were the overall goals of all three projects. NECCDEP’s purpose was to sustain livelihoods and sound management of natural resources; STRCBWSS aimed to reduce poverty by improving access to safe water and sanitation, thereby saving time and improving health; and NECORD-II aimed to improve living conditions and well-being in tsunami- and conflict-affected areas. Ensuring that women contributed and benefited was vital for the achievement of all these objectives.

Due to their GAPs, NECCDEP and STRCBWSS set out detailed procedures to create an environment and implementation mechanisms that assured that gender considerations were routinely addressed in their work. Consequently women’s participation was high in all project activities. In all three projects, involving women in decision making ensured that their priorities for infrastructure were met; this contributed directly to the goal of improving living conditions. Since resettlement was due to the conflict and the tsunami, families in NECCDEP and NECORD-II areas relied more on cash for basic food supplies, as they could no longer produce enough in their gardens. Livelihood activities increased women’s income and food security, which reduced the vulnerability of their families to poverty.

Involving women in decision making also significantly increased project effectiveness and efficiency because women’s efforts helped to keep projects on schedule, particularly in conflict-affected areas where men were often absent. Involving women fully in decision making enhanced their ownership of these infrastructures and their commitment to contribute labor for construction and ongoing maintenance and management. WRDS and women’s society members from all three projects expressed genuine commitment to maintaining infrastructures because they are so useful to their social and economic lives.

Sustainability of investments in social mobilization was more likely for STRCBWSS than NECCDEP and NECORD-II as mechanisms had been put in place through the project to continue support of women’s societies through local and provincial government. The social and economic environment for STRCBWSS was very different from that in the conflict- and tsunami-affected areas of NECCDEP and NECORD-II, making it somewhat easier to establish structures and measures for sustaining results. In NECCDEP, some efforts were made to sustain CBOs by forming district steering committees, but the constraints on women’s participation in these committees need to be addressed. In both NECCDEP and NECORD-II, women’s commitment to continuing to contribute to community activities may not be sustained unless local government officers are able to help groups overcome disagreements and manage RLFs, or provide training necessary to address technical concerns with infrastructure or equipment. Both NECCDEP and NECORD-II need to put in place mechanisms to strengthen the sustainability of CBOs, including by providing training and support to local government officials and by sharing learning on effective strategies with STRCBWSS. These measures will also enhance the sustainability of project infrastructure investments.

The Quality of Gender Action Plans and Their Implementation Varied

All three projects had GAPs that were developed during project design. NECCDEP and STRCBWSS fully implemented their GAPs; data were insufficient to verify whether all GAP elements were implemented in NECORD-II. Comparing the approaches taken during design and implementation highlights the following factors that contributed to the achievement of positive gender equality results in Sri Lanka:

(i) Comprehensive gender analysis. STRCBWSS and NECCDEP demonstrated the most comprehensive gender equality results and both carried out comprehensive gender analysis, although in different ways. For STRCBWSS, the gender analysis in the report and recommendation of the President (RRP) was minimal but was supplemented by implementation arrangements that required IP–NGO staff (including at least one woman) to reside in project villages for the first year of implementation, greatly enhancing the quality of social and gender analysis feeding
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into participatory needs assessments (PNAs) and VDPs. If this initial process is not carried out well, the potential for high-quality gender results is much reduced. However, there was no gender analysis for the STRCBWSS urban component, and no efforts for promoting women’s participation were identified in the RRP. NECCDEP’s GAP was based on gender analysis carried out during the project preparatory phase and was supplemented with PNAs that were closely monitored early in implementation by NECCDEP’s process monitor. Due to NECORD-II’s accelerated project preparation phase, there was little gender analysis in the RRP, lessons from previous phases were not identified, and there appeared to be little monitoring of the social mobilization process to ensure that women participated equally and that their needs and priorities were taken into account.

(ii) **Targets and strategies for all project components.** All three GAPs included special measures to ensure that participatory processes involved women, and NECCDEP and NECORD-II had GAP provisions for all components, whereas STRCBWSS had no provisions for the urban component. This was a missed opportunity to ensure that large-scale water supply and sanitation infrastructure met the needs of women. The NECCDEP and STRCBWSS GAPs had specific targets for women’s participation, whereas this was lacking in NECORD-II. The use of targets correlated with much better monitoring and reporting on women’s participation, coupled with effective follow-up action in cases where this was not achieved. In contrast, it was not possible to verify women’s participation or benefits in NECORD-II.

(iii) **GAPs revised during implementation.** NECCDEP and STRCBWSS GAPs were revised early in implementation and this increased their effectiveness. The ADB resident mission gender specialist facilitated participatory workshops with both NECCDEP and STRCBWSS to discuss GAP progress and encourage modifications to meet on-the-ground conditions. The STRCBWSS GAP was revised based on experience from previous phases and the gender training of project staff, in which the social and community development staff on the project team took an analytical approach to incorporating lessons and good practices. For example, a detailed quantitative monitoring framework was developed to track progress on the participation of men and women in all rural component activities. Additional activities were incorporated to promote the sustainability of CBOs, such as creation of a task force involving several government departments, to identify resources and mechanisms to support women’s societies after project completion.

(iv) **Ownership of GAPs by project implementers.** Ownership of the GAP and commitment to its implementation were very high in STRCBWSS and NECCDEP. Initially there was limited understanding of the relevance of some aspects of the NECCDEP GAP by project team members. Following investments in gender capacity building in-country and at regional ADB lateral learning events, and intensive monitoring and feedback from NECCDEP’s independent process monitors, who recommended the appointment of a project gender specialist, ownership of the GAP increased and its implementation was supported. All the community organizing staff at STRCBWSS were very familiar with the GAP, which drew on the social mobilization experience of staff from previous phases. In contrast, with the limited reporting on GAP implementation and gender equality results in NECORD-II, it was difficult to assess the level of commitment among project staff to implementing the GAP provisions.

(v) **Gender capacity of project implementers.** All three projects dedicated resources to gender awareness raising and capacity building with staff, IP–NGOs, government partners, and beneficiaries; this helped to ensure that women participated and that their needs were considered. Gender training was particularly important for IP–NGOs in NECCDEP and NECORD-II project areas due to a shortage of NGO staff with gender-inclusive social mobilization experience.
Executive Summary

and capacity. NECCDEP’s GAP also required that the selection criteria for project specialists, IP–NGOs, and other service providers should include gender-related experience and gender sensitivity. Gender training with NECCDEP and STRCBWSS staff helped revise their GAPs, and ADB-sponsored lateral learning sessions attended by senior management from all three projects reinforced learning regarding GAPs through exchanges with peers from their own and other countries. This directly contributed to ownership of the GAP and its monitoring in NECCDEP.

Local gender specialists. The availability of gender expertise in all three projects assisted significantly with GAP implementation. Comparing approaches between the three projects also demonstrates that long-term gender expertise enhances the achievement of gender equality results. Technical support for implementing the GAPs was contracted for NECCDEP and NECORD-II, although for NECORD-II the budget was sufficient for only 2 years. The NECCDEP gender specialist strengthened the capacity of project staff and other stakeholders to understand and implement the GAP, including by breaking it down into step-by-step elements and by helping revise and modify GAP activities when the project team needed to respond flexibly to community needs. Although STRCBWSS did not contract a gender specialist, an effective gender mainstreaming approach was employed using community organizers and sociologists from the executing agency who had gender expertise and who ensured that participation, needs assessment, and other activities included women. Care was taken, also, to ensure that IP–NGO staff included a high proportion of women, and the detailed monitoring of GAP implementation ensured that GAP targets were met and impressive gender equality results achieved. The involvement of the ADB resident mission gender specialist in participatory and highly tailored gender capacity building with project implementers paid off in NECCDEP and STRCBWSS as GAPs were modified in response to the context faced during implementation. Also, her involvement in midterm reviews and other monitoring missions by ADB staff strengthened the monitoring of quantitative targets and the reporting of other gender-related results in these projects.

Institutionalization of Gender Actions Plans

More effort was needed to institutionalize the GAPs by executing and implementing agencies and ADB through the project cycle. None of the projects incorporated GAP targets for women’s participation into their design and monitoring frameworks (DMFs), although NECCDEP revised its DMF following the midterm review to include one GAP indicator.

Both NECCDEP and STRCBWSS had comprehensive systems in place to monitor whether GAP measures were effective at encouraging women’s participation and both took corrective action when problems with women’s participation in social mobilization were identified. The STRCBWSS project collected and reported comprehensive sex-disaggregated data on participation in rural activities; however, this was not adequately reported by NECCDEP. It was unclear whether sex-disaggregated data were routinely collected by NECORD-II; there were no monitoring mechanisms for GAP implementation and there was no reporting on the effectiveness of activities to deliver benefits equally to women and men. Consequently, it was not possible to track progress in many areas of the GAP, nor to verify the broad statements of achievements made by the executing agency.

In all three projects, most GAP reporting focused on completed activities or progress toward quantitative targets. There was no reporting on higher-level gender equality results and no analysis of the contribution that these results and GAP implementation made to the achievement of overall project outcomes. Tracking the contribution that GAP activities are making to project outcomes can assist with modifying the GAP and improving its effectiveness, and help reinforce understanding of the GAP and commitment to its ongoing implementation.

The assessment of these three projects has highlighted the importance of incorporating a covenant for GAP implementation into the loan agreement.
to encourage monitoring of GAP implementation. The loan agreements for both NECCDEP and the STRCBWSS project included a covenant that required implementation of the GAP, and in both cases there was good monitoring of GAP implementation and women’s participation. In addition, the ADB loan review missions for NECCDEP reported regularly on compliance with the covenant, although there was minimal monitoring of the STRCBWSS gender-related loan covenant by ADB. In contrast, there was no loan covenant in the loan agreement for NECORD-II to implement the GAP; it was assumed that the executing agency’s commitment to inclusive social mobilization would ensure the implementation of the GAP; there were inadequate data available to analyze the proportion of women participating and the project benefits accruing to women; and there was no tracking of GAP implementation or achievements in ADB loan review processes.

Other Contextual and Institutional Factors

Direct requests for sex-disaggregated data and information on gender equality results from the ADB project manager provided important signals to the executing agency regarding the importance of GAP implementation. Comparing results achieved for the three projects also shows that where leadership from project directors was demonstrated, gender equality results were more comprehensive, with better monitoring and follow-up.

Both NECCDEP and NECORD-II were implemented in conflict- and tsunami-affected areas and needed to respond quickly and flexibly to communities experiencing extreme upheaval, in a context in which the capacity of IP-NGOs was limited. Good monitoring helped to achieve gender equality results in NECCDEP, but NECORD-II missed opportunities to put comprehensive monitoring mechanisms in place. It is now accepted by government partners that projects implementing community-driven processes must reflect the needs of all community members if they are to be effective. However, it cannot be assumed that projects identified as “socially inclusive” will automatically ensure women’s equal participation, particularly in complex and emergency response situations; in addition, despite a clear commitment to social inclusiveness, there was no appreciation of the need to involve women in the urban infrastructure activities undertaken in STRCBWSS, even though women are equally responsible for household water and sanitation in rural and urban areas.

Recommendations for Sri Lanka

ADB’s Strategy 2020 highlights gender equity as a driver of change and the ADB country partnership strategy for Sri Lanka reinforces ADB’s commitment to gender mainstreaming in all operations. If this is to be achieved, GAP features that have led to the high-quality gender equality results identified by the RGA need to be applied comprehensively. The following recommendations are made to achieve this aim:

(i) All projects should have comprehensive GAPs with pro-poor and gender-responsive provisions for each component, including large-scale urban infrastructure components in water supply and sanitation projects. The GAPs should be prepared in sufficient detail to provide a road map for implementation and should include strategies and targets for each component, project gender specialists throughout implementation, and gender capacity building with executing agencies and other stakeholders. The implementation of all the GAPs should be covered by a covenant in the loan agreement.

(ii) Gender equity as a driver of change needs to be systematically addressed in project monitoring and reporting, and tracked at both project and country levels. Sex-disaggregated baseline and monitoring data should be collected on gender-related targets included in project GAPs and on other DMF indicators.

(iii) GAP targets should be included in the DMF to encourage comprehensive monitoring and reporting on the GAP and gender equality results in core documents such as annual, midterm review, impact assessment, and project completion reports. They should assess gender differences in participation, access to project resources, and benefits. This will also facilitate the tracking of results at country level.
(iv) Involvement of the ADB resident mission gender specialist in participatory gender capacity building with executing agencies, the monitoring of GAP implementation, and loan review missions should be encouraged by other ADB staff, particularly in projects in high-priority sectors where it is possible to demonstrate the impact of a gender-responsive approach and where there are opportunities for lesson learning and replication to other projects. Regular lateral learning opportunities in-country will enable the sharing of experiences regarding the more challenging aspects of sustaining gender equality and social inclusion results from investments in social and physical infrastructure through CBOs.

(v) ADB should pay more consistent attention to GAP implementation and monitoring, including the monitoring of gender equality results throughout project implementation in complex social circumstances (such as in conflict- and tsunami-affected areas), and should have more dialogue with executing agencies on GAP implementation and gender-related loan covenants, particularly where reporting on GAP implementation and gender equality results is inadequate. It should not be assumed that projects identified as “socially inclusive” will automatically cover gender issues and ensure women’s equal participation; special measures need to be identified in a GAP, implemented, and closely monitored.
Introduction

Background

The 1998 Policy on Gender and Development of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) identified gender mainstreaming as a key strategy for addressing gender equality and the empowerment of women in all ADB-financed activities (ADB 1998, 41). Several institutional mechanisms have been adopted to ensure policy implementation, including the appointment of local gender specialists in ADB resident missions and the development of gender action plans (GAPs) for loan projects (ADB 2006c).

The first series of rapid gender assessments (RGA-I) was undertaken in 2004–2005 as part of ADB’s review of the implementation of the gender and development (GAD) policy (ADB 2006b, vii–viii). RGA-I assessed 12 loans in four countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, and Pakistan) and found that the GAPs were an effective gender mainstreaming tool because they provided a road map for implementing the project’s gender design features (Hunt, Lateef, and Thomas 2007, xiii–xiv).

Strengthening the implementation of gender-related loan design features is a central aspect of ADB’s Gender and Development Plan of Action (ADB 2007b). Several actions are identified to achieve this purpose, including institutionalizing the development and use of project-specific GAPs, incorporating gender-related targets and indicators in design and monitoring frameworks (DMFs) of all projects, and promoting stricter compliance with gender-related loan assurances and covenants (ADB 2007b, 7).

ADB’s Strategy 2020 (ADB 2008a) identified gender equity as one of five drivers of change essential for achieving inclusive and sustainable growth, reducing poverty, and improving living standards (ADB 2008a, 1, 15). Under Strategy 2020, ADB will promote gender equity by designing gender-inclusive projects and paying careful attention to gender issues across the full range of its operations. ADB’s results framework (designed to monitor implementation of Strategy 2020), which includes a gender mainstreaming indicator, reinforces this commitment (ADB 2008d, 4–13).

As part of its commitment to aid effectiveness, ADB is a partner to the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2005). To achieve greater development effectiveness in meeting the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, developed and developing member countries and multilateral and bilateral development institutions committed themselves to five principles: ownership, harmonization, alignment, results, and mutual accountability. With gender equality and women’s empowerment as one of the goals, aid effectiveness in gender equality has become an important part of the global development agenda. How to manage, achieve, and measure gender equality and women’s empowerment results is a topic of concern among donors and development partners. Managing for development results is also part of a broader commitment by ADB to demonstrate and increase aid effectiveness (ADB 2007c).

To monitor these commitments, the GAD Plan of Action scheduled a second series of rapid gender assessments (RGA-II) to assess the results achieved by projects with a gender and development theme and gender-related activities (ADB 2007b, 11). This includes assessments of 12 loans in Indonesia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam. This report on the Sri Lanka RGAs is part of a series that includes four country reports and a synthesis report that consolidates findings from across the four countries.

Objectives

The objective was to assess the extent to which project-specific GAPs or specific gender provisions in ADB loans achieved gender equality results and contributed to
projects’ overall outcomes and outputs. ADB planned to use the findings to

(i) assess the quality and implementation of the GAPs, including compliance with gender-related loan assurances and covenants, and the incorporation of GAP elements into design and monitoring and evaluation frameworks and performance-monitoring systems;

(ii) assess how the achievement of gender equality results contributed to overall development outcomes, effectiveness, and sustainability—and demonstrate these links, if they were found; and

(iii) share knowledge on the core elements of quality GAPs that are critical for the achievement of gender equality results and overall development outcomes.

Methodology and Scope

The following criteria were used to select the loan projects for RGA-II:

(i) projects were categorized with a gender and development theme or effective gender mainstreaming preferably having gender targets in the framework or a project-specific GAP; in a country where a limited number of such loan projects existed, such as Mongolia, loans with some gender provisions were included;

(ii) projects were at an advanced stage of implementation of gender-related activities, and outputs and preliminary outcomes could be assessed;

(iii) projects covered a mix of rural and urban locations and a variety of sectors, including the priority sectors highlighted in ADB’s Strategy 2020;

(iv) projects included some components that addressed the constraints and needs of marginalized people (for example indigenous people and ethnic minorities); and

(v) the developing member country showed a willingness to participate.

A common methodological framework was developed to guide the assessments in each country. It included overarching questions, process and outcome indicators, an exploration of negative and positive changes, and intended and unintended results. Key gender-related results investigated were:

(i) the participation by women in project activities and access to project resources compared with men;

(ii) the practical benefits achieved for women compared with men;

(iii) progress toward strategic changes in gender relations, including at the individual, household, community, societal, or national level; and

(iv) other results such as institutional changes within executing agencies, implementing agencies, or other government agencies or programs.

The RGA consultants modified the questions and indicators as needed for each project. The overarching questions for assessment follow:

(i) What gender equality results were achieved?

(ii) Where gender equality results were demonstrated, how did these contribute to the achievement of overall loan objectives or outcomes and the effectiveness and sustainability of the loan investment?

(iii) Where gender equality results were demonstrated, what caused or contributed to these results?

(iv) What were the key features of the GAPs and gender strategies and provisions that contributed to the achievement of positive gender equality results and overall development outcomes, effectiveness, and sustainability? To what extent were the GAPs, gender strategies, and gender provisions implemented?
Introduction

(v) To what extent were the GAPs, gender strategies, and gender provisions institutionalized into project management and monitoring systems and processes by ADB and executing agencies?

(vi) What are the implications of findings in all the above areas for improving the focus on gender equality in ADB loan preparation, design, implementation, and monitoring?

An international gender specialist and ADB resident mission gender specialist carried out the field assessments. They visited project sites and interviewed project beneficiaries (women and men), staff, and local stakeholders individually and in groups (Appendix 3) using questions from the methodological framework. Each RGA reviewed project documents, including the report and recommendation of the President (RRP), the GAP, the project administration memorandum where available, back-to-office reports from review missions, progress reports, ADB case studies, and other relevant documents at the resident missions (Appendix 4).

The RGAs were systematic assessments that adhered to quality standards for data collection, analysis, and validation (ADB n.d.). However, the focus was on gender equality results and the causes of those results; with three loans selected from various sectors in each country, the RGAs were not designed to meet the broad range of criteria usually specified for an evaluation. Very few projects had adequate baseline or sex-disaggregated quantitative data for assessing results for women compared with men. RGAs were based on both qualitative and quantitative information. Qualitative assessments were cross-checked with a range of in-country stakeholders and relevant ADB headquarters staff. Details for the three projects included in the Sri Lanka RGA are set out in Table 1.

Fieldwork for the Sri Lanka Rapid Gender Assessment

The international consultant spent 12 working days in Sri Lanka and 2 additional days at ADB headquarters. The international consultant and resident mission

Table 1 Project Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan No.</th>
<th>Loan Name</th>
<th>Gender Category a</th>
<th>Thematic Classification b</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Loan Approval (A)</th>
<th>Effectivity (E)</th>
<th>Completion (C) c</th>
<th>Loan Amount ($ million)</th>
<th>Executing Agency</th>
<th>ADB Division</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

continued on next page

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2 Project administration memoranda were requested but were not always made available to the RGA consultants.

3 Evaluations are defined as comprehensive assessments of the design, implementation, and results of all aspects of a project, including the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability (Development Assistance Committee 2002).
### Table 1  
continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan No.</th>
<th>Loan Name</th>
<th>Gender Category(^a)</th>
<th>Thematic Classification(^b)</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Loan Approval (A)</th>
<th>Effectivity (E)</th>
<th>Completion (C)(^c)</th>
<th>Loan Amount ($ million)</th>
<th>Executing Agency</th>
<th>ADB Division</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2168/2167</td>
<td>North East Community Restoration and Development Project-II (NECORD-II) and Tsunami-Affected Areas Rebuilding Project (TAARP)</td>
<td>Effective gender mainstreaming</td>
<td>Rural development (multisector)</td>
<td>A: Apr 2005 E: Jul 2005 C: Mar 2010 (NECORD-II) C: Dec 2010 (TAARP)</td>
<td>NECORD-II ADF grant: 14.0; ADF loan: 26.0 TAARP ATF grant: 150.0; ADF loan: 7.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development TAARP: Executing agencies for each disbursing loan project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^a\) ADB classifies loans according to the following gender categories: gender and development theme, effective gender mainstreaming, and some gender benefits. A loan is classified as effective gender mainstreaming when (i) the social analysis conducted during project preparation includes consideration of gender issues; (ii) the project includes design features to facilitate women’s participation in project activities, access to project benefits, or both; and (iii) these design features are supported by loan covenants. A loan is classified as gender and development theme if it directly promotes gender equity by attempting to narrow gender disparities, or if it integrates a gender perspective to achieve equal participation, benefits, and rights (ADB. 2008e. Gender Categories of ADB Projects).

\(^b\) Thematic classification tracks how each project supports the strategic goals of ADB (ADB. 2008f. Updated Theme Classification).

\(^c\) Loan effectivity refers to the date at which the loan became effective and could be drawn down.


gender specialist spent 5 days in the Trincomalee region meeting with NECORD-II and NECCDEP project staff, the chief secretary of the Northern Provincial Council (involved in implementing both projects), and 1 full day each meeting with NECORD-II and NECCDEP project beneficiaries in group meetings and individually. The RGA team viewed results from subprojects funded by both projects and met with local government officials. The RGA team spent 4 days in Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura districts and had meetings with STRCBWSS project staff and project beneficiaries in both districts in groups and individually. The team
also met with the former gender specialist from the NECCDEP project in Anuradhapura. In total during fieldwork, the RGA team met with approximately 230 project beneficiaries. The remaining time was spent in Colombo interviewing other project stakeholders, the NECCDEP project manager and other staff from the ADB Sri Lanka resident mission. The STRCBWSS project manager was interviewed at ADB headquarters and the NECORD-II project manager by telephone.

Background on Sri Lanka

Projects selected in Sri Lanka were from similar sectors. All involved working with communities to develop and implement small infrastructure (including water and sanitation for STRCBWSS) and livelihood and other rehabilitation activities, primarily in rural areas. Social mobilization was a core element in each project’s approach to working with communities, and each RRP stressed the importance of women’s involvement in this process. Each project GAP focused on the process of how communities were to be mobilized to participate in project activities, rather than the results to be achieved. NECORD-II and NECCDEP were implemented in conflict- and tsunami-affected areas, where communities were seeking survival strategies, rather than longer-term development objectives. NECORD-II and NECCDEP provided assistance at the same time using similar delivery frameworks, with the RRP that explicitly highlighted the importance of communities receiving equal access to relief funds to meet their immediate needs.

There are many misperceptions about women’s empowerment in Sri Lanka. There seem to be few restrictions on women’s mobility, except in Muslim communities, and there are several prominent women in politics and business from leading Sri Lankan families. Women’s rights are well articulated in the Constitution and legislation. Assumptions are therefore made that specific measures will not be necessary to ensure women participate fully in development projects. While there is a high level of basic literacy among women, in practice traditional patriarchal attitudes limit the interaction of the vast majority of women in the public world of community decision making or commerce. Many women in rural areas have very basic levels of literacy and most women interviewed for the RGA noted they had never been to the local government office nor interacted directly with officials prior to their involvement in an ADB-funded project. Women commonly do not rise to high decision-making positions in either the public or the private sector. Thus, projects noted difficulties in meeting gender balance targets in steering or monitoring committees as there are few women in the senior public service positions represented on these committees.

In conflict-affected areas, women bear the brunt of social and economic impacts. Gender-based violence in the household and in public places has increased dramatically due to the overall environment of violence and insecurity across the country over the past 20 years (Wijayatilake 2004). The proportion of households headed by women has sharply increased, because of widowhood and abandonment; men frequently fail to return home even if they are not killed, kidnapped, or wounded. Families are traumatized by events around them, and the very real fear of slipping into extreme poverty places additional stress on relations within the family.

Economic activities are difficult to establish and sustain under the insecure conditions. Markets have been disrupted and, with travel restricted and checkpoints existing in most conflict-affected regions, communities have limited access to regional centers where more economic opportunities might lie. Women in particular are fearful to travel alone; they also fear for the safety of their children. These conditions limit the potential for small and micro enterprises to thrive and for new markets to be exploited. At the same time, women find they have to take on nontraditional activities to keep their families going, in the absence of male adults. In this context, gender stereotypes are being challenged, but women also have to bear the insecurities of taking on new roles in communities without the support of male family members.

It cannot be assumed, therefore, that women in Sri Lanka are easily able or willing to participate in development project activities. Special measures and support are needed to ensure that women have the 4 Stated in an interview with the secretary of the Northern Province during the RGA fieldwork.
opportunity to participate. For example, when planning mobilization activities involving women it is important that the timing of meetings and project activities does not conflict with their other duties. Careful analysis is required of the situation in each community, with space and time allowed during project implementation for women to negotiate their participation on their own terms with their families and other community members. The RGA projects illustrate the general points above, and this assessment afforded an opportunity to analyze what measures were taken to ensure that women fully benefited from development investments.
North East Coastal Community Development Project

Project Description

The goal of the North East Coastal Community Development Project (NECCDEP) was to reduce poverty and meet basic needs in coastal communities in the three districts of the Eastern Province (ADB 2003a, 3). The project purpose was sustainable livelihood improvement and sound management of natural resources. The most vulnerable communities were prioritized for support early in the project. The focus was particularly on women, given the high number of households headed by them in the conflict- and tsunami-affected region. The total project cost estimate was $28.4 million (ADB 2003a). Parallel cofinancing, through a grant from the Government of the Netherlands intended for part of the coastal resource planning component, was withdrawn when the security situation in this area worsened. Following the tsunami disaster in 2004, funds from the Tsunami-Affected Areas Project (TAARP), approved in early 2005, were channeled for disbursement through several existing and planned projects in affected districts, including NECCDEP (ADB 2005a).

The project had five components:

(i) **Sustainable livelihood improvement.** This component had two major elements:

(a) Sustainable livelihood improvement was to be equally accessible to men and women and focused on activities in agriculture, fisheries, agroforestry, and related enterprises (by servicing and adding value to these subsectors) and on some non-traditional economic opportunities. In undertaking the livelihood support activities, emphasis was to be on developing livelihood clusters—links between supply of raw materials and value-added production, and access to transport and marketing facilities—to ensure the sustainability and financial viability of the interventions. Separate clusters for women were envisaged in the design. Livelihood and enterprise development services were to be provided to facilitate identification of market opportunities, relevant technology transfer, small business and entrepreneurship training, provision of mentoring support, and the development of livelihood clusters. The livelihood improvement activities were to be financed through a microfinance delivery system established under the project.

(b) Small-scale infrastructure was to be provided at the community level to meet basic needs. Community infrastructure interventions eligible for funding included the construction and rehabilitation of minor roads, culverts, drains, small-scale water supply and sanitation facilities, simple solid waste management schemes, and community buildings (e.g., multipurpose buildings that might include day care and playground facilities). The community infrastructure interventions, including some fisheries infrastructure, were to be assessed and selected on the basis of specified social and environmental criteria, with priority given to the needs of the poor and households headed by women. The recipient communities themselves were to manage and maintain the infrastructure facilities financed by the project.

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5 This included ADB loan funds of $20.0 million, with additional funds to be provided by the Government of Sri Lanka ($5.6 million), the Government of the Netherlands ($1.1 million), and beneficiaries ($1.3 million) (ADB 2003, ii).
(ii) **Resource management in three special management areas.** This included assistance to carry out resource mapping and to identify resource management problems that affect livelihoods and the quality of life in the community. The project was to help implement selected community-based resource management interventions to address these problems, including mangrove replanting, solid waste management, introduction of alternative energy sources (such as solar power), and implementation of public awareness programs. In addition, the project was to support habitat conservation activities, such as demarcation of environmentally sensitive areas and formation of local resource management groups. The resource management interventions at the community level were to be closely linked to the livelihood support activities in component 1 to ensure their sustainability.

(iii) **Coastal resource planning.** A coastal resource management plan for the Eastern Province was to be prepared to establish a consistent framework for coastal resource planning and management with local government agencies. These outcomes were to be achieved through institutional capacity building with staff training in provinces, districts, and divisions; and investing in equipment to improve existing database management systems, incorporating sex-disaggregated information where appropriate.

(iv) **Fisheries development.** This component aimed to support the development of a more efficient and productive fishing industry on the east coast by rehabilitating the two major fisheries’ harbor facilities. It was to combine physical infrastructure rehabilitation and improvement (offshore and onshore) with training and awareness programs covering improved fish handling, onboard storage methods, and processing and marketing methods. Target groups included fishers, boat owners, processors, and traders. Few women engage in any aspect of the fishery in this region.

(v) **Project implementation support.** This was to include the establishment and operation of management and monitoring systems to support timely and cost-effective project implementation. It consisted of the provision of project and financial management support; engagement of implementing partner–nongovernment organizations (IP–NGOs) and other service providers, especially those with a focus on women; procurement of equipment, supplies, and materials; and the establishment of accounting, auditing, monitoring, and reporting systems. An impact assessment framework and an information, education, and communication system were also to be established.

A process monitor was contracted to provide objective assessment of the implementation of the procedures established to ensure bottom–up planning, implementation, operation, and maintenance of livelihood and infrastructure activities for all project components. Annual surveys covering different topics each year and field visits to verify progress reported by the implementing agency were conducted.

The executing agency was the Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development (formerly the Ministry of Home Affairs, Provincial Councils, and Local Government). The North East Provincial Council was the lead implementing agency and responsible for overall project coordination. The National Development Trust Fund managed and coordinated the project’s microfinance delivery system under a subsidiary loan agreement. Management of this project was delegated from ADB headquarters to the Sri Lanka resident mission.

At the time of the rapid gender assessment (RGA), overall progress of the project was rated as satisfactory by ADB with 584 subprojects approved and 522 under implementation. Three livelihood and enterprise development service workers had been engaged to provide training and skills to help develop alternative livelihoods and approximately 355 training programs had been held. Resource mapping for the three special management areas was completed; 63 interventions

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6 The North East Province was redivided into the original Northern and Eastern provinces in 2006. The Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development was renamed the Ministry of Economic Development following the national elections of January 2010.
had commenced in this component and 32 had been completed. However, due to the security situation in the project areas, implementation of the coastal resource planning and fisheries components had been delayed (ADB 2009).

Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan Included in the Loan Design

A gender action plan (GAP) was included in the report and recommendation of the President (RRP). The GAP was based on findings from the poverty and social assessment conducted during the project preparatory technical assistance and cross-checked and updated during loan processing. The GAP identified some key challenges associated with the social and economic impacts of the conflict on women. This analysis provided a strong rationale for the special measures set out in the GAP to ensure full participation of women in project activities. The GAP included comprehensive design features and measures for all subcomponents of the project to ensure the participation of women.

The livelihoods component required 50% representation of women in small self-help groups and that women’s rural development societies (WRDSs) be formed alongside rural development societies (RDSs) for men. When participatory needs assessments (PNAs) were conducted, separate sessions were to be held for women, and their needs incorporated in village development plans (VDPs). The IP–NGOs selected for social mobilization had to include at least one women-focused NGO in each district and all IP–NGO staff must have received gender training.

Once VDPs were agreed upon within communities, at least 50% of small-scale community infrastructure projects were to meet women’s needs as identified in PNAs. Environmental conservation and restoration projects were required to ensure 50% participation by women, and enterprise development activities were to meet women’s needs. Gender training that included a focus on leadership and gender balance was to be delivered to all groups, with additional training for IP–NGOs in the delivery of these modules when necessary. Project information centers focusing on the needs of women were to be established.

The resource management component was to ensure 30% women’s participation in consultation workshops and women were to participate in the resource mapping process. The resource planning and fisheries management components also required the participation of women. It was noted that women are not extensively involved in fishery, but where appropriate women entrepreneurs and producer groups were to be encouraged.

In the project management and monitoring component, the engagement of a social development specialist and sex-disaggregation of all data in the monitoring and evaluation systems were required. The GAP also stated that project-related training must include a compulsory module on gender awareness to create a supportive environment for women participants in project activities. It also required the social development consultant to have expertise in gender and development and gender mainstreaming; to conduct gender training; and to advise the project officers, IP–NGOs, and NGO consortia on gender-sensitive project management (ADB 2003a, 26).

Provisions to implement the GAP were included in loan assurances and incorporated into the loan agreement as covenants requiring that “(a) all project interventions are specifically targeted to the poor and to women; and (b) the project’s gender strategy and plan are implemented” (ADB 2004a, 38). An additional covenant required that 50% of the credit line from the National Development Trust Fund be allocated to women entrepreneurs (ADB 2004a, 34).

Gender Action Plan Implementation

During the early implementation phase, the project gender specialist broke down the RRP GAP into step-by-step activities for each component. This enabled team members to clarify how GAP activities fit with other activities requiring concurrent implementation. Several project activities were delayed because of the worsening security situation throughout the region, so further adjustments to the GAP were necessary. For example, in many villages unaffected by the tsunami, communities fled to camps for internally displaced people for over a year as government forces reestablished control across the Northern and Eastern provinces. Even in communities that were not displaced, the conflict and natural disaster wreaked havoc on the local economy and made travel, even to the bank in
the next-larger town, dangerous or impossible. The regular functioning of RDSs and WRDSs that had been reestablished or newly formed through the project and revitalized in the immediate aftermath of the tsunami with funding from international NGOs (according to some informants) disintegrated when communities were displaced. These community-based organizations (CBOs) remained registered with the local government, which affords them access to government programming and support for development activities, and have had to be revived again even if some are in debt for lines of credit extended during the earlier emergency relief period.

This period of upheaval meant that the project team had to be flexible in the way it introduced activities or in quickly providing relief to support housing or income-generating activities as families returned, before PNAs or VDP activities could be conducted. Under these circumstances, many IP–NGOs found it hard to take the time necessary to carry out detailed social and gender analysis, or to wait for full community participation and commitment. The demand for quick relief was enormous from these communities in crisis. Several early PNAs and VDPs were reworked with communities by the IP–NGOs, with support from the project gender specialist, to ensure that women were fully involved and that gender dimensions were incorporated.

Gender Equality Results

The following sections present gender equality results evident from field visits and project reports. They are summarized in Table 2. Given the time available, the RGA team visited only a few villages, and given the delays in the implementation of components 2, 3, and 4, only villages where component 1, sustainable livelihood improvements, was being implemented. The most recent quarterly report (NECCDEP 2008c) noted that targets for women’s participation in component 2 consultations had been met and that a sex-disaggregated database had been established for component 3. Appendix 1 compares GAP targets and provisions with the gender equality results achieved in all components.

Component 1: Sustainable Livelihood Improvement

Participation and Access to Resources

Care was taken to ensure women participated in PNAs and in self-help groups separate from men, with WRDSs being either re-formed or established. The requirement for separate RDSs for men and WRDSs for women ensured high participation by women, with WRDSs making up 42% of all groups formed by the project. The first process monitor report noted that in 2006 most of the PNAs were not carried out thoroughly, with limited documentation of “gender and ethnic/distinct group sensitive approaches” (CIRM 2006b, 6). The 2006 process monitor report did state, however, that communities were interested in participating, and many had already experienced various needs assessment sessions with other organizations, so knew what to expect. Overall, women were 32% of the participants involved in the development of VDPs.

Social mobilization requires complex procedures demanding highly experienced community mobilization skills. In villages visited by the RGA team, WRDS members appeared satisfied with the process. Two years after the 2006 process monitor survey was conducted, these WRDSs had gone on to develop proposals for funding from the local government for new subprojects. Even though there were some communities in which the social mobilization process unfolded less smoothly, there were others in which community organizing skills had been effectively transferred to WRDS members, who continue to apply them to planning and preparing subprojects to improve their communities. Gender roles are already in flux, and women are forced to be more active outside the household. IP–NGOs and project staff noted that because so many men are absent from communities (seeking work, in the military, or missing), in some communities it was a challenge to hold regular RDS meetings with men. Thus, this further benefit of working with women, noted in an RGA fieldwork interview: “They complete activities more quickly as they attend every meeting.”

Infrastructure. All the WRDS members interviewed verified that PNAs reflected the voices of women and

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7 Each process monitor report has focused on a particular aspect of the project’s implementation approach. The first one focused on social mobilization process.
Table 2  North East Coastal Community Development Project—Summary of Gender Equality Results by Loan Component

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Component</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project goal and objectives:</strong> poverty reduction, sustainable livelihood improvement, and sound management of natural resources</td>
<td>• Reduced vulnerability to poverty due to increased cash from women’s income generation and subsistence food production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased social capital due to women’s involvement in WRDSs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Component 1—Sustainable Livelihood Improvement</strong></td>
<td>• Local government areas selected by the project had a high proportion of households headed by women.a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Select communities</td>
<td>• Of the 239 members of the district secretariat steering committees, 9% were women, which did not meet the target of 30% women. Action was being taken to address this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish district secretariat steering and monitoring committees</td>
<td>• Four project information centers were established and focusing on needs of women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish project information centers</td>
<td>• One women-focused and 6 other IP–NGOs were contracted per district, with 40% women staff trained. Gender training was conducted for all IP–NGOs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Select IP–NGOs</td>
<td>• Of 661 groups formed, 277 (42%) were WRDSs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social mobilization: conduct PNAs and develop VDPs</td>
<td>• PNAs were conducted separately for women and VDPs incorporated women’s concerns. Of 26,372 beneficiaries participating in developing VDPs, 8,415 (32%) were women. Some early PNAs were reworked to ensure that women’s needs were well incorporated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide livelihood and enterprise development services</td>
<td>• A total of 21,539 loans were processed through groups with 20,790 (96%) given to women. About 2,552 households headed by women received credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Implement small-scale community infrastructure projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 32% of the 2,517 subprojects addressed women’s specific needs (e.g. common wells, production centers, multipurpose buildings, markets, preschools, women’s shopping complexes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Voluntary labor was structured so that women could adjust their labor contributions around their other responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Implement environmental conservation and restoration projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• On average, 55% of all those participating in environmental and conservation projects were women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Conduct training on livelihood improvement, enterprise development, technology transfer, and leadership training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Overall, 12,398 people attended training programs and 8,013 (65%) were women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Component 2—Resource Management in Three Special Management Areas</strong></td>
<td>• 23,418 people participated in consultations on environmental impacts, of whom 12,513 (53%) were women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conduct consultations on environmental impacts</td>
<td>• 494 people participated in resource mapping, of whom 17% were women—this component had a delayed start.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Carry out detailed resource mapping and identify resource management priorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Select community-based resource management interventions including public awareness programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Component 3—Coastal Resource Planning</strong></td>
<td>• Delayed implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sex-disaggregated database was established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Component 4—Fisheries Development</strong></td>
<td>• Delayed implementation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
project reports indicated that 32% of construction activities had addressed priorities identified by women. A mixture of multipurpose buildings (much appreciated by women because they now have a place for meetings, trainings, and health clinics); roads; and water and sanitation had been funded. While priorities identified by men and women may be different, the combination of buildings, access roads, market areas, drainage channels, fishers’ rests, and other small infrastructure construction have brought more opportunities to the community as a whole. Several women proudly noted that they had contributed to the construction of a multipurpose community building, and were now managing it—keeping a calendar of reservations and collecting rent. Revenue is used to maintain other infrastructure as well as the building. This has meant WRDSs can maintain access for their own needs, unlike in other communities in the past, where once such a building was completed the RDS generally took control. Four project information centers have been established that contain libraries of primarily gender- and environment-related subjects (NECCDEP 2008b, 214). At one project site with access to an information center, informants noted they find the information useful and use the centers for various meetings as well. Women informants all stated they willingly donated labor for infrastructure construction. They were able to adjust other responsibilities around this additional demand on their time as construction activities were planned well in advance.

**Livelihood.** Revolving loan funds (RLFs) with training on income-generating activities were offered to WRDSs to reach the project’s target group of widows and households headed by women, and 96% of the loans extended by the project have been to women. Commercial and other sources of credit for these communities are very limited since displacement. WRDS members all greatly appreciated the income-generating opportunities the RLF provided even though interest rates, after the funds pass through the National Development Trust Fund, are relatively high. Some women reported that income-generating activities are doing well, and some keep accounts using business skills learned from the project (some even accounting for their own labor time).

**Skills training.** This was offered to RDS and WRDS members through a cluster system. This subcomponent has been implemented slowly because there are few livelihood and enterprise development services with the capacity to deliver the range of services required to develop a cluster as initially envisaged in the project design. Project reports indicate that one IP–NGO contracted for each district had demonstrated experience working with women, meeting the GAP target (NECCDEP 2008b, 214). Women were 65% of the participants in livelihood training programs. However, ADB’s midterm review mission report noted that “it appears few have translated the training into income generating activities” (ADB 2008c, 3).

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**Table 2 continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Component</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component 5—Project Management and Monitoring</td>
<td>• Social development specialist engaged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide project specialist and financial management support</td>
<td>• Consideration given to experience regarding gender in selection of IP–NGOs and other service providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engage IP–NGOs and service providers</td>
<td>• Sex-disaggregation of all data in monitoring and evaluation systems although this was not included in regular progress reports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish a project performance management system and participatory monitoring and evaluation system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IP–NGO = implementing partner–nongovernment organization, PNA = participatory needs assessment, VDP = village development plan, WRDS = women’s rural development society.

* Sri Lanka is divided into nine provinces and 25 districts; each district includes a number of divisional secretariats, which include several local government administrative areas.

Practical Benefits
The improvements in small infrastructures resulted in considerable practical benefits to women and their families. Basic housing for those returning to their communities was vital; in many areas all existing buildings had been destroyed due to the conflict. Other rehabilitation and improvements to community infrastructures, such as drainage channels, health clinics, and community halls, have combined to improve overall living standards.

Livelihood opportunities increased incomes for a few women using RLF. These financial services—savings as well as credit—were not available from other sources in the region, and some women reported increased incomes from small businesses established using this credit. The importance of any additional cash income for a family should not be underestimated. Before displacement, these families did not purchase food for household consumption and sold any surplus from their home gardens. Now, they cannot feed themselves from household gardens and have to purchase food and other items; they need more cash than before, while they lack the cash they once got from surplus produce.

Strategic Changes in Gender Relations at the Individual or Household Level
Women stated that they participated with their husbands in household decision making before they joined WRDS under this project. However, couples are now cooperating in community work and they discuss project activities together, which informants said they had not done before. When their husbands are unable to attend RDS meetings because of their work away from the village, the women pass the information from group meetings on to them. Many women reported that the “gender balance training” provided to WRDSs was much appreciated. Their husbands also attended and it gave them all an opportunity to discuss the division of labor in the household, and how income-generating activities might be limited for women because of their household responsibilities. They discussed during the training how these constraints could be overcome if husbands assisted more in the house, but it was too early to report changes in the division of labor in the household.

Strategic Changes in Gender Relations at the Community Level
Group mobilization into separate self-help groups (RDSs and WRDSs) ensured that women’s voices were heard and their priorities considered in VDPs and the funding of subprojects. WRDS members said that this did not happen in the past, especially regarding the selection and construction of the types of small infrastructure funded through NECCDEP. Now, WRDSs draw up their own lists of priorities and reach a consensus with RDS members regarding which proposals should be presented for NECCDEP funding to local government. Women have even started to attend regular local government planning meetings to seek non-project support for other priorities they have identified in the WRDS groups. Also, use of multipurpose buildings as community centers provides a public space where women can participate in decision making more easily. Women, therefore, regularly participate in community decision making and this is contributing to a sense of community cohesion.

In addition to these significant benefits for women, WRDS formation has offered opportunities to transform relationships among community members in the future. Women now know how to develop proposals for presentation to local government for funding. Two WRDSs had bid on tenders for small infrastructures not funded through NECCDEP and were awarded the contracts. The women explained that they knew how to cost the bids based on the work they had done through NECCDEP. Once they were implementing the new contracts, if they could not solve a problem, they consulted RDS members as equals. Everything went well for these WRDSs and their confidence significantly increased to bid on more contracts and develop proposals to meet their own needs.

WRDS members also said that they discuss more than project or RLF issues at meetings. For example, they discuss community problems or issues regarding the health of their children. One member mentioned that her group helped a woman attend WRDS meetings when her husband prevented her, by going together to talk to him about the importance of her participation.

Component 2: Resource Management in Three Special Management Areas
At the time of the RGA, implementation of this component had just begun. GAP targets of 30% for women’s participation were exceeded for the consultation workshops, with women making up 53% of participants. In Ampara, 63% of participants were women, and
in Batticaloa, 33%. Targets for the resource mapping component were not achieved; 17% of participants were women, including 12% in Batticaloa, 20% in Ampara, and 26% in Trincomalee, compared with the target of 30%. In some communities, village development planning processes introduced for the sustainable livelihood component were also used to analyze natural resource and environmental management concerns (ADB 2008c, 4). The RGA team did not visit any of the project sites where component 2 is under implementation, so it was not possible to verify participation rates or other benefits with project beneficiaries.

Contribution of Gender Equality Results to Loan Outcomes and Effectiveness

The purpose of the project was sustainable livelihood improvement and sound management of natural resources. Women contribute significantly to household livelihoods and play a vital role in natural resource management. Due to economic shocks from conflict and natural disaster, households rely more than ever on women’s contribution from income-generation activities and subsistence food production. Consequently, many design features intended to ensure women’s full participation in all project activities were incorporated. These design features, outlined in the comprehensive GAP, enabled women to access benefits from the project, and their involvement also contributed to sustaining results in the future. The increased income earned by women helped to reduce poverty—the overall goal of the project—in tsunami- and conflict-affected communities with few livelihood options.

The process of socially inclusive community mobilization is complex, especially with communities under stress. There were few IP–NGOs with experience of this approach in the project areas, but there was evidence that in some communities everyone has learned as they have progressed. Given training and encouragement, women provided important inputs to community planning, ensuring their needs were reflected as infrastructures were developed. Many men are absent not only in the military or missing, but also to find employment elsewhere. Project team members noted how important it was to engage women to keep infrastructure and other subprojects on track. The special measures used to draw women into self-help groups have proven vital to effective implementation of the project. This approach has been strongly endorsed by the implementing agency team members and the local government officials interviewed by the RGA team. As the project director stated, “How can a project meet the needs of a community and hence promote sustainability if women are not fully involved?”

What remains to be verified is whether WRDSs and RDSs will continue to operate and maintain the new infrastructures as anticipated. The women interviewed by the RGA team were extremely enthusiastic about these infrastructures and clear about their importance in getting their communities back on their feet. They intend to keep them running. Also, it can be assumed that these women now understand much better than before how to maintain the infrastructures, since they took part in constructing them.

Challenges

Microfinance, Livelihood, and Enterprise Development Activities

One issue reported by the ADB midterm review mission (ADB 2008c) was that microfinance NGOs encouraged lending to women in preference to men, because repayment rates from women are higher than from men. Recovery of money is easier from women as they are generally at home when NGO staff collect repayments. Some men complained to the midterm review team that they did not have access to project credit even though the project design only required that 50% of credit be allocated to women. In addition, some IP–NGOs and microfinance NGOs have permitted (and in some cases perhaps encouraged) women to pass on credit to their husbands for income-generating activities. While passing on credit to a husband or other relative may seem a reasonable strategy within a family, IP–NGOs should discuss problems that might occur if the WRDS member cannot keep up with repayments once control over the loan has been passed on to someone else. The women

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8 Data provided by NECCDEP by e-mail, August 2009.
remain solely responsible for repayment, even if they
do not control the inputs and business interactions
to which the credit has been applied. Furthermore,
enterprise training with WRDS members is less effec-
tive if they do not have direct access to or control over
their loans. To address these challenges, as the micro-
finance and skills-training activities are undertaken, it is
very important for the NECCDEP project team to enter
into dialogue with IP–NGOs, livelihood and enterprise
development services (LEDS), and microfinance NGOs
regarding the importance of women retaining control
over credit. At the same time, the reason for targeting
50% women should be discussed.

There were delays in delivering the credit funds,
for several reasons. Few microfinance NGOs were will-
ing to participate in the NECCDEP scheme because of
security concerns related to the conflict, and complex
implementation arrangements through which lines of
credit were transferred. Funds from NECCDEP had to
pass through the National Development Trust Fund
with on-lending to local microfinance NGOs; each layer
charged service fees, raising the interest rate for the
project beneficiaries to 24%. Other sources of microfi-
nance funds, such as international relief organizations
and the ADB-funded TAARP, offered lower, subsidized
rates to beneficiaries and simpler transfer procedures.
Nevertheless, NECCDEP loans were repaid by some
WRDSs and additional income was earned. Project staff
indicated that all ADB-funded microfinance schemes
would be closing at the end of 2009 in the Eastern
Province, and at the time of the field visit there were
no plans for future RLF schemes in either the Northern
or Eastern provinces.

There were some problems regarding the coordi-
nation of microfinance and skills-training activities for
the LEDS activities. The process of identifying income-
generating opportunities, selecting trainees, providing
credit, supporting marketing, and so forth had not
been implemented comprehensively. The midterm
review mission report concluded: “[I]t appears that
the type of training conducted is based more on the
conventional training programs that the LEDS providers
routinely conduct and [is] not always tailored to match
the available resources” (ADB 2008c, 3). Furthermore,
the training sessions were not coordinated with credit
provision. In some cases, credit was provided before
training and was used for other purposes; in other
cases, no credit had been provided although the
training had finished. The ADB midterm review report
recommended that “microfinance NGOs give priority
to beneficiaries who have received training and work
together with the IP–NGOs and LEDS providers to
identify these beneficiaries” (ADB 2008c, 4).

The RGA team at a LEDS training center noted
that women were receiving training in sewing and
beauty culture, a very popular small business for
women in Sri Lanka that is in high demand for wed-
ding parties. Only young men were being trained as
mobile phone technicians. When asked why training
was segregated in this traditional way, project staff
and the LEDS IP–NGO responded that no young
women had shown interest in training as mobile
phone technicians. In many countries, women have
found repairing and renting out mobile phones lucra-
tive and socially acceptable. Women can work from
home, with other women bringing mobile phones for
repair. Technicians are required to carry out very fine
work, and women with sewing skills can be adept at it.
Women may not be aware of the potential for earning
more money from mobile phone repair compared to
sewing or that other women have successfully taken
up this work from their homes, and so do not come
forward for this nontraditional training. The RGA team
suggested that the project team and LEDS IP–NGOs
could be more encouraging of women taking up
nontraditional skills so they can increase the financial
return on their labor. The lack of encouragement may
indicate LEDS IP–NGOs’ lack of experience in working
with women.

Capacity of Implementing Partner–
Nongovernment Organizations

The limited social mobilization capacity of local NGOs
had a considerable impact on the implementation of
this project. It was difficult for the project team to
identify IP–NGOs in the region with sufficient capac-
ity and experience to carry out some of the complex
tasks required by the project (CIRM 2006a). Many
NGOs do not want to work in this insecure area or
their best staff were lured away after the tsunami by
international NGOs offering higher salaries than the
NECCDEP contracts. The IP–NGOs play a vital role by
first introducing the objectives of NECCDEP and then
elaborating the process for community decision mak-
ing regarding subproject identification, design, and
implementation. The IP–NGOs are also responsible, through this participatory process, for carrying out initial gender analysis in each community.

Many informants noted that those IP–NGOs with limited experience wanted to simply replicate a planning process across every community, without understanding that different packages of support might be required to respond to different needs in different communities. Training was given to IP–NGOs, but constant mentoring and backstopping was also required if a gender-sensitive social mobilization process was to be comprehensively implemented. The implementing agency staff had a very heavy workload as they were implementing several projects at once (such as additional components of TAARP, see chapter 4) with few extra resources and consequently they found it difficult to provide this kind of intensive mentoring to IP–NGOs.

The process monitor project manager noted that since the 2006 survey (CIRM 2006b), WRDSs had become more reliable and committed to participating in project-related activities. But she also remarked that as women are in the village most of the time, WRDS meetings were easier to convene than those for RDS. Nevertheless, there are many demands on women’s time, and encouragement from community mobilizers is important to sustain commitment to regularly attend meetings. The process monitor project manager also commented that some of WRDSs were very successful with their livelihood activities and involvement in the VDP preparation process, but it was possible that these groups had previous experience working together. The RGA team confirmed this in several communities where WRDS members spoke about previous gender training from international NGOs. However, even where successful these groups needed more support for marketing aspects of their income-generating activities and on the importance of preparing and sticking to a business plan (ADB 2008c and CIRM 2008). In addition, IP–NGOs and community groups need further support to understand the important role that monitoring and self-reflection play in delivering sustainable results, and why regular monitoring is an important part of the NECCDEP process.

In conclusion, the challenges of working in the post-tsunami context and in conflict-affected areas were underestimated during the project design in terms of capacities available and the difficulties in restarting the local economy. It was assumed that a participatory planning process could be set in motion across the region. When it has been applied well, the approach of developing specific packages of activities for each community has produced good results and should be sustainable; but to do the process well takes time. Government officers must resist the temptation to use the same package in all communities and need to understand the importance of tailoring support to the needs identified in each PNA.

**Monitoring and Reporting of Gender Equality Results**

Although the contracting of a process monitor yielded some positive changes in approaches during implementation, overall project reporting focused on process indicators; hence, there was little reporting in project documents on the strategic changes in gender relations identified during the RGA field visit. Much is being missed if the implementing agency or ADB wants to learn about which design features facilitated good gender equality results or what targets might be identified for new projects. Even the section reporting on progress of the GAP in the 2008 ADB midterm review report does not identify gender equality results beyond the participation of women (ADB 2008c). Simple indicators could be identified to track first-level outputs for women, such as the proportion of WRDS members who have their own bank accounts, or how many women have started to use bicycles to increase their mobility. Higher-level outcome indicators could include how many times WRDS members attend meetings at the local government offices to discuss funding for new projects or to participate in other planning meetings.

If specific gender equality results had been included as targets in the project design and monitoring framework, outcomes for women might have been tracked more effectively. For example, while the project consistently provided gender awareness training to beneficiaries, there were no indicators established to track the effectiveness of this training. The imbalance in the gender division of labor within

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9 These ideas for indicators were suggested by the former NECCDEP gender specialist.
households has the potential to limit the viability of women’s income-generation activities; therefore, it would be useful to track whether the gender awareness training was altering attitudes among husbands and wives, and if women had more time to spend on income generation or on their own well-being. Similarly, the ADB midterm review report noted that there was no tracking by the project of whether livelihood training coupled with credit resulted in viable enterprises being set up (ADB 2008c, 3), because reporting focused only on the number of trainings and amount of credit distributed. Without information on the establishment and operation of enterprises, it is not possible to understand if women are facing difficulties with new and viable income-generating opportunities. Monitoring and evaluation of LEDS and microfinance activities should include sex-disaggregated data and analysis should be carried out to track which income-generation activities have been successful for women, and why—for example, how markets have been accessed, whether a business plan was followed, and whether women had access to appropriate technologies.

The process monitor focused only on monitoring the social mobilization phase of NECCDEP implementation during its first monitoring exercise. Due to a lack of detailed reporting from NECCDEP on the proportion of women participating in VDP preparations since the first process monitor report, it was not clear whether the implementing agency project teams continued monitoring these activities closely enough to identify the communities where women were facing difficulties contributing to VDPs.

In addition, despite a GAP provision to collect sex-disaggregated data in all NECCDEP monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting to ADB did not consistently include such data, even if it was collected at source. For example, reporting on training activities in regular implementing agency reports only presented how many people attended each type of training. If this data were sex-disaggregated, it would be possible to identify whether barriers exist to women’s participation in general or in particular livelihood areas and how training might be revised to ensure a gender balance, and to follow up on whether the training was useful to both women and men.

As staff on the NECCDEP implementing agency project team change, it may be necessary to reinforce the importance of drawing analytical conclusions from sex-disaggregated data. The ADB resident mission gender specialist can play an important role by encouraging more detailed monitoring that identifies where intended gender results are not being achieved. Also, experiences among similar projects could be exchanged through sessions convened by the ADB resident gender specialist focusing on effective strategies to enhance women’s participation and their influence on decision making in the community, and the achievement of other gender equality results.

### Sustainability

As noted above, community members who were interviewed demonstrated strong ownership of infrastructures completed under NECCDEP. The approach to social mobilization required by the project, involving all community members, encouraged WRDS and RDS members to take responsibility for planning, construction, and ongoing maintenance of infrastructures. This level of commitment is to be commended given the stress under which these communities have been living in recent years. At first, these communities were interested only in meeting their immediate needs, but there is growing evidence that community members understand that the self-help groups (WRDSs and RDSs) can also contribute to the long-term development of their communities.

With WRDS members now regularly attending planning meetings at the local government offices, government officials are becoming used to interacting with women and are impressed with women’s new confidence and capacity to contribute to community decision making. Most of the WRDSs are now registered with local governments; this entitles them to receive support in the future from the rural development officers (RDOs) and women development officers (WDOs). It is not certain, however, that there will be sufficient staff and other resources to keep the group members interested and meeting regularly, or for technical aspects of microfinance and livelihood activities. There are many vacancies for local government officers, and current staff have to cover several jobs, as few people want to work in these conflict-affected areas. The gains for women from NECCDEP may not be sustained over the long term without consistent support.
The district secretariat steering committees established by NECCDEP offer an opportunity for RDSs and WRDSs to support each other beyond the life of the project. Representatives from each WRDS and RDS attend this forum to exchange experiences and learn from each other. Some group leaders have solid experience built on extended support from a series of projects and have successfully sustained infrastructure and livelihood activities. However, at the time of the RGA very few women were on the steering committees. Overall, women were 9% of steering committee members, and in Trincomalee only 6% of the 132 members were women. It is important for the project to assess what discourages women from participating in this forum if it is to become a key element of a sustainability strategy for the social mobilization achievements. Focused attention from NECCDEP staff and IP–NGOs will be required over the final year of project implementation to facilitate the participation of more women, along with special measures, such as additional leadership training, and different meeting times so women can attend. NECCDEP could also build on the experience of similar projects in Sri Lanka (such as the Secondary Towns and Rural Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation Project, discussed in Chapter 3) that have developed comparable forums for mutual support among regional groupings of RDSs and WRDSs. Other ADB-supported projects have faced similar challenges in sustaining CBOs beyond project completion, and structures have been established within executing agency ministries in some provinces to seek out sources of funding for project CBOs and to bring together a wide range of government officials who can provide support. Mechanisms to bring these experiences into the work of NECCDEP need to be identified, such as in-country lateral learning workshops focusing on group sustainability.

Local government authorities also need to consider how best to continue to use the WRDSs and RDSs as resources in community planning and project implementation. NECCDEP can consider providing additional training to local government officials, especially RDOs and WDOs, to build capacities in sustaining group momentum and in technical areas such as microfinance and enterprise development to assist in problem solving for livelihood activities. Liaison between local government and IP–NGOs has established working relationships that are likely to remain active in the NECCDEP project areas. Staff from one IP–NGO noted that since working on NECCDEP, they had a better understanding of the opportunities a close working relationship with local government can offer to sustain their community development activities.

### Factors Influencing the Achievement of Gender Equality Results

#### Gender Action Plan Design

Significant gender equality results were achieved due to the high quality of the NECCDEP GAP. The GAP was based on sound gender analysis and was designed to respond to the gender issues identified by the poverty and social assessment conducted during the project preparatory phase. The GAP identified strategies for each project component to maximize women’s participation. It set out basic requirements for the social mobilization process to encourage women’s involvement by establishing WRDSs in each community alongside RDSs and to ensure women’s participation in community decision-making forums. GAP implementation was supported by loan covenants that required the implementation of the plan and set targets for women’s participation and the allocation of credit funds for women.

#### Ownership of the Gender Action Plan

One mechanism that encouraged ownership of the gender-specific social mobilization activities was the establishment of model villages with complete, single-sex sets of committees and subcommittees, and a VDP based on a full PNA. The positive impacts of women’s participation on the achievement of project results and on the effectiveness of project implementation were evident in the model villages. It was also helpful to break down the GAP into a work plan that demonstrated clearly why each step was necessary to encourage women’s participation, as the implementing agency team initially did not understand why the GAP was needed.

Ownership of the GAP would have been reinforced if it had included indicators illustrating how women’s participation could help achieve the project objectives. The development of more communications materials
that presented in simple terms the rationale and steps of the GAP would have been useful to explain to IP–NGOs, local government officers, community members, and implementing agency team members the importance of the GAP, and how it increased the effectiveness of project investments. Lecture-style training sessions were less effective in developing ownership and understanding than practical, easy-to-understand messages regarding women’s participation and gender issues in technical areas, such as agricultural production or infrastructure construction.

**Project Gender Specialist Resources**

A budget was allocated in the project design for a social development specialist with responsibility for implementing the GAP. Ultimately, a gender specialist was contracted, but later than other team members. Consequently, it was necessary to redo some VDPs in which gender dimensions had been missed or were not fully elaborated during the first round of social mobilization. The first process monitor report from 2006 noted that there were considerable shortfalls in attention to women’s participation and the identification of their needs, and recommended that a “gender specialist (consultant) be appointed immediately to provide gender training to IP–NGOs and NECCDEP staff” (CIRM 2006a, 31). Once a project gender specialist was contracted, these shortfalls were addressed and the GAP more comprehensively implemented.

**Capacity Development for the Project Team**

At first there was limited capacity on the NECCDEP team for implementing the GAP, in the rush to meet the emergency relief needs of communities. However, commitment was reinforced and capacities were strengthened once a project gender specialist joined the team and conducted gender training among team members. The ADB resident mission gender specialist supported the project gender specialist by assisting with training sessions and discussing experiences from other projects, thus, strengthening the results achieved. Other capacity development opportunities also were provided by ADB during implementation. The project director participated in an ADB lateral learning exchange visit to Bangladesh in 2005 and the 2008 joint multilateral agency workshop in Manila on gender and infrastructure. In addition, the former deputy project director participated in an ADB regional gender workshop in Cambodia and presented a case study on NECCDEP.10 These lateral learning events demonstrated to the senior implementing agency management that ADB is seriously committed to addressing gender dimensions in its operations, and helped to reinforce the lessons they were learning during implementation. NECCDEP team members appreciated this support from ADB, together with access to advice from the ADB resident mission gender specialist.

It should now be a priority to build the gender and social mobilization capacity of all village and district secretariat government officers so they can provide support to WRDSs and ensure that gender dimensions remain a priority in their future work with these project communities.11 This is especially important for WDOs, attached to the Ministry of Child Development and Women’s Empowerment, and RDOs, who are men. Both are located in the divisional secretariats and do not necessarily receive any gender training, especially the RDOs. Technical training may also be required for these officers to sustain RLF and LEDS activities and to enable them to provide support on these activities to WRDSs and RDSs when needed.

**Monitoring by Project Implementers**

The process monitor identified where the full NECCDEP PNA process was not closely followed, and where women’s needs were not fully reflected in VDPs. This enabled the project gender specialist to return to specific communities and rework aspects of the VDPs, ensuring that women’s needs were incorporated. This illustrates the importance of consistent, ongoing monitoring. However, as noted above, the IP–NGOs do not

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10 The workshop was “Gender, Poverty, and Development Results,” held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 3–5 May 2006, under Regional Technical Assistance (RETA) 6092: Enhancing Gender and Development Capacity in DMCs [Developing Member Countries]: Phase II (ADB 2008j, 25; 2008l).

11 The administrative structure in Sri Lanka has 9 provinces and 25 districts; each district includes a number of divisional secretariats, whose village subdivisions are the lowest level of the administrative structure and whose officials are known as Grama Niladhari.
generally have the capacity or understanding to carry out such monitoring, and the heavy workload placed on the implementing agency project team remains a problem. More attention on monitoring and reporting on benefits and outcomes is needed, in addition to the focus on women’s participation.

**ADB Monitoring**

There was good monitoring of GAP implementation by ADB staff and consistent reporting on the loan covenant that women participate in NECCDEP activities and on targeting marginalized groups such as households headed by women and the poor more generally. The ADB resident mission gender specialist participated in the 2008 midterm review and travelled with the ADB project manager on several occasions. This presented several opportunities for the resident mission gender specialist to highlight issues of concern and provide additional advice and support to the project gender specialist. For example, following the midterm review, the NECCDEP DMF was revised to include a performance indicator on the allocation of at least 50% of microcredit funds to women.

**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made to maximize learning regarding project outcomes and effective strategies for achieving gender equality results:

(i) Indicators for gender equality results should be included in monitoring tools to track benefits and impacts for women and men, and how these differ. The social impact assessment carried out at the close of the project should include questions that tease out information about benefits for women.

(ii) The implementing agency should include quantitative sex-disaggregated data in all reports to ADB, as required in the GAP. Progress for all components can best be monitored if comparisons can be made between the access of men and of women to project benefits.

(iii) Given the turnover of staff on the NECCDEP project, gender training workshops should be conducted again, especially for the new staff. These workshops could be supported by the ADB resident mission gender specialist, who could share experiences and lateral learning from other community-driven infrastructure projects, and provide mentoring to project staff to strengthen their approach to monitoring project progress with IP–NGOs, including the analysis of gender equality results.

(iv) The practice of WRDS members passing on RLF loans to family members should be actively discouraged. Dialogues between ADB and NECCDEP, and between NECCDEP and IP–NGOs should be started to examine the potential impact of this practice. NECCDEP and IP–NGOs should also revise mobilization and enterprise training sessions to include discussions among RDS and WRDS members regarding access to and control over RLF loans, and the reason NECCDEP promotes women’s access to credit.

(v) A strategy to strengthen the sustainability of WRDSs and RDSs is required for the final year of NECCDEP. District secretariat steering committees should be strengthened by addressing the constraints on women’s attendance at these forums. NECCDEP should provide additional training to local government officials, especially RDOs and WDOs, to build their capacity to sustain group momentum and to assist with problem solving in technical areas such as microfinance and livelihood activities. Liaison between local government and IP–NGOs can also be used to sustain working relationships established under NECCDEP.
Project Description

The goal of the fourth phase of the Secondary Towns and Rural Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation (STRCBWSS) Project was to contribute to poverty reduction efforts and promote human development by improving access to safe water and sanitation for poor populations, thereby decreasing waterborne diseases and related costs, both financial and in women’s time spent caring for sick family members (ADB 2002). The project objectives were to (i) provide safe water to 946,000 people and sanitation to 171,500 in four urban areas and in rural areas of the North Central and North East provinces; and (ii) increase the capacity of the government to provide safe water by strengthening the water sector institutions. The main benefits of the project were expected to be (i) improved health; (ii) fewer resources (time and cash) spent by households in water provision, especially by women and young girls; and (iii) support to environmentally sustainable economic and population growth, especially in the urban centers.

The executing agency was the National Water Supply and Drainage Board (NWSDB), under the Ministry of Urban Development and Water Supply. The project cost was estimated at $86.4 million and was approved in December 2002 with estimated project completion by March 2009. In 2006, a supplemental loan was approved for $60.0 million to cover additional costs associated with inflation and underestimates of costs during design (ADB 2006a, i). The project had three components:

(i) **Urban component.** This component aimed to rehabilitate and upgrade water supply and drainage systems in several urban areas in Sri Lanka, contributing to reconstruction and rehabilitation of war-damaged infrastructures. It focused on large-scale infrastructure development with little direct involvement with local government or communities, and was not covered in the gender action plan (GAP). None of its project sites were visited during the rapid gender assessment (RGA).

(ii) **Rural component.** The rural component financed a demand-driven and community-based program to provide water and sanitation in 14 selected village council areas of Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura districts in North Central Province. An estimated 322,000 people were to be provided with safe water and 138,000 with latrines. Subprojects were to be identified during project implementation combining elements of both a poverty-targeted and a demand-responsive approach. After counter-part implementing partner–nongovernment

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12 The funds included the original ADB loan amount of $60.3 million, $23.0 million from the Government of Sri Lanka, and $3.1 million from communities. The project completion date was revised to June 2010 (ADB 2008g).

13 The supplemental funds were loan 2275/2276, including $46.5 million from the Asian Development Fund and $13.5 from the ordinary capital resources of ADB.

14 ADB classification categories were revised between 2002 and 2006, although the theme of gender development did not change (ADB 2008e).
organizations (IP–NGOs) and local government technical officers provided initial training and information regarding water source availability, initial capital investment, and expected operation and maintenance costs for each option, the beneficiaries, mobilized into community-based organizations (CBOs), were to choose the type of system they wanted to implement in their community. CBOs, combining both male and female subgroups, were to contribute a minimum of 20% of the construction costs, or the entire unskilled labor component, whichever was higher. Further, the project contribution per household was to be limited to a ceiling that was to be calculated based on the water supply technology. Special arrangements were to be made for monetary contributions from poor households. In this way, the rural component focused on the beneficiaries developing ownership of the project investments. This component also included institutional support for the North Central Provincial Council and for participating village councils and CBOs to develop their capacity to implement, operate, and maintain water supply schemes and sanitation facilities; and to assure the sustainability of water supply after project completion. Activities to achieve these objectives were (i) organization of beneficiaries into apex executive-level CBOs with separate subgroups—rural development societies (RDSs) for men and women’s societies for women within each community; (ii) capacity development for all levels of CBOs to implement, operate, and maintain water supply schemes and sanitation facilities; (iii) a community-based rural infrastructure program to provide water; and (iv) a community-based rural sanitation infrastructure program. Some revolving loan funds (RLFs) were to be made available, mostly to women’s societies for income-generating activities to address poverty concerns.

At the time of the RGA, overall progress of the project was rated as satisfactory by ADB with 67% of funds disbursed. Construction of water supply facilities was ongoing in all four project towns and approximately 85% of rural water sources had been completed in the first batch of construction activities. Progress in some areas, such as in Polonnaruwa District, was slower than others due to the difficult security situation and, in some cases, the displacement of communities in 2006 and 2007. Some communities were reported as having lost interest due to these problems and the increased cost of living across the country, but as communities returned to their homes progress was expected to accelerate. A second batch of activities had begun in Anuradhapura with social mobilization completed and hygiene education and income-generation activities ongoing (ADB 2008g).

Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan Included in the Loan Design

The project had a GAP that provided guidance and targets for community-based activities for the rural component, and targets for the proportion of qualified women in all levels of the project implementation structure, “especially in the rural component” (ADB 2002, 33). The social benefit analysis in the RRP identified women as the main beneficiaries because they are “traditionally responsible for cooking, cleaning, and taking care of the family, and are highly affected by problems associated with water supply. The project will reduce the time women spend fetching water, the burden of carrying heavy loads, and the time spent taking care of children suffering from waterborne diseases” (ADB 2002, 14). For these benefits to be achieved, it was further noted in the social development strategy that the “project recognizes that participation of women in decision making is important, as they are providers, users, and managers of water at the household level” (ADB 2002, 33).
The rationale for special measures to promote women’s full participation in project activities was reinforced in the analysis of lessons learned from the sector. The importance of involving beneficiaries in planning and implementation to improve water demand management and maintenance of assets was acknowledged (ADB 2002, 28, 33). The project’s response to these lessons was the preparation of a GAP and a project design that was demand driven, with a community-based approach, and a commitment to providing a supportive environment for women’s participation through preliminary meetings for women before they joined plenary discussions.

The GAP itself, although concise, stressed processes to ensure full participation by women, not just in attending meetings but also in contributing to decision making. For example, it was not considered sufficient for 50% of the self-help group subcommittees formed to be female. Women should also take up 50% of the seats on apex CBO executive committees where consensus is reached on which water and sanitation options will be selected for the whole community. The GAP also specified that if women’s needs were not being respected in decision making, project staff “will have to take an active role to prevent women’s decisions being overshadowed” (ADB 2002, 33). The GAP also highlighted the importance of involving at least 25% women on the staff of the project implementation unit and of offering training to women members of village councils, NWSDB, and the project implementation unit to “enhance women’s role in the sector” more generally (ADB 2002, 14, 30–33). An assurance was included in the RRP and in the loan agreement as a covenant requiring the government and NWSDB to ensure that the project is implemented in accordance with the GAP (ADB 2003b).

Despite the importance given to ensuring women’s participation in relevant project activities, as with most projects designed in the early 2000s, GAP targets were not included in the project design and monitoring framework (DMF), and there was no sex-disaggregation of quantitative targets for beneficiaries. In addition, there were no GAP provisions or activities for the urban component to ensure consultation with women living in urban areas affected by the project. This component supported large-scale civil works to improve water supply and sanitation in large areas of two cities, where women remain responsible for domestic water management, just as in rural areas.

Gender Action Plan Implementation

The executing agency demonstrated a strong commitment to ensure full participation of all community members, including women, in the rural component. No consultant was contracted solely to implement the GAP as NWSDB had cadre positions for community organizers and sociologists who made certain that participatory processes were maintained, and a community development specialist was responsible for overall implementation of the GAP. Detailed monitoring mechanisms were put in place and revised as necessary during implementation to track whether the target proportions of women were participating in all project activities. Where a gender balance was not being met, follow-up action could be taken. An example of a monitoring report is in Appendix 2 and illustrates comparisons between the proportion of males and females participating in several project activities.

During early implementation, a more detailed work plan was developed setting out how targets in the GAP were to be implemented. The GAP was also revised following two gender workshops facilitated by ADB staff from the Sri Lanka resident mission. Regular reports on the status of GAP implementation were included in quarterly reports. However, these GAP reports noted only whether activities were completed; there was no analysis of qualitative gender equality results. Monitoring by ADB appeared to be minimal. Progress on the GAP implementation was not mentioned, for example, in the 2008 loan review mission back-to-office report, other than that training programs were being implemented and the “anticipated proportion of women are to be included” (ADB 2008k).

The requirement for 25% of project and government staff to be women was met during the early period of implementation and the first project director was a woman, but the proportion is now lower than the GAP target as resource requirements have changed during the final phase of implementation. The project implementation unit staff believed that placing a target for the proportion of female staff was a good idea, although they were already committed
to encouraging female staff among IP–NGOs as an important factor in encouraging women’s participation. The project staff noted, however, the difficulties of finding female engineers willing to work for long periods in the field, even though there are a good proportion of women who meet the qualifications needed. The team is now aware of the importance of taking a proactive approach to encourage women to work in the field.

Gender Equality Results

The following sections discuss gender equality results demonstrated from the RGA field visits and project reports for the rural and institutional strengthening components. These are summarized in Table 3 and Appendix 1. There were no GAP provisions or activities for the urban component and no gender equality results were demonstrated for it.

Table 3  Secondary Towns and Rural Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation Project—Summary of Gender Equality Results by Loan Component

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Component</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
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| **Project Goal:** poverty reduction and promotion of human development by improving access to safe water and sanitation | - Women’s involvement in decision making ensured their needs were met and increased social capital and the sustainability of rural infrastructure investments.  
- Rural water and sanitation facilities improved women’s lives by saving time, improving health, and increasing access to rainwater for food gardens. |
| Component 1—Urban Activities | - No provisions or activities were included in the GAP for the urban component and no gender equality results were demonstrated. |
| - Construction of two urban water networks, a salinity barrier, and a hospital waste treatment plant; construction of 33,000 low-cost latrines; provision of training and public awareness campaigns | - Women’s preferences and needs were taken into account in needs assessments and small infrastructure construction.  
- 36,282 people participated in CBOs (WSs and RDSs): Anuradhapura had 45% women (11,741) and 55% men (14,227) and Polonnaruwa had 42% women (41,904) and 58% men (58,096), compared with a 50% target for women’s participation.  
- 1,135 people were represented on CBO executive committees: Anuradhapura had 49% women (320) and 51% men (328), and Polonnaruwa had 52% women (256) and 47% men (231).  
- Women actively participated in all programs, with 65% participation in almost 400 health and hygiene programs, more than 98% in 350 income-generating programs, and 60% in construction training.  
- A Forum of Women’s Associations was established for each local village council area.  
- Livelihood components were functioning but there were no data on the percentage of viable businesses established.  
- Women’s CBOs developed their own proposals for presentation to local government.  
- The CBO mobilization process allowed a new generation of nontraditional leaders, including women, to emerge.  
- Women’s and men’s participation in all activities was closely monitored and corrective action was taken if women’s participation was low. |
| Component 2—Rural Activities | |
| - Construction of rural water schemes to provide drinking water (piped, rain fed, protected well) to 322,000 people in Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura | |
| - Construction of 27,600 low-cost latrines | |
| - Training of participating CBOs, 14 participating local village councils, and 1 provincial council | |

continued on next page
Participation and Access to Resources

The process of social mobilization has successfully encouraged women to participate in participatory needs assessments (PNAs) and other planning activities. Under STRCBWSS, social mobilization started with establishing (or re-forming) groups of 10 to 20 members that became women’s societies or RDSs, and women are 42%–45% of participants in these groups. When groups remain small, members are more able to overcome shyness and speak up. Initial PNAs were conducted for each group. Representatives from each RDS and women’s society presented their planning priorities to a CBO executive committee which made decisions on behalf of the whole community. Representatives from women’s societies were selected democratically to represent their interests at these committee meetings. This structure ensures 50% participation by women. Positions within the CBO executive committee rotated among men and women to encourage a broad-based leadership that was also gender balanced.

Technical subcommittees were established by gender in each community. They were responsible for tasks such as procurement and financial management and reported to the CBO executive committee. IP–NGO staff were required to ensure that the communication of information between each layer of committees and groups was accurate. Cross-checking by IP–NGOs kept misunderstandings to a minimum. There has been some resistance from Muslim men to permitting their female relatives to attend women’s society meetings, which has yet to be fully overcome.

Women interviewed by the RGA team all stated they enjoy group meetings and do not find attending meetings too time consuming. At first, they were suspicious that the IP–NGOs would not follow through with the promised funds for infrastructure. But as the process unfolded, they realized the PNA would be used to select priorities with women’s society members involved in all stages of construction, and they became fully committed to the project. The main women’s society and RDS groups met only once per month, and during construction phases the technical subcommittees met more often as needed. The women also stated that they willingly donated labor for infrastructure components as they were given enough warning regarding when this would be required, so were able to adjust household and other productive responsibilities around this work. Some of the women do more construction labor if they do not have gardens. Others

CBO = community-based organization, GAP = gender action plan, NWSDB = National Water Supply and Drainage Board, PIU = project implementation unit, RDS = rural development society (men only), RGA = rapid gender assessment, STRCBWSS = Secondary Towns and Rural and Community-Based Water and Sanitation project, WS = women’s society.

get up earlier so they can finish household tasks and then help with construction.

RLFs with training opportunities were also offered to women’s societies. Members reported that RLF amounts available for credit were too small to start a significant enterprise, but they appreciated access to the credit nonetheless, as they have limited access (if any) to commercial sources of credit. Priority was given to women’s society members, with women making up approximately 98% of the participants in livelihood programs. Enterprise training was also offered—in one community, women’s societies received services from the agriculture department for the first time; these helped them with their gardens and cash crops. Only men had participated in previous agricultural training.

Practical Benefits

The new water supply and sanitation facilities improved women’s lives considerably. Several women recounted that in the past, especially during the dry season, they would have to spend hours fetching water and would be reluctant to use this water to irrigate their household gardens, limiting productivity. Other duties also had been time consuming, such as washing when they had to go some distance from their homes to find washing steps on canals. With respect to other infrastructures funded through the project, women expressed their satisfaction that their priorities had been considered in the CBO executive committee meetings. They particularly appreciated the community meeting halls, access roads, and refurbished steps at washing places in nearby canals.

New water supply and sanitation facilities are saving time and improving health, although monitoring data for health indicators are not yet available. Water is now easily available for gardening by harvesting rainwater and using household wastewater. For example, one woman used to share a well and pump with her mother, who lives close by, but now the woman’s family has its own well and she can decide how much water to use and when. She is no longer a burden on her mother. Other informants use the time they would have spent fetching water to improve garden production or on new business activities.

Women also appreciated the health training associated with the construction of latrines and other sanitation infrastructures. Some women noted that previously they had not understood how to keep the sanitation area clean, how to keep a separate place for soap and water, and other hygiene issues important for keeping their children healthy.

Women’s society subgroups provided savings and credit services, and women’s society meetings provided opportunities for mutual support and to exchange experiences with women running different enterprises. Incomes have increased where enterprises have been successful.

Strategic Changes in Gender Relations at the Individual or Household Level

Women stated that they had participated with husbands in household decision making before but that women’s society training has expanded their knowledge. Now, husbands and wives discuss technical issues concerning the construction of infrastructures and experiences from their shared work. Even though in some communities men had been involved in similar small-scale improvement schemes, these topics were not discussed at home with their wives, and the women appreciate this new, shared window on community activities.

Strategic Changes in Gender Relations at the Community Level

Women’s society members have developed their own proposals for presentation to local government. These were first discussed with the CBO executive committee to reach consensus on which proposal would be brought forward for funding. The opportunity to go to the local government office to discuss community plans is new for women in these communities, and some women now regularly attend planning meetings with government officials. Members of women’s societies have developed skills to prepare and cost proposals and in two cases their proposals were accepted by the local government for funding from outside this project. Women’s society members also said they now discuss more than project issues or the RLF at their meetings. For example, they might discuss “family problems,” such as marital disputes or concerns about their children, for mutual support.

The process of social mobilization and group formation enabled a new generation of nontraditional
leaders to emerge, including women. Project staff believed these new leaders were more innovative and interested in how to benefit the community as a whole compared with their predecessors. The process was reinforced through the development of forums where women’s societies and CBOs from different communities can discuss their challenges and successes. Government officers also attend these meetings to become familiar with group members and the decision-making dynamics they have created. The emergence of a new cohort of community leaders made up of women and men who would not otherwise participate in decision making is an important result from this project, especially as so many women appear to be taking on these new roles in the community (see Box).

Institutional Changes and Sustainability

Steps have been taken by STRCBWSS to ensure that the group structures established under the project can be sustained after it closes. First, the project ensured that

Box 1 The Experience of Building Socially Inclusive Social Mobilization—A Field Perspective

In the Third Water Supply and Sanitation Project (the previous phase of STRCBWSS), communities would get together at a big meeting to select leaders to represent the community as a whole. In every village, traditional leaders came forward. In the STRCBWSS project, a different approach was used: a village was divided into zones subdivided into groups of 10 to 20 households and separate groups of men (RDSs) and women (women’s societies) were established. People found it easier to talk freely and could express their opinions in the smaller groups. The structure encouraged men and women with leadership potential to come forward, without being pushed out by traditional leaders. Two leaders were selected from each zone group to attend the apex CBO executive committee in each village, where decisions were made on a consensus basis. Experience has demonstrated to the community organizers that many traditional leaders are not open to new ideas. As one team member said, “They are not all bad of course, but some are more conservative and do not want to share their influence.” Now many young people (men and women) come forward under this process and they are open to new ideas. This process gives a place for everyone’s opinions to be heard. Earlier, when CBOs were formed, traditional leaders made decisions and everyone had to follow whether they wanted to or not.

Ideas from all the smaller women’s and men’s groups were taken to the CBO executive committee meetings, which offered another space for the ideas to be discussed openly. In a sense, two new levels of leadership have been created, one in the smaller groups and one in the CBO executive committee. The cascading of decision making down to small groups, with ideas and priorities rolling back up to the main decision-making committee, with gender balance respected at all levels, encouraged transparent decision making that reflected the needs of the whole community. As CBOs were being formed in a particular district, the project set up a forum for representatives from the CBO executive committees to come together on a regular basis to discuss their experiences. This forum offered an opportunity for local government officers to listen to the concerns of the communities and to monitor outcomes from infrastructure investments through discussion with CBO representatives.

The implementing partner–nongovernment organization (IP–NGO) staff were required to reside in the community and closely monitored this process for at least 12 months from initial social mobilization, renting accommodation in the village. Because they were living among the group members, they could catch hints of problems and address them right away. If IP–NGO staff only visited once per week or once per month, it would not be possible to monitor closely how openly decisions are being made. Also, the suggestions of the IP–NGO staff were trusted by the groups and their guidance followed, and the spirit of the project was for IP–NGOs to create a space for community members to express their own ideas.

In the past, NGOs would go to a community and inform people what was going to happen; there was no opportunity for community members to share their ideas for what would be best. The STRCBWSS project did not follow a lecture-style process. Team members mobilized the groups to create a space for giving ideas. This process has made women very strong and committed. As one project community organizer said, “We thought we had done the best process in the third project, but we now realize after this experience in the fourth phase that we could do better!”

Source: Interviews with beneficiaries conducted during fieldwork.
all apex CBOs and subgroups (women’s society and RDS) are registered with the local government so they can access government services. Next, it established a task force between the Women’s Bureau and NSWDB social development officers at a high level so there is collective effort to sustain these groups across different government agencies. NSWDB formed a section that reports to this task force and is tasked to identify funds to support CBOs, and a Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Unit was formed to coordinate different supports for CBOs. An act setting out responsibilities for and commitment to sustain CBOs is going through provincial councils to reinforce the process. Under these arrangements women’s societies are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Child Development and Women’s Empowerment, which has accepted the idea in principle, although there are no funds available for support or programming at the moment.

Consideration also has to be given to the capacity of local officials to support different activities undertaken by the women’s societies after the project closes. For example, the monitoring of RLF schemes requires particular technical skills, as does the assessment of infrastructure proposals. As these new responsibilities devolve to local government officers, it would be useful if they could access training and travel to other districts to review how they have addressed challenges.

The institutionalization of women’s participation in rural water supply and sanitation projects implemented by NSWDB was encouraged by the presence within the agency of adequate numbers of trained staff sociologists and community organizers. The results achieved by STRCBWSS have demonstrated that NSWDB has the capacity to design measures to ensure women’s full participation in and benefits from rural projects, and contract appropriate IP–NGOs with adequate skills to implement these gender design features.

**Contribution of Gender Equality Results to Loan Outcomes and Effectiveness**

The main objectives of the STRCBWSS project were to reduce the incidence of waterborne diseases in the beneficiary populations and reduce the level of resources (both cash and time) that households spend acquiring water for their basic needs. As women are responsible for caring for those suffering from waterborne diseases and for fetching and managing domestic water resources, their involvement was vital. The participatory approach to involving all community members in project activities in the rural component ensured that women contributed to decision making about the type of water system to be implemented in their community; this involvement by women and their contribution to subproject design ensured that the new infrastructures effectively reduced women’s time burdens.

The rural component also aimed to develop ownership of the project by project beneficiaries. Women’s involvement significantly enhanced community ownership and will directly contribute to ensuring that new infrastructure is maintained. Women who are members of women’s societies have built their confidence to continue to participate in the development of their communities, and government officers now understand the contribution women can make to sustain the benefits from investments.

**Challenges**

Women’s society members expressed some concerns to the RGA team regarding the RLF provided by the project. They complained that the loans were not sufficient to sustain a viable enterprise. While they appreciated having the microcredit and the training offered, suggestions were made regarding the size of future loans and different types of training that could be included.

Another issue that may pose challenges after project completion is that the project requires women’s society members to agree among themselves regarding interest rates and repayment schedules for loans. Support from IP–NGOs and the executing agency team is now easily available and guidance can be sought on reasonable microfinance terms. However, if this support cannot be offered over the longer term from WDOs or RDOs, disputes over the RLF may become the breaking point for some women’s societies. The provision of credit is a technical area, especially when basic business skills need to be provided for women’s society members to establish viable enterprises. If business skill training is not of high quality, some members might be encouraged to take out loans for nonviable activities, which may result in
defaults on their repayments; this would affect all other members waiting for the next loan cycle to become available. If RLF activities are to be encouraged, care should be taken to ensure that expert advice is available to women’s societies, and that women leaders already operating successful enterprises are given opportunities to learn from other communities with long experience operating credit schemes. Similarly, care should be taken to ensure that WDOs and RDOs have sufficient training to support and sustain this work.

The project team mentioned the challenge of encouraging women’s full participation in some Muslim communities, where women’s participation was low. NECORD-II (discussed in Chapter 4) faced similar challenges in Muslim communities, and addressed this issue by working with daughters and demonstrating to male family members the potential benefits for the whole family when women are more actively involved in small enterprises. In the NECORD-II communities, many more women are now participating in women’s rural development society activities, and some are even traveling outside their villages for business purposes or training events. In the STRCBWSS project areas, Muslim communities have remained more traditional compared with those in conflict- and tsunami-affected regions, where families have been forced to modify gender roles because of the social and economic stresses. Nevertheless, it might be useful for STRCBWSS project staff to share experiences with the NECORD-II project team.

Although the monitoring of women’s participation in rural activities was comprehensive, it would be useful to develop some qualitative indicators that track progress toward women’s empowerment. Women clearly have been empowered through their participation in group activities. Many examples of broader impacts on women’s lives were given during the RGA, such as increased confidence to visit the district secretariat office to discuss issues beyond the project, pride in doing new community tasks, and increased confidence due to successes from their RLF enterprise activities. These gender equality results increased the effectiveness of infrastructure projects and are likely to enhance the sustainability of infrastructure; they will also contribute to poverty reduction in the long term. Although the project is nearing completion, it is important that these types of results are recorded as part of the impact-monitoring process. The empowerment measures suggested for NECCDEP may also be useful for STRCBWSS, for example keeping track of how many women open their own bank accounts and how many women’s societies visit local government offices to discuss issues beyond STRCBWSS activities. This information would demonstrate the broader benefits from the community mobilization process adopted by the executing agency team, and could enable ADB to document knowledge on effective strategies that could be applied to other projects.

The lack of GAP provisions for the urban component of the project was a major weakness in the project design. ADB and project staff noted that the urban component was not designed to take a community-based approach to infrastructure planning and construction. Consequently, there was no analysis of gender issues for this component during the project design phase, and several RGA informants argued that since the urban component was not designed to be demand driven, GAP provisions were not necessary. Other projects of this nature have demonstrated that, as women are still the primary users and managers of water and sanitation needs within the household, they have concerns about the location and design of large-scale infrastructures and how payment is to be made for related resources. For example, the positioning of water points in communities without piped water is of great concern to girls and women, who have to carry the water. It would also be essential to involve and consult with women to maximize returns on the investment in low-cost latrines in urban areas. Very few women participate in municipal government, so even at that decision-making level it is unlikely women’s concerns or needs were taken into account. This project missed an opportunity to explore how more women might be engaged in the planning and implementation of large infrastructure projects associated with water supply, drainage, and sanitation. At a minimum, the GAP could have required public consultation involving women, to ensure their specific needs were met.

The GAP stipulated that national public awareness and education campaigns concerning water supply and sanitation and the value of scarce water resources (included in component 3) should take into account the role of women as the major providers and users of water in the household (ADB 2002, 33). However, there was no reporting on attention to gender issues for this important activity in either GAP reports or project
progress reports. Consequently, it was not possible to assess whether women and men had been effectively targeted, whether public education messages took account of gender issues, or the effectiveness of public education and awareness activities. This was also a missed opportunity to promote women’s capacity and to extend the benefits and gender equality results achieved by the project.

Factors Influencing the Achievement of Gender Equality Results

Many projects make general statements about the importance of women’s participation but fail to follow through with the extra time and budget required for meaningful participation to take place. The following paragraphs discuss the combination of factors that led to the achievement of impressive gender equality results for the STRCBWSS project. The GAP was the major factor, including the covenant that required its implementation as stipulated in the loan agreement.

Gender Action Plan Design

The concise GAP prepared for the RRP set out the principles for ensuring that women were fully involved in the community mobilization process for the rural component. Special measures were incorporated into the design not only to mobilize women into groups but also to encourage women’s participation in decision making and planning. Extensive leadership and technical training was provided to women’s society members and procedures for meetings and CBO leadership were established to give women the confidence and space to raise their concerns in a supportive environment. The GAP requirement that project staff would actively follow up if women’s needs were not respected in decision making was an important and innovative strategy. However, although targets for women’s participation were covered well in the GAP, it did not identify any higher-level results. None of the GAP elements or targets were incorporated into the DMF, reinforcing the importance of the GAP to ensure that gender-related results were monitored and reported.

Gender Analysis during Project Design and Implementation

In addition to the gender analysis included in the RRP, comprehensive social and gender analysis was carried out during implementation as part of the PNA and VDP process for each community. The executing agency drew on its experience with previous projects, and hence understood that a truly participatory approach would provide the team with all the information required to analyze and assist in planning effective investments with each community. Expertise to design and monitor this process in detail and in a gender-inclusive manner was available in NWSDB with its cadre community organizer positions. The requirement that two IP–NGO staff reside in project villages for the first year of project implementation facilitated a deep and comprehensive social and gender analysis of the community. Also, the IP–NGO staff were able to build trust and engage regularly with the community, contributing to effective community mobilizing. It must be noted that compared to the conflict- and tsunami-affected areas in the other two projects assessed in the RGA, STRCBWSS was implemented in a more stable environment that offered greater potential for participation and mobilization of the community.

Gender-inclusive and Socially Inclusive Community Mobilization

Although both women and men have been involved in CBOs such as Funeral Aid Societies, farmer societies, and rural women’s societies, in the past many of these groups fostered gender-stereotyped roles for men and women and were for the purpose of intra-community support and activities. The approach taken to group formation by the STRCBWSS project facilitated the emergence of a new cohort of leaders, and this process challenged gender stereotypes by encouraging women to come forward as leaders. Now, the CBO executive committees and both women’s society and RDS members, mobilized by STRCBWSS, are moving beyond their initial STRCBWSS functions of planning and implementing physical works toward more strategic activities, for example negotiating for scarce resources beyond those provided by the project at the district secretariat level.
Gender Capacity and Resources

There was no gender specialist contracted for the project team. However, the accumulated experience among project staff from previous water supply and sanitation projects contributed to shaping a gender-inclusive project design and a gender mainstreaming approach to implementation, and this enabled the team to achieve significant gender results. A wide group among the executing agency project team, supported by experienced IP–NGOs (who were expected to field a high proportion of women) were responsible for implementing the GAP and achieving significant results for women. This group included both male and female staff. Careful analysis and monitoring of progress was possible from IP–NGO workers residing within target communities. IP–NGOs noted that they did not have difficulty encouraging female staff to take up residence in the villages as required by their contract with the project. Two IP–NGO staff were recruited for each village so the women did not have to work alone. Training was conducted with IP–NGOs at the start of each contract to ensure that the socially inclusive and gender-sensitive principles of participatory community mobilization, PNAs, and VDPs were understood.

The ADB resident mission gender specialist also worked with the project team through workshop discussions to strengthen the implementation of the GAP. The project director and several other project staff attended ADB lateral learning exchanges, including the 2008 joint multilateral agency workshop in Manila on gender and infrastructure, which was noted as being useful (ADB 2008l). This provided an opportunity for the project team to present its achievements, discuss approaches for ensuring that project benefits accrue equally to women and men, and consolidate their own learning.

Leadership, Ownership, and Commitment by the Executing Agency

The executing agency team was already committed to ensuring that no one would be marginalized from access to project benefits and to ensuring that the whole community would take ownership of project investments, based on their experience working on previous projects. The rationale for involving women in a project that invests in community-based water and sanitation infrastructures is easily understood, because it is widely accepted that the management and use of household water resources is primarily the responsibility of women. This can be compared to other infrastructure projects in which investments are in physical works that are associated with male responsibilities, such as markets. In addition, the comprehensive implementation of the GAP by the executing agency has brought significant practical benefits for women, promoted strategic changes in gender relations, and clearly maximized the returns on the loan investment; these results have helped to reinforce the institutionalization of social and gender inclusion as a key aspect of the agency’s work. On the other hand, the lack of gender provisions in the urban component points to the need for leadership to be taken by the executing agency to explore measures to ensure that the benefits from large-scale construction projects are also maximized for women.

The first project director for the project was a woman. She demonstrated leadership by ensuring that participatory approaches consistently included women. During the early phase of implementation, GAP targets for women’s participation on the project team were achieved, although this was no longer the case at the time of the RGA due to staff turnover and a change in resources required during the later stages of implementation. Comments from several executing agency staff highlighted the importance of the leadership of the previous project director, a woman, in building an environment that facilitated placing a priority on gender issues and women’s participation. Not only can female staff provide insights into the needs and interests of women beneficiaries; there is considerable anecdotal evidence that women feel more comfortable and are more productive in a workplace where there is a critical mass of at least 30% women. The GAP targets for women’s employment on the project team and in IP–NGOs were intended to demonstrate the benefits of such an environment although no rationale was included in the GAP. ADB and the executing agency should explore these issues in the project impact assessment for component 3 (institutional strengthening) by including some questions regarding the workplace environment and its conduciveness for women staff, to test the assumptions behind this GAP requirement.
Monitoring by the Executing Agency and ADB

Executing agency community organizers developed detailed monitoring mechanisms to ensure that women were able to participate as planned in the project design. Records of those attending meetings and participating in training and other programs are based on sex-disaggregated data. Ongoing monitoring enabled the team to identify where a gender balance was not being achieved and therefore to follow up with site visits and discussions with the relevant IP–NGOs. It was then possible to adjust project process because IP–NGO staff were residing in the village and could analyze and comment on factors that constrained women’s participation, and develop appropriate strategies to address any problems (see the sample of monitoring data in Appendix 2).

Monitoring of GAP implementation by ADB appeared to be minimal. Progress on GAP implementation was not mentioned, for example, in the 2008 loan review mission back-to-office report, other than that training programs were being implemented and the “anticipated proportion of women are to be included” (ADB 2008k). The ADB resident mission gender specialist worked with the executing agency team by facilitating gender workshops to clarify ADB’s approach to gender mainstreaming and encouraged the adjustment of the GAP to meet evolving needs. Her involvement on loan review missions would have contributed to a deeper analysis of gender equality results in reporting.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to learn lessons regarding effective strategies for achieving gender equality results, and to enhance the sustainability of benefits in STRCBWSS and other projects:

(i) The executing agency should consult with other ADB project teams that have had more success in gradually encouraging Muslim women to participate in public meetings or income-generating activities.

(ii) Qualitative indicators of women’s empowerment should be included in the social impact assessment of the project to demonstrate the good practice strategies and gender equality results achieved.

(iii) Capacity building should be offered to WDOs and RDOs regarding the management and maintenance of RLF activities to sustain support to women’s societies after the project closes. Such training could include business plan development, the value of maintaining small enterprise accounts, and group marketing for common income-generating activities.

(iv) Future water supply and sanitation projects should include GAP provisions for all components, including urban infrastructure.
North East Community Restoration and Development Project-II and the Tsunami-Affected Areas Rebuilding Project

Project Description

Two projects were presented for approval in one report and recommendation of the President (RRP) in April 2005. The Tsunami-Affected Areas Rebuilding Project (TAARP) grant aimed to contribute to the overall rebuilding efforts of the Government of Sri Lanka following the tsunami in December 2004. Post-tsunami efforts focused on rebuilding roads, other infrastructure, and shelter in coastal-belt communities; restoring livelihoods; rebuilding coastline protection damaged by the tsunami; and facilitating law and governance measures and safeguards. The North East Community Restoration and Development Project-II (NECORD-II) loan continued the government’s rehabilitation program for the conflict-affected areas of the Northern and Eastern provinces. Post-conflict rehabilitation addressed basic needs through health, education, irrigation, agriculture, community development, institutional infrastructure, and income-generation subprojects (ADB 2005a).

The objective of TAARP was to rapidly improve the living conditions and well-being of a significant number of people in the tsunami-affected areas by restoring basic social infrastructure, community and public services, and livelihoods. TAARP addressed the needs of tsunami-affected people through funding numerous subprojects in a variety of sectors selected and formulated in response to requests from communities and the government. The estimated total cost for this project was $249.3 million. TAARP funds were presented for approval under the same RRP as NECORD-II to facilitate rapid approval, but disbursement for TAARP was undertaken through NECORD-II and seven other ongoing ADB-funded loan projects, including the North East Coastal Community Project (NECCDEP). The framework for disbursement of TAARP funds presented in the RRP was intended to cover all eight ADB-supported projects (ADB 2005a).

Components of TAARP under which subprojects could be funded included: (i) legal assistance, governance, and anticorruption; (ii) North East coastal community development for livelihood and coastal management assistance; (iii) road rehabilitation and reconstruction for national and access roads; (iv) water supply and sanitation; (v) coastal resources management and livelihoods; (vi) microcredit support to rural communities; and (vii) reconstruction of the basic and social infrastructure works already replaced or rehabilitated in the North East coastal areas under the previous phase of NECORD (ADB 2005a).

The main objective of NECORD-II was rapidly to improve the living conditions and well-being of a significant number of people in the conflict-affected areas of the North East by restoring basic social infrastructure, community and public services, and livelihoods. NECORD-II rehabilitation subprojects furthered community development, rehabilitated access roads, developed institutional infrastructure, and restored basic infrastructure. Components included support to reconstruction or improvement in the following areas: (i) health and education; (ii) water supply and sanitation; (iii) access roads; (iv) village development (establishing community-based organizations [CBOs] and general social mobilization—including provision of revolving loan funds [RLFs] in selected

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15 This included an ADB Asian Tsunami Fund grant of $150.0 million, an ADB loan of $7.0 million, $39.1 million from the Government of Sri Lanka, and $53.2 million from the European Commission (ADB 2005, iv).
communities—and provision of basic shelter in conflict-affected communities returning after displacement); (v) irrigation; (vi) livelihood training; (vii) improvements to agriculture and livestock livelihoods; (viii) some urban development; and (ix) institutional development and capacity building. The estimated total cost was $55.0 million.16

Both projects were implemented through project management units already established under the first phase of NECORD. A project coordination committee was established with representation from government ministries and agencies responsible for tsunami-related reconstruction and rehabilitation; the chief secretaries of the Southern and North East provincial councils;17 ADB project directors; and others as appropriate. Building on established procedures under previous ADB-supported projects and emergency reconstruction activities, sector subprojects were prepared by CBOs mobilized in each village, and from civil society and government agencies. Subprojects were then presented for approval to each provincial project coordination committee. Management of both projects was delegated from ADB headquarters to the Sri Lanka resident mission.

While some additional staff and resources were brought into NECORD-II project management units to take on additional tasks associated with TAARP, the scope of funds from TAARP has made implementation challenging. In the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, these areas experienced an influx of funds from international nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and other relief agencies offering a wide range of assistance, with different and sometimes conflicting procedures and requirements placed on communities. The multiple layers of stress on the communities, many of which were displaced once again in 2006 due to insecurity and conflict in the NECORD-II regions, also presented unique challenges to the project teams.

An intention highlighted in the RRP for both NECORD-II and TAARP was to rebuild community cohesion through social mobilization while at the same time establishing relations between CBOs and government agencies so that reconstruction would build from the needs of the communities upwards. As with the other two projects reviewed by the rapid gender assessment (RGA), NECORD-II’s approach to social mobilization relied on establishing a set of procedures through which socially inclusive groups within communities, necessarily involving women, would build skills to identify their needs; develop a plan and budget for subprojects to meet those needs; present these plans to a local government committee (backstopped through the NECORD-II decision-making structure); receive funding if approved; organize combinations of voluntary labor and contracted labor to carry out physical works; and then manage the infrastructures to ensure sustained operation and maintenance.

At the time of the RGA, progress on NECORD-II was rated as satisfactory with 79% of funds disbursed for NECORD-II and 75% for TAARP. Numerous small- and large-scale infrastructure activities were either completed or under implementation for both projects (see Table 4). For TAARP, 331 village divisions had been identified to receive support and 322 village development plans (VDPs) had been developed; in the remainder, communities were still displaced. Approximately 1,220 proposals for subprojects from communities had been screened, work had commenced on 804, and 517 of these had been completed. Of 337 women’s rural development societies (WRDSs) that had been formed or strengthened, 232 had received funds under the RLF program to provide microcredit to group members (ADB 2008h and 2008i).

Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan Included in the Loan Design

A gender action plan (GAP) was incorporated in the RRP. It provided guidance on how gender considerations were relevant to each component and steps to ensure that the process of social mobilization would be inclusive. The analysis was drawn from the ADB Country Gender Assessment (ADB 2004b) noting

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16 This included grants and loans from ADB totalling $40.0 million, $9.1 million from the Government of Sri Lanka, and $5.9 million from the Government of Sweden (ADB 2005a, v).
17 The North East Provincial Council has since been divided into two new bodies, the provincial councils of the Northern and Eastern provinces, with separate administrative structures.
women’s disadvantage in accessing resources, services, and opportunities that might limit their participation in both TAARP and NECORD-II activities. The GAP stated that particular attention must be given to

(i) equal participation of women and men in planning and village reconstruction;

(ii) recovery of livelihood for women and men, with particular attention to war widows and households headed by women—this was to build on gender-oriented enterprise programs and women’s industrial centers begun under the previous NECORD–Extension Project;

(iii) equal access by women and men to infrastructure activities, including in planning, construction, and use and maintenance of infrastructure; and

(iv) involvement of women and men in environmental management and coastal resource management (ADB 2005a, 129).

As TAARP was to be made operational and funds disbursed through eight ongoing projects, and with a great deal of pressure for quick approval in the post-tsunami environment, concrete targets for women’s participation were not included in the RRP GAP for NECORD-II or TAARP (ADB 2005a). Some projects through which TAARP funds were disbursed, such as NECCDEP, already had gender provisions, including targets and mechanisms, in place to promote women’s participation. As the usual loan process was accelerated in the emergency context with a limited preparatory phase, it was not possible to undertake detailed social or gender analysis or to provide baseline data; it was also not possible to develop sex-disaggregated quantitative targets and indicators. The design and monitoring framework (DMF) for TAARP included an output for the establishment of small enterprises for vulnerable groups and women. The DMFs for both projects required women’s involvement in the establishment of CBOs, and the village development components in both projects focused on the need to “make the women self-reliant” (ADB 2005a, 45, 48) but without a corresponding performance indicator for proportions or numbers of women to be reached under this component.

The RRP included a requirement for sex-disaggregated data to be collected for all project monitoring instruments. It also required that the

Table 4  North East Community Restoration and Development Project-II and Tsunami-Affected Areas Rebuilding Project—Summary of Gender Equality Results by Loan Component

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector and GAP Provisions</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Purpose:** improved living conditions and well-being in tsunami- and conflict-affected areas by restoring basic social infrastructure, community and public services, and livelihoods | • Reduced vulnerability to poverty due to increased food production from women’s home gardens.  
 • Increased social cohesion due to mobilization of women into WRDSs. |

1. Civil Works—Basic Infrastructure

**Education**—163 subprojects approved to restore services and facilities:

• Encourage recruitment for training of female and male teachers who are willing to live in project areas, and provide quarters for female teachers.

• Encourage involvement of women and men in school management and education societies.

45,151 female students and 1,826 female teachers benefited from the rehabilitation of 139 schools with the provision of 946 classrooms, water supply and sanitation facilities, and living quarters:

• No sex-disaggregated data were available to the RGA team on whether the number of female teachers increased, comparing the number of female and male students and teachers who benefited, or on participation in school management committees.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector and GAP Provisions</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong>—53 subprojects approved to restore services through hospital and village clinic reconstruction and supply of medical equipment:</td>
<td>220,736 women and 38 female officers benefited from the provision of new facilities:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure that health facilities cater to the special needs of men, women, children, the elderly, and the disabled.</td>
<td>• Maternity ward with water for rural pregnant women was constructed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure wage parity for men and women in constructing health facilities.</td>
<td>• Quarters for doctors were built to encourage them to remain in rural areas (but no data were available on whether this occurred).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure that health facilities have separate units for sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS and that women and men (from NGOs) deliver awareness and prevention training on HIV/AIDS to contractors, construction personnel and workers, and local communities.</td>
<td>• Midwives’ quarters were built in the rural areas to encourage them to remain in villages (695 Tamil-speaking midwives were trained and 671 were working in project areas).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No data were available on HIV/AIDS activities or on whether wage parity was provided for women.</td>
<td>• No data were available on HIV/AIDS activities or on whether wage parity was provided for women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Irrigation</strong>—2 subprojects approved for rehabilitation of medium and large schemes:</td>
<td>Water for cultivation of 1,319 hectares of paddy land benefiting 9,641 farm families was provided:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure the equal participation of women and men in deciding on the reconstruction of irrigation schemes.</td>
<td>• Additional water supply improved productivity of women’s home gardens, increasing incomes and nutrition, and reduced time spent by women fetching water; but no data were available on the number of women with increased incomes or nutrition, or time reduction for fetching water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure that women and men are trained to maintain irrigation schemes.</td>
<td>• No sex-disaggregated data were available on training for irrigation maintenance or on women’s and men’s involvement in inland fisheries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage women and men to be involved in inland fisheries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Water Supply and Sanitation</strong>—4 subprojects approved for improvements to infrastructures in small and medium towns:</td>
<td>123,274 female group members benefited from provision of 1 garbage compactor, 1 gully emptier, 1 four-wheel tractor, and 1 garbage collection truck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure the equal participation of men and women in planning, construction, and maintenance of water supply schemes.</td>
<td>• No other data were provided on women’s participation, leadership, training, or benefits or whether subprojects met specific needs that women identified in WRDS groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage women to lead CBOs and working committees for the scheme.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage women and men are trained to maintain water supply and sanitation schemes.</td>
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</table>

2. Community Development

| Village Development to restore livelihoods and support reconciliation and social cohesion: | 20,036 women from WRDSs in 120 villages benefited from microcredit from RLFs. |
| • Promote and ensure consultation with both men and women in village reconstruction and development plans by establishing separate CBOs. | • 633 vulnerable families headed by women, in 61 WRDSs from 30 villages, received microcredit. |
| • Prioritize women’s participation in training on CBO management and leadership. | • No data were available on men’s access to RLF microcredit; no sex-disaggregated data were available on access to livelihood support services. |
| • Provide training to women and men to utilize microcredit and revolving fund schemes. | • 6,440 resettled families benefited from basic facilities provided to villages such as jungle clearing, repairs to rural roads, wells, central dispensaries, and toilets. |
| • Provide referral services and access to information for livelihood support and enterprises to women and men. | • No sex-disaggregated data were available on the proportion of women and men participating in civil works or wage parity. |

continued on next page
processes of review and evaluation “cover both quanti-
tative and qualitative gender-based information” (ADB 2005a, 25). However, there was no clause in the RRP loan assurances or in the covenants in the loan agreement relating to implementation of the GAP (ADB 2005b).

Gender Action Plan Implementation

The GAP was elaborated into a work plan and a gender development coordinator was contracted for 2 years up to April 2008. Gender training was provided to project staff, implementing partner–nongovernment organizations (IP–NGOs), and WRDS members. Proposals for each subproject had to comply with a set of criteria to qualify for approval. The format for subproject proposals included a series of questions including on how many women would benefit. The approval criteria also required that there be “gender equity in access to services provided” (Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development [MNBEID] 2008b). It was not clear, however, whether there was any follow-up monitoring for any of these criteria. For example, no information was available

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector and GAP Provisions</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shelter—28 subprojects approved:</td>
<td>1,770 resettled families consisting of 8,829 people benefited from the rehabilitation of 1,770 houses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure that women are not discriminated against in obtaining titles to housing and property.</td>
<td>• No sex-disaggregated data were available on beneficiaries or housing title.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livelihood—Agriculture, livestock, and fisheries:</td>
<td>Livestock: 20,015 families benefited with rural women undertaking livestock farming; income and nutrition improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Educate extension service providers to give women access to services.</td>
<td>• Agriculture: 101,699 farm families benefited and employment opportunities increased for female unskilled laborers in new agricultural facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruit female extension staff to cater to women with restricted mobility.</td>
<td>• Fishing: women established fish drying; 7,024 families benefited from the RLF for fishing crafts, fishing nets, and motors through 36 fishermen cooperatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide women with seed packets to grow high-nutrition vegetables in their home gardens and arrange postharvest technology training and links with technical assistance and service providers for women and men.</td>
<td>• No sex-disaggregated data were available on participation or access to resources or services for these subprojects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Development:</td>
<td>Female staff benefited from access to separate quarters in rural areas, increasing privacy and security.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure that adequate and separate facilities are provided for women and men in the reconstruction of local government and district offices.</td>
<td>• No sex-disaggregated data were provided on participation or access to resources or services for these subprojects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure equal access to and participation of women and men in training programs and actively promote women’s entry into higher levels of public administration.</td>
<td>• Five trainings on gender and development were conducted; 150 women participated. No data were available on the number of men participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide gender awareness training to public administration staff to ensure that women are not discriminated against in getting access to and benefiting from local government services.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Sources: NECORD-II. 2008. Women Development Activities under NECORD Project. Trincomalee; Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development. 2008a. NECORD-II, Northern Province, Provincial Project Coordinating Committee Meeting, Sub Project Proposals. Trincomalee; Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development. 2008b. NECORD-II, Eastern Province, Provincial Project Coordinating Committee Meeting, Sub Project Proposals. Trincomalee; information gathered during fieldwork; and information provided by the NECORD-II Project Management Unit by e-mail, 12 August 2009.
during the RGA regarding whether women had equal access to livelihood infrastructures, or whether the completed subprojects met their needs. Under these circumstances it was difficult to ascertain to what extent the GAP was implemented.

Progress toward Gender Equality Results

The following sections discuss gender equality results demonstrated from the RGA field visits. These are summarized in Table 4 and Appendix 1, along with data from NECORD-II project reports.

Participation and Access to Resources

From group discussions in the field with WRDS members and IP–NGOs, it was apparent that care had been taken to ensure women participated in participatory needs assessment (PNA) and CBO activities, with subgroup WRDSs being either re-formed or founded for the first time. Some men resisted the involvement of women in WRDSs, especially in Muslim villages. In these cases, the IP–NGOs started by involving daughters and gradually their mothers came out and joined the groups. In some cases, women leaders were brought from nearby villages to encourage women to take up WRDS responsibilities. Several informants noted that gender roles were already in flux because of the social disruption due to the conflict; women were forced to be more active outside the household, making it easier to encourage them to join WRDS groups. Men are now travelling away to find employment, so in the end more women attend meetings than do men even though this is a new activity for women.

As noted above, subproject proposals required comments on women’s potential to benefit and on gender equity in access to services. It appeared to be assumed by the Provincial Project Coordinating Committee than an initial analysis of potential benefits is carried out by the CBOs and IP–NGOs. The GAP report prepared for the RGA stated that no subproject proposal had been received that failed to meet these gender criteria (NECORD-II 2008). It was not clear, however, whether the project team had the capacity to assess and monitor gender impacts based on the limited data provided for each proposal.

Field interviews, rather than reported data, show that women participated in all stages of infrastructure subproject implementation. Women stated that they willingly donated labor to infrastructure components and were able to adjust other responsibilities around project work because they planned together in their WRDSs to schedule construction. Initially, the project team found women laborers would leave the construction sites during the day to deliver food to men working in the fields, or for other household responsibilities. This slowed down construction, but once this problem was discussed, the schedules were altered and the women increased their efforts so they could keep up with the project schedule.

Perhaps the most significant benefit from the project has been the provision of housing and basic productive resources, such as fruit trees, during the start-up phase of project implementation. Emergency activities to meet the most basic of needs were implemented as quickly as possible while procedures for PNAs and social mobilization were being put in place. As noted in the GAP report, several other project components also had significant potential to benefit women; for example, improved access to health services and improved education facilities for girls and female teachers (NECORD-II 2008). Whether these benefits for women were realized was not clear based on current reporting. For example, improved housing for female teachers should encourage more teachers to return to project areas, but there were no baseline or monitoring data available to measure whether this change had taken place.

The livelihood component included the provision of perennial crops (mostly fruit trees) to rural development society (RDS) and WRDS members, and skills training for income-generating activities, with access to credit through the RLFs. The 2008 GAP report for the RGA stated that 633 “vulnerable women-headed families” accessed RLFs through 61 WRDSs (NECORD-II 2008). These resources not only provided emergency relief through additional income for families, but also in some cases enabled WRDS members to start small businesses. Several women noted that before displacement they could feed their families from household garden produce and sell some for cash, but when they returned to their village from the camps for internally displaced people they had to purchase foodstuffs to supplement rations from the
World Food Program, so any extra cash was needed for simple survival.

Women stated in interviews with the RGA team that infrastructures funded through the project met their needs. The combination of multipurpose buildings where women can meet and attend training and health clinics, roads, and water and sanitation infrastructure have brought their communities back to some semblance of the past.

Practical Benefits

Vital infrastructures such as temporary and permanent housing to replace those destroyed over the previous few years were provided. The replacement of permanent housing is far from complete; for example, in one community only 41 out of 218 families had received the funding and other assistance to construct permanent houses at the time of the RGA. Women said that the provision of water and sanitation facilities was also vital. Where a multipurpose community building has been constructed, public health nurses now come once per month, and village health volunteers have a place to meet with women on a daily basis. They have somewhere to keep clinic cards and water treatment tablets and to provide basic advice on care and treatments.

Livelihood opportunities increased incomes for women due to the training and credit provided through the project. The RLF activities undertaken in WRDSs enabled women to increase their savings and receive credit. Training was offered in how to prepare a business plan and how to keep accounts for micro-enterprises. The RLF and accompanying training have been important to these communities, even though the amount of credit provided was small. There are few other sources of credit; most microfinance programs provided by international development agencies following the tsunami planned to close in 2008 or 2009, and there was no provision for RLFs in future programming in the Northern and Eastern provinces (MNBEID, 2008a and 2008b). It was difficult for women to travel to nearby towns to make deposits at commercial banks because of fear of harassment and a general fear of kidnapping and assault on the road. Widows and poor women also rarely had collateral to qualify for commercial loans, so the RLF activities were of great benefit to them.

In some communities, women have taken up nontraditional activities such as carpentry, plumbing, and welding, skills they can use in the future with a good return on their labor compared to most other income-generation activities women do. However, quantitative data on how many women took up these training opportunities or whether they were able to find employment were not made available to the RGA team. In group discussions, some women reported they have started shops in their homes, an income-generating activity they had not done before. In one community, a WRDS member travels to the nearby town to purchase goods wholesale for a group of members so they can save through bulk purchase. The next time another member will go, saving the other women time and reducing their exposure to risks associated with travel. This is a good example of how the establishment of WRDSs has increased social capital in some project areas.

Strategic Changes in Gender Relations at the Individual or Household Level

Some women interviewed by the RGA team stated that since CARE International organized their original WRDS in the immediate post-tsunami period they have participated with their husbands in household decision making and their confidence has been reinforced by the NECORD-II social mobilization activities. The project offered them additional training on gender work balance, which they attended with their husbands, and was highly appreciated, as they had never thought about this before. For example, one woman noted that her husband now helps her out in the house and in her small food business. He assists with food preparation in the morning and fetches water as she prepares meals for the school canteen at lunchtime. Both husband and wife have discussed with their son how he should help his wife out in a similar way once he is married. The RGA was unable to assess how widespread these changes were in communities where this training had been offered.

Other training identified as important by women included a session on domestic violence—the causes, what to do if it happens, where to get help, and encouragement to go to the police if it persists. In one village visited by the RGA team two men from the RDS attended the session on domestic violence. It would
be interesting to track within that community whether these men passed on any of the information about domestic violence or if the police noted any additional interaction with women regarding domestic violence incidents. The potential for these kinds of longer-term changes to address domestic violence has been opened with this kind of training.

**Strategic Changes in Gender Relations at the Community Level**

WRDS members now develop their own proposals for presentation to local government. These proposals are discussed with the village RDS first and a consensus is reached on which proposals will be brought forward. The involvement of women as well as men in the planning for village infrastructure is new—although one village claimed they had been doing this, though not on a regular basis, and that women only “tried to talk” at government meetings. Now WRDS members attend planning meetings with government officials regularly, and they know how to put forward their proposals, so they feel their voices are being heard. In two cases, WRDS proposals for funding outside NECORD-II have been accepted by the local government. At least one WRDS bid on a tender to complete a health clinic, which was beyond the infrastructures agreed to in the project VDP. The assistant divisional secretary acknowledged this as being very significant for these women, and the WRDS completed the contract well. Also, IP–NGOs reported that women are now traveling outside their immediate community to meet the divisional secretary or for their own purposes on a regular basis, which had been rare before the formation of the WRDSs. Some women are even traveling as far as Trincomalee for meetings and other business.

In some communities, CBOs including the WRDSs and RDSs are preparing environmental awareness programs; they want to keep their villages clean now that they have new infrastructure. IP–NGOs noted that the RDSs and WRDSs work together to solve problems and to ensure new infrastructure such as the multipurpose community buildings are maintained and managed properly. Women are now encouraging men to attend community meetings regarding communal areas, a very different dynamic than before, when men managed this sort of community decision making.

WRDS members discuss more than project or RLF issues at meetings. Some said they discussed domestic violence, alcohol abuse, and problems with early marriage; some also mentioned that they try to find ways to assist a neighbor who is having trouble attending meetings. In one case they appealed to the rural development officer (RDO) to come with them to the house of a WRDS member who had been prevented from attending meetings by her husband. Discussions regarding domestic violence and how to respond and assist one’s neighbors were started with the CARE International post-tsunami project. Now the WRDS is being used in the community as a mechanism to build solidarity among women to combat these types of social problems.

**Institutional Changes and Sustainability**

One IP–NGO noted that they had not worked directly with government agencies before their involvement with NECORD-II. They would go to officials to ask for something, but now they feel they are assisting government, they are partners, and government procedures seem to go much faster when they work together. Building these relationships can make government officers more open to understanding the social and gender dimensions of the communities they serve. There is a shortage of government officers as few want to live in these insecure areas, so partnerships with NGOs are the only way many services are being extended to these communities. Such partnerships will encourage and sustain the communities as they seek support and funding for the investments in basic infrastructures that are still needed.

Sustainability of WRDSs and RDSs needs to be given priority for the remainder of the project. IP–NGOs noted their concern that local government will not have the resources or skills to support these CBOs once the project is ended. Many WRDSs may not survive without regular support, for example to manage the RLF, which is a highly technical field. Currently WRDSs are deciding for themselves interest rates and repayment schedules, and this might cause conflict between members in the future if there is no mediation available from RDOs, local government women development officers (WDOs), or NGOs. Training for WDOs and RDOs to support and monitor RLF activities will be necessary for related activities to continue.
The executing agency has required CBOs to register with the local government, facilitating future support from RDOs, WDOs, and a range of local government agencies. However, it is far from certain that local government will have the capacity to continue to support the WRDSs and RDSs once the project has closed, given the extreme shortage of staff in these provinces. Experience from the STRCBWSS project might be applied, for example to develop regional forums where leaders from WRDSs and RDSs can meet to discuss their experiences. These forums might also be used to advocate for community needs with local government and, hence, encourage the allocation of more resources to maintain these groups.

In group discussions with the RGA team, WRDS members expressed their interest in sustaining the infrastructures they have developed. To date, multi-purpose buildings visited by the team are allocating rental income to maintenance, and many women spoke of the importance of these community spaces, emphasizing how committed they are to ensuring theirs remains available for their use. In the past, these kinds of community spaces have often been taken over by men for social purposes once projects have closed, leaving women once again without a place to meet or hold health clinics.

**Contribution of Gender Equality Results to Loan Outcomes and Effectiveness**

The overall purpose of both NECORD-II and TAARP was to improve living conditions and well-being in the tsunami- and conflict-affected areas of the North East Province by restoring basic social infrastructure, community and public services, and livelihoods. The approach adopted was to rebuild community cohesion through social mobilization while establishing relations between CBOs and government agencies so that reconstruction would be based on the needs of the communities. Ensuring that all community members, including women, fully participated was clearly necessary if this intention was to be met.

Design features were set out in the GAP to ensure women participated in planning and decision making regarding reconstruction activities. Other areas where discrimination and disadvantage restrict women’s access to community resources or decision making were also identified and measures suggested to overcome these constraints. In those communities where WRDSs are stable and capacities to prepare proposals for submission to the local government officials have been developed, the special measures taken by the project to build women’s confidence to take on leadership and to fully participate in WRDS activities have enabled an active relationship with government. As noted by several government officials, women implemented projects quickly and effectively partly because they reside in the community, while many men are forced to seek employment far from home. Consequently, women’s contributions were essential to achieve project outcomes efficiently.

The limited reporting on direct benefits to women makes it difficult, if not impossible, to assess the extent to which women are benefiting in practice, especially in areas where WRDSs have not been fully mobilized. For example, efforts were made to increase women’s agricultural productivity, but there was no quantitative reporting on whether the training offered to women was useful, or the extent to which new ideas and technologies contributed to food security. Similarly, although the increase in incomes reported by women due to livelihood training and credit provision would directly contribute to the project goal, data were inadequate to assess the extent to which this has occurred throughout project communities. An assessment of how the investments targeting women are contributing to achieving overall project objectives is therefore not possible given the information available. These shortcomings may be addressed in the project impact assessment. However, monitoring whether activities are reaching their intended target groups effectively or achieving the intended outcomes would also have provided essential information for adjusting project implementation as it proceeded.

**Challenges**

**Capacity of Implementing Partner—Nongovernment Organizations**

The methodology for building social cohesion within conflict- and tsunami-affected areas was through social mobilization and building capacities within each community to plan and reconstruct basic infrastructure and
services. The capacities of IP–NGOs managing the social mobilization and planning process needed to be strong enough to ensure each step was followed in sequence, and to ensure that all groups within a community participated fully. This is challenging even in relatively stable communities. In villages returning after such traumatic experiences as the tsunami and from camps for internally displaced people, social divisions can be magnified. When there is extreme pressure on families to simply survive, taking time to ensure confidence is built among those who do not normally participate in decision making can be frustrating for some, and there may be enormous pressure to diverge from the steps set out under NECORD-II. Women clearly would need extra time and support to participate as they were not already involved in community decision making. There were few local IP–NGOs with experience in carrying out this type of participatory approach to planning and implementing development activities. There was strong competition among all international and local NGOs operating in the region during the immediate post-tsunami period, with some offering higher salaries and better working conditions than those offered under government contracts.

### Monitoring of the Implementation of the Gender Action Plan and Reporting of Gender Equality Results

There was no mention of GAP implementation in ADB loan review mission reports and no coverage of GAP implementation or gender equality results in quarterly reports from the executing agency. Consequently, it was not possible to track the effectiveness of the social mobilization approach or the proportion of women who in fact participated in WRDS activities, or in the various subprojects. For example, the GAP report prepared for the RGA team indicated there were 34 agriculture subprojects benefiting 101,699 families and that agricultural infrastructure had been constructed. Based on assumptions regarding the proportion of women involved in agricultural production, it claimed that “more than half of the beneficiaries were women” (NECORD-II 2008). However, it was not possible to identify whether any WRDSs had requested subprojects in this sector, whether their priorities or needs were met, or if women were involved in any agricultural training undertaken by the project. It was also unclear from the regular reports to ADB how many WRDSs and RDSs had been formed, or whether there were villages where it was more or less difficult to mobilize women (for example Muslim villages).

It is understandable that NECORD-II, with additional funds from TAARP, had to plan and disburse many subprojects very rapidly under very difficult conditions, and therefore detailed consideration of many concerns may not have been possible at the start of the project. However, as implementation proceeded, reporting on qualitative indicators, as required under the RRP, could have been put in place. This would have enabled an assessment of the extent and effectiveness of women’s participation in the planning of subprojects, and how these had benefited women. Experience from other projects in Sri Lanka highlights the importance of verifying the assumption that women can and will participate in community-based projects. Although interviews with project beneficiaries during the RGA provided some insight into the level of access by women to project resources and changes in gender relations, a larger sample would be required to verify these results. IP–NGOs noted they would appreciate more training on monitoring and evaluation so such aspects could be more closely monitored.

There was also no reporting on key concerns set out in the GAP. For example, the GAP identified the need to ensure women were not discriminated against in obtaining titles to housing and property as communities returned to their original villages. There was no mention of whether this concern was addressed in training sessions with WRDSs, or if IP–NGOs were requested to bring this into group training. The report on GAP activities prepared for the RGA team presents data regarding numbers of families benefiting from new infrastructures or training, followed by an assumption that women benefit on a 50–50 basis with men (NECORD-II 2008). Experience has demonstrated across Sri Lanka and other countries that this cannot be assumed, especially when there is evidence of discrimination against women accessing community or household resources, as is noted in the RRP gender analysis (ADB 2005a).

Given the stresses placed on these communities over recent years, the project has achieved a great deal, and there are some promising strategic results for women. As noted by the provincial secretary, these communities needed strategies for survival rather than for long-term development, so it can be assumed the scope for strategic gender results would be limited.
Nevertheless, women have given their labor for infrastructure construction, developed their leadership skills, and responded to the changing gender roles required in an uncertain social and economic environment. As social and economic conditions return to some semblance of normality, the social mobilization process should be monitored more carefully and lessons exchanged among implementing partners. Some RDSs and WRDSs have been built on previous programs of social mobilization and appear to be stronger than some of the new self-help groups. Leaders from stronger groups can bring their experiences to those communities facing difficulties. Being fully socially inclusive, and ensuring the participation of everyone, including women, takes time and the flexibility to respond to the conditions in each community. More comprehensive monitoring could strengthen reflection by the project team on what has been learned so far and how lessons can be applied in their current and future work.

Microfinance, Livelihood, and Enterprise Development Activities

Livelihood and enterprise development activities aimed to build up the local economy and provide much-needed incomes. International NGO and other donor-funded microfinance and livelihood schemes offered different and sometimes more favorable credit conditions, creating confusion for project beneficiaries when neighboring communities appeared to have access to better loan conditions. Also, it was difficult for NECORD-II to contract IP–NGOs with experience in this area. The project sought to overcome capacity shortfalls among IP–NGOs through on-the-job training and the coordination of activities with other post-tsunami programs.

Several women noted during the RGA fieldwork that they had passed their RLF project credit on to their husbands. One IP–NGO reported that among their CBOs 607 women had started their own businesses, and that 182 men had done so, with credit received from their wives. This amounted to almost 25% of loans to women being handed over to men, even though the women remained solely responsible for repayments. One potential problem from this practice is that wives may not be able to encourage their husbands to keep aside adequate amounts from profits to cover repayments according to schedule. As noted in the discussion on NECCDEP microfinance, IP–NGOs and NECORD-II staff need to introduce discussions in the community regarding the importance of ensuring that women are not left solely responsible for loans over which they have no control. It is important, also, that the NECORD-II team is encouraged to discuss with IP–NGOs why project credit is targeted to widows and households headed by women, and the importance of women not only accessing but also controlling such vital economic resources. IP–NGOs should then raise these points in training with RDSs as well as WRDSs to discourage the practice of passing credit received through the project on to other family members.

Another implication of this practice is that reporting on the number of women receiving the RLF does not necessarily reflect who actually benefits from project resources. In addition, the current monitoring does not track the viability of income-generation activities undertaken by WRDS members receiving RLF credit.

Factors Influencing the Achievement of Gender Equality Results

The complex environment for this project has affected its implementation, but nevertheless emergency support was delivered to many communities in need. The following paragraphs discuss the major factors that influenced the achievement of gender equality results.

Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan Design

The urgent need to respond to the tsunami emergency and deliver TAARP funds using the structures of NECORD-II and other projects led to an accelerated project preparation phase. Detailed gender analysis could not be accommodated in the project document, and realistic gender-related targets were not identified. Nevertheless, the GAP provided guidance for promoting social inclusiveness in community mobilization activities, and strategies were identified to enhance women’s participation in all NECORD-II sectors and components. This was very positive.

Gender-specific Resources and Capacity Building

A project gender development coordinator was contracted from August 2006 until April 2008. She
organized training programs for WRDS members in several districts, which were attended by project staff and IP–NGOs. As with NECCDEP, there were difficulties in identifying IP–NGOs with extensive experience in participatory planning and implementation in the project areas, so any training would have been important for those contracted. A professor from the University of Colombo presented a lecture on gender and development for the project team and the project director attended an ADB regional gender and development seminar held in Viet Nam. There were also plans for some project team members to take a gender training course in Bangkok, but this had to be cancelled as the security situation worsened.

**Gender Action Plan Implementation and Monitoring**

The pressure to start implementation to respond to emergency needs meant that many activities were initiated without adjustments based on conditions on the ground. Clearly many benefits for women were achieved, but the extent to which social disadvantages were addressed through the social mobilization process was not as evident as in other projects reviewed during the RGAs in Sri Lanka. There was no evidence from project reports that the implementation team returned to the communities mobilized during the early stages to check whether VDPs did reflect the needs of women as well as men, or to verify the appropriateness of training and other activities under way. In addition, the limited monitoring and reporting made it difficult to assess which elements of the GAP had been fully implemented, and thus how effective the GAP had been in enhancing the effectiveness of the project’s investments or in meeting the needs of women.

Under such circumstances of accelerated loan preparation, even with a poor-quality GAP, experience in other projects and countries has demonstrated the importance of revising the GAP to ensure that benefits accrue equally to women and men. Interim GAP targets for various key activities could have been developed once further knowledge was gained of conditions on the ground. However, this requires both investment in monitoring and ongoing gender specialist expertise and targeted capacity building to develop ownership and understanding of the GAP. Neither of these conditions was met during project implementation.

**Recommendations**

It is important that ADB documents effective strategies to ensure that women benefit in conflict-affected and post-emergency contexts. The following recommendations are made to enhance this learning, and to maximize the returns on investments for the remainder of project implementation:

(i) Sex-disaggregated data should be collected for all project activities to provide information on results achieved for women compared with those for men. The project impact assessment should include an analysis of gender equality results including women’s participation in project activities compared with men’s, their access to project resources and benefits, and any changes in gender relations (such as sustained participation by women in community planning and interaction with local government to access vital resources). The project impact assessment should also consider what contribution these gender equality results have made to the achievement of overall project outcomes.

(ii) The practice of WRDS members passing on RLF loans to other family members should be actively discouraged. A dialogue between ADB and NECORD-II, and between NECORD-II and IP–NGOs should be started to examine the potential impact of this practice. NECORD-II and IP–NGOs should also revise mobilization and enterprise training sessions to include discussions among RDS and WRDS members regarding access to and control over RLF loans, and the reason NECORD-II promotes women’s access to credit.

(iii) Priority should be given to supporting the sustainability of WRDSs and RDSs for the remainder of the project duration. Lessons can be drawn from mechanisms put in place by other community-based projects, such as STRCBWSS, to strengthen communication and support among CBOs within the region and with the local government agencies that can provide funding and other support in the future. Training for WDOs and RDOs should also be considered to help them support and monitor RLF activities.
Findings, Issues, and Conclusions

Summary of Gender Equality Results and Links to Loan Outcomes

Participation in Project Activities

All three projects achieved significant participation by women in project activities. Efforts were also made to ensure that there was a gender balance in key planning and construction activities. Women interviewed by the rapid gender assessment (RGA) team from all projects confirmed that they found involvement in women’s rural development societies (WRDSs) in the North East Coastal Community Development Project (NECCDEP) and the North East Community Restoration and Development Project-II (NECORD-II), and women’s societies in the Secondary Towns and Rural Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation (STRCBWSS) Project useful and that participatory need assessments (PNAs) reflected their needs.

NECCDEP overcame initial challenges to women’s participation in the PNAs (identified by the process monitors) by returning to some communities to rework the village development plan (VDP) using a more participatory process that ensured the needs of women were incorporated. STRCBWSS took a comprehensive approach to social mobilization that not only ensured women’s participation in WRDSs, but also required 50% women’s representation on the apex decision-making committees in community-based organizations (CBOs) in each village. The only circumstance in which participation targets were not met in STRCBWSS was in Muslim communities where there was resistance to women leaving the household to join meetings. Detailed monitoring of women’s membership in WRDSs, attendance at training, and access to project resources complemented the mobilizing activities so that project staff could track progress and approach implementing partner–nongovernment organizations (IP–NGOs) to address any variances as they occurred. In contrast, NECORD-II took a more passive approach and did not appear to verify whether participation targets were met. There was limited reporting on gender action plan (GAP) elements and without concrete targets, it was unclear whether men and women participated equally in NECORD-II.

Access to Resources

The three project GAPs highlighted the need to target women to ensure their access to credit, particularly women heads of households and widows, and the majority of credit recipients in all projects were women. NECCDEP WRDS members reported to the RGA team that their priorities as well as those of men were reflected in the VDPs and that infrastructures built met their needs. This verified the data reported by the project. Women beneficiaries noted that the buildings, feeder roads, market areas, and drainage structures have strengthened the community as a whole. Livelihoods also improved, due to credit provided through revolving loan funds (RLFs), a high proportion of which was channeled through WRDSs. However, the skill training for livelihood enterprise development provided stereotyped training to men and women, rather than encouraging women to consider nontraditional, but more profitable, enterprises.

Women from the STRCBWSS project all strongly stated how much they appreciated the water and sanitation infrastructure provided by the project, and the detailed project monitoring data confirmed that there was a good gender balance for those accessing all programs. Women’s lives improved considerably as they now have reliable access to good water and sanitation facilities, bringing considerable time savings. Microfinance through RLFs was also available to WRDS members, but it has been in such small amounts that the women found it difficult to establish viable enterprises, although some have used the loan funds to improve existing economic activities.

Basic productive resources and shelter were provided to families by NECORD-II, but there were no data available to the RGA to confirm the proportion of women involved, or if households headed by women
received adequate priority. Project reports confirmed that microfinance through the RLF had been provided to vulnerable women, and this has enabled women to use extra cash from income-generation activities to increase food security. Women interviewed by the RGA team confirmed that their needs were met through the PNA process, but this was a small sample and there were no data to verify this from project reports.

Practical Benefits

All three projects delivered practical benefits to women. NECCDEP provided a range of community infrastructures (such as markets, feeder roads, preschools, and common wells) and increased livelihood opportunities through the provision of microfinance and training, with increased incomes applied in most cases to improving food security. The STRCBWSS project delivered significant improvements in water and sanitation infrastructures, both medium and small scale, although no data indicating improvements in health status have yet been collected. Women reported considerable time benefits, but this indicator of benefits to women was not regularly monitored by any of the projects. Time savings for women should be incorporated as an indicator in post-project impact assessment as it is identified as a significant benefit from water infrastructure improvements in all three projects. In STRCBWSS, women also appreciated other small infrastructures constructed by the project, such as washing steps on canals, access roads, and community meeting halls, in addition to the health and hygiene training provided. Women identified immediate temporary shelter and water and sanitation infrastructure as particularly important benefits. Multipurpose buildings (provided in NECCDEP and NECORD-II/TAARP) were also much appreciated as they gave women a place to meet and a space for health clinics to be conducted.

Strategic Changes in Gender Relations at the Individual or Household Level

The approach taken to mobilizing men and women to actively participate in the design and physical construction of infrastructure for all three projects has brought changes to gender relations between husbands and wives. Many women interviewed during the RGA noted they already contributed to family decision making, but that following the shared construction experience with members of the rural development society (RDS, a men’s group), they now discuss different things with their husbands. The training in nontraditional areas for women (which equipped women to participate in decision making, planning, and management related to small infrastructure construction) has left them feeling more confident and knowledgeable about the world outside their household. Many women particularly appreciated the awareness workshops held by NECCDEP and NECORD-II regarding gender balance in household workload. Many husbands also attended, and the workshops have opened up opportunities for women to start negotiating assistance from their husbands and sons in some tasks so the women can undertake income-generating activities more efficiently. In some communities, international NGOs such as CARE International had already mobilized WRDSs and introduced discussions about domestic violence. These discussions have continued at WRDS group meetings. However, because these kinds of qualitative changes were not monitored by any of the projects it was not possible to assess the scope of changes in gender relations within the family.

Strategic Changes in Gender Relations at the Community Level

Mobilizing women as well as men into CBOs (WRDSs, women’s societies, and RDSs) has brought considerable changes to gender relations in communities from all three projects. WRDSs have to reach consensus with RDSs on projects taken to government bodies for funding, and these kinds of discussions did not previously involve both men and women. Women from all three projects now go regularly to local government planning meetings to present proposals, and some WRDSs have even prepared bids and won and executed contracts using skills they learned from the project. Training offered to both WRDSs and RDSs has facilitated the process of consensus building and in many NECCDEP and NECORD-II communities multipurpose community buildings have created a space where groups can meet.
STRCBWSS has taken the process one step further by grooming a new cohort of community leaders, drawn from women’s societies and RDSs, who can consolidate their learning and build their confidence through participation in apex CBO forums with representation from many communities within a district. Government officials attend these meetings, giving them new opportunities to better understand the needs of their communities. For example, in an interview with the RGA team, one government official noted that he now appreciates much better the contribution women can make to the development and rehabilitation of their own communities.

Other Positive Results and Institutional Changes

STRCBWSS has worked with the National Water Supply and Drainage Board (NWSDB; the project executing agency) to establish new structures within the agency for sustaining CBOs in implementing and maintaining water and sanitation infrastructures. A high-level task force has been established, legislation has been presented to the provincial government, and roles and responsibilities have been set out to identify funds and develop support for registered women’s societies and RDSs. This task force includes agencies from the Ministry of Child Development and Women’s Empowerment as well as others, such as the Ministry of Agriculture.

NECCDEP has established district secretariat steering committees with representation from WRDSs and RDSs to provide forums for exchanging experiences and mutual support. These forums can also be encouraged to advocate for more development resources with local government as they develop future community plans. The proportion of women participating in these steering committees is very low, however, and an analysis of causes for this low participation rate needs to be carried out and steps taken to address constraints. The steering committees can enhance the sustainability of social mobilization, but capacity building of local government officers to provide essential support once the project is closed will also be necessary. IP–NGOs are expressing an interest in sustaining liaison with local government to continue to support community-driven development programming. NECCDEP can play a vital role in cementing these channels for continued collaboration, as well as in drawing lessons from experiences of similar projects—such as STRCBWSS—to establish more formal mechanisms to advocate for and access scarce development resources through higher levels of government.

IP–NGOs working on NECORD-II remarked to the RGA team that this project has given them an important opportunity to work more closely with local government. The training offered on the development and costing of proposals has meant they understand the functions of government better, and they now feel like partners in the development of communities. This is a significant change, as the pressure on government officials to meet the needs of the disrupted communities in the NECORD-II region has led them to rely more on NGOs to deliver programming. It is important, therefore, that they work well together.

Contribution of Gender Action Plans and Gender Equality Results to Project Outcomes, Effectiveness, and Sustainability

GAPs reinforced the need to design special measures to ensure women can overcome discrimination and disadvantages that limit their participation in project activities and access to resources. Due to their GAPs, NECCDEP and STRCBWSS set out detailed procedures to create an environment and implementation mechanisms that ensured gender considerations were routinely addressed in their work. Consequently, women’s participation was high in all project activities. Livelihood activities increased women’s income and food security, which reduced the vulnerability of their families to poverty. Involving women in decision making ensured that their priorities for infrastructure were met; this contributed directly to the goal of improving living conditions and it increased project effectiveness and efficiency because women’s efforts helped to keep projects on schedule, particularly in conflict-affected areas where men were often absent. Involving women fully in decision making enhanced their ownership of these infrastructures and their commitment to contribute labor for construction and maintenance. In NECORD-II, with its less detailed GAP and inconsistent monitoring, it was not possible to confirm that comprehensive participation had taken place and hence the effectiveness and sustainability of investments may be compromised.
The social and economic environment for STRCBWSS was very different from that in the conflict- and tsunami-affected areas of NECCDEP and NECORD-II, making it easier to put in place measures for sustaining results. In contrast, in the North East region local government is under great pressure to meet emergency needs and the capacity to sustain results is less certain due to shortages of staff and other resources. Individual women from WRDSs expressed genuine commitment to maintaining infrastructures because they are so useful to their social and economic lives. However, this commitment may not be sustained if local government officers are unable to help groups overcome disagreements and manage RLFs, or provide training necessary to address technical concerns with infrastructures or equipment.

The Quality and Effectiveness of Gender Action Plans

All three projects had GAPs that were developed during project design. NECCDEP and STRCBWSS implemented their GAPs, whereas there was insufficient data to verify whether all GAP elements were implemented in NECORD-II. Comparing the approaches taken during design and implementation highlights the importance of comprehensive gender analysis, concrete targets for women’s participation, persistent monitoring of women’s and men’s participation, the use of loan covenants to support monitoring, and ownership of the GAP. These and other features of GAPs that contributed to the achievement of gender equality results are discussed below.

Gender Analysis

The two projects with the most comprehensive gender equality results both carried out detailed gender analysis, but in different ways. NECCDEP used a gender analysis carried out by the project preparation technical assistance to develop gender-related project design features. The gender analysis findings were cross-checked as the GAP was prepared during loan processing. As the project began implementation and the gender specialist was contracted, the PNAs provided additional data so that project staff could develop a comprehensive picture of key gender issues and special measures that might be required to engage all women effectively in project activities. The process monitor also checked the quality of participation in the preparation of VDPs, providing another opportunity to verify assumptions regarding the needs and interests of women in all project communities.

The STRCBWSS project designers were building on the experience of three previous phases of water supply and sanitation programming in rural areas. The gender analysis presented in the RRP was minimal, but the project implementation arrangements required that IP–NGOs send two staff (at least one female) to reside in each village during the social mobilization process. Over 1 year, these IP–NGO staff were expected to guide the PNA process and cross-check findings through additional analysis, including gender analysis. There was no gender analysis, however, for the STRCBWSS urban component and, therefore, no entry points for promoting women’s participation were identified in the RRP or during implementation.

Project preparation was accelerated for NECORD-II given the pressing need to start delivering TAARP grant assistance for emergency relief to tsunami-affected communities. The gender analysis presented in the project document was minimal and lessons regarding women’s participation and social mobilization from previous phases of NECORD were not presented owing to the very limited time available for processing an emergency loan.

Features of Quality Gender Action Plans

All three GAPs had special measures to ensure that participatory processes involved women. NECORD-II and NECCDEP provided guidance to promote women’s participation in all project components, a very positive feature. The STRCBWSS GAP was more concise, but it was built on many years of experience among the executing agency staff in implementing similar projects and the work plan developed during implementation addressed all activities of the rural component of the project.

The NECCDEP and STRCBWSS GAPs included specific targets for women’s participation in key activities, whereas NECORD-II’s GAP did not. The use of targets was correlated with much better monitoring and reporting of women’s participation in NECCDEP and STRCBWSS, coupled with effective follow-up action.
in cases where this was not achieved. In contrast, it was not possible to verify women’s participation for NECORD-II. In addition, without the close monitoring of women’s participation evident in the other two projects, there was no follow-up in NECORD-II to ensure that women were fully involved in PNAs or the development of VDPs, or that community-based infrastructure construction met their needs.

None of the GAPs had explicit gender-related results associated with higher-level project outputs or outcomes. However, the NECCDEP and STRCBWSS GAPs had other positive features: the targets for women’s participation in NECCDEP and STRCBWSS included provisions for their participation in decision making at various levels in the community and in project management; and in NECCDEP, there was an explicit requirement for VDPs to incorporate women’s specific needs. This was an important feature that resulted in the revision of VDPs in some communities to ensure that women’s priorities were taken into account (see below).

Another common positive feature of the NECCDEP and STRCBWSS GAPs is that both were revised and updated during implementation following input by the ADB resident mission gender specialist. Updating GAPs during implementation was found to be a key factor in ensuring that they were implemented and gender equality results achieved during the first series of rapid gender assessments (RGA-I) undertaken by ADB (Hunt, Lateef, and Thomas 2007).

Ownership of the Gender Action Plans

Initially there was limited understanding of the relevance of some aspects of the NECCDEP GAP by members of the project team, but following some training in-country and exposure to lessons from other ADB projects at ADB’s regional lateral learning workshops, ownership of the GAP increased and its implementation was supported. The need to comprehensively follow the GAP aspects of the NECCDEP mobilization process was reinforced by the process monitors, who identified problems with women’s contribution to some VDPs before the project gender specialist was contracted. Their assessment allowed the team to return to these villages, rework the PNA process, and adjust VDPs where necessary. Ownership and commitment to GAP implementation could have been reinforced if leaflets and other materials had been prepared to explain in simple terms why the GAP was important and how it could contribute to overall project effectiveness. Such communication tools could have been used by IP-NGOs as they worked with community leaders and government officials.

All the community organizing staff at STRCBWSS were very familiar with the GAP, and felt that, due to their commitment to and knowledge of gender-sensitive approaches to social mobilization, they would have used them with or without the GAP. This demonstrates a very high level of ownership of gender mainstreaming approaches within the executing agency for rural and community-based activities, although there was no such awareness for the urban component. The STRCBWSS project benefited from the experience of the social mobilization staff from previous phases, also during which special measures had been taken to ensure women’s participation. In contrast, the limited reporting of GAP implementation and gender equality results for NECORD-II made it difficult to assess the level of commitment among project staff to implementing the GAP features.

Capacity Building of Project Implementers

All three projects dedicated resources to gender awareness and gender capacity building with project staff; IP–NGOs; government partners; and WRDS, women’s society, and RDS members. NECCDEP developed dramas and written materials and conducted participatory workshops on various gender-related topics to bring a dynamic atmosphere to training sessions. NECORD-II used the project gender development coordinator and brought in a lecturer from Colombo to facilitate gender training and discussions with stakeholders.

Senior managers from all three projects attended lateral learning sessions organized by ADB headquarters with the most impact on commitment to GAP implementation noted for NECCDEP. These lateral learning opportunities not only demonstrated ADB’s commitment to gender mainstreaming, but also reinforced learning from project implementation experience, because similar lessons were brought from peers in other countries. The resident mission gender specialist delivered gender workshops to project staff for STRCBWSS and NECCDEP. These sessions encouraged analysis of the effectiveness of GAP
design features and subsequent revisions to aspects of the GAPs.

The NECCDEP GAP required that the selection criteria for project specialists, IP–NGOs, and other service providers include gender-related experience and gender sensitivity, and that at least one women-focused IP–NGO should be contracted per district. The RGA-I found that such requirements had a positive impact on the achievement of gender equality results in other countries and projects (Hunt, Lateef, and Thomas 2007). The limited capacity of IP–NGOs in the North East region (where both NECCDEP and NECORD-II were implemented) to take a participatory approach to project implementation accentuated the need for the project to provide them with additional training opportunities. Gender training was particularly important as few had experience in designing or implementing gender-related work plans. The process monitor for NECCDEP highlighted this limited gender capacity in their 2006 report and urged the project to contract a gender specialist as soon as possible to work with the IP–NGOs and to rework some of the PNAs already carried out.

As the three projects near completion, an area of capacity development that remains to be addressed is with government officials who will take on responsibility for supporting WRDSs, women’s societies, and RDSs in the future. Opportunities to draw these officials into training sessions should be followed up, and consideration given to targeted training as part of sustainability strategies.

**Institutionalization of Gender Action Plans in Loan Design, Implementation, and Monitoring**

It was positive that all three projects identified the need for a GAP to maximize women’s participation in community-driven project implementation. Nevertheless, more effort was needed to institutionalize GAPs by both executing and implementing agencies and ADB through the project cycle.

None of the projects incorporated GAP targets for women’s participation into their design and monitoring frameworks (DMFs). The NECORD-II DMF had one output that referred to the need to “make women self-reliant,” but without corresponding indicators, it was not clear what was meant by this statement and it was not monitored. Nor did this reference link to any particular element of the GAP. As noted above, none of the GAPs had gender-related results associated with higher-level outputs or outcomes, and consequently, nor did their DMFs. On the positive side, NECCDEP revised its DMF in 2008 following the midterm review (due to inputs by the ADB resident mission gender specialist) to include one GAP indicator on women’s access to microfinance resources.

Both NECCDEP and STRCBWSS implemented their GAPs and had comprehensive systems in place to monitor whether the special measures taken to encourage women’s participation were effective. NECCDEP had a provision for a process monitor to track the quality of PNAs and VDPs during the early implementation stage. Their recommendations regarding shortfalls in the participation of women were taken up by the project gender specialist, and proved useful to point out where corrective measures were required by IP–NGOs and other project staff. One process monitor report also identified the need for IP–NGOs to strengthen their self-analysis monitoring functions so adjustments during implementation can be made continually.

STRCBWSS put in place the most detailed monitoring framework for community mobilization activities and other key programs to ensure the GAP targets were met and project staff took corrective action when variances were identified. This demonstrates that comprehensive monitoring of women’s participation for all aspects of the rural component was institutionalized within the STRCBWSS project team. The lack of GAP features for the urban component, however, identifies the need for NWSDB to consider mechanisms to ensure that women’s needs are taken into account when larger civil works are planned and implemented.

NECORD-II, on the other hand, did not have monitoring mechanisms for GAP implementation. There was no discussion in project reports or ADB reviews of the quality of PNAs or VDPs upon which subprojects were designed, because there were no monitoring instruments in place to verify that community mobilization was socially inclusive and no reporting on the effectiveness of activities to deliver benefits equally to women and men. Consequently, it was not possible to track progress in many areas of the GAP, or to verify the broad statements of achievements made by the executing agency. When asked by the RGA team if
IP–NGOs thought there were areas of weakness they would like to improve, several identified monitoring skills and mechanisms.

The lack of gender-related targets and indicators in project DMFs meant that reporting on GAP implementation and basic sex-disaggregated data was limited to separate GAP sections in progress reports. In NECCDEP’s case, sex-disaggregated data on participation in project activities were not adequately reported by the executing agency, although they were repeatedly requested by ADB. In NECORD-II, it was unclear whether sex-disaggregated data were routinely collected, since they were not included in regular progress reports nor made available to the RGA. In contrast, the STRCBWSS project collected and reported comprehensive sex-disaggregated data on participation in rural activities.

In all three projects, most GAP reporting focused on completed activities or progress toward quantitative targets. There was no reporting on higher-level gender equality results and no analysis of the contribution that these results and GAP implementation made to the achievement of overall project outcomes. Tracking the contribution that GAP activities are making to project outcomes can be a useful way of ensuring that, for example, participation is being used to bring the voices of the whole community into decisions regarding their own development; it can also help to reinforce understanding and ownership of the GAP and commitment to its ongoing implementation.

The assessment of these three projects has highlighted the importance of incorporating a covenant for GAP implementation into the loan agreement to encourage monitoring of GAP implementation. The loan agreements for both NECCDEP and the STRCBWSS project included a covenant that required implementation of the GAP and in both cases there was good monitoring of GAP implementation and women’s participation by the executing agency. In addition, the loan review missions for NECCDEP reported regularly on compliance with the covenant, although there was minimal monitoring of the STRCBWSS gender-related loan covenant by ADB. In contrast, there was no loan covenant in the loan agreement for NECORD-II to implement the GAP; it was assumed that the executing agency’s commitment to inclusive social mobilization would ensure the implementation of the GAP, and there were inadequate data available to analyze the proportion of women participating compared with men and the project benefits accruing to women. In addition, there was no tracking of GAP implementation or achievements in ADB loan review processes for NECORD-II.18

The Role of Local Gender Specialists

The availability of gender expertise in all three projects assisted significantly with GAP implementation. Comparing approaches between the three projects also demonstrates the added value that long-term and ongoing gender expertise can bring to project implementation and monitoring, and the achievement of gender equality results. Technical support for implementing the GAPs was contracted for NECCDEP and NECORD-II, although for NECORD-II the budget was sufficient for a gender specialist for just over 2 years. No reports from her work were shared with the RGA team, so its value could not be assessed. However, the training delivered to NECORD-II IP–NGOs and WRDSs appeared to have been useful and appreciated.

The reporting of gender-related activities in NECCDEP provided a more complete picture of the contributions of the project gender specialist, who worked closely with inexperienced IP–NGOs to facilitate more effective participation by women. She established model villages to demonstrate the full participation of women and men in village development planning and decision making and its positive effects. She also played a key role by strengthening the capacity of project staff and other stakeholders to understand and implement the GAP, including by breaking it down into step-by-step elements, and by helping revise and modify GAP activities when the project team needed to respond flexibly to community needs due to considerable displacement and upheaval.

Given the extensive experience of the executing agency staff responsible for community organizing for

18 Back-to-office reports for NECORD-II loan review missions were not made available to the RGA team, but questions on the monitoring of GAP implementation were included in interviews with the relevant ADB staff.
STRCBWSS, an additional gender consultant was not considered necessary. The STRCBWSS project effectively employed a gender mainstreaming approach in the rural component—community organizers and sociologists with gender expertise ensured that participation, needs assessment, and other activities included women, and where there was not a gender balance, this was followed up assertively. Care was taken to ensure that IP–NGO staff included a high proportion of women, and with the detailed monitoring of GAP implementation, and the requirement that IP–NGOs have at least one female staff with gender experience residing in each community, GAP targets were met and impressive gender equality results achieved.

The involvement of the ADB resident mission gender specialist in participatory and highly tailored gender capacity building with project implementers has paid off in NECCDEP and STRCBWSS, as their GAPs were modified to meet the contexts faced during implementation. Her involvement in midterm reviews and other monitoring missions by ADB staff strengthened the monitoring of quantitative targets and the reporting of other gender-related results in these projects. These missions provided an opportunity for her to remain familiar with progress and issues regarding the implementation of the GAP, and to bring the experiences of other projects to problem solving. It also demonstrated to executing agencies that ADB takes GAP implementation seriously. The resident mission gender specialist also played a mentoring role for contracted gender specialists. Regular visits to project sites by the resident mission gender specialist ensured that she had a close understanding of current field conditions and the context within which GAPs were being implemented; familiarity with the project enhanced her ability to provide timely and realistic support and mentoring.

Other Contextual or Institutional Factors

Direct requests for sex-disaggregated data and quality reporting on gender equality results from the ADB project manager provided important signals to the executing agency and implementing agency teams that implementation of the GAP was a vital part of project implementation. Comparing results achieved for the three projects also demonstrates the importance of project directors taking a direct interest in the implementation of the GAP and the link between gender results and the overall objective of a project. Where this leadership was demonstrated, gender equality results were more comprehensive, with better monitoring and follow-up.

Both NECCDEP and NECORD-II were implemented in conflict- and tsunami-affected regions and both needed to respond quickly to communities experiencing extreme upheaval. In addition, there was an accelerated approval process for NECORD-II with considerable pressure to disburse TAARP funds quickly. The capacity of IP–NGOs was limited due to the security situation and the high demand for experienced staff by international NGOs also working in the region. Although comprehensive gender equality results were achieved in NECCDEP, the limited monitoring and reporting in NECORD-II meant that a similar range of results could not be verified. As the project progressed, opportunities to put more comprehensive monitoring mechanisms in place were missed, which limited the learning regarding how to maximize gender equality results and the most effective strategies for involving women in these communities.

It is now accepted by government partners in Sri Lanka that projects implementing community-driven processes to restore or strengthen livelihoods and community infrastructures must reflect the needs of all community members if they are to be effective. However, the assumption does not hold that projects identified as “socially inclusive” will always or automatically cover gender issues and ensure women’s equal participation. As the ADB Country Partnership Strategy for Sri Lanka notes, it is still necessary to ensure that gender issues are identified and incorporated in ADB-financed operations (ADB 2008b). Experience in the RGAs has demonstrated that when there is pressure to disburse funds in complex social circumstances such as those in conflict- and tsunami-affected areas, implementing and executing agencies may fail to take the extra time and to allocate the resources required to encourage women to participate. Special measures, set out in a GAP, are necessary to ensure that women can take up opportunities to participate in development activities. In addition, despite a clear commitment to social inclusiveness, there was no appreciation of the need to consult with and involve women in the large-scale urban infrastructure activities undertaken in STRCBWSS—even though
women are equally responsible for household water and sanitation in rural and urban areas, and responding to the needs and priorities of women is equally essential for the achievement of project objectives in rural and urban areas. Consultations with women in urban areas during the design of STRCBWSS might have identified entry points and design features that would have ensured that the water and sanitation needs of the poorest women were addressed.

Overarching Recommendations for Sri Lanka

Drawing on the lessons learned through the RGAs in Sri Lanka, the following recommendations are made to maximize the benefits from gender equity as a driver of change, and to fulfill the commitment to developing project-specific GAPs as outlined in ADB’s Country Partnership Strategy for Sri Lanka (ADB 2008b):

(i) All projects should have comprehensive GAPs with pro-poor and gender-responsive provisions for each component, including large-scale urban infrastructure components in water supply and sanitation projects. GAPs should be prepared in sufficient detail to provide a road map for implementation and should include strategies and targets for each component, project gender specialists throughout implementation, and gender capacity building with executing agencies and other stakeholders. The implementation of all GAPs should be covered by a covenant in the loan agreement.

(ii) Gender equity as a driver of change needs to be systematically addressed in project monitoring and reporting, and tracked at both project and country level. Sex-disaggregated baseline and monitoring data should be collected on gender-related targets included in project GAPs and on other DMF indicators.

(iii) GAP targets should be included in the DMF to encourage comprehensive monitoring and reporting on the GAP and gender equality results in core documents such as annual, midterm review, impact assessment, and project completion reports. They should assess gender differences in participation, access to project resources, and benefits. This will also facilitate the tracking of results at country level.

(iv) Involvement of the ADB resident mission gender specialist in participatory gender capacity building with executing agencies, the monitoring of GAP implementation, and loan review missions should be encouraged by other ADB staff, particularly in projects in high-priority sectors where it is possible to demonstrate the impact of a gender-responsive approach and where there are opportunities for lesson learning and replication to other projects. Regular lateral learning opportunities in-country will enable the sharing of experiences regarding the more challenging aspects of sustaining gender equality and social inclusion results from investments in social and physical infrastructure through CBOs.

(v) ADB should pay more consistent attention to GAP implementation and monitoring, including the monitoring of gender equality results throughout project implementation in complex social circumstances (such as in conflict- and tsunami-affected areas), and should have more dialogue with executing agencies on GAP implementation and gender-related loan covenants, particularly where reporting on GAP implementation and gender equality results is inadequate. It should not be assumed that “socially inclusive” projects will automatically cover gender issues and ensure women’s equal participation; special measures need to be identified in a GAP, implemented, and closely monitored.

Conclusions from Rapid Gender Assessments in All Four Countries

Lessons and findings from the Sri Lanka RGA are confirmed and reinforced by the RGAs in Indonesia, Mongolia, and Viet Nam, which also validated the findings from RGA-I: projects with detailed GAPs had the most comprehensive gender equality results, including participation in project activities, access to project
resources, practical benefits, and progress toward equal gender relations. In some cases in the other countries, the implementation of GAPs and the achievement of gender equality results also promoted or reinforced institutional changes within executing agencies that are expected to support future gender mainstreaming efforts.

Findings from the RGAs also demonstrated that where comprehensive gender equality results were achieved, these directly contributed to overall loan effectiveness and the achievement of loan outcomes. The following design and implementation features were critical for achieving comprehensive gender equality results:

(i) GAPs were prepared during loan preparation and incorporated into loan designs to provide a road map for executing and implementing agencies to ensure equal participation and benefits. The projects that achieved the most comprehensive results had loan designs that were informed by good quality and integrated gender and social analysis.

(ii) GAPs had realistic and achievable targets and strategies for each component that were clearly relevant to the loan components and outcomes. Projects with the most comprehensive results had achievable targets and inclusive community participation and mobilization strategies.

(iii) GAP implementation and gender equality results were systematically monitored. Consistent monitoring by executing agencies was a strong feature for those projects that achieved the most comprehensive results.

(iv) GAPs were owned and understood by executing and implementing agencies. The most comprehensive results were achieved where key stakeholders understood the rationale for ensuring that women participated and benefited, and how this contributed to the achievement of loan outcomes and/or the implementation of government policy.

(v) Gender capacity building and gender and social development expertise during implementation enhanced understanding and ownership of GAPs and ensured that they were fully implemented and regularly reviewed. These were also key features of the projects that achieved the most comprehensive results.

(vi) ADB invested in lateral learning through peer exchanges on effective strategies for achieving gender equality results. Some of the projects with the most comprehensive results had project directors who participated in ADB lateral learning events on gender mainstreaming.

There were also some common challenges evident across all four countries. The findings highlight the importance of developing and implementing quality GAPs. In addition to having the features listed above, GAPs need to be effective communication tools. Many of the GAPs included in RGA-II focused on women’s participation in project activities. While this is essential, more attention is also needed on higher-level results such as benefits and outcomes, including clear strategies for how to achieve these.

The monitoring of GAP implementation by ADB and the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data by executing agencies and ADB need to be improved. Even where gender-related loan covenants were in place, reporting on compliance was often cursory and sometimes inaccurate. In some projects, particularly those with poor-quality GAPs or no GAPs, collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated data were inadequate.

Monitoring needs to be supported by integrating key gender-related outputs and gender-sensitive indicators for each component into DMFs and ADB project performance reporting. The institutionalization of GAPs into ADB DMFs and project performance reports was weak across all four countries. This needs to be considerably improved if ADB is to demonstrate its Strategy 2020 commitments to promote gender equity as a driver of change, and to increase aid effectiveness by managing for development results (ADB 2008a).
The findings from RGA-I demonstrated that the involvement of the ADB resident mission gender specialists was critical for improving the quality of loan design and implementation. These findings were reinforced in RGA-II, which also points to the need for resident mission gender specialists to be used as strategically as possible throughout the project cycle to ensure that quality GAPs are designed, implemented, and monitored. For this to occur systematically and consistently, ADB project team leaders and project managers need to be open to the involvement and inputs of resident mission gender specialists. This requires ADB country directors and headquarters staff to actively promote the inclusion of gender considerations in all loans, and to support the role of resident mission gender specialists, particularly during project preparation, design, and loan review missions.
Appendix 1
Summary Tables of Project Gender Equality Results

Table A1.1 Secondary Towns and Rural Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation Project—Summary of Gender Equality Results

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<tr>
<th>Project Components</th>
<th>GAP Provisions</th>
<th>Institutional Changes</th>
<th>Participation and Access to Resources</th>
<th>Practical Benefits</th>
<th>Strategic Changes in Gender Relations:</th>
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<td>At Community Level</td>
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<td>Component 1—Urban Water Supply and Sanitation</td>
<td>No GAP provisions and no gender equality results demonstrated during the RGA.</td>
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<td>Component 2—Rural Water Supply and Sanitation</td>
<td>• Construction of rural water schemes to provide drinking water (piped, rain fed, protected well) to 322,000 people in Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura</td>
<td>• 50% of participation in small-group activities will be by women.</td>
<td>• Participation in CBOs was 55% women and 45% men in Anuradhapura and 50% women and 50% men in Polonnaruwa.</td>
<td>• Women stated that they had already participated with husbands in HH decision making but women’s society subgroups provided an opportunity to discuss infrastructure planning and maintenance, which were new for these women.</td>
<td>• Women’s society members developed their own proposals for presentation to local government, discussed with men’s RDS and village CBO, and then reached a consensus on which proposals will be taken forward for funding. This process was new for these communities; women now attend planning meetings with government officials regularly. Women’s society members developed skills to prepare and cost proposals and in 2 cases proposals were accepted by local government.</td>
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<td>• Construction of 27,600 low-cost latrines</td>
<td>• Executive committee of the CBO will be at least 50% women.</td>
<td>• All CBOs and subgroups were registered with the local government.</td>
<td>• Water and sanitation facilities were saving time for women and improving the health of family members.</td>
<td>• Women’s society subgroups were providing mutual support to members.</td>
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<td>• Delivery of training to participating CBOs, 14 participating rural councils, and 1 provincial council</td>
<td>• Links were made between the Women’s Bureau and social development officers at steering committees within NWSDB.</td>
<td>• Women’s CBOs made up 45% of the total in Anuradhapura and 42% of the total in Polonnaruwa.</td>
<td>• Water was available for gardening from rainwater harvesting and using household wastewater, which improved women’s productivity.</td>
<td>• Income-generation activities using microfinance from the RLF were appreciated but loans were too small to establish viable enterprises.</td>
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<td>• Forum of Women’s Associations for each rural council area was established.</td>
<td>• Women made up 49% of CBO executive committee members in Anuradhapura and 52% in Polonnaruwa.</td>
<td>• Women’s society subgroups were providing mutual support to members.</td>
<td>• Income-generation activities using microfinance from the RLF were appreciated but loans were too small to establish viable enterprises.</td>
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### Strategic Changes in Gender Relations:

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<th>Participation and Access to Resources</th>
<th>Practical Benefits</th>
<th>At Individual or HH Level</th>
<th>At Community Level</th>
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<td>• Separate discussions with women’s groups will take place regarding technologies and service level of the water supply facilities built by the project. If major differences occur between women’s groups and mixed or men’s groups, the project facilitators will take an active role to prevent women’s decisions being overshadowed.</td>
<td>• NWSDB formed a high-level task force to seek ways to sustain water supply and sanitation CBOs and to coordinate different supports for CBOs. An act setting out responsibilities and commitment to sustain CBOs is going through provincial councils. Under these arrangements, women’s societies are under the responsibility of the Women’s Ministry. The idea has been accepted in principle, but there are no extra funds available.</td>
<td>• Women had actively participated in all programs as at least 50% of participants, and in some cases more than 50%. E.g., after almost 400 health and hygiene programs, 65% women had participated; after 350 income-generating programs, more than 98% women had participated; intake construction training included 60% women.</td>
<td>• Women willingly donated labor required for infrastructure components and adjusted other responsibilities around this as they had time to plan participation in the work.</td>
<td>• At least 1 women’s group bid on a tender to complete other infrastructures beyond the project.</td>
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<td>• Women’s societies discussed more than the project or RLF issues at meetings, e.g., “family problems.”</td>
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<th>Project Components</th>
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<td>Consideration also had to be given to the capacity of local officials to provide support for different activities undertaken by the women’s societies. The capacities of local government officials needed to be developed; training and travel to other regions to review how other districts have addressed challenges would facilitate this.</td>
<td>Water and sanitation facilities improved women’s lives considerably.</td>
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<td>RLFs with training opportunities were offered to women’s societies.</td>
<td>Livelihoods components were functioning, but amounts of credit available were too small for many activities to be viable.</td>
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<td>Infrastructures: needs assessments reflected voices of women and the mixture of multipurpose buildings (much appreciated by women as they now have a place for meetings, trainings, and other uses); roads; and water and sanitation.</td>
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<th>Strategic Changes in Gender Relations:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Component 3—Institutional Strengthening</td>
<td>• Delivery of a national public awareness and education campaign</td>
<td>• Regular reporting of GAP progress by PIU in quarterly reports was established.</td>
<td>• In the early phase of project implementation, 25% targets for women’s participation on project teams and IP–NGOs were met.</td>
<td>• Women were given access to training and encouraged to take up job opportunities in the Northern and Eastern provinces.</td>
<td>At Individual or HH Level  At Community Level</td>
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<td>• Implementation of a corporate strategy to improve NWSDB management</td>
<td>• 25% of professional and technical staff working with the PMU and PIU, rural councils, and IP–NGOs will be women.</td>
<td>• 20% of trainees have been women.</td>
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<td>• Implementation of a strategy to reduce operation and maintenance costs</td>
<td>• 20% of training offered through the project will be reserved for women.</td>
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CBO = community-based organization, GAP = gender action plan, HH = household, IP–NGO = implementing partner–nongovernment organization, NWSDB = National Water Supply and Drainage Board, PMU = project management unit, PIU = project implementation unit, RDS = rural development society, RGA = rapid gender assessment, RLF = revolving loan fund, STRCBWSS = Secondary Towns and Rural and Community-Based Water and Sanitation Project.

### Table A1.2  North East Coastal Community Development Project—Summary of Gender Equality Result

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<th>Project Components</th>
<th>GAP Provisions</th>
<th>Institutional Changes</th>
<th>Participation and Access to Resources</th>
<th>Strategic Changes in Gender Relations:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Component 1—Livelihoods Improved in a Sustainable Manner</td>
<td>• Communities to be selected with high proportion of HH headed by women</td>
<td>• All WRDSs and RDSs were registered with the local government to access services once project is complete.</td>
<td>• 130 most vulnerable local government divisions were selected for project areas with high proportion of HH headed by women.</td>
<td>At Individual or HH Level</td>
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<td>• 50% representation of women in small groups; WRDSs to be formed alongside all RDSs</td>
<td>• District secretariat steering committees with representation from RDSs and WRDSs were established to promote sustainability, but participation from women was low at only 9%.</td>
<td>• Of the total 661 groups formed, 277 were WRDSs (42%).</td>
<td>• Women stated that cooperation with husbands in community civil works means they now discuss project activities together, offering a new window of cooperation. When husbands are absent women pass on information from project meetings.</td>
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<td>• 30% representation of women on district secretariat steering committees with gender training</td>
<td>• Project information centers to be established focusing on the needs of women</td>
<td>• Of the 239 members of the district secretariat steering committees, only 9% were women; action is being taken to address this variance.</td>
<td>• “Gender balance training” provided to WRDSs was much appreciated by women, as their husbands attended and they had a unique opportunity to discuss the HH division of labor and how income-generation activities might be limited for women because of their other household responsibilities.</td>
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<td>• Project information centers to be established focusing on the needs of women</td>
<td>• At least 1 women-focused IP–NGO per district and all IP–NGOs to be provided with gender training</td>
<td>• On average, 55% of participants in environmental and conservation projects were women.</td>
<td>• WRDSs successfully bid on civil works tenders applying new skills gained from the project.</td>
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<td>• At least 1 women-focused IP–NGO per district and all IP–NGOs to be provided with gender training</td>
<td>• PNAs to be conducted separately for women and VDPs to incorporate their concerns</td>
<td>• PNAs were conducted separately for women and VDPs incorporated their concerns. Of 26,372 beneficiaries participating in developing VDPs, 32% (8,415) were women.</td>
<td>• Multipurpose community centers provided community cohesion and a public space where women can participate in decision making more easily.</td>
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<td>• Implement small-scale community infrastructure projects</td>
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<td>• Living and economic conditions improved for women: 32% of the 2,517 subprojects addressed women’s specific needs (e.g., common wells, production centers, multipurpose buildings, markets, preschools).</td>
<td>• Women’s voices have been heard in preparation of VDPs, and in the selection and construction of small infrastructures, something that did not happen in the past.</td>
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<td>• Implement environmental conservation and restoration projects</td>
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<td>• A total of 21,539 loans were processed through groups with 96% (20,790) given to women. 2,552 HH headed by women received credit. Incomes increased through a combination of credit and skills training.</td>
<td>• Women attended regular local government planning meetings to seek non-project support for other priorities they have identified in the WRDS, which will continue after the project.</td>
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<td>• Conduct training including livelihood improvement, enterprise development, technology transfer, and leadership training</td>
<td>• Enterprise development activities to meet women’s needs</td>
<td>• At least 50% of subprojects to meet women’s needs as identified in the PNAs</td>
<td>• 4 project information centers were established that are focusing on the needs of women.</td>
<td>• Women willingly donated labor required for infrastructure components and adjusted other responsibilities.</td>
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<td>• Voluntary labor structured so women can adjust timing around other responsibilities</td>
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<td>• 12,398 people attended training programs, of whom 65% (8,013) were women.</td>
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<td>• 50% women to participate in environmental conservation and restoration projects</td>
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<td>• Gender leadership and gender balance training to be delivered to all groups; training of IP-NGOs in delivery of these modules when necessary</td>
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| Component 2 — Resource Management in Three Special Management Areas | • 30% women participants in consultation workshops  
• Women to participate in resource mapping process | | Delayed implementation  
• 23,418 people participated in consultations on environmental impacts; 53% (12,513) were women.  
• 494 people participated in resource mapping, of whom 17% were women. |
| Component 3 — Coastal Resource Planning | • Sex-disaggregated database to be established  
• At least 30% women participants in project activities | | Sex-disaggregated database was established. |
| Component 4 — Fisheries Development | • Women to be included as separate stakeholders  
• Encourage participation of women entrepreneurs and producer groups and boat owners and traders (if any) | | |
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<td>IP-NGOs. Sex-</td>
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<td>disaggregated data</td>
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<td>and evaluation</td>
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<td>systems, but not</td>
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<td>progress reports.</td>
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</table>

GAP = gender action plan, HH = household, IP–NGO = implementing partner–nongovernment organization, PNA = participatory needs assessment, RDS = rural development society (for men), VDP = village development plan, WRDS = women’s rural development society.

Sources: NECCDEP 2008a, Quarterly Progress Report No. 14, First Quarter, Trincomalee; NECCDEP 2008b, Quarterly Progress Report No. 15, Second Quarter, Trincomalee; NECCDEP 2008b, Quarterly Progress Report No. 16, Third Quarter, Trincomalee; information gathered during fieldwork; and information provided by the NECCDEP Project Implementation Unit by e-mail, 11 August 2009.
Table A1.3  North East Community Restoration and Development Project-II and Tsunami-Affected Areas Rebuilding Project
—Summary of Gender Equality Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Components</th>
<th>GAP Provisions</th>
<th>Institutional Changes</th>
<th>Participation and Access to Resources</th>
<th>Practical Benefits</th>
<th>Strategic Changes in Gender Relations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component 1—Civil Works, Basic Infrastructure</td>
<td>• Ensure equal participation of women and men in decision making and that specific needs of women are met</td>
<td>• No sex-disaggregated data were collected on participation.</td>
<td>Education 45,151 female students and 1,826 female teachers benefited from rehabilitation of 139 schools and living quarters. No data were available on whether number of female teachers increased or comparative data on number of male students whom teachers benefited.</td>
<td>• Cooperation with husbands in civil works increased women’s role in HH decision making. Many women had already received gender training from other INGOs, but NECORD-II training reinforced women’s confidence.</td>
<td>At Individual/HH Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restoration of services and facilities in education, health, irrigation, and water supply and sanitation</td>
<td>• Women trained in operation and maintenance where culturally appropriate</td>
<td>• Based on field interviews rather than reported data, women participated in all stages of infrastructure subproject implementation. Women stated they willingly donated labor to infrastructure components.</td>
<td>Health 220,736 women and 38 female officers benefited from the provision of new facilities: e.g., construction of maternity ward with water and 695 Tamil-speaking midwives trained with 671 working in Northern and Eastern provinces.</td>
<td>• The project offered additional training on gender work balance, which wives attended with their husbands, and was highly appreciated, as couples had never thought about this before. Individual women reported increased support from husbands to do their income-generating activities.</td>
<td>At Community Level</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Wage parity in construction works for health infrastructure</td>
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<td>• WRDS members developed their own proposals for presentation to local government. This process of involving women as well as men was new.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Encourage recruitment of women teachers and medical professionals</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Prevention training on HIV/AIDS provided by IP-NGOs to contractors, construction personnel and workers, and local communities.</td>
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### Appendix 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Components</th>
<th>GAP Provisions</th>
<th>Institutional Changes</th>
<th>Participation and Access to Resources</th>
<th>Practical Benefits</th>
<th>Strategic Changes in Gender Relations:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Irrigation</strong></td>
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<td>• Other training provided through WRDSs was identified as important by women, including a session on domestic violence. In a village visited by the RGA 2 men from the RDS also attended the session on domestic violence. There was no evidence that NECORD-II was tracking whether these men passed on any of the information about domestic violence to others or if the police noted any additional interaction with women regarding domestic violence incidents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provision of water for cultivation of 1,319 ha of paddy land benefited 9,641 farm families—improving productivity of women’s home gardens, increasing incomes and nutrition, and reducing time spent by women fetching water; no quantitative data were provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Water Supply and Sanitation</strong></td>
<td>123,274 female group members benefited from provision of 1 garbage compactor, 1 gully emptier, 1 four-wheel tractor, and 1 garbage collection truck. No data were provided regarding whether subprojects met specific needs of women identified in PNAs or VDPs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>WRDS members attended planning meetings with local government officials regularly, and they now know how to put forward their proposals, so they believe their voices were being heard. In 2 cases, WRDS proposals for funding outside NECORD-II were accepted by the local government; and at least 1 WRDS bid on a tender to complete a health clinic. IP-NGOs also reported that women were traveling outside their immediate community to meet the divisional secretary or for their own purposes on a regular basis, which had been rare before the formation of the WRDS. Some women were traveling as far as Trincomalee for meetings and other business.</td>
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Table A1.3 continued

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Components</th>
<th>GAP Provisions</th>
<th>Institutional Changes</th>
<th>Participation and Access to Resources</th>
<th>Practical Benefits</th>
<th>Strategic Changes in Gender Relations:</th>
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<td>At Individual/HH Level</td>
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<td>At Community Level</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- RDSs and WRDSs worked together to solve problems and ensure infrastructures such as the multipurpose community buildings were maintained and managed properly.

- WRDS members discussed more than the project or RLF issues at meetings. Some said they discussed domestic violence, alcohol abuse, and problems with early marriage, or tried to find ways to assist a neighbor who was having trouble attending meetings.

*continued on next page*
Table A1.3 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Components</th>
<th>GAP Provisions</th>
<th>Institutional Changes</th>
<th>Participation and Access to Resources</th>
<th>Practical Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Component 2—Community Development | • Village development to restore livelihoods, support reconciliation and social cohesion  
  • Basic shelter  
  • Livelihood—agriculture and livestock  
  • Fisheries | • Ensure consultation with men and women in village reconstruction and development plans through separate CBOs. Prioritize women’s participation in training to encourage women’s leadership  
  • Ensure women are not discriminated against in obtaining title to housing and property  
  • Education extension service providers to give women access to services, and recruit female extension staff  
  • Provide women with agro-technology associated with responsibilities in home gardens | • From group discussions in the field with WRDS members and IP-NGOs, care had been taken to ensure women participate in PNA and in CBO activities, with subgroup WRDSs being either reformed or founded for first time. | Livestock  
  20,015 families benefited with rural women undertaking livestock farming; income and nutrition improved; no quantitative data were available.  
  Agriculture  
  101,699 farm families benefited and employment opportunities increased for female unskilled laborers in new agricultural facilities; no sex-disaggregated data were available on men and women participating. NECCDEP assumed that more than half of the beneficiaries were women. |

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### Table A1.3 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Components</th>
<th>GAP Provisions</th>
<th>Institutional Changes</th>
<th>Participation and Access to Resources</th>
<th>Practical Benefits</th>
<th>Strategic Changes in Gender Relations:</th>
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<td>At Individual/ HH Level</td>
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<td>At Community Level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fisheries</td>
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<td>Women from 7,024 fishing families benefited from the RLF for fish drying, fiberglass fishing crafts, fishing nets, and motors through 36 fishermen cooperatives. No data were available on WRDSs in these communities.</td>
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<td>Component 3—Institutional Development</td>
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<td>• Reestablishment of damaged or construction of new local government and district offices</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Training to government staff in public administration, accounts, and information management</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ensure that adequate and separate facilities are provided for women and men in reconstruction of local government and district offices,</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ensure equal access to and participation of women and men in training programs and actively promote women’s entry into higher levels of public administration.</td>
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<td>• 5 trainings were conducted on gender and development; 150 women participated.</td>
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<td>• No data on number of men participants.</td>
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<td>• Subproject proposals required comments on women’s potential to benefit from the project and gender equity in access to services, but there was no information or reporting on this.</td>
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<td>• Female staff have access to separate quarters in rural areas, increasing privacy and security.</td>
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</table>

CBO = community-based organization, GAP = gender action plan, ha = hectare, HH = household, INGO = international nongovernment organization, IP–NGO = implementing partner–nongovernment organization, NECCDEP = North East Coastal Community Development Project, NECORD-II = North East Community Restoration and Development Project II, PNA = participatory needs assessment, RDS = rural development society (for men), RGA = rapid gender assessment, RLF = revolving loan fund, VDP = village development plan, WRDS = women’s rural development society.

Sources: NECORD-II. 2008. Women Development Activities under NECORD Project. Trincomalee; Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development. 2008a. NECORD-II, Northern Province, Provincial Project Coordinating Committee Meeting. Sub Project Proposals. Trincomalee; Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development. 2008b. NECORD-II, Eastern Province, Provincial Project Coordinating Committee Meeting, Sub Project Proposals. Trincomalee; information gathered during fieldwork; and information provided by the NECORD-II Project Management Unit by e-mail, 12 August 2009.
### Appendix 2

Secondary Towns and Rural Community-Based Water Supply and Sanitation Project: Assessment of Gender Participation in Water and Sanitation Activities
(Anuradhapura, September 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Name of the PSD</th>
<th>No. of GND</th>
<th>Representation of CBO</th>
<th>Participatory Representatives</th>
<th>CBO Executive Committee</th>
<th>No. of Meetings</th>
<th>Participation of Small Groups</th>
<th>No. of Members of Women Societies</th>
<th>No. of Programs</th>
<th>Self-Help Programs</th>
<th>No. of Programs</th>
<th>Religious Programs</th>
<th>No. of Programs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Galnewa</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1,613</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>233</td>
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<td>351</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Rajanganaya</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5,166</td>
<td>5,106</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>1,595</td>
<td>11,112</td>
<td>10,342</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>NGP</td>
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<td>367</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>2,138</td>
<td>149</td>
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<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Thalawa</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6,134</td>
<td>4,254</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>8,513</td>
<td>12,804</td>
<td>612</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>14,227</td>
<td>11,741</td>
<td>722</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>3,702</td>
<td>22,158</td>
<td>27,772</td>
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<td>%</td>
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<td>54.79</td>
<td>45.21</td>
<td>44.68</td>
<td>55.32</td>
<td>50.62</td>
<td>49.38</td>
<td>44.38</td>
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<td>39.97</td>
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<td>S/N</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rajanganaya</td>
<td>1,793</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>NGP</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Thalawa</td>
<td>1,910</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the PSD</th>
<th>No. of Programs</th>
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</tr>
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<td>Rajanganaya</td>
<td>1,793</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGP</td>
<td>1,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thalawa</td>
<td>1,910</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,195</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

% of Male: 48.19, Female: 51.81

* = not applicable.
CBO = community-based organization, F = female, GND = Grama Niladhari Division (lowest level of government administration), M = male, NGP = Nugegoda Niladhari Division Central, PSD = Pradeshya Sabha division (rural local council area), SN = serial number.

Source: Information provided by the STRCBWSS Project Implementation Unit during fieldwork, November 2008 (extract from a project report).
Appendix 3
Meetings Undertaken

M. Gamage
Additional Director General, External Resources Department
S. Rangaraja
Chief Secretary, Northern Provincial Council

**North East Coastal Community Development Project (NECCDEP)**
S.M. Cross
Project Director, NECCDEP
S. Chrishanthis
Gender Specialist
S. Sriskantharajar
Livelihood Enterprise Development Officer
V. Sritharan
Project Monitoring Officer
R. Singarayer
Centre for Information Resources Management (CIRM), Project Manager NECCDEP Process Monitoring
K. Kumarage
Former Gender Advisor, NECCDEP

**North East Community Restoration and Development Project-II (NECORD-II)**
T. Lankaneson
Project Director
N. Pugendran
Deputy Project Director

**NECCDEP/NECORD-II Officers Attending Focus Group Meetings**
S. Theeparay
T. Kalai Kuman
V. Sritharan
P. Mraunthan
K. Premanandan

**Representatives of NGOs Working in Trincomalee District Including Those Working with NECCDEP and NECORD-II**
M.B. Abdullah
Kinniya Vision
S. Tharmaratnam
Society for Social Economical Development Organization of Trincomalee District (SSED)
T. Kowsala
Voluntary Organisation for Vulnerable Community Development (VOVCOD)
T. Sivanesh
VOVCOD
M. Suganthini
Sewa Lanka Foundation
K. Vakeeson
Aham
P. Satdrivanandan
Aham
K. Janarthanan
Trincomalee District Development Association (TDDA)
V.M.M. Naleem
Social Development Foundation (SDF)
M. Umashangor
Aham
P. Kandany
TDDA
M.M. Nijam
SDF
T. Sivanathan
SSED
N. Anithprason
Socio Economic Development Organization of Trincomalee (SEDOT)
N. Chandrasegaram
SEDOT
Appendix 3

M.I. Farhana  Hope Sri Lanka
A.M. Amitta  Hope Sri Lanka
M.L. Madundea  SDF
A.G.M. Samen  Sewa Lanka Foundation
N. Supamal  Sewa Lanka Foundation
G. Kanapathipillai  Leonard Cheshire Disability Resource Centres (LCDRC)
A.J. Nawas Mohamed  Sewa Lanka Foundation
M. Suganthi  Sewa Lanka Foundation
K. Ramaliyan  Sewa Lanka Foundation
Prasawna  Organisation for Eelam Refugees Rehabilitation (OfERR) (Ceylon) – Trincomalee
D.R. Michael  OfERR (Ceylon) – Trincomalee
T. Praveena  People in Need
S. Rifal  People in Need

STRCBWSS
M.K. Hapuarachchi  Project Director
K. Sahabandu  Chief Engineer – Anuradhapura
D.S.K. Edisinghe  Community Development Specialist
Chandana  Water Supply Engineer
A.H.D. Kulhirathnu  Community Development Assistant
H.M. Abayaratur  Community Development Assistant
E.M.B. Ekanayake  Community Development Assistant
H.M.J.B. Henatu  Community Development Assistant
R. Weeramuni  Community Development Assistant
R. Dissanayaka  Project Officer
K.A.K. Ranathunga  Community Facilitator, Pahala Uva (IP–NGO)
Maximo Bugarin  Project Manager, Package A
A. Weresingh  Biologist
K. Dharmayala  Rural Water Engineer
S.P. Wanasinghe  Rural Water Supply Engineer
A.R.M. Liyanage  Engineer Assistant
H.M.D.B. Herath  Engineer Assistant

Fieldwork
NECCDEP:
Kuchchaveli District Secretariat Division  Kuchchaveli village
Town and Gravets  Kappalthurai village
Varothayanagar village
Pattanatheru village

Held six focus group discussions with 58 women and men project beneficiaries and met with nine women trainees at a livelihood and enterprise development services center.

NECORD-II and TAARP:
Eechanampattu village
Mutur village

Held two focus group discussions with a total of 44 female and 8 male project beneficiaries.
STRCBWSS:
Medirigiriya Pradeshya Sabha (PS) council—K’game community-based organization (CBO): met with 13 male and female members
Hingurakgoda PS council—Randihadahara CBO: met with 27 male and female members
Palagala PS—Ekamuthu CBO: met with 23 male and female members
Ndearby community—met with 13 male and female members
Thalawa PS—Randiyawara CBO: met with 34 male and female members

Asian Development Bank
Richard Vokes Country Director, Sri Lanka resident mission
Mookiah Thiruchelvam Project Implementation Officer (telephone interview)—NECORD-II
Amila Salgado Acting Project Implementation Officer—NECCDEP
Tatiana Gallego-Lizon Urban Development Specialist, South Asia Department—STRCBWSS
Gender action plan (GAP)/gender strategies – A comprehensive framework for addressing gender issues in the design and implementation of an ADB loan project or program based on the social and gender analyses undertaken during project preparation. A GAP identifies strategies, activities, resources, gender capacity-building initiatives, targets, and indicators for ensuring that both women and men participate in and benefit from all components of the project or program.

Gender analysis – A form of social analysis that requires the collection, analysis, and application of sex-disaggregated information, including on women’s and men’s participation and benefits; the process of considering the different impacts of a development project or program on women and men, and on the economic and social relations between them.

Gender equality and equity – Gender equality refers to equal opportunities and outcomes for women and men. This involves the removal of discrimination and structural inequalities in access to resources, opportunities, and services. It also encompasses the promotion of equal rights between men and women. Gender equity refers to fairness in access to resources and in the distribution of benefits from development.

Gender equality results – Results achieved for women compared with men, including participation in project activities, access to project and other resources, practical benefits, and strategic changes in gender relations (see next page). For the purposes of the rapid gender assessments, gender equality results may be immediate or process results, intermediate results or outputs, or long-term results or outcomes.

Gender mainstreaming – A strategy to achieve the goal of gender equality by ensuring that gender issues and women’s needs and perspectives are explicitly considered in all ADB operations, so that both women and men participate as decision makers and beneficiaries in all activities, and so that their needs and interests are addressed in all project components and activities.

Gender provisions – Specific requirements included in the project design to address women’s needs or ensure that women participate in a project, such as targets for women’s participation in training. In the rapid gender assessments, this refers to design features that are not integrated into an overarching GAP or gender strategy.

Gender-sensitive, gender-responsive, gender-inclusive – Women’s different needs and priorities have been considered, and efforts have been made to ensure that they participate in and benefit equally from development activities. For example, a gender-sensitive indicator is one that disaggregates information by sex and enables monitoring of any differences in participation, benefits, and impacts between women and men; or that assesses changes in gender relations between women and men.

Outcome – The likely or achieved effects from a development intervention; may refer to short-term effects but usually refers to medium-term effects.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>The products, capital goods, and services that result from a development intervention; changes resulting from the intervention that contribute to the achievement of outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practical benefits</td>
<td>Benefits that meet the practical needs women have for survival and livelihood. They do not challenge existing gender relations of culture, tradition, the gender division of labor, legal inequalities, or any other aspects of women’s status or power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>The output, outcome, or impact (intended or unintended, positive or negative) of a development intervention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic changes in gender relations</td>
<td>The progress toward equality between women and men, created by transforming social or economic power relations between them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>The continuation of benefits after the development project or program has been completed. Given that all the loans included in the rapid gender assessments were either under implementation or recently completed, in this report sustainability refers to a reasonable likelihood that benefits will continue to be enjoyed beyond the life of the project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Development Assistance Committee 2002; ADB 2006c; and Hunt, Lateef, and Thomas 2007.
References


———. 2004a. Loan Agreement, Loan Number 2027, North East Coastal Community Development Project. Manila. 16 June.


———. 2005b. Financing Agreement for Tsunami-Affected Areas Rebuilding Project, Loan Number 2167-SRI(SF) and Grant Number 0006-SRI(SF). Manila.


———. 2008d. ADB Results Framework. Manila.


References


Gender Equality Results in ADB Projects: Sri Lanka Country Report

Rapid gender assessments of 12 projects in four countries were undertaken as part of the Asian Development Bank’s commitment to improving aid effectiveness. The assessment of three loans in Sri Lanka found that positive gender equality results were achieved due to the implementation of gender action plans and provisions. Gender action plans were effective tools for ensuring that both women and men participated in and benefited from projects. Gender equality results and gender action plans contributed directly to achieving loan outcomes and improved project effectiveness.

This report then discusses the gender equality results achieved for each project, summarizes factors that enhanced the quality of project design and implementation, and makes recommendations to maximize gender equity as a driver of change.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB’s vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries substantially reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region’s many successes, it remains home to two-thirds of the world’s poor: 1.8 billion people who live on less than $2 a day, with 903 million struggling on less than $1.25 a day. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.