

## Gender and Development Cooperation Fund

### Completed Sub-Projects – AusAID financed

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#### 1. Safe Drinking Water Saves Lives in Timor-Leste

The Oecussi and Ermera Water Rehabilitation Project will expand and rehabilitate water supply systems in the Manatuto and Pante Macasar districts of Timor-Leste to ensure 24 hour provision of safe drinking water. The rehabilitated water supply systems will have the capacity to provide clean and potable water to about 5,200 households.

Clean, safe, easily accessible water supply and sanitation services can potentially save lives, improve health, reduce women and girls' workload and reduce women's time poverty. Recognizing that provision of water and sanitation services must take into account women's needs and preferences, and to develop an evidence-based gender-responsive project design, a GDCF grant was provided to complement project preparatory activities and to develop a project gender action plan (GAP). The grant enabled wide-ranging preparatory consultations with the community, especially women, conduct of a comprehensive gender analysis and the piloting of a small-scale project to demonstrate that the proposed project GAP approach and targets for women's participation were realistic and achievable. The results of the pilot were critical for convincing both the community and government counterparts of the proposed gender features built into project design. Activities financed under the grant contributed to setting of appropriate targets for women's participation in civil works, operation and maintenance, and decision-making on water infrastructure.

The project GAP developed with the help of GDCF grant includes the following measures to support women's involvement and benefits from the project: (i) 40% target for women's employment in civil works during construction; (ii) a minimum 30% of maintenance trainees to be women to ensure ongoing maintenance employment opportunities; (iii) at least 50% female membership of community-based groups, and; (iv) at least 30% females in the Coordinating Committees in each district capital. The gender design features of the project aims to facilitate women's benefits from employment opportunities created during the implementation of the project civil works, the design and operation of the water supply system meets women's needs and is responsive to their concerns, and to ensure women's voices are heard in water decision making. The GAP also includes features to support women's involvement in hygiene promotion and water resource education programs provided under the project.

#### Socioeconomic Surveys and Pilot for Women

During the project design, the consultant team worked very closely with the women in the project communities. A socioeconomic and gender survey (with all data disaggregated by sex and vulnerable households) was carried out in each district township, which provided information on the characteristics and stated the needs of vulnerable groups to enable planning and implementation of measures that will assist with ensuring inclusion and equitable distribution of benefits.

According to the survey in both towns where water was carried from a source to the house, adult women carried out this task in approximately 85% of households. In addition, the

survey indicates that 30% of households in Oecusse and 22% households in Manatuto are headed by women. These households are characterized by a lack of formal education (approximately 70% compared with 25% in households headed by men) and by lower participation rates in community organizations. For these and other vulnerable households, effective communication to enable participation and access to project benefits, including capacity development and training is needed to ensure preferential access to all employment opportunities provided by the project. To ensure that women benefit from the project, a gender plan was prepared and in depth discussions were held with the community chiefs with regards to the need to involve women in project design and implementation.

A pilot project was implemented to test that the proposed GAP would be feasible and acceptable to the community. The pilot project focused on erosion control measures by the community, with guidance from technical experts. The civil works entailed gathering stones and building gabions. Workshops and consultations with the *soco* chiefs facilitated the successful involvement of women in the organization of the works. Women decided on the selection criteria for households which would benefit from employment, employment schedules, meal logistics for workers, and having one of the community women responsible for coordinating and supervising management of community laborers. Women were also direct beneficiaries of the employment opportunities generated by the pilot project, with more than 40% of the laborers being women.

The pilot demonstrated to the community and the government counterparts that the proposed GAP approach and targets for women's participation were realistic and achievable and provided a positive example on a small scale. The communities were informed that the project will be implemented in a similar fashion, with involvement of women in the decisions about implementation, and with at least 30% women as laborers.

### **Creating Employment Opportunities for Women**

Construction contracts under the project will incorporate use of local labor and avoid construction camps, with training opportunities for at least 30% women, to ensure that they will be qualified for semi-skilled employment. The local contractors will employ women in construction, rehabilitation, and labor-intensive maintenance who would constitute at least 30% of the paid workforce. The project will ensure equal pay for work of equal type for men and women, and provide training and tools that are gender-appropriate. To ensure that these measures are implemented adequately, the project will provide training on gender mainstreaming for project implementers and contractors at construction commencement and after six months to identify possible constraints. The NGOs engaged to deliver hygiene promotion will employ a minimum of 50% women staff in all non-administrative positions to ensure that conditions support ongoing employment of women.

### **Women's Voice in Decision Making**

To enable effective participation of women, the project will establish and train community-based groups, in which women will constitute at least 50% of the membership. At least 30% of the Coordinating Committee in each district capital will also be women. In addition, there is a target of at least a 50% participation rate of women in all project- related training activities. The terms of reference for all staff contracted through the PIU include specific responsibilities for gender inclusion.

## 2. Greater Mekong Sub-region: Gender and Transport Workshop

The Workshop was attended by over 60 participants, comprised of transport sector officials from Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam, representatives of National Women's Machineries and development partners, resource persons, and select ADB and AusAID staff. Government participants were primarily project directors (PDs) or senior project staff from executing/implementing agencies of ADB-financed transport sector projects..

The main objective of the 2.5 day workshop was to raise awareness, build capacity, share experiences and showcase good practices on mainstreaming gender in transport sector operations in Mekong countries. In particular, the workshop aimed to build participants understanding about: the relevance of gender to the transport sector, the scope of gender issues which relate to different modes of transport; the implications for inter-sectionality between gender and other forms of inclusion in relation to transport services; how to develop and design quality project Gender Action Plans (GAPs) and integrate gender performance targets/indicators into project monitoring; and how to better manage the implementation of gender-inclusive project designs. The approach of showcasing good practice examples, provided a unique opportunity for PDs to share experiences and learn from their peers about innovative designs and implementation practices. This sub-regional workshop was designed as a replication of the successful gender lateral learning seminar series that

**The Working Session** presentations were grouped into 5 broad areas: (i) Why Gender in Transport (ii) Gender-Inclusive Design of Urban and Rural Transport, (iii) Measuring gender impacts of transport projects (iv) Mitigating gender and social risks – resettlement, HIV/AIDS prevention, road safety and (v) Implementation challenges. The sessions included a mix of presentations on key themes by experts and practitioners and presentation of different ADB-financed transport projects, from both within and beyond the sub-region, highlighting the gender-inclusive design and gender-related results. Participants appreciated and seemed keenly interested in the various types of initiatives that can be integrated into transport projects to make them more gender-responsive.

Case studies highlighted how the involvement of women in road construction and on-going road maintenance can provide much needed cash incomes to poor women, especially in remote areas where there are few other alternative cash income earning opportunities, while simultaneously improving the cost-effectiveness and long-term sustainability of project interventions. A common theme of workshop discussions was the importance of exploring innovative ways to integrate project design features which can help women move up the chain from unskilled labor work into 'smarter' jobs in the transport sector (e.g. bus/train drivers, steam-roller operators, surveyors, technicians, management). While this is already being explored, to some extent, in more recent ADB transport project GAPs through the inclusion of employment targets in different types of jobs, the workshop recognized that more effort was required in this area. Some suggestions included the need to facilitate women's entry and training into transport training institutes, especially those managed by transport agencies (where they exist) and to explore synergies with the TVET subsector.

The active participation and high levels of engagement in the workshop discussions by senior government officials (mainly male) was impressive. The officials demonstrated a keen interest in learning more about gender-inclusive project designs; strategies for implementation of gender design features and mechanisms for improving and optimizing gender equality results. This level of interest, especially from infrastructure sectors was especially encouraging.