

Summary of Evaluation Results

I. Outline of the Project		
Country: Sri Lanka		Project title: The Project on Rural Livelihood Improvement in Hambantota District (SouthCAP)
Issue/Sector: Rural Development		Cooperation scheme: Proposal Type Technical Cooperation Project (PROTECO)
Division in charge: JICA Sri Lanka office		Total cost (at the time of evaluation): JPY 320 million
Period of Cooperation	(R/D): Jan.12, 2007 19 March 2007 – 18 March 2011 (Four years)	Partner Country’s Implementing Organization: Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils Southern Provincial Council
		Supporting Organization in Japan: None
Related Cooperation : None		
1. Background of the Project <p>Hambantota District is the largest district in the Southern Province, with the area of 2,609 km2. It is divided into 12 DS divisions, which are divided further into 576 Grama Niladhari (GN) Divisions.</p> <p>Major sources of income for the population are agriculture, including paddy rice and field crop production, animal husbandry and fishery. However, agriculture production is not satisfactorily contributing to local economy due to multiple factors: small amount of rainfall; water shortage, low productivity; lack of infrastructure; instability of market prices; unfair profit making activities of middlemen and so forth.</p> <p>It is generally understood that there have been a number of interventions for development both by national and international development actors in Southern Province. However, the results are not considered as good as they were expected. The thought-less development plans, no-sensitivity to sustainability and lack of coordination among development efforts are identified as common problems, contributing to unsatisfactory effects from these interventions.</p> <p>A participatory rural development approach, so called “CAP approach” featuring Community Action Planning (CAP) and Community Contract System (CCS) was first developed and introduced by the government of Sri Lanka in the 1980s. CCS has been adopted in many development projects especially for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the North and East, yet rarely for rural development in Southern Province. In this context, the Project on Rural Livelihood Improvement in Hambantota District (SouthCAP) (hereinafter referred to as “Project”) was designed to strengthen the existing rural development system through the effective use of CAP and CCS, thereby contributing to livelihood improvement in the target area.</p>		
2. Project Overview <p>(1) Overall Goal</p> <p>Income and livelihood of the people in areas within Hambantota and Southern Province will be improved by introducing the Community Approach Programme for participatory rural development, which is acknowledged by stakeholders through this Project.</p>		

(2) Project Purpose

The existing system and structure for the participatory rural development will be functioning through effective use of institutions and practices (e.g. Community Action Planning and Community Contract System), aiming at improving income and livelihood of the people in the Project area.

(3) Outputs

1. Community Action Plans (CAPs) will be prepared in selected villages, then individual projects will be identified.
2. A coordination body at the Divisional level (Project Implementation Committee, PIC) will be functioning for implementation of CAPs.
3. Villager's (Community-based Organisation, CBO's) skills for construction / maintenance works of rural infrastructure are developed through implementation of identified project(s).
4. Villager's (CBO's) capacity to implement and manage productive and reproductive activities is enhanced.

(4) Inputs

Japanese side :

Expert: 7 (112.55 MM) Equipment 16,064,000 SLR
Local cost 105,617,000 SLR Trainee received: 16

Sri Lankan Side :

Counterpart : 7 (65 cooperating government staff members)
Land and Facilities 1 office space Local Cost 22,701,000 SLR

II. Evaluation Team

Members of Evaluation Team	Mr. Takuya Otsuka, Team Leader (JICA Sri Lanka Office) Mr. Hideki Sonoyama, Participatory Development/ Evaluation Planning (JICA Sri Lanka Office) Dr. Kumiko Shuto, Evaluation and Analysis (Consultant, IC Net Limited)	
	Ms. I.V.N Preethika Kumudunie, Deputy Chief Secretary (Planning), Southern Province Planning Secretariat Mr. G. Sumedha Chandrajith, Assistant Director (Planning), Southern Province Planning Secretariat Mr. W. Wimalasena, Assistant Director (Planning), District Planning Secretariat, Hambantota District	
Period of Evaluation	30 September 2010 – 21 October 2010	Type of Evaluation : Terminal Evaluation

III. Results of Evaluation

3-1 Achievement of the Project

3-1-1 Achievement of Outputs

(1) Output 1

The Achievement of Output 1 is high. All the eight target communities formulated CAPs, which are considered to be useful by the villagers. However, the number of villagers trained for CAP has not reached the target figure of 1,920, shy of 756, while the corresponding figure for the frontline government officials is

564, well over the target number of 204.

(2) Output 2

The Achievement of Output 2 is moderate. Although the Project Implementation Committee (PIC) members recognise the importance of having PIC meetings regularly, attendance of the PIC meetings remains low and the ownership of PIC by the Sri Lankan counterpart organisations is not so strong.

(3) Output 3

The Achievement of Output 3 is high. All the Community Contract System (CCS) projects are completed within the set budgets and time frame. The quality of most of the construction works is exemplary. Operation and maintenance (O&M) plans and institutions to manage the plans are established at the community level and in most of the cases, with a very few exceptions, O&M activities are undertaken smoothly. CCS is recognised as a very useful and powerful tool for enhancing community ownership and ensuring quality work and O&M.

(4) Output 4

The Achievement of Output 4 is two-fold. The output in agricultural extension work is high and the output in other livelihood improvement training, including income generation training, is moderate. Most of the agricultural techniques offered to the farmers are accepted and applied to their agricultural activities. Some have seen success in increasing income from the new techniques such as the cultivation of Chinese vegetables, passion fruits and mushroom. The latter training, i.e. training for income generation and improvement of living conditions has many challenges. The participants' training experience is not leading to actual improvement of their livelihood because increased household income was not realised in the majority of the cases. The villagers lack a strong entrepreneurial spirit as well as means to acquire marketing, quality management and packaging skills, and initial investment capital.

3-1-2 Achievement of Project Purpose

The level of achievement of the project purpose is high. The Project has conducted genuine participatory CAP on the ground which served as a basis for undertaking a range of livelihood improvement activities including infrastructure, agriculture and off-farm skills development. The key stakeholders of community development now understand the efficacy of CAP and recognise the importance of having a Divisional level coordinating body such as PIC, which is leading to increased and animated participation of frontline government officials in their extension work to the target communities. The Project's shortcomings, however, mainly lie in insufficient function of PIC and unsatisfactory effectiveness of off-farm income generation training, which poses a problem in ensuring Project's sustainability.

3-1-3 Prospect of Achieving Overall Goal

Foreseeing the future direction of the Project is still very much in uncertainty. There have been some attempts to integrate the CAP approach in existing community development systems, which see some level of success but face so many challenges. The forthcoming "Jana Sabha Act (People's Council Act)" by the Ministry of Economic Development, which tries to legislate the Jana Sabha system, has a great stake in ensuring the long-term effectiveness of the function of Jana Sabha. The Project's impact is highly dependent on the policy framework to be set by this Act.

3-2 Summary of Evaluation Results

(1) Relevance

Relevance is high. All the Project activities are well aligned with the Government's development policies as well as Japan's cooperation plans for Sri Lanka. The target groups are also appropriately identified and the Project is meeting the pressing needs of the target groups, particularly the community members, by offering practical skills enhancement opportunities for rural infrastructure development and livelihood improvement. The needs of the frontline government officials leave room for re-examination because the central government's priority, rather than their felt needs, usually take precedence. The Japan's knowledge, skills and experiences, particularly in the area of overall management skills regarding CAP and rural infrastructure, are effectively utilised.

(2) Effectiveness

Effectiveness is high. The Project is on the right track to achieve the project purpose to a large extent by the end of the project period. The cycle of community-based project management based on the CAP approach has been established in the eight target GN Divisions through conducting CCS and facilitating other livelihood development initiatives on the ground. A considerable number of concerned government officials as well as CBOs have recognised the efficacy of the CAP/ CCS, particularly in small-scale infrastructure construction and agricultural development. However, problems remain in areas of maintaining Divisional coordination bodies for CAP implantation and off-farm income generation activities conducted by the community members. The capacity of frontline government officials in facilitating the CAP process is also posing challenges.

(3) Efficiency

Efficiency is moderate. Inputs from both Sri Lankan and Japanese sides are basically provided as agreed in the Record of Discussion (R/D), which has led to the yield of expected outcomes. Frequent and rigorous monitoring of the community activities is identified as one of the strongest contributing factors for smooth project operation. However, problems including very limited time allocated to the Project by the Assistant Project Managers and Southern Provincial Council staff, frequent transfer of government officials involved in the Project, and insufficient number of the technical staff in conducting extension work at communities are negatively affecting efficiency of the Project.

(4) Impact

Impact is moderate. The activity of small infrastructure development through the CCS has led to benefiting a cumulative total of 1,591 out of the total of 2,549 households in the target areas directly and indirectly, which should be considered significant. Most of the physical structures built during the project period have been operated and maintained generally well by the community members and villagers' "dependency mentality" has been minimised. The area of agricultural development has also seen some success stories typified by the seed programme, parachute transplanting technique, production and sales of Chinese vegetables, passion fruits, and mushrooms. There is a relatively high chance that these success cases will spread to areas outside the target communities. On the other hand, however, off-farm income generation activity conducted within the limited time frame do not seem to be producing tangible and long-term economic benefits, hence unlikely to raise people out of poverty. A number of positive effects such as involvement of a wide array of stakeholders in the activities related to Human Elephant Conflict (HEC) and the Hambantota Product

Promotion Committee (HPPC) were observed during the process of project implementation. Above all, the assurance of impact and the achievement of the overall goal largely depend on how concerned authorities of Sri Lanka will be able to pave their way to further continuation as well as expansion of the outputs of the Project. The Project is now making efforts to push this issue forward but the progress is slow due to human/financial resource constraints and unclear policy direction of Sri Lanka.

(5) Sustainability

Sustainability is moderate at present. The gap between the communities and the frontline government officials in delivering public services has been considerably filled by the Project. However, due to current uncertainty of future institutional and financial outlook, some of the outputs such as CAP/CCS process, Divisional coordination function, and services for income generation produced during the Project period may face a risk of discontinuation in future. Institutional and financial arrangements for the implementation of CAP/CCS in wider areas of the Hambantota District need to be sought and the division of responsibilities needs to be clearly defined among related institutions. As for technical sustainability, some counterpart personnel, particularly in agriculture and irrigation sectors, has already acquired a certain level of necessary skills and knowledge to facilitate the CCS and agricultural extension work. However, in the areas of overall CAP facilitation and income generation, appropriate counterpart organisations for technical transfer are hard to be found. Thus, the technical knowledge in these fields still remains within the Project Team despite the fact that all the necessary operation manuals as well as booklets which document the Project's experiences are to be produced by the end of the project period. The Project has a potential to achieve a certain level of sustainability if future direction of the national policies, such as those influenced by the forthcoming Jana Sabha Act, can bring about appropriate institutional and financial arrangements.

4. Conclusion

A wide range of activities implemented continuously at the GN Division level for the past three and a half years have brought about the situation where the main stakeholders of the target areas confirm and appreciate the efficacy of the CAP/CCS approach. The approach is characterised by its valued facility to ensure community ownership, openness and transparency of decision making, and thus, genuine community-led development initiatives are materialised as a consequence. It is fair to say that the Project has accomplished proving the effectiveness and viability of the CAP/CCS interventions in the target areas. While positive impact of the Project is also recognisable, the Project's sustainability seems to be difficult to ensure. Institutional and financial sustainability, in particular, is facing a great deal of uncertainty particularly because it is very much subject to the future policy directions at the national level.

5. Recommendations

<Recommendations for the Project>

(1) Production and distribution of materials for wide and proper CAP/CCS practice

The Project should complete the production and distribution of materials for wider and proper practice of CAP/CCS by the government or other development organisations. In addition to the "Participatory Rural Development Planning Guideline" for formulating Village Development Plans through CAP approach and the "CCS Handbook" for implementing community-based small-scale infrastructure works, booklets which describe lessons, advantages and common issues pertaining to CAP/CCS need to be produced as scheduled by the Project in collaboration with the counterpart organisations. Those materials should be distributed to

relevant stakeholders and organisations through seminars and symposium to be organized.

<Recommendations for the government organisations at Provincial, District, DS and GN Division levels>

(2) Ensuring the function of development coordination body (PIC) at DS Division level

The PIC should keep playing a vital role in coordinating inter-sectoral development activities in the respective DS Divisions even after the end of the project period. The PIC members including Divisional Secretary and Pradeshiya Sabha (Divisional Council) Chairperson, with support from the Project, should discuss expected roles of the PIC. Taking into account the problem of low attendance rates as well as duplication of participants of other committees such as Divisional Agricultural Committee, a consensus should be reached among the PIC members on practical ways to ensure sustainable and efficient development coordination at DS Division level.

(3) Utilisation of the CAP approach for consolidating development plans and establishment of coordination bodies at GN Division level

For continuous and wider use of the CAP approach in the remaining GN Divisions in the target DS Divisions, many village development plans formulated through different rural development initiatives should be consolidated by introducing participatory and democratic planning and management exercises featuring CAP approach. By that way, the problem of low participation by the villagers at the GN Divisional level can be minimised. Southern Provincial Council and Hambantota District should discuss this issue and secure budget allocation necessary for conducting such planning and review workshops at each GN Division. These consolidated plans should serve as the comprehensive development plans of the respective GN Divisions, which should be shared with Pradeshiya Sabha, line departments and other relevant organisations through the respective DS Office. Furthermore, like “Jana Sabha Coordination Committee” set up by the Project an integrated coordination body should be established at each GN Division in the target DS Divisions, as a first step. Both Southern Provincial Council and Hambantota District are expected to take initiatives to put this into practice.

(4) Utilization of CCS for small-scale infrastructure projects at District and Provincial Levels

As the effectiveness of CCS practiced by the Project is recognised, it is recommended that the CCS be widely utilised for any other small-scale infrastructure projects to be planned and implemented within Hambantota District and Southern Province. Although CCS has already been introduced by many different development organisations in Sri Lanka, they often fail to produce desired outputs due to improper management of community contracts or insufficient technical and human inputs. Human resources who gained skills and experiences from the Project and the CCS handbook developed by the Project should be fully utilised for practicing CCS in a proper and transparent manner so as to enhance the impact of those small-scale infrastructure projects in the area.

<Recommendations for the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils and the Ministry of Economic Development>

(5) Incorporating the CAP/ CCS approach in the government programmes at the national level

While above-mentioned efforts are required to be made at the local level, sustainability and impact of the Project in the future are highly dependent on direction of national rural development policy at the central government level, especially on the new institutional and financial arrangements for rural development to be

set up through the forthcoming “Jana Sabha Act” by the Ministry of Economic Development. It is therefore recommended that the Project’s experience in implementing CAP/CCS and strengthening the function of development coordination bodies at DS/GN Division levels be shared with the planners of the Jana Sabha system in the Ministry of Economic Development through the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils. Thereby, the participatory rural development approach promoted by the Project will be incorporated into national rural development programmes to be planned and implemented under the Jana Sabha system.

6. Lessons learned

(1) Efficacy of the CAP/ CCS approach – transparency, openness and ownership as the most-valued components

The CAP/CCS approach the Project endeavoured to promote is proved to be an effective vehicle for development in addressing the pressing needs of the community and bringing out community’s sense of ownership, which in turn ensured sustainable operation and maintenance of the infrastructure built by the community people. Transparency and openness of the decision making process, particularly regarding priority setting and budget allocation, are some of the most valued elements of the CAP/CCS method by the community.

(2) Ensuring success by frequent monitoring and awareness-raising

The success of CAP/CCS is made possible largely because frequent monitoring and repeated awareness-raising activities are rigorously conducted in the community. Fieldworkers’ timely visit to the community, regular monitoring, and facilitation of discussions among the CBO members lead to safe, accurate and high-quality construction work. Technical transfer in agricultural skills is also ensured by extension workers’ frequent visit and technical advice given to the farmers.

(3) Effectiveness of hands-on, on-the-spot training in agriculture and trade

The Project provides optimal learning experience to the community members by organising field trips, showing agricultural demonstration plots, and participating in various trade fairs and exhibitions. Such hands-on, on-the-spot training is felt much more effective than conventional classroom teaching by people engaged in agriculture and trade.