

Kingdom of Cambodia

Ex-Post Evaluation of Japanese Technical Cooperation Project  
“Capacity Development of Provincial Rural Development in Northern Provinces”

External Evaluator: Maki Tsumagari, IMG, Inc.

0. Summary

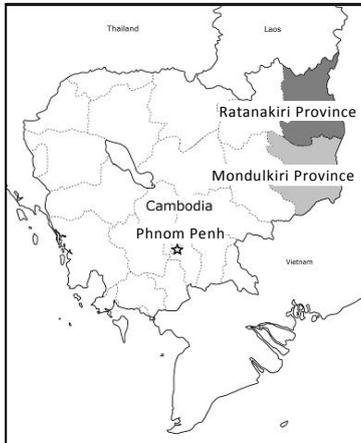
This project was conducted for the Ratanakiri Province and the Mondulakiri Province, both of which are ranked the lowest in terms of development levels within the country, to help strengthen the administrative capacity of local authorities in order to achieve sustainable regional development. The project was highly relevant to Cambodia’s developmental policy, developmental needs and Japan’s ODA policy; thus, its relevance is high.

This project was aimed at target groups that had not been subject to an approach of executing development projects in the context of the region wide development plans. The goal was to develop capacity for the target groups in the following way: (1) examining development plans that are in line with development goals, strategies, operations and activities, and establish priorities; (2) planning and implementing pilot projects; and (3) integrating the experience from managing such pilot projects into the Report of Recommendations on Formulation of District Development Plan and District Investment Project. Furthermore, some of the proposals in the aforementioned recommendation report were incorporated into the national version of the district development planning guideline, thereby achieving the Project Purpose. Following the completion of the project, however, the delivery of the district/khan<sup>1</sup> development funds, which would fund the expansion of the development project, was delayed, and there have been no new development projects to utilize the knowledge and experience gained from the cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation that was cultivated under the project. Thus, the effectiveness/impact is fair. In terms of the outputs, the period of the cooperation was within the original plan; however, project costs were higher than initially planned since development activities commenced simultaneously in two remote provinces in Cambodia, and the efficiency is thus evaluated as fair. Furthermore, the aforementioned delay in delivery of funds limited opportunities to maintain and pass on acquired technologies. Therefore, the sustainability in benefits generated by this project is fair. In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be partially satisfactory.

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<sup>1</sup> Refers to “ward.”

## 1. Project Description



Project Location



Pilot Project's District Meeting Hall

### 1.1 Background

While Cambodia's two northeastern provinces (Ratanakiri Province and Mondulakiri Province) are areas with abundant natural resources such as natural forests, they are remote mountainous regions with poor access to urban areas. There are also numerous indigenous people who have not changed their traditional way of living, and these provinces are thus ranked at the bottom within the country in terms of their development levels according to the report on the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals (2003). There has also been a lack of a system to foster talent and train the people concerned with development administration. For that reason, the Cambodian National Government asked Japan in 2004 to conduct a development study to formulate a comprehensive development plan for the northeastern provinces and to provide technical cooperation to assist the Provincial Rural Development Committee (hereafter, PRDC). In response, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) fielded three project formulation missions in 2004 and 2005. Based on the recommendations of these missions, the Cambodian government requested assistance for a technical cooperation project for the development of human resources in the northeastern provinces. This led to the start of the Capacity Development of Provincial Rural Development in Northern Provinces by JICA from October 2007, which was scheduled to last 3.5 years, with the Ministry of Interior and the Executive Committee of the PRDC (hereafter, ExCom) in Ratanakiri Province and Mondulakiri Province as the counterpart personnel (hereafter, C/P) institutions.

## 1.2 Project Outline

Overall Goal		Provincial development is actively and strategically undertaken by the local governments.
Project Purpose		The capacity of the targeted local governments for promoting sustainable rural development is strengthened <sup>2</sup> .
Outputs	Output 1	Capacity of local government officials in developmental research and analysis is strengthened.
	Output 2	Capacity of local government officials in rural development planning is strengthened.
	Output 3	Capacity of local government officials in implementing and managing rural development projects is strengthened.
	Output 4	Capacity of local government officials in monitoring and evaluation is strengthened.
Inputs		<p>Japanese Side:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Experts 1 for Long-Term, 9 for Short-Term (Regional Development Planning/Chief Advisor, Rural Development/Social Survey 1 · 2, Rural Infrastructure, GIS, Monitoring and Evaluation, Participatory Development, Training, Coordinator 1 · 2, Local Governance/Coordinator) Total 107.76MM</li> <li>2. Equipment 12 million yen</li> <li>3. Local Cost 103.6 million yen</li> </ol> <p>Cambodian Side</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 22 Counterpart Personnel</li> <li>2. Land and Facilities, project office, utilities</li> </ol>
Total cost		366 million yen
Period of Cooperation		October, 2007 – March, 2011
Implementing Agency		Ministry of Interior (MoI), PRDC/ExCom of Ratanakiri Province and Mondulkiri Province, Local Government Offices at the Provincial and District levels
Cooperation Agency in Japan		IC Net Limited, Nippon Koei Co., Ltd.

<sup>2</sup> The target for capacity development was set as district offices for Ratanakiri Province (narrowed down to Andoung Meas District and Koun Mom District as pilot districts after the mid-term review) and provincial sector offices for Mondulkiri Province (Agricultural Office and Tourism Office as pilot offices after the mid-term review). The arrangement was due to the relative capacity limitation of administrative officers at the onset of the project, as the 2003 start of development activities in Mondulkiri's PRDC/ExCom was behind by 7 years compared to Ratanakiri.

Related Projects	JICA Technical Cooperation Project “The Project on Improvement of Local Administration in Cambodia” (2007-2010); “The Project for Capacity Development for Implementing the Organic Law at Capital & Provincial Level” (2010-2015)
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### 1.3 Outline of the Terminal Evaluation

The following is the summary results of the terminal evaluation conducted in October 2010.

#### 1.3.1 Achievement of Overall Goal at the time of the Terminal Evaluation

Based upon prioritization of needs identified from a needs survey and situation analysis, development plans were formulated for districts and provincial sector departments, followed by the implementation of pilot projects. In the process, the basic knowledge required by district officers and provincial sector department officials to conduct projects was improved through training in proposal writing, documentation of contracts, accounting, and computer proficiency. In accordance with a decision of The National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development<sup>3</sup>'s (hereafter, NCDD) Secretariat Office, the recommendations from the Project<sup>4</sup> have been incorporated into the district development planning guideline<sup>5</sup> which are used within the nation, and the level of achievement of the Project Purpose was thus evaluated as satisfactory.

#### 1.3.2 Achievement of Project Purpose at the time of the Terminal Evaluation

In achieving the project's overall goals, the priority objectives in the Project Design Matrix<sup>6</sup> (hereafter, PDM) was set on a long-term perspective of 5–10 years after the end of the project; it was thus assessed that it would be difficult to evaluate the project achievements at that time.

#### 1.3.3 Recommendations at the time of the Terminal Evaluation

The followings are recommendations proposed by the terminal evaluation (seven in total) and the measures taken by the time of the ex-post evaluation study.

<sup>3</sup> An institution established under the Organic Law on Administrative Management of Capital, Provinces, Municipalities, Districts and Khans that has the highest decision-making authority at a national level in relation to decentralization and deconcentration reforms that transverses central government ministries and agencies.

<sup>4</sup> Such as the simplification of the development plans, the need for analytical methods, relevance of the development plan for the area, the creation of cooperative relationships with Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), and the need for introduction of a gender perspective.

<sup>5</sup> Final draft stage at October 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Refers to PDM version 3.

Recommendations made by the terminal evaluation	Measures taken
(1) By the end of the Project	
To distribute “Feedback from Pilot Development Projects at Provincial and District Level in Northeastern Provinces” through MoI in order to disseminate project effects to the other districts/sectors, as well as to institutionalize them at the national level.	Efforts were made to disseminate project effects as recommended, through MoI led distribution of print materials produced by the project.
In view of the attainment prospect within 3-5 years after completion of the project, to reformulate the Overall Goal, Objectively Verifiable Indicators, and Assumptions, based on realistic assessment of the existing Project environment in Cambodia.	Revised (to PDM4) as recommended, and approved at the final JCC meeting (4th) in March, 2011.
To incorporate method of capacity development adopted by the project into the project’s products, to be explained and presented clearly to the relevant authorities of Cambodia as well as to the other parties concerned.	Prepared as recommended, capturing the essences of the project effects into a report <sup>7</sup> .
To provide appropriate management/maintenance advice to ensure sustainability of pilot projects, including that on repair work of structures where such needs are already identified.	Responded as recommended, by the project confirming at the 4 <sup>th</sup> Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) meeting the entities that became responsible for the further maintenance and upkeep of the pilot projects by the project. The already identified repair needs that had been responded were also recorded at the JCC.
(2) After Project completion	
The Provincial Governments of the 2 provinces are requested to support dissemination activities of the project	The dissemination of project knowledge in the two provinces is being absorbed and integrated into the implementation process

<sup>7</sup> "Report of Recommendations on Formulation of District Development Plan and District Investment Project" (April 2010)

<p>learning within each Province.</p>	<p>for the National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development <sup>8</sup> 3-Year Implementation Plan <sup>9</sup> (hereafter, IP3), which is the initial three years of the detailed plan of the national program that started in 2010, i.e., the National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development (hereafter, NP-SNDD) (2010–2019). Consequently, the dissemination of project knowledge anticipated in the terminal evaluation has not occurred independently.</p>
<p>MoI is requested to look into the staffing arrangement and work environment of local government personnel under the new structure of the Provincial Government, including expense allocations and their benefit arrangement.</p>	<p>In both Provinces, MoI has appropriately managed to retain instrumental project C/Ps in the new local government structure. However, staff benefit and expense allocations are matters that are dealt at the level of NCDD, a joint organization between ministries established as the highest decision-making authority on a national level in relation to D&amp;D reform, i.e. outside of the independent mandate of MoI, thus MoI specific responses have not been made.</p>
<p>The implementers of the pilot projects are requested to look into possibilities of support by Provincial Government, central government, NGO and/or other donors for follow-up activities to ensure sustainability of the developmental effects of the pilot project<sup>10</sup>.</p>	<p>The basic law to establish the district/khan development funds that provide resources for the development projects for local governments below the district level<sup>11</sup> was enacted in 2012, which led to the provision of direct budgets to districts and areas as development project funds. The delay in</p>

<sup>8</sup> A 10-year (2010–2019) national program to create local governments (provinces, municipalities, districts, and khans) prescribed under the Organic Law on Administrative Management of Capital, Provinces, Municipalities, Districts and Khans, which was enacted in 2008.

<sup>9</sup> The initial 3 year detailed implementation plan of the NP-SNDD was aimed at establishing and strengthening the local and central government system with particular focus on local governments for municipalities, districts and khans.

<sup>10</sup> This project’s pilot development projects consist largely of the following activities: administrative procedures and health promotion; non-infrastructure pilot projects such as rice cultivation training; and infrastructure pilot projects such as the construction of bridges, culverts, and office meeting hall. This recommendation on accessing additional support from other donors in order to sustain the benefits achieved by the project was assumed to seek funding required for the maintenance of infrastructure.

	<p>preparing the regulations, manuals, and formats concerning the management of these funds in turn delayed the actual funding; however, funds had arrived in some areas as of the ex-post evaluation location survey, and distribution of budget grants are close for some district secretariat offices. The district development plans have already been submitted to provincial governments for validation. Therefore, the groundwork has been laid to allow for development project activities to proceed based on the priority ranking at the location, ensuring sustainability of the pilot project.</p>
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## 2. Outline of the Evaluation Study

### 2.1 External Evaluator

Maki Tsumagari, IMG, Inc.

### 2.2 Duration of Evaluation Study

Duration of the Study: September, 2013 – March, 2014

Duration of the Field Study: November 21 – December 11, 2013; February 19 – March 4, 2014

### 2.3 Constraints during the Evaluation Study

In terms of efficiency, a comparison of the planned project costs (i.e. the initial budget) and the actual costs (with the expenses itemized) enables examination of whether the budget has managed to meet the needs of the project and how the respective breakdown of costs had translated into outcomes; moreover, by assessing trends in the actual costs, examination on whether inputs have been consistent with the project's progress can be drawn. In the ex-post evaluation, the evaluator was provided with documentation from JICA as well as the project's expert teams, and examined a breakdown of the gross amounts of the initial budget estimates and the actual costs. However, the acquired data did not allow a comparison between the itemized expenditures, which limited analysis of the project's efficiency.

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<sup>11</sup> The Sub-Decree on the Establishment and Functioning of the District/Municipal Fund.

### 3. Results of the Evaluation (Overall Rating: C<sup>12</sup>)

#### 3.1 Relevance (Rating: ③<sup>13</sup>)

##### 3.1.1 Relevance to the Development Plan of Cambodia

The Organic Law on Administrative Management of Capital, Provinces, Municipalities, Districts and Khans (hereafter, Organic Law) based on the Strategic Framework for Decentralization and Deconcentration (hereafter, D&D) Reforms approved by the Council of Ministers in June 2005 was formulated during the planning stage of the project. This law was aimed at strengthening provinces and districts in order to promote delegation of authority and decentralization of operations from the central government to administrators below the provincial level. Therefore, the implementation of this project was in line with the national development policies at the start of the project. The enactment of this law in 2008 resulted in the establishment of the 10-year (2010–2019) NP-SNDD, the main purpose of which was the creation of local governments prescribed under the law. The implementation of IP3, which corresponded to the detailed plan for the initial three years, commenced two months prior to the end of the project (January 2011). The knowledge gained from this project was absorbed and integrated into the IP3 implementation process and referenced in the formulation of the district<sup>14</sup> development planning guideline. As such, it was well aligned with the development policies of Cambodia when the project ended.

##### 3.1.2 Relevance to the Development Needs of Cambodia

One of the aims of decentralization in Cambodia when the project was planned was “to promote regional development and eliminate poverty.” There was also an awareness of the urgent needs in the northeastern provinces that had lagged in receiving development support compared with other regions. These provinces lacked the number of personnel and capacity needed to strengthen the local government function. These regions also had a large number of indigenous minorities, which led to issues such as language barriers and education levels that needed to be addressed. Therefore, training of local government officials capable of strategic planning and implementing government services at the provincial and district level was an urgent issue when the Organic Law was being formulated. Even at the end of the project, the provinces that were the subject of the

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<sup>12</sup> A: Highly satisfactory, B: Satisfactory, C: Partially satisfactory, D: Unsatisfactory

<sup>13</sup> ③: High, ②: Fair, ①: Low

<sup>14</sup> District governments formulate district development projects; however, its project staff is responsible for administrative procedures. As such, the technical issues regarding the formulation and implementation of the plan rely on technical support from the technical officer of the sector office, a branch office of the province’s central sector ministry. The district governor, much like the provincial governor, is nominated by the Ministry of the Interior.

project remained at the lower end of the ranking in aggregate scores of all provinces in terms of the Millennium Development Goals (hereafter, MDGs) calculated by a score using various socio-economic data as tools to manage their achievements. There was a high requirement to further boost the capacity of government officials to plan and implement projects. In particular, the approach of strengthening the capacity for implementing specific projects by the district government focused on transfer of knowledge to sub-government bodies under the district government, which had not been targeted by other donors in the past, and this remains an issue that still needs to be addressed even after the end of the project.

### 3.1.3 Relevance to Japan's ODA Policy

According to JICA Country Assistance Policy for Cambodia (2005), the principle of Japan's ODA policy to Cambodia when the project was planned was: to "safeguard human security by contributing to economic growth and poverty reduction through human resources development, institutional building, and infrastructure enhancement." As for one of the key areas of focus of Japan's ODA policy "to promote good governance", the protracted civil war within the country meant that there was a lack of mid-level human resources to support the administration, and the subsequent education and training system was lacking. It was further noted that it was difficult for the administration to effectively and efficiently manage so as to provide widespread and appropriate administrative services to its citizens. The northeastern provinces, which were the subject of this project, were in the region defined under the Cambodia - Laos - Viet Nam Development Triangle Master Plan adopted at the 2004 Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam (CLV) and Japan Summit. Japan has proactively supported this plan. The implementation of this project was closely aligned with Japan's ODA policy, as a case to contribute to the capacity building of local government officials, who are indispensable for responding to the region's urgent need to eliminate poverty.

This project has been highly relevant to the country's development plan, development needs, as well as Japan's ODA policy. Therefore, its relevance is high.

## 3.2 Effectiveness and Impact<sup>15</sup> (Rating: ②)

### 3.2.1 Effectiveness

#### 3.2.1.1 Project Output

The following 4 Outputs were determined as necessary outputs to achieve Project Purpose.

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<sup>15</sup> Sub-rating for Effectiveness is to be put with consideration of Impact.

### 1) Output 1

Output 1 was “capacity of local government officials in developmental research and analysis is strengthened.” The indicators for measuring the achievement of Output 1 were that “provincial situation survey reports are prepared based on data analysis and survey results,” “at least one module training course on problem analysis is provided, and significant improvement is demonstrated between pre-test and post-test,” and “usage of quantitative data to verify development priority in target areas is observed in Development Plans.”

All three indicators were achieved before the terminal evaluation, and the target group became familiar with the knowledge to analyze theoretical problems and gained experience in handling quantitative data for planning. Thus, it can be said that Output 1 was achieved. The ex-post evaluation survey for beneficiaries<sup>16</sup> asked whether participants had previously experienced similar training and approximately half the participants (48% of the 60 valid responses) responded that, as part of the regions entire development plan, they had not even been familiar with the approach to formulate, implement, and monitor development projects as well as make adjustments when needed. Therefore, the existing baseline of the trainees was extremely low in terms of the target to provide training of development methodologies. The output had considerable significance for many participants, not so much as an opportunity to “boost” analysis and research capacity, but as an introduction to “foster and acquire” certain capabilities.

### 2) Output 2

Output 2 was “capacity of local government officials in rural development planning is strengthened,” and the indicators for measuring the achievement of Output 2 were that “district development plans of the pilot districts are drafted by local government officials in Ratanakiri,” “sector development plan(s) of (a) prioritized sector(s)<sup>17</sup> is/are drafted by local government officials in Mondulkiri,” “development projects are planned and prepared by local government officials,” and “reports on improvement of the development

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<sup>16</sup> In this project, a variety of capacity development training and on-the-job-training (hereafter, OJT) activities were conducted for officials (who belong to two districts offices of Ratanakiri Province and three sector departments of Mondulkiri Province) who were formed into “target groups.” In addition to those target group government officials who were continuously concerned with the project’s capacity development activities, there were people who participated in the project’s training as they were concerned with its pilot activities. These include local government staff members at Veun Sai District Office, Ratanakiri Province, as well as those at district offices of Mondulkiri Province. Furthermore, there were administrative officials, through working with project experts, who received opportunity for capacity development. The ex-post evaluation survey targeted all of these people concerned with the project and received 76 responses. The ex-post evaluator, together with the local consultants, visited each office where respondents are stationed, confirmed content of the survey, provided complementary explanation, and administered the Khmer translated questionnaire into which each person was asked to fill in their replies on the spot.

<sup>17</sup> Agriculture and tourism sectors.

planning process are formulated.”

This project was aimed at target groups that had not been subject to an approach of executing development projects in the context of the region wide development plans. The goal was to develop capacity for the target groups in the following way: (1) examining development plans that are in line with development goals, strategies, operations and activities, and establish priorities; (2) planning and implementing pilot projects<sup>18</sup>; and (3) integrating the experience from managing such pilot projects into the Report of Recommendations on Formulation of District Development Plan and District Investment Project. Some recommendations (such as the need to simplify development plans, improve analytical methods, align with commune development plans, build cooperative relationships with NGOs, and implement a gender perspective)<sup>19</sup> were reflected in the final draft of the district development planning guideline created by the NCDD. Therefore, Output 2 was achieved with the inclusion of all 4 indicators.

To ensure achievement of the Project Purpose that were concentrated on the selected target regions and target groups, the Mid-term Review restricted the scope of each respective target to two pilot districts in Ratanakiri Province and to government officials that were pursuing development in high priority sectors in Mondulakiri Province. Such changes also led to changes in the output indicators compatible with the situation for the respective provinces. There was feedback from related parties at the provincial level, which were in control of each province, that these changes would provide a smoother transition for development of the project thereafter from the perspective of specificity, practicality, and relevance; thus, the change was considered appropriate in terms of project effectiveness.

### 3) Output 3

Output 3 was “capacity of local government officials in implementing and managing rural development projects is strengthened,” and the indicators for measuring the achievement of Output 3 were that “development projects are managed by local government officials,” “target officials’ knowledge for implementation is improved,” and “reports on improvement of the implementation process of development projects are formulated.”

Pilot projects based on a regional development plan in Ratanakiri Province during the term of the project were implemented in three cycles<sup>20</sup>. During the implementation of this

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<sup>18</sup> In Ratanakiri Province, a total of 38 pilot development projects (22 non-infrastructure projects and 16 infrastructure projects) were conducted, while in Mondulakiri Province the total number of pilot development projects were 35, consisting of 22 non-infrastructure projects and 9 infrastructure projects.

<sup>19</sup> In the Report of Recommendations on Formulation of District Development Plan and District Investment Project

<sup>20</sup> A “cycle” refers to the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of a pilot project based on a regional

process, practical application of various contractual arrangements, account management, and operational management (such as preparing planning documents, contracts, and other reports as well as project management) were performed. Similarly, projects based on regional development plans were also implemented in Mondulkiri Province that enabled officers to acquire basic project execution skills through contract management and repeated management of operations. Improvement in participants' post-test scores over pre-test scores was achieved in all the administered tests as a result of training provided during the implementation of all of these projects. In addition, the Report of Recommendations on Formulation of District Development Plan and District Investment Project incorporated the lessons and recommendations concerning improvements in the implementation process for development projects; that is, all indicators were satisfied and Output 3 was achieved.

#### 4) Output 4

Output 4 was “capacity of local government officials in monitoring and evaluation is strengthened,” and the indicators for measuring the achievement of Output 4 were that “monitoring and evaluation plans for pilot projects and other projects are formulated,” “monitoring and evaluation on pilot projects are conducted based on the plans above,” “target officials’ knowledge for monitoring and evaluation is improved,” and “reports on improvement of methods and systems for monitoring and evaluation of development projects are formulated.”

During the term of the project, the target group created monitoring and evaluation plans for the pilot projects in both provinces under the guidance of project experts for multiple cycles. In terms of monitoring by the target group, it was initially difficult for them to find the time because of the effort being put into managing the pilot project itself. Yet, by the third business cycle, the target group was able to undertake a series of activities, such as (i) setting indicators; (ii) creating monitoring and evaluation plans for pilot projects through the acquisition of baseline data for the set indicators; and (iii) monitoring and evaluating all the pilot projects utilizing tools such as monitoring sheets and checklists introduced for the project. The accumulation of such experience was evident in the data with an 11.14% improvement in the average pre-post test scores for questions on knowledge about monitoring and evaluation. Lessons learned and recommendations made during the implementation of the pilot project concerning the method and design for monitoring and evaluation are incorporated into the Feedback from Pilot Development Projects at Provincial and District Level in Northeastern Provinces. Since such processes resulted in all the indicators being met, Output 4 was achieved.

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development plan.

However, in terms of fostering the capacity to amend set indicators in line with the pilot project's activity goals and strategy, the terminal evaluation assessed that it was not sufficiently covered during the term of the project.

#### 3.2.1.2 Achievement of Project Purpose

The Project Purpose was that “the capacity of the targeted local governments for promoting sustainable rural development is strengthened,” and three (3) set of indicators were specified. The following is an assessment of the achievement of the respective indicators.

##### 1) Indicator 1

Indicator 1 was for Andong Mea District and Korn Mom District, Ratanakiri Province, and consisted of “district development plans with sustainable rural development activities, including non-infrastructure projects that have received relatively little attention so far, that meet the local needs are formulated and implemented,” and “rural development activities are monitored and evaluated by local government officials.”

On the basis of the needs survey, 22 non-infrastructure pilot projects and 16 infrastructure pilot projects were implemented during the term of the project in the subject districts, which were monitored by the target group. The target group that experienced this process achieved this indicator during the course of reporting and sharing the results of monitoring and evaluation with the team of experts and C/P and advancing measures based on the lessons learned.

##### 2) Indicator 2

Indicator 2 was for Mondulkiri Province, and consisted of “sector development plans with sustainable rural development activities, including non-infrastructure projects that have received relatively little attention so far, that meet the local needs are formulated and implemented,” and “sector development activities are monitored and evaluated by local government officials.”

On the basis of the needs survey, 26 non-infrastructure pilot projects and 9 infrastructure pilot projects were implemented during the term of the project in the priority areas for the province (agriculture and tourism sectors), with monitoring by government officials from the sector departments and districts. The use of monitoring and evaluation tools introduced by the project for all the pilot projects led to monitoring and evaluation that had not been done prior to the project, which eventually led to the achievement of this indicator.

### 3) Indicator 3

Indicator 3 was set for the national level as “lessons learnt from the project are reflected in guidelines and/or manuals in order to institutionalize findings of the project.”

The knowledge gained from this project and the recommendations that followed were incorporated in the district development planning guideline (Output 2), the Report of Recommendations on Formulation of District Development Plan and District Investment Project (Output 3), and the Feedback from Pilot Development Projects at Provincial and District Level in Northeastern Provinces (Output 4). By reflecting some of the project recommendations (such as simplifying development plans, improving analytical methods, relevance with development plans for lower level sub-national administrative bodies, building cooperative relationships with non-government organizations, and the need to implement a gender perspective)<sup>21</sup> in the district development planning guideline formulated by the NCDD’s Secretariat Office, the knowledge of the project has been incorporated into the national level guidelines and achieved this indicator.

Therefore, the project purpose has been achieved.

All the activities planned under the project were undertaken and the four outputs were achieved in line with the plan as noted in 3.2.1.1.

The implementation of this project, when there was still no improvement in the education and training system to educate public servants, meant that the local government officials in both provinces were able to gain a better understanding of the provincial development and planning, implementation, and evaluation cycle for priority projects through on-the-job application of the pilot project cycle. The direct or modified application of the methods introduced by the project was also used for monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, the incorporation of everyday administrative practices within the framework of the provincial development indicates that all indicators were met, and the Project Purpose “to strengthen the local administrative capacity for sustained regional development in the targeted provinces” was achieved.

## 3.2.2 Impact

### 3.2.2.1 Achievement of Overall Goal

The Overall Goal which should be achieved three to five years after the project termination was that “Provincial development is actively and strategically undertaken by the local governments.” Four (4) indicators were set to assess the achievement of the Overall Goal.

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<sup>21</sup> In the Report of Recommendations on Formulation of District Development Plan and District Investment Project

1) Indicator 1

“Sustainable district development projects including projects having received relatively little attention so far such as non-infrastructure are continuously formulated in accordance with local needs and implemented in Andong Meas and Korn Mom districts. Other districts also commence the development projects with the similar approach” was set as Indicator 1, for Ratanakiri Province.

2) Indicator 2

“Rural development activities are continuously monitored and evaluated by the local government officials in Andong Meas and Korn Mom districts. Other districts also commence monitoring and evaluation with the similar approach” was set as Indicator 2, for Ratanakiri Province.

3) Indicator 3

“Sustainable rural development projects to meet the local needs are continuously formulated and implemented in the sectors of rice cultivation and tourism. Other sectors/departments also commence sustainable rural development projects with similar approach” was set as Indicator 3, for Mondulkiri Province.

4) Indicator 4

“Sector development activities are continuously monitored and evaluated by local government officials in the field of rice cultivation and tourism. Other sectors/departments also commence monitoring and evaluation with similar approach” was set as Indicator 4, for Mondulkiri Province.

The Overall Goal of this project was to facilitate implementation of independent and strategic development projects by the local government officials<sup>22</sup> at respective administrative bodies using the resultant improved administrative capacity. The implementation of projects based on the provincial development plan and the consequent review and improvements under this project provided local government officials with a clearer understanding of the scope of their responsibility in the various operations for regional development and strengthened their confidence in their skills. Consequently, those officials appear to have taken a more active role in operations, which was also

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<sup>22</sup> Technical officers at provincial sector offices for Mondulkiri Province, and officers tasked with development activities at district offices for Ratanakiri Province.

evident from the responses to the ex-post evaluation survey<sup>23</sup>. The administrative methods and processes implemented under the project, such as preparing accounting documents and creating various reports for higher levels of government using computers, particularly the ground-breaking measures for the target group at the district level, have become the foundation for managing the cycle from planning to implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

To leverage the results following the end of the project, it is vital to secure the operational budget that enables implementation of development plans by Sub-National Administrations. The PDM also affirmed that securing a budget was one of the important assumptions necessary to achieve the overall goals<sup>24</sup>. However, the delay in implementing Cambodia's D&D policy affected the preparations for formulating the detailed regulations concerning the management of the "district/khan development funds" that was legislated in 2012. Funding was delayed, and as of February 2014, when this second in-country study for the ex-post evaluation was conducted, new development projects under the Provincial Development Guidelines, which was formulated by the district that believed funding was imminent, had not started<sup>25</sup>. Therefore, the sustained output at the time of the ex-post evaluation was limited to monitoring the pilot project in response to request from the community for maintenance of the water well, ambulance, and library constructed under the project's pilot project and transferred thereafter to the community.

The targets under this project were restricted in the Ratanakiri Province to improving the capacity of district government officials and in the Mondulakiri Province to similar activities for government officials of the provincial sector departments. In the case of the Ratanakiri Province, where the target was to improve the capacity for projects at the district level, the roles and the allocation of responsibility of the related parties during the term of the project continued after the project ended. This led to a cycle of monitoring with the support from provincial government C/Ps to the district government, i.e., the main entity for planning and implementation. In other words, the hierarchy for formulating and implementing the regional plans by existing local administrators was

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<sup>23</sup> Regarding how participation in the project organized training affected one to enlarge his/her views, 40% responded as "confidence in technical handling of the duties", 46% as "clearer link between on-the-ground rural development activities and upper level (district/province) development plans", and 26% as "larger view of development work conducted by the office I belong (e.g. District, Province)." (76 valid responses with multiple responses accepted)

<sup>24</sup> There were a total of six important assumptions, i.e., "no major change in the policy or direction of decentralization," "no change in the NCDD framework," "implementation of IP3 on schedule," "the budget for provincial and district development projects to be secured," "the provincial and district governments function as the main entities for regional development," and "provincial and district government employees work continuously."

<sup>25</sup> At the time of ex-post evaluation, funds had reached some khans and the focus was on support of the khans by the district governments. There was also confirmation that technical assistance for formulation and implementation of regional development plans at khans had already commenced. In addition, since funding to the district offices was imminent, district development plans had already been submitted to and were in the process of confirmation by provincial governments.

more stringently followed.

On the other hand, the scope of responsibility for government officials differs at the provincial and district levels. Particularly in the case of provincial sector departments, the main duties have, thus far, been to provide technical advice as a branch office of the national sector ministry, and the contribution of their knowledge to provincial and district development plans has thus been limited to input from a technical perspective. The recipients of their technical input have also differed by sector. For example, in the case of the Monduliri Province Tourism Department, the number one issue from the perspective of the national tourism policy was to attract foreign tourists. The pilot project was to support the establishment of a tourist promotion committee with relevant parties in the corporate sector that were pursuing the local tourism business (hotels, restaurants, etc.) and install billboards welcoming tourists, but such pilot projects inherently lacked follow through. In contrast, in the case of that Province's Agriculture Department, the pilot projects involved activities such as training farmers for rice cultivation in a region with extensive cultivation of rice, and monitoring the result of such training for selected pilot farms. Therefore, there was a higher need for ongoing support for the pilot farms even after the project ended. Consequently, even though pilot projects involved the same province's sector offices, comparing the activities for the Tourism Department with the Agriculture Department, for example, indicates a difference in ongoing impact, i.e. the lack of stimulus to sustain monitoring and evaluation and subsequent improvements.

From the above, parties related to the project assumed that the district/khan development funds would fund the implementation of development projects after the project ended, and had even formulated development plans and prioritized the projects; however, it did not actually incorporate the processes of implementation, monitoring, and evaluation as prescribed by the overall goal indicator of this project. Thus, the Overall Goal has not been achieved.

#### 3.2.2.2 Other Impacts

The pilot project was first and foremost implemented to provide an OJT opportunity for the target group. This led to development benefits such as improvements in transportation, health, and hygiene in the regional communities in the two provinces. In particular, in Veun Sai District, Ratanakiri Province, some pilot projects from the perspective of preventing the spread of cholera and diarrhea that followed flooding were implemented in time such as the installation of a common well and awareness raising on hygiene were implemented. The active maintenance for the community's joint facilities, such as the rotation system for cleaning, also took root within the community.

This project has achieved the Project Purpose with the inclusion of all indicators. However, achievement of the Overall Goal has been partial, due to delay in the allocation of district/khan development funds, that has put on hold the implementation of new development activities utilizing the project capacitated planning, conducting, monitoring, and evaluation cycle management skills. Therefore effectiveness/impact of the project is fair.

### 3.3 Efficiency (Rating: ②)

#### 3.3.1 Inputs

<b>Inputs</b>	<b>Plan</b>	<b>Actual</b>
(1) Experts	Maximum 4 experts covering: Chief Advisor, Regional Planning, Rural Infrastructure, Monitoring and Evaluation, Local Governance, Coordinator	1 for Long-Term 8 for Short-Term (Regional Development Planning/Chief Advisor, Rural Development/Social Survey 1・2, Rural Infrastructure, GIS, Monitoring and Evaluation, Participatory Development, Training, Coordinator 1・2, Local Governance/Coordinator) (96.3MM in total)
(2) Equipment	(amount not mentioned)	12 million yen
(3) Local Cost	Expenses for conducting development work as for On the Job Training (OJT)	103 million yen
Total Project Cost	327 million yen	366 million yen
Total Local Cost	(amount not mentioned)	Utility charges

##### 3.3.1.1 Elements of Inputs

Inputs were provided as planned, both from Japan and Cambodia.

Regarding dispatch of experts, the terminal evaluation considered the duty station of long-term expert being Phnom Penh as a factor that “reduced the project’s efficiency as almost all activities were the capacity development activities for the target group, including the implementation of pilot projects conducted in the two provinces.” It was

imperative to concentrate information centrally in order to ensure the status and conclusion of the project given the on-going national debate about decentralization. Particularly in the final stages of the project, the lessons accumulated from the practical application of the provincial development plan and pilot projects were submitted to the NCDD's Secretariat Office in Phnom Penh. The expert positioned in Phnom Penh was there to ensure that the project recommendations were reflected when the Secretariat Office was formulating the district development planning guideline to be used by all districts across the country. It was vital for the project outputs to contribute to the formation of a national program, and such input was therefore important and appropriate.

The main equipment acquired for the project from Japan was everyday use office equipment, such as PCs, photocopiers, telephones, and cabinets, and they are still in use today. In particular, there were places within district governments where the PCs supplied by the project were the only PCs, and they are being used very carefully with the generators supplied under the project to ensure minimal damage. Apart from office equipment, one motorbike was provided to each of the pilot district governments. They are still being used today; however, their use has not been limited to monitoring the pilot project, and they are used for everyday operations at the district governments.

The ex-post evaluation in-country study confirmed that apart from the allocation of C/Ps and the provision of working space for experts, the input from the Cambodian side during the term of the project was mainly utility charges.

#### 3.3.1.2 Project Cost

The project cost was higher by 39 million yen than planned (112% of the plan), inclusive of local consultant cost of 55 million yen, which was unbudgeted at the time of project start. In terms of dispatch of Japanese experts, experts were dispatched in a succession of short periods, and there were periods when there were no experts on the ground. This resulted in the local consultant, who had been employed as the national coordinator, taking charge of activities such as the management of progress for the target group's pilot projects while maintaining close contact with experts. Since it took an entire day to transfer between the two provinces, the geographic distances resulted in hiring two of the aforementioned national coordinators to manage the activities in the two provinces at the same time with one located in each province.

#### 3.3.1.3 Period of Cooperation

The cooperation period was 42 months, which was as planned (100% of the plan).

Although the project period was within the plan, the project cost exceeded the plan.

Therefore, efficiency of the project is fair.

### 3.4 Sustainability (Rating: ②)

#### 3.4.1 Related Policy towards the Project

The NP-SNDD framework to promote decentralization was finally realized when the project ended, and the NCDD, as a joint organization between ministries, was established as the highest decision-making authority on a national level in relation to D&D reform and as the institution for implementation and management of the NP-SNDD. Furthermore, the enactment of IP3, the detailed plan for the first three years of the D&D reform program, started from January 2011. Therefore, it was the time when a common national framework was firstly used to promote Cambodia's decentralization. The accumulated knowledge and lessons<sup>26</sup> from the regional development planning and implementation by the project in the two northeastern provinces were reflected in the district development planning guideline formulated by the NCDD's Secretariat Office and used nationally. Subsequently, IP3 was implemented in earnest on a national level. Consequently, the Project contributed to institutionalizing the development decisions and implementation policies performed by the sub-national administrative bodies under Cambodia's decentralization by providing a wealth of accumulated, preceding experience. On the other hand, the experience accumulated from this project was not systematically incorporated among the activities listed in the IP3. There is no sign of application or transfer of knowledge or skills to the implementation of the IP3, which suggests scope for improvement.

IP3 started as a plan for the initial three years of NP-SNDD (2010–2019), but a decision to extend this by one year was already made in 2013. While the details to be built into the next phase will be decided on the basis of achievements during the extension period, the NP-SNDD is expected to act to establish and institutionalize a regional and central administrative system. Accordingly, the sustainability of the policy on strengthening local government organizations and government officials is also expected as secured.

The main point of IP3 is for the local government organizations to “function” with transparency and responsibility in promoting local development and providing public services. This project improved the capacity of the local government officials of the targeted provinces to strategically plan and implement regional development projects. This was achieved through the cycle of implementation, supervision, monitoring, and evaluation of projects that are in dire need; the development plans for these projects had

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<sup>26</sup> Needs such as the simplification of development plans, introduction of analytical methods and relevance to the development plan for the area, the creation of cooperative relationships with NGOs, and the need for introduction of a gender perspective.

been formulated on the basis of a situation analysis, for which the plans had been regulated. This led to a goal in the IP3 of improving the function of the local government organizations.

#### 3.4.2 Institutional Aspects of the Implementing Agency

The C/P ExCom was dissolved in December 2010, and the terminal evaluation confirmed the merger with the provincial government; however, in actuality, ExCom continued until the end of the project. Under this project, ExCom was the C/P institution; the district offices<sup>27</sup> and sector departments were the implementing agencies of the pilot projects, undertaking activities to promote capacity building of the target groups, i.e., the district offices and sector departments. ExCom was dissolved after completion of the project in accordance with the Organic Law to revise local government organizations, and its function was transferred to a Sub-national Administration. There was a movement of personnel at the time, and project managers<sup>28</sup> on this project were subsequently appointed to responsible positions within the provincial government. In addition, many members of ExCom also remained in the provincial government.

With regard to the provincial sector departments, it is possible that they will be merged with the provincial governments as D&D reforms progress; however, at present, they continue to exist as a branch office of the central ministry and provide technical support for each of the sector departments within the provinces. Consequently, the Agriculture Department and the Tourism Department of Mondulkiri Province, for which the project targeted as capacity building, function as the provincial sector's technical divisions even today. As for the Agriculture Department, it responds to requests for technical assistance from the district government including hands on guidance to farmers. Regarding the Tourism Department, the main focus is cooperation with businesses and NGOs jointly involved in the tourism in the local areas, and there is no direct cooperation with the lower sub-national administrative bodies.

The role of the district government is expected to be strengthened by the enactment of the 2008 Organic Law and be the subject of future capacity building. The district governor, who is still appointed by the Ministry of Interior, can change every few years; however, the governors of the district governments, which were subject to this project, remain in those positions at the time of this ex-post evaluation. In addition, the district government officials are employed locally, and there has been virtually no change in personnel.

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<sup>27</sup> After ExCom was dissolved, in parallel to the provincial governments, district offices became district governments.

<sup>28</sup> Represents C/P and administer day-to-day operation of the project. For PRDNEP, 2 Project Managers were appointed, each representing Ratanakiri and Mondulkiri Provinces.

Therefore, even with organizational reforms of the C/P institutions as part of decentralization, the personnel that gained experience from the project will remain the core of any new organization. With the focus on strengthening the function of the sub-national administrative bodies, the organizational conditions allows government officials to perform a greater active and strategic demonstration of their strategic planning and implementation of administrative services, which was aimed at the project.

### 3.4.3 Technical Aspects of the Implementing Agency

The district government officials, who are the target group, joined the administrative services with junior high school and high school level educational backgrounds and had virtually no experience in project management. This meant that they acquired new knowledge one step at a time through the pilot projects. This ex-post evaluation confirmed that the project has given these district government officials an awareness of when and what action is required (including the timing and the details of requests for technical assistance from upper level organizations) and of their own role in relation to the administration as a whole. In the ex-post evaluation survey, 92% (61 valid responses) of the target group said that their learning from the project is useful even today. The target group cited reasons<sup>29</sup> confirming an awareness of their priorities based on an understanding of the entire picture, rather than reacting only to the immediate tasks.

On the other hand, as noted later, the national government's delay in granting the district/khan development funds that were to finance the implementation of the development projects means that no new development projects have started. There has been no "repeated rotation" from one cycle of planning based on a situation analysis of the regional development plan, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation to the next with using the strategic know-how cultivated under the project. From amongst the skills they acquired from training to comprehending the fundamental knowledge needed to implement the development project, many government officials state that the skills<sup>30</sup> with higher practical application to administrative operations were more useful and utilized in everyday operations. However, the format used to plan development projects, utilizing the district/khan development funds, is the same as that used in this project. Thus, the skills cultivated under the project continue to be the foundation for dealing with plans for future development projects; this was evident from the comments made by district government officials.

District governments without a technical officer need to continue seeking technical assistance from the provincial government while maintaining a good relationship with

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<sup>29</sup> On the examples of application of project experiences, see the footnote 22.

<sup>30</sup> Such as accounting procedures and PC based document preparation.

them. Interviews with both parties for this ex-post evaluation confirmed that the district government had coordinated with officials at the relevant department of the provincial government since the formulation stages of the development plan. In this regard, the district government makes use of the pilot project's experience to maintain a line of communication with the relevant provincial department for requesting technical assistance on their own initiative.

#### 3.4.4 Financial Aspects of the Implementing Agency

The budget sources for sub-national administrative bodies rely on grants from the central government; the situation is the same for both provincial and district governments. While there have been fluctuations, following the end of the project in 2010, the development budget in Ratanakiri Province has amounted to 6,000–8,000 million riel (156–208 million yen) per annum and in Mondulakiri Province 170–2,300 million riel (4.4–60 million yen) per annum. However, such budgets are either for activities in those provinces from donor programs/projects or the provincial allocation of sector budgets set by the sector ministries and are not allocated for independent projects operated by the province. The same is true for district governments, with current budgets relying on grants from the central government. These development budgets have been funding from the district/khan development funds. Consequently, “active” and “strategic” implementation of development projects based on a district level's own development plans which would demonstrate the skills and capacity cultivated under this project would not become a reality till the budgets arrive; however, such budgets would not be available until such funds reach the district. Therefore, as of the in-country study for the ex-post evaluation, there has not been a similar process to the project's OJT for a new project in the districts.

However, at the district level, the equipment procured by the project has continued to be used in the interim. Also, benefits from the project are maintained, while administrative functions sustained and activity implementation managed within the scope of current budgets (for example, the implementation of works on the outer walls of an office in Veun Sai District, Ratanakiri Province that was built in conformity to the project's standards and processes). Apart from everyday office equipment such as PCs, photocopiers, telephones, and cabinets, the main equipment supplied was the generator used in the office and one motor bike to each pilot district government. The maintenance of these pieces of equipment is provided for in the current budget, but any new purchases would likely require a separate budget allocation.

Some problems have been observed in terms of the financial aspects of the

implementing agency, limiting opportunities for the project enhanced technical capacities to be further maintained and succeeded. Therefore, sustainability of the project effects is fair.

## 4. Conclusion, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

### 4.1 Conclusion

This project was conducted for the Ratanakiri Province and the Mondulakiri Province, both of which are ranked the lowest in terms of development levels within the country, to help strengthen the administrative capacity of local authorities in order to achieve sustainable regional development. The project was highly relevant to Cambodia's developmental policy, developmental needs and Japan's ODA policy; thus, its relevance is high.

This project was aimed at target groups that had not been subject to an approach of executing development projects in the context of the region wide development plans. The goal was to develop capacity for the target groups in the following way: (1) examining development plans that are in line with development goals, strategies, operations and activities, and establish priorities; (2) planning and implementing pilot projects; and (3) integrating the experience from managing such pilot projects into the Report of Recommendations on Formulation of District Development Plan and District Investment Project. Furthermore, some of the proposals in the aforementioned recommendation report were incorporated into the national version of the district development planning guideline, thereby achieving the Project Purpose. Following the completion of the project, however, the delivery of the district/khan development funds, which would fund the expansion of the development project, was delayed, and there have been no new development projects to utilize the knowledge and experience gained from the cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation that was cultivated under the project. Thus, the effectiveness/impact is fair. In terms of the outputs, the period of the cooperation was within the original plan; however, project costs were higher than initially planned since development activities commenced simultaneously in two remote provinces in Cambodia, and the efficiency is thus evaluated as fair. Furthermore, the aforementioned delay in delivery of funds limited opportunities to maintain and pass on acquired technologies. Therefore, the sustainability in benefits generated by this project is fair. In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be partially satisfactory.

### 4.2 Recommendations

#### 4.2.1 Recommendations to the Implementing Agency

Decentralization reforms are currently being conducted on a national scale, and

sub-national administrations below the provincial levels are facing a period of major change, making it difficult for them to know where they stand in the overall picture. The project's theme to "develop the capacity of local government officials engaged in regional development" has been reflected in the IP3, which is the current 3-year plan for the NP-SNDD. The NP-SNDD, at the core of such reforms, is aimed at improving the function of sub-national administrative bodies. However, there is no systematic arrangement within the activities of the IP3 to incorporate the knowledge and experience accumulated under this project, such as the application and transfer of knowledge and skills. There is thus still scope for improvement. Consequently, to the provincial governments that succeeded the function of the project's C/P institution (ExCom), it is recommended that attention be paid to the project trained officers in the districts of the two target provinces, as they possess perspectives to manage development administration based on a cycle, starting with situation analysis (overall development) to plan formulation (an important part of development planning) to project implementation and management, and to monitoring/evaluation, which is highly relevant perspective for the training by IP3. Specifically, when implementing related training within the province under the sub-program 5 of the IP3 "5.1 Developing the Planning Systems of SNAs (Sub-national Administrations)," the project trained officers could be tasked to share their project experiences on cycle management by performing functions such as assistants to the IP3 trainers and/or resource persons. The involvement of the project trained officers, through the arrangement as mentioned above, will contribute to turning this series of individual courses into integrated and interconnected training process, thus making a difference to the institutional improvement of the public administration. As of the time of this ex-post evaluation, a one-off training "event," structured into a series of individual courses, such as training in data collection, formulating an investment program, etc., constitutes the bulk of the training program planned by the NCDD. The consultants employed under the IP3 are located within the provincial governments, so it is hoped that the former project managers of the project who are still working at both provincial governments will be offered the opportunity to provide suggestions within the provincial government.

#### 4.2.2 Recommendations to JICA

None

#### 4.3 Lessons Learned

##### (1) Implementation of pilot projects focused on improving the target's existing capacity

There were three cycles of pilot projects during the 3.5 year term of this project.

Through this process, local government officials became familiar with various contracts and procurement conditions, and in order to boost their management capacity, took on application of regional development planning and management into practice through implementation of pilot projects. Local government officials initially needed to become accustomed to the first new cycle, and unequal effort had to be put into implementation, leaving less than sufficient room for monitoring. However, by the third cycle, they were able to set the indicators, create a monitoring plan that incorporated baseline data that have been obtained, and engage in managing the development project cycle (the project's Project Purpose). On the other hand, the flexibility required in the process of linking one cycle to the next, such as adjustments to the indicators in line with the activity goals and strategic target, was not sufficiently covered during the term of the project.

Consequently, there were issues about the allocation of time to balance between the management of the overall implementation of the development projects (the overall cycle) and focus on each phase of implementation (planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and efforts to make linkages to the next cycle).

It is advisable that the pilot project cycle planning and implementation is carefully timed, ensuring the capacity development target group to be able to allocate time to reflect on the lessons learned from the process. When pilot projects are conducted in a limited time frame, completion of each cycle then becomes the priority due to pressures to complete activities within the budgeted time. Once this happens, it could lead to increased involvement by the project team instead of focusing on the capacity development target group.

An important point when considering the commitment balance between the project team and the target group is the formulation of a project plan that pilot project cycles can be managed by capacity development target group for itself from the stage of planning to implementation, monitoring, to evaluation within the scheduled time frame. Pilot projects need to be formulated while taking into consideration whether the intended purpose of the project can be achieved within the given time constraints (in the case of this project, such intended purpose was to ensure that each stage of the project cycle, i.e., the implementation, monitoring/evaluation, and feedback to the next development plan was established by the capacity development target).

(2) Choice of pilot projects that allow for sustained involvement by capacity development target group

This project chose to narrow down the target, by re-focusing target regions and target groups with the goal of increasing the certainty of achieving the Project Purpose. The pilot project activities for the selected capacity development target group were aligned

with the needs of the “respective target provinces” at the time. However, the chosen projects by nature were not necessarily led to favorable output that would continue after the project by the capacity development target group.

For example, the main role of the Tourism Department, which was the target sector in Mondulkiri Province, was to play a part in the country’s tourism policy. The pilot project chosen was to support the establishment of a tourist promotion committee with relevant parties in the corporate sector that were pursuing the local tourism business (hotels, restaurants, etc.) and installing billboards welcoming tourists. In the case of the Agriculture Department, which was the other sector department targeted in that province, the selection for the pilot project was made to implement activities such as training farmers for rice cultivation in a region fertile for rice crop, and monitoring the result of such training for selected pilot farms. In the latter case, there was an even higher need for ongoing support for that process after the project ended, so the subsequent monitoring, evaluation, and continuing encouragement for improvement has been maintained by the capacity development target group. On the other hand, in the case of the Tourism Department, measures were temporary and lacked a medium to long-term time horizon in its engagement scope. In addition, no new projects have been planned because of the lack of budget, so there continues to be a lack of opportunity for the target group to utilize the knowledge and skills cultivated through the project after its completion.

While there is a major assumption that pilot projects are undertaken to meet the needs of the capacity development target group, it is advisable that pilot projects should be planned on the basis that they provide opportunities for capacity development target group to contribute to regional development utilizing the knowledge and skills gained by the project even after the project has ended.

**BOX: Implications from the results of the ex-post evaluation related to the planning and implementation of capacity development projects for local government bodies**

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has implemented a number of technical cooperation projects aimed at improving public services through the enhancement of local governance functions. In an effort to provide a highly relevant reference for use in the planning and implementation of projects in similar fields, a cross-sectional comparison of the ex-post evaluation results of two recent projects was conducted; namely the “Local Governance and Rural Empowerment Project for Davao Region (LGREP)” (2007–2010) conducted in the Philippines; and the “Capacity Development of Provincial Rural Development in Northern Provinces (PRDNEP) (2007–2011)” project conducted in Cambodia. The projects were carried out to enhance the capacity of local governments that had assumed greater responsibility for the provision of public services to the community

under national policies that promoted decentralization, and both were implemented in target regions that faced many development challenges. By time of the projects' completion, each had achieved its Project Purpose of ensuring that C/Ps had acquired, by means of hands-on training, the skills deemed necessary to allow them to carry out their public administration duties. However, after completion of the project, LGREP sustained the effect (capacity cultivated by the project in public service provision), whereas in PRDNEP, partly because no budget has been allocated for development projects since the project completion, there has not been new development project implementation using the knowledge and experience learned during the project. Below is a gist of the contrasting elements of both projects that affected the sustainability/further succession of outputs by the C/Ps themselves after the projects' completion.

- LGREP focused on the “capacity to provide services” in small water supply and established improved techniques. On the other hand, PRDNEP worked to foster a new initiative in the locale; namely, the “capacity to formulate development plans.” In the case of PRDNEP, the capacity development target group had a wide range of duties, and as a result, there were no strong overarching links built to their various day-to-day duties.
- LGREP assessed the capacity of stakeholders (other than those already included in the project's target) who were necessary to ensure the solid achievement of its objectives. Part way through the project, it added these stakeholders as its target as well as added a new output (Small Scale Water Supply Group) accordingly. Similarly, part way through the project, PRDNEP tried to refine its target. However, for the differences in the levels of government tiers at the two provinces that formed the target groups, and for the varied nature of the services provided by each target group even within one province, the project's aim to work on multiple sectors inevitably required individual responses to different service field. As a result, the effort did not lead to streamlining the scope of the capacity that needed to be enhanced.
- With the LGREP, training was conducted and consolidated in line with C/Ps' specific, everyday tasks, such as developing groundwater and organizing communities, which in turn led to the ability to apply their knowledge to the daily operations after the project completion. However, in the case of PRDNEP, on the whole, primary focus went to experiencing cycles of pilot project implementation and less of it to acquiring the necessary basics that would lead them to apply their training to the individual tasks needed during each phase of the cycle.
- LGREP, in order to achieve the goals, as stated above, added an additional target

to the project, which led to forming an integrative process for the implementation of the water supply projects that connected each of the relevant departments in the local government—a process that was carried forward and sustained to the time of the ex-post evaluation. PRDNEP targeted multiple levels of government and sectors, and the business and duties that fell within the jurisdiction of these government bodies and sectors were not involved in commonly shared implementation procedures. Consequently, scope for within the organization formulation and establishment of implementation process for development projects was limited.