

# **FINAL INDEPENDENT EVALUATION REPORT**

**of  
the Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning (IRAP)  
component of the UNOPS Community Access  
Programme (CAP).**

**SRL/07/02/UNO**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AAP</b>	Accessibility Action Plans
<b>ACLG</b>	Assistant Commissioner of Local Government
<b>CAP</b>	Community Access Programme
<b>CLG</b>	Commissioner of Local Government
<b>FAM</b>	Fund Allocation Model
<b>GIS</b>	Geographical Information System
<b>GN</b>	Grama Niladhari
<b>GPS</b>	Geographic Positioning System
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>(I)NGOs</b>	International Non Government Organizations
<b>IRAP</b>	Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning
<b>PS</b>	Pradeshiya Sabha
<b>TII</b>	Transport Infrastructure Inventory
<b>UNOPS</b>	United Nations Organization for Project Services
<b>VAM</b>	Vulnerability Analysis Mapping

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this final independent evaluation is to assess the efficiency of the services provided under the Inter-Agency Agreement by the ILO, the Associated Agency to the UNOPS, the Executing Agency, under the four components specified in the Description of Services to the said Agreement. The evaluation was expected to focus on the preparation of 16 PS Accessibility Action Plans of Ampara District, using the IRAP process.

The evaluation finds that the IRAP process and methodology as described in the reports, was followed step by step during implementation. Accordingly, the evaluation reveals that the process has been appreciated and commended by the community representatives, government officers and the PS political leadership as a viable methodology for rural sector development planning. The outputs thus produced, the Village Assets Data Book, Transport Infrastructure Inventory and the prioritized Investment Plan, provide much needed information, guidance and assistance for the future development initiatives. The authorities, therefore, consider the IRAP outputs as invaluable development information.

The IRAP process has developed institution capacity in planning at the PSs and is now a strength to them. The participation of community representatives in priority ranking of development actions, officers providing technical information and analysis to convert the community selections into technically sound activities, the identification of all access roads in the PS area and production of an accessibility map, capacity development of planning and development institutions of Ampara district are some of the benefits accrued from the Programme. However, during the evaluation, few weaknesses of the IRAP process were also identified. Absence of a process to incorporate necessary top down thinking into the plan, limiting the process only to an identified five sectors across the board in every PS and the possibility of few community representatives who have common interests prioritizing the actions beneficial to them, are few such weaknesses.

The evaluation also finds that some of the issues highlighted in the Quarterly and Annual Reports are reasonable. However, it should be noted that the dedicated inputs of the members of Working Team have immensely helped to overcome the time delays occurred in completing the outputs.

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Based on the findings, the evaluation arrived at following conclusions.

- The IRAP process has been appreciated and commended by line-agencies and local planning institutions as a sound and useful planning tool;
- The introduction of IRAP process has filled a vacuum in the regional planning system, particularly of Ampara district, and of other rural areas of Sri Lanka;
- For a district like Ampara where development information is lacking, the IRAP process had produced essential planning information. The outputs developed under the IRAP process would therefore be an invaluable planning information for the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils and the Eastern Provincial Council;
- The GIS maps produced by IRAP would be of beneficial for several other service delivery organizations such as Water Supply and Drainage, Telecommunication, Electricity and Road Development for planning and improvement of their service facilities;
- The Programme has increased the institutional capacity in development planning.

Accordingly, the evaluation rates the technical assistance provided by ILO – IRAP as highly relevant, efficient, effective, sustainable and a successful initiative. The evaluation also suggests the following recommendations as measures to be considered in strengthening and improving the present IRAP process.

- Allow essential top-down inputs to link together with bottom-up approach used in the process to enhance the applicability and appropriateness the final outputs;
  - Select sectors based on livelihood improvement of the area centered on accessibility approach without limiting to the same five sectors to be used across the board in all areas;
  - Re-rank priority actions at the time of implementation of AAP to take account of the development initiatives taken place during the interim period between plan preparation and implementation commencement;
  - Take actions to complete the Priority Investment Plan of AAP with estimated cost of each action and total investment for each sector;
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- Consider transferring all software programmes, equipment and other technical items to the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka to facilitate strengthening its proposed institution on planning and their infrastructure. Also, transfer all GIS Maps to PRDD and Water Board of Ampara for their use; and
- Implement a launching programme of AAPs finalized for the Ampara District to decision makers of the Central and Provincial Governments to enhance awareness of the IRAP outputs and their future use.

## **CHAPTER - 1**

### **INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT BACKGROUND**

#### **1.1 Project Background**

The Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning (IRAP) project has been implemented by ILO Colombo and it is funded by UNOPS with a budget of USD 967,591.00. An additional USD 255,400.00 was the UNOPS contribution for counterpart, workshops and vehicles support. Key partners include the MLGPC, the Eastern Province, the Assistant Commissioner of Local Government (ACLG), the Ampara District Secretariat and the SE University.

The project objectives include: the development a fund allocation model to allow the allocation of funds for road rehabilitation to the most vulnerable Pradeshya Sabha; the preparation of a first year workplan; the preparation of second and third year workplans and contributing towards a Transport Infrastructure Management System.

To initiate implementation of road works by UNOPS and the MLGPC, the ILO designed a fund allocation model based on vulnerability to guide broad fund allocation at the Pradeshya Sabha (PS) level and a Road Prioritization Exercise (RPE) to assist local authority and community representatives to screen and prioritize specific road investments.

For the second and third year work plan, the ILO implemented Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning (IRAP) in Ampara District to strengthen the capacity of local authorities to plan and prioritize rural transport interventions. The ILO has been involved in developing a planning process for improving access in rural areas designed for application at the local government level in many countries. IRAP simultaneously seeks to improve the rural transport system and distribution of facilities and services. The objective of the process is to - in a cost-effective manner - improve access to goods and services in rural areas.

IRAP introduces a set of planning tools based on access needs of rural people and seeks to maximize the use of local resources. Its main features are its simplicity, user friendliness, low-cost application and immediate outputs. Local planners can make use of the tools, as part of their routine planning activities, to define priorities for different sectors and communities.

The process enables the planner to quickly assess what should be done, where, and identify rural infrastructure priorities.

IRAP is now completing in all the Pradeshya Sabha Divisions of the Eastern District of Ampara. The plans map communities' priorities to access basic minimum needs, such as water, and basic services such as health, education, markets and the road network. All plans have been formally ratified with the local authorities at District meetings. The plans remain in the ownership of the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils and can be used to focus donor contributions on the most isolated and poorest communities.

As well as the mapping the location, condition, and use of schools, health centres and markets, a principle output of the planning process is a full Transport Infrastructure Inventory. This is providing the Government and local authorities with exact details of the extent and condition of the entire road network in the District. This will form the basis of an improved maintenance management system, whereby local authorities can clearly identify the budgets required for rural road management for the first time in Sri Lanka.

The Eastern Provincial Council provided permanent staff for the exercise and the Chief Secretary, Chairmen of Pradeshya Sabhas, GA's and staff of the PS and Divisional Secretariat offices were involved in the planning. The SE University of Sri Lanka provided participants to receive intensive on-the-job training including senior lecturers and undergraduates of the faculties of Economics and Commerce, and Arts and Culture.

One year after the commencement of the project and six months after the commencement of IRAP, there was a detailed Technical Review of the IRAP process to date, undertaken by an International IRAP expert. This listed a large number of technical points to improve the process.

## **1,2 Background on Evaluation**

ILO (Colombo) Office has commissioned Management Frontiers (Pvt.) Ltd., Colombo to undertake an **Evaluation of the Outputs and impact of the Technical Assistance provided to the Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning (IRAP) Project component of the UNOPS Community Access Programming (CAP)** and submit its report.



As per TOR, the evaluation was undertaken during a period of one calendar month and as agreed the field study was conducted from 25 to 29 August 2008. The Draft Report was submitted on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2008 as scheduled and the Final Report is submitted on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the efficiency of the services provided by the Associated Agency, the ILO, to the Executing Agency, the UNOPS, under the Inter-Agency Agreement and the four components stated in the Description of Services to the said Agreement. The following were the four components of the Agreement.

- Component 1 – Fund Allocation based on a model (such as CIRM) for most backward Divisions of the District,
- Component 2 – Preparation of a First Year Work Plan,
- Component 3 – Preparation of a Second and Third Year Investment Plan, and
- Component 4 – Contribution towards a Transport Infrastructure Management System.

**Client:** The principal clients of this evaluation are the project management. ILO Colombo, UNOPS, and relevant ILO technical units. Clients will also include the MLGPC and the Eastern Province.

**Scope:** The evaluation is expected to focus on the ILO's contribution for the preparation of Accessibility Action Plans (AAPs) for all 16 Pradeshiya Sabhas (PSs) of Ampara District.

The specific terms of reference includes the following aspects.

- i. Review the process and methodology adopted by the ILO IRAP project;
- ii. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the project;
- iii. Review the project documents and outputs;
- iv. Review all quarterly reports and annual reports produced by IRAP; and
- v. Make recommendations based on the findings.

The evaluation manager for this evaluation is the Mr. Henrik Visisen who is responsible for the overall coordination and management of this evaluation. Mr. Visisen shall also ensure the follow up of this evaluation's recommendations. The evaluator reports to the evaluation manager.

### **1.3 Evaluation Methodology**

The evaluation focused on the ILO contribution to the UNOPS Community Access Road Project only. It did not include the evaluation of UNOPS systems and procedures. However, for the purpose of better understanding, Management Frontiers reviewed the process and methodology adopted by the ILO in the implementation of IRAP process and, as requested in the specific terms of reference, assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the process and reviewed the project documents and outputs.

The evaluation adheres to the UN Evaluation Norms and Standards and OECD/DAC quality standards. The evaluation methodology followed during the assessment period included the following activities.

- i. Conducted discussions with relevant Government officers in Colombo and in Ampara district who had direct involvement in the IRAP process; (A list of Officers met is given in Annex 2);
- ii. Studied in detail the IRAP Process followed in the formulation of Accessibility Action Plans in five of the sample PSs, Thirukkovil, Padiyathalawa, Sammanthurai, Navithanveli and Uhana;
- iii. Visited some of the works completed to verify whether they fit on to the project selection criteria; and
- iv. Conducted discussions with other institutions such as Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Ampara District and Representatives of Ampara Employers Federation. (Although the Evaluation Team was interested of meeting a representative from District Trade Unions, it was not possible to make an appointment with the Union.)

The checklist questions for the interviews with Heads of Departments and Institution and the guidelines for the conduct of focus group discussions with local officers and representatives of community group are attached in the Annex 3 and 4, respectively.

The following Chapters provide findings of the Evaluation Team and the last Chapter presents the evaluation recommendations.

**CHAPTER - 2**  
**REVIEW OF IRAP PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY**

Consultants found that the process and methodology explained in the reports was followed step by step during the participatory exercises in the preparation of AAPs for all PSs. In all five PSs reviewed by the consultants (namely, Thirukkovil, Padiyathalawa, Sammanthurai, Navithanveli and Uhana), it was found that a detailed three stage process of planning had been followed, where stage 1 was on data collection, stage 2 on data analysis and stage 3 on accessibility planning. During stage 1, an initial office work session had been carried out for the preparation of a base line map for each PS and preparation of a map using the Geographic Information System (GIS) software. In the preparation of manual and GIS maps, the officers worked in the IRAP office using maps already available at the Survey Department and used them in the conducting workshops at Grama Niladhari (GN) level in terms of few clusters to collect data with participants. These participants included all local level officers and community representatives.

The important workshop conducted during the stage 1 process, was meant to explain the IRAP process and methodology to participants and explain to them that the plan will be prepared for 5 selected sectors, namely, water supply, education, health, markets and rural access roads. It has been explained to participants that the main objective of the planning exercise is to identify the issues related to accessibility and therefore, rather than construction of new roads in the area, maintenance of existing roads and rehabilitation of much dilapidated roads will be given high priority. This was generally a one day workshop held at the PS level for all local authority and divisional officers and representatives of community groups.

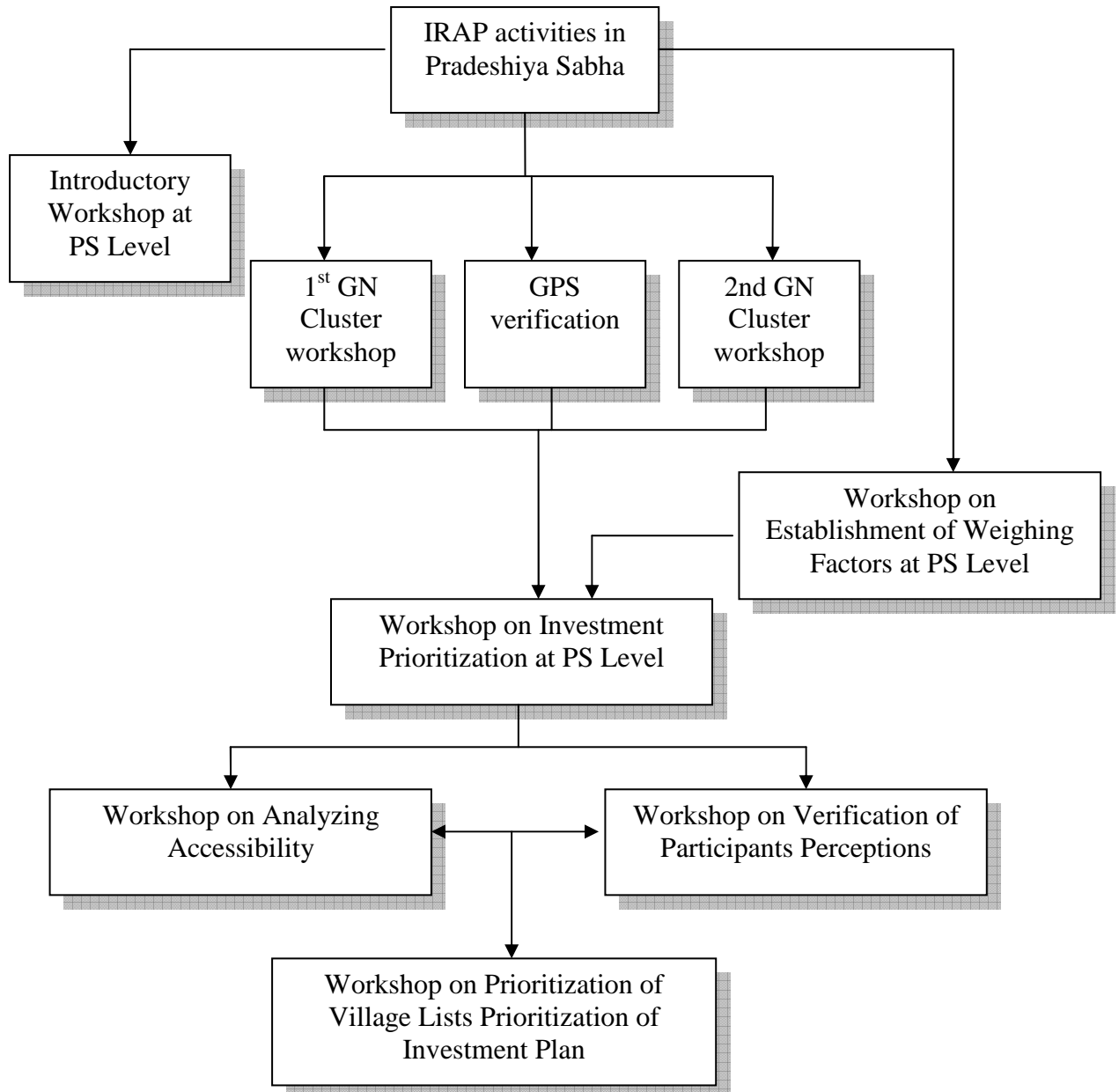
Thereafter, several detailed workshops had been conducted at GN cluster level to collect data related to the five sectors using secondary sources and identification of assets available in the GN clusters under the five sectors. A field verification of assets using Global Positioning System (GPS) was carried out during these workshops. Accordingly, it was observed that this was the first exercise ever undertaken at the village level to identify and list out details of assets available for the benefit of people and quality of such assets.

After collecting the data at village level, the IRAP team has spent several days at office to translate the GPS data into GIS. With this information, officers were able to prepare a transport infrastructure inventory (TII) that provides information on time taken by villages to reach main facilities such as education institutions, health institutions, village markets and collection points (sources) of drinking water. Thus an accessibility map was prepared using GIS technology to reach basic minimum needs for households living in the villages. Based on this information, it was possible to identify the most disadvantaged villages in accessing basic infrastructure needs and was able to assess the poverty status of villages in terms of accessibility to basic minimum infrastructure needs.

With the completion of the preparation of TII maps, a second set of GN cluster workshops had been conducted to present the results of TIIs and verify the results with the village level accessibility problems with the participants. While the participants agreeing with the issues thrown up in the TII maps, priorities of villages in terms of poorest facilities available for the five sectors had been analyzed. These priorities were listed according to a set of indicators and identified the investment that need to be made to satisfy the basic minimum needs of priority villages.

At the end of the identification of priority villages and the development needs of each of the five sectors of PS, a ratification meeting had been held at the district level with the chairmanship of District Secretary, Ampara with the presence of ILO Team Members, Chairmen of respective PS, Assistant Commissioner of Local Government (ACLG) of Ampara and Commissioner of Local Government (CLG) of Eastern Province and Chief Secretary or his representative. Representatives of local officers and community representatives were also present at the ratification meeting. After the ratification, the AAP was considered as final and ready to be published.

The above process and methodology illustrated in **Diagram 1** is given in page 2-3.



**Diagram 1: IRAP Process and Methodology**

In the implementation of above explained process and methodology, the IRAP achieved the following.

- The step wise process IRAP had been followed in all five PSs reviewed by consultants and found that the process was fully accepted by all participants. The high rate of community participation at all workshops held both at PS and GN levels proves that all community representatives showed great enthusiasm in participating the planning process, even though in Tamil and Muslim predominant areas, the female participation was at a low level due to socio cultural reasons. The officers interviewed had witnessed a level of enthusiasm of community representatives unseen any of the previous interventions.
  
- The time utilized for the process to complete one AAP in a given PS has taken approximately 2 – 3 months. This duration includes time spent to complete the technical inputs to conduct activities in five important sectors for the following tasks.
  - i. Office work for the preparation of Manual Maps and initial GIS maps;
  - ii. Office work for data management, which includes GPS information to be converted into GIS, and the preparation of Transport Infrastructure Inventory (TII) Map;
  - iii. Finalizing the TII;
  - iv. Revision of accessibility classification, GIS accessibility mapping and Integrated Accessibility Planning; and
  - v. Writing the Accessibility Action Plan, including final review of final GIS maps.
  
- The IRAP process and methodology was accepted by the communities due to the following reasons.
  - i. So far, this is the only community accepted planning tool that identified investment interventions according to community needs and preferences;
  - ii. Existing infrastructure at village level was identified, prioritized and ranked according to community preferences for development;

- iii. Assessed existing infrastructure assets in each PS on village basis so that villages could be ranked according to their level of access to basic minimum services; and
- iv. After completing the planning process, each PS got the following set of planning documents prepared with community participation.
  - a. A complete Data Book on village based community assets and their accessibility;
  - b. Transport Infrastructure Inventory with the complete road network of the PS; and
  - c. Prioritized Investment Plan covering the identified five sectors for the next two years.

**CHAPTER - 3**  
**STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE PROJECT**

The review of project outputs and the field study conducted at the institutions involved in IRAP process in the five sample PS Divisions studied by the consultants, the following strengths and weaknesses of the project have been identified.

**3.1 Strengths of the IRAP process and methodology**

IRAP is a planning tool which is, on a conceptual basis, not a new concept for Sri Lanka. Most of the regional planning systems at district and divisional levels were using the community involved planning approach, especially in the identification of infrastructure development facilities. However, in practical terms, the community involvement planning process that was used in Sri Lanka was not a continuous process compared with that of IRAP process. Accordingly, the following are the **strengths** of IRAP Project.

- i. IRAP introduced a stage-wise rural planning process where community involvement activities need to be separated out from technical aspects of planning in which technicians will have to provide their expert knowledge only as a supportive role, while integrating the community and technological aspects will end up with a sustainable planning system.
- ii. IRAP process of planning with community participation helped the planning process particularly on following aspects at village level.
  - a. Identification of community assets at village level;
  - b. Extent of the use of facilities / community assets created at the village level;
  - c. Assessment of the status of facilities already available at village level;
  - d. Identification of rehabilitation / new development facility needs at village level;



- e. Priority ranking of identified development activities;
  - f. Participation of labour at community level during project implementation;  
and
  - g. Quality control and supervision of project implementation by the community representatives.
- iii. Although IRAP is not a poverty mapping system, the Fund Allocation Model that is being used together with the IRAP process is a special poverty mapping tool and therefore all poverty areas within Divisions in terms of not only villages but also in terms of households concentrated in areas could be easily identified and actions addressing poverty be planned.
- iv. In the planning process, IRAP helps to formulate a complete socio economic Data Book with all specifications with regard to each type of community asset, an Accessibility Profile containing structure maps in relation to each asset, a Transport Infrastructure Inventory available for the Division for the first time its history and, finally, an AAP completed with prioritized development activities and an Investment Plan ready for future implementation.
- v. The community representatives learned the process of planning and understand that the plan prepared is their own. They will find that they need not criticise government officers for not identifying their grievances and not selecting assets / facilities representing community needs and priorities
- vi. It was a learning experience for the government officers as well. The following are few of the strengths identified and learning experiences received by government officers and planning technicians.
- a. Planning is something for the benefit of communities and to be developed to meet community requirements;
  - b. Technical data and methods have to be submitted to the communities as early as possible;
  - c. The decision making and prioritization process lies with community representatives and they know better;

- d. Technical information have to be presented to community representatives as they could easily understood; and
  - e. During implementation, community involvement would reduce the cost of development as well as keep the ownership of assets with the community.
- vii. The IRAP produced a total list of roads some of which were up to now not in the list of assets of PS and even not known to most of the PSs. Thanks to IRAP process, now there is a complete list of roads within the PS Division that could be programmed with a maintenance plan in the future.
- viii. With the completion of AAPs, the Chairmen of PSs, the Secretaries of respective Divisional Secretariats and the Government Agent have comprehensive planning documents for the respective areas covering the selected five economic sectors for future development. Now, they can offer the prioritized sectors as well as activities for investment to any donor agency or International Non-Government Organization (INGO) in any area of their preference.
- ix. One central institution of the district (In Ampara District, it is the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka) received the technology transfer and training on IRAP process for planning. Accordingly, with their technical know how, PSs could prepare similar prioritization of development activities covering other sectors of the Divisional Economy with the involvement of local officers and community representatives. Or else, prepare similar plans to cover the urban local authorities of the district and compile a comprehensive plan covering all local authorities of the district.
- x. The district planning authority can now prepare a Consolidated Development Plan for Ampara District, either on one selected economic sector or for all economic sectors of PSs. The district authorities will be in an advantageous position to offer such plans to donor agencies.

- xi. At present, Ampara is the only advantaged District having comprehensive Accessibility Plans. Therefore, it could now provide learning experience to other districts of the country.

### 3.2 Weaknesses of IRAP Project

Although the district authorities including community representatives expressed the positive achievements of IRAP process and final outcome of the AAPs for all PSs, consultants were able to identify the following weaknesses during the detailed field level discussions. The following are the **weaknesses** of IRAP Project that were identified.

- i. There was no integration of top-down activities into the rural level planning process. The process accepted that the bottom-up planning system involved in decision making, other than the technical inputs, makes a sound development plan for PSs. However, as highlighted during discussions, now it is realized that there were few linkage gaps between actions already prioritized in the investment plans. It was pointed out that village level community representatives may not in a position to look for such gaps unless necessary inputs from higher level officers are integrated into the system. Such gaps could conveniently be identified only by looking at the macro picture of sector facilities of the area and not looking at just on individual facilities at village level.<sup>1</sup>
- ii. The IRAP process is limited to only five sectors when implementing the planning process in the Ampara district. Theoretically, it needs not limit the process only to five sectors. In fact, initially it can consider all economic sectors of the economy such as irrigation, agriculture, etc. and then prioritize five sectors which are most relevant to the particular PS area. However, the limitation of the IRAP process in Ampara district to only five sectors is a weakness of the IRAP Process.
- iii. Similarly, another weakness is the use of same five sectors in the planning process irrespective of the poor accessibility of each sector measured according to

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<sup>1</sup> For example, as District Secretary points out, in Padiyatalawa PS access roads to village hamlet from the main road have been identified in the IRAP and an interior road connecting the villages have not been identified. From such a link road the villages could benefit much more.

community preferences. However, when carefully studied some of the AAPs prepared, it is found that, for example, the status of marketing facilities of some PSs indicated that the community do not have problems related to marketing but the sector is used throughout the planning process and ultimately formulated a priority investment plan for the sector.

- iv. It is acknowledged that the basic rationale of IRAP process is the use of community involvement during the entire planning process and limited to planners involvement only to technical exercises. At the discussions held during the visit to Ampara district, several officers including the District Secretary expressed that the quality of the report, the Accessibility Action Plan, would have improved by including more appropriate actions such as important link access roads between villages as priority actions. However, there cannot be such activities identified as preferences in a village based micro level community involvement process.
- v. Few local level officers who were involved in the IRAP process, when asked for weaknesses of the program, expressed the view that if several community representatives who have common interest, present their views at the workshops there is a possibility of selecting their preferences as priority items overruling those of others. Although one could argue that this may not happen, there had been such instances in actual practice. eg. Uhana PS education sector.

**CHAPTER - 4**  
**REVIEW OF QUARTERLY REPORTS AND ANNUAL REPORT BY IRAP**

IRAP project produced four Quarterly Progress Reports between May 2007 to April 2008 and one Annual Report to cover the period April 2007 to March 2008. These reports emphasize work completed during the reporting period, highlight issues faced by the Project in executing their work programme and describe with reasons the deviations from the programme action plans and targets, if any.

The review of Quarterly Reports and Annual Report, revealed many key factor of implementation such as **achievements** and **issues** encountered and they are summarized below.

As per the Annual Report, the following achievements and issues had been highlighted.

- The IRAP step by step strengthening the capacity of local authorities to plan and prioritize rural transport interventions to increase village accessibility to essential services;
- Local Authorities that do not have a complete list of roads and not having names for some roads, are now having a complete list of roads within their administrative areas with names to identify of each road;
- A Fund Allocation Model (FAM) was prepared and finalized for the identification of villages in terms of poverty and prepared a poverty map for each PS and thereby a Poverty Map for the rural areas of Ampara District; and
- In terms of FAM, the eight most vulnerable PSs had been prioritized through a Rapid Road Prioritizing Programme which was implemented during April – June 2007 involving 58 km of Class E roads and 48 km of Class C & D roads.

- The following were the main outputs delivered by the Project
  - FAM completed in April 2007;
  - Road Prioritization Exercise – First Year Work Plan completed in June 2007;  
and
  - Road Prioritization Map Book completed in June 2007.
  
- In addition, a Baseline Survey on the following 6 roads from the FYWP Zone control road has been prepared.
  - Mandani Road                      Thirukkivil PS
  - Weerabodhi Cross Road        Lahugala PS
  - Thiruvellar Road                Kalmunai PS
  - Kanjah Road                      Ninthavur PS
  - Ethigoda Road                  Alayadivembu PS
  - Kolamanthalawa Road        Padiyathalawa PS and
  - Bogaslanda Road (control road) where no improvements are anticipated.

The **issues** faced during the first year of programme implementation were as follows.

- The ACLG, his staff and Chairmen of PSs showed a limited involvement in the IRAP process in the preparation of respective AAPs;
- After the identification of the roads in the Road Map of PS, Council Chairmen were given prominence to complete the naming of new roads identified in the Plan so that the Transport Infrastructure Inventory could be completed for respective PSs. But, the response of some Chairmen has not been encouraging.
- The support from the local Heads of Departments of Ampara District in collecting secondary data required for the preparation of AAPs and their participation in the workshops was poor.

In the Quarterly Reports also the same issues were highlighted. In summary, all four Quarterly Reports stated the following three issues as reasons for not been able to meet the planned targets by the Project.

- Poor response of local departments in the physical verification of assets listed in GN cluster workshops;
- PSs not taking initiatives in naming of roads newly identified for maintenance; and
- Delays in preparation of Data Book due to poor response of local officers of the government departments.

Although, there had been issues along with poor responses received from the government institutions at the local level, the IRAP Project has produced very encouraging set of outputs and results as per the Inter - Agency Agreement entered into between the ILO and UNOPS.

The components listed in the Agreement were as follows.

- Component 1 – Preparation of a Fund Allocation Model (FAM)
- Component 2 – Preparation of a First Year Investment Plan
- Component 3 – Preparation of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Investment Plan, and
- Component 4 – Contributing Towards a Transport Infrastructure Management Plan

The FAM was completed in April 2007 and used for mapping of villages in terms of poverty. The poorest set of villages in each PS were listed in the respective AAP using the variables weighted in the FAM. Also the First Year Road Investment Plan was prepared and implemented on the basis of items selected under it.

In the preparation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year Investment Plan, the IRAP process was used and only five more plan reports are to be completed. These will be completed by the end of September 2008. Using the GIS Mapping technology, a comprehensive transport infrastructure management plan has been prepared.

Accordingly, the Technical Assistance Team of ILO-IRAP Project has completed the four components stated in the Inter – agency Agreement and to complete the above works on time, the Team no doubt has worked hard and according a definite time target.

The evaluation also recommends that the balance work in the preparation of the remaining AAPs be completed by the end of September as agreed between the two institutions.

**CHAPTER - 5**  
**CONCLUSIONS. LESSONS LEARNED AND ASSESSMENT**

**5.1 Conclusions and Lessons Learned**

As discussed above, the evaluation highlights many lessons learned and conclusions. More important lessons learned and conclusions are summarized below.

- The IRAP process has been appreciated and commended by the line agencies and provided the planning authorities at both the government level and the local level as useful and much needed exposure in undertaking local level planning and implementation activities;
- The introduction of IRAP process has filled a vacuum in the regional planning system and information needs for planning and development of Ampara district;
- A methodical and sound planning approach such as IRAP is acceptable to the officials and the community and could be replicated in any part of the country for rural level planning and development;
- For a district like Ampara where development information is lacking, the IRAP process is highly relevant and useful and appreciated by the community for their involvement and participation in development;
- The outputs developed under the IRAP process have been already owned by the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils and the Eastern Provincial Council; This is an extremely important and a positive movement where the process and methodology could be replicated for development planning not only in other districts of the Eastern Province but in other local authorities of the country as well;
- The outputs produced by the IRAP process, especially the GIS maps would be of immense advantage for most of other service facility improvement and development organizations such as Water Supply and Drainage, Communication, Electricity and Road Maintenance due to various reasons. The Regional Office of National Water Supply and Drainage Board in Ampara has already indicated the benefit of the GIS plans that were produced as outputs, since the use of these plans would reduce the



cost of surveys on the preparation and construction of water distribution systems and related facilities and drainage systems etc.

## 5.2 Overall Assessment and Rating

The evaluation rates the Technical Assistance provided as **highly relevant** in terms of meeting its objectives clearly and mentioned project components and identified needs.

The Technical Assistance is rated as **efficient** due to the timely delivery of outputs as mentioned in the Inter – Agency Agreement.

The TA is tentatively **relevant** and **effective** based on the progress towards outcomes attainment within planned time.

The evaluation also rates the **sustainability** of outcome achievement as **likely**, based on the acceptance of the road sector output for implementation during three years as planned and completed a sound and detailed prioritized investment plan for funding of activities identified in other sectors.

Overall, the evaluation rates the technical assistance as **successful** and **achieved** its intended objectives.

**CHAPTER - 6**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD**

The followings recommendations are suggested with the objective of strengthening the IRAP process and facilitating implementation of the PS plans in the future.

- i. Appreciating the 'bottom-up approach' used in the formulation of PS Division plans following the IRAP methodology, it is recommended at some stage, most probably at the ratification stage, where the final ratification to the plan is made, some inputs using the top-down approach be accommodated into the plan. This is necessary not to deviate from the priorities identified in the investment plan but to incorporate some livelihood elements with regard to link activities into the plan to make it more comprehensive and to improve the applicability and appropriateness of the plan at macro level.
  
  - ii. The preparation of accessibility plans should not be made on the basis of same five sectors uniformly across the board for every PS division. To minimize practical difficulties involved in the planning exercise, it is desirable to limit the planning process to cover only five sectors. However, at the initial introductory workshop held at the PS level, it is important to decide the five sectors which need to be included in the plan based on most felt-need sectors for that PS division and to collect detailed information with regard to the selected five sectors. The desk exercise should therefore be undertaken to collect basic information with regard to all sectors of the PS economy and then select most deprived five sectors for the PS area following the community participation approach. The sector selection procedure thus represented to identify the most backward villages of the area based on its economic characteristics. The rural access roads sector could still be the centralized criterion for planning in addition to the other sectors thus identified.
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- iii. At the time of identification of development activities under each sector, such identification was made only on the basis of conditions prevailing at that time. Since then development works in some sectors may have been taken up at a faster rate with the support of donor agencies or INGOs, the same priorities may not exist later on. The situation at the time of taking up the plan for implementation after a few months, the same priority ranking may also not exist. It is not a deficiency in the IRAP process but a characteristic of the development process. It will therefore be essential to know the development initiatives taken place, and ensure the priorities of activities under each sector. This may lead to a reconsideration of the priorities of sectors in the PS Plan.
  - iv. It is also recommended to complete the Priority Investment Plan of AAPs with estimated cost of each item of all sectors. Such information would help the donor agencies to select funding of sectors on PS basis or to identify the total funding requirement for all sectors of a selected PS.
  - v. The IRAP methodology has introduced several important techniques into the infrastructure planning process in Ampara district. Poverty mapping based on the Fund Allocation Model (FAM), positioning of village assets using Global Positioning Systems (GPS), preparation of asset maps using Geographic Information System (GIS) and preparation of Vulnerability Analysis Mapping (VAM) are a few important techniques that had been commonly used in IRAP process. It is unfortunate that Ampara district administration did not have its own staff to release to the IRAP working team to familiarize the use of advanced and essential planning techniques and get the technology transfer to the public sector through exposure. District planning and administration structure therefore need to understand the importance of such technology transfer and take positive steps towards acquiring and using them through competency enhancement of the officers.
  - vi. The IRAP has also taken action to train a team of persons, four young staff of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka and three Final Year Students of the same university. The objective of this training is to transfer the IRAP technology to a permanent training institution of the district to
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provide training to planning personnel of public sector institutions in future. While commending this as a positive step taken by the ILO-IRAP Team, it is recommended to transfer the all computer software packages and other technical equipment to the South Eastern University. It is understood that the Social Sciences Faculty is making arrangement to establish as a specialized Center to provide technical assistance on IRAP process on self financing basis. The transfer of equipment and software packages by the IRAP technical arm to the University will be an important step towards supporting this initiative and strengthening the proposed institution.

- vii. It is also recommended to transfer all GIS files, in soft copy form to the technical institutions such as the Ampara Regional Office of the Water Supply and Drainage Board and the Provincial Road Development Department of Ampara district where the GIS technology is already available and being used.
  - viii. The South Eastern University of Sri Lanka and Provincial Road Development Department of Ampara District should assist the ACLG offices in Ampara, in using the same integrated accessibility methodology to prepare similar plans for the other two Urban Local Authorities which were not included under the present programme, i.e., the Ampara Urban Council and Kalmunai Municipal Council. Accordingly, a complete road map covering all A, B, C, D, & E class roads of the district could be shown in one map using GIS technology.
  - ix. Implement an awareness programme among political leadership (Members of Parliament and Members of Eastern Provincial Council) and other parties involved in development decision making to educate them on the contents of the 16 AAPs and availability of already prioritized infrastructure development plans for the implementation.
  - x. The district planning authorities and political leadership should endeavour to look for foreign funding possibilities to implement the proposals identified in the Accessibility Investment Plan, without limiting to the sectors for which funding is already available.
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- xi. Based on the lessons learnt during the implementation of the road development component, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen the implementation of Accessibility Action Plans, in the future.
- Establish Plan Implementation Steering Committees consisting of a wide representation;
  - Establish Project Monitoring Committees for each Pradeshiya Sabha Action Plan and they be chaired by the Divisional Secretary;
  - Promote awarding construction contracts to local community organizations; and
  - Promote utilization of local materials, services and labour of respective communities so that their income could be increased.
- xii. Since there are AAPs for all 16 PSs in Ampara district, it is recommended that the planning authorities should take action to prepare a **Consolidated Rural Sector Accessibility Action Plan** for the five sectors identified for the district. Hence, the planning authorities would be in a advantageous position to submit the consolidated plan to donor agencies and to the government to finance the district development programme either on district basis or sector basis.
- xiii. It is also recommended that the Consolidated Rural Accessibility Plan shall be produced in a soft form so that the donors could take it to their offices and study them in detail. Since the Accessibility Action Plan includes all details of sector plans proposed for development it would be easier for them to evaluate the proposals for funding.
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## **Annex 1**

### **Terms of Reference**

*Evaluation of the outputs and impact of the technical assistance provided to the Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning (IRAP) Project component of the UNOPS Community Access Programme (CAP).*

#### **1 Background**

The ILO is providing Technical Assistance for planning to UNOPS who are providing technical assistance to the MLGPC to rehabilitate 400 km of E class roads to establish sustainable access to basic amenities for the more vulnerable communities in Ampara District through the planning and construction of durable access community roads.

To initiate implementation of road works by UNOPS and the MLGPC, the ILO designed a fund allocation model based on vulnerability to guide broad fund allocation at the Pradeshya Sabha (PS) level and a Road Prioritization Exercise (RPE) to assist local authority and community representatives to screen and prioritize specific road investments.

For the second and third year work plan, the ILO implemented Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning (IRAP) in Ampara District to strengthen the capacity of local authorities to plan and prioritize rural transport interventions. The ILO has been involved in developing a planning process for improving access in rural areas designed for application at the local government level in many countries. IRAP simultaneously seeks to improve the rural transport system and distribution of facilities and services. The objective of the process is to - in a cost-effective manner - improve access to goods and services in rural areas.

IRAP introduces a set of planning tools based on access needs of rural people and seeks to maximize the use of local resources. Its main features are its simplicity, user friendliness, low-cost application and immediate outputs. Local planners can make use of the tools, as part of their routine planning activities, to define priorities for different sectors and communities. The process enables the planner to quickly assess what should be done, where, and identify rural infrastructure priorities.

IRAP is now completing in all the Pradeshya Sabha Divisions of the Eastern District of Ampara. The plans map communities' priorities to access basic minimum needs, such as water, and basic services such as health, education, markets and the road network. All plans have been formally ratified with the local authorities at District meetings. The plans remain in the ownership of the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils and can be used to focus donor contributions on the most isolated and poorest communities.

As well as the mapping the location, condition, and use of schools, health centres and markets, a principle output of the planning process is a full Transport Infrastructure Inventory. This is providing the Government and local authorities with exact details of the extent and condition of the entire road network in the District. This will form the basis of an improved maintenance management system, whereby local authorities can clearly identify the budgets required for rural road management for the first time in Sri Lanka.

The Eastern Provincial Council provided permanent staff for the exercise and the Chief Secretary, Chairmen of Pradeshya Sabhas, GA's and staff of the PS and Divisional

Secretariat offices were involved in the planning. The SE University of Sri Lanka provided participants to receive intensive on-the-job training including senior lecturers and undergraduates of the faculties of Economics and Commerce, and Arts and Culture.

Since the Inter Agency Agreement between UNOPS and the ILO is expiring on the 30<sup>th</sup> September it is necessary to carry out an assessment to review the impact and effectiveness of the technical assistance provided by the ILO.

## **2 Objectives**

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the efficiency of the services provided by the Associated Agency (ILO) to the Executing Agency (UNOPS) under the Inter-Agency Agreement and the four components as described in the Description of Services to that document. The evaluation will focus on the ILOs contribution to the UNOPS Community Access Project and will not evaluate the UNOPS systems procedures or deliverables.

## **3 Specific terms of reference**

- Review the process and methodology adopted by the ILO IRAP project
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Project
- Review the project documents and outputs;
- Review all the Quarterly reports and annual report produced by IRAP
- Make recommendations based on the findings

## **4 Tasks and activities**

- Prepare a detailed work plan and the methodology proposed for the evaluation and submit this to the ILO Project team (Colombo).
- Discuss with the project team (ILO Colombo) regarding collection of information from secondary sources and primary sources
- In consultation with the ILO and UNOPS and the MLGPC prepare a list of authorities required to be interviewed
- Conduct interviews with the relevant authorities
- Tabulate and analyse the data required for evaluation
- Discuss the main findings with the project team
- Write a draft report for submission to the ILO-UNOPS and MLGPC for comment
- Compile the final report

The IRAP will make arrangements to meet the relevant authorities for interviews

## **5 Time frame**

The assignment should commence on the 11<sup>th</sup> August and should complete on the 6<sup>th</sup> September

## **6 Deliverables**

- Design of interview format for semi-structured interviews
- Methodology to conduct impact evaluation

- Draft report on Technical Assistance provided by IRAP for comment of the ILO, UNOPS and MLGPC
- Final Report on Technical Assistance provided by IRAP
- Presentation to ILO-IRAP, UNOPS-CAP, MLGPC



## Annex 2

### PERSONS MET

#### **ILO, IRAP Head Office Project Team**

- Mr. Andrew Young, Programme Advisor
- Mr. Upali Delpachithra, National Programme Manager

#### **ILO, Project Team, Thirukkivil Office**

- Mr. H.M. Nijam, Planning Coordinator
- Mr. S. Srimanobhavan, GIS Expert

#### **Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government**

- Mr. D.P. Hettiarachchi, Addl. Secretary

#### **District Secretariat, Ampara**

- Mr. Sunil Kannangara, District Secretary
- Mr. M. H. Bawa, District planning Director

#### **Department of Local Government, Ampara District**

- Mr. A.I.S. Irshad, Assistant Commissioner, Local Government

#### **Provincial Road Development Department, Ampara District Office**

- Mr A.M. Rizvi, Chief Engineer

#### **Regional Director of Health Services, Ampara**

- Dr. N.H.D. Premadasa, Medial Officer, Planning Unit

#### **Zonal Education Office, Ampara**

- Mr. R.G. Kulatunga, Zonal Director of Education

#### **National Water Supply and Drainage Board, Ampara Regional Office**

- Mr. N. Razeel, Regional Manager
- Mr. K. Vinothan, Chief Engineer

#### **Divisional Secretariat, Thirukkivil**

- Mr. B. Alagaratnam, Divisional Secretary
- Mr. S.L. Chandrabavan, Development Assistant
- Mr. K. Theevakumaran, Rural Development Officer

#### **Divisional Secretariat, Sammanthurai**

- Mr. A. Mansoor, Divisional Secretary
- Mr. I.L.M. Fareed, GN, Block G West 1
- Mr. A.L. Uduma Lebbe, GN, Block J East 1
- Mr. M.T.A. Gaffor, GN, Block J West 2
- Mr. K.L. Abusali, GN, Block J East 2
- Mr. M.M. Salman, GN, Malwatte 3 & Sammanthurai 12
- Mr. M.I.M. Thawfer, GN, Sammanthurai 7

- Mr. M.I. Sinnarasah, GN, Majeed Grama 3

**Divisional Secretariat, Ninthavur**

- Mr. M. Gopalaratnam, Divisional Secretary

**Divisional Secretariat, Padiyathalawa**

- Mr. R.M.K.R.B. Ratnayake, Divisional Secretary

**Divisional Secretariat, Uhana**

- Mr. Indika Anuruddha Piyadasa, Divisional Secretary

**Pradeshiya Sabha, Thirukkovil**

- Mr. S. Sabapathy, Chairman
- Mr. K. Paranertupasingham, Secretary
- Mr. J.R. Sathiyaseelan, Management Assistant
- Mr. T.S. Athiseyarajah, Management Assistant
- Mr. A.L.M. Sabir, Local Government Assistant

**Pradeshiya Sabha, Sammanthurai**

- Mr. M.I.M. Mansoor, Chairman
- Mr. M.A. ThumbiKadu, Vice Chairman
- Dr. I.L. Abdul Majeed, Opposition Leader

**Pradeshiya Sabha, Ninthavur**

- Mr. T. Kalairasan, Chairman

**Pradeshiya Sabha, Padiyathalawa**

- Mr. Lalanthan Sumit Seneviratne, Chairman

**Pradeshiya Sabha, Uhana**

- Mr. Ranjith Ekanayake, Cairman

### **Annex 3**

#### **Check List for Interviews with Heads of Departments and Institutions**

1. Your understanding about IRAP procedure for local planning
2. In your view, the extent to which IRAP procedure is relevant to development planning in rural sector
3. Extent to which you and your staff involved in IRAP process
4. How do you gauge IRAP process compared to previous rural planning processes known to you
5. Whether satisfactory participation from different community groups were made during the workshops; participation of representatives from women's groups, vulnerable groups, ethnic groups, youth etc.
6. Whether these groups were given sufficient opportunities to express their ideas
7. Do you think the number of workshops held were insufficient/ sufficient/ excessive
8. Whether time duration allowed for each workshop was inadequate/ adequate/ excessive.
9. Your views and assessment on the ratification procedure followed during the process
10. Extent to which the proposals ratified at the final workshop represented actual community needs
11. Extent to which the capacity and knowledge on planning for development was improved as a result of IRAP
12. Your views about community gained and understood on rural planning and development as a result of IRAP
13. Extent to which the expected outcome of IRAP were achieved
14. Extent to which the final output (AAP) is comprehensive enough for meeting the needs of communities
15. Extent to which the final output is comprehensive enough for implementation
16. Your awareness about the availability of funds for implementation of planned activities
17. How do you gauge the performance of ILO Team in conducting IRAP process
18. What is your assessment of the overall IRAP methodology and process
19. Extent to which the replicability of IRAP tool in other districts
20. Your suggestions, if any, for further improving the IRAP methodology and process.

## Annex 4

### **Guideline for the Conduct of Focus Group Discussions with Local Officers and Representatives of Community Group Representatives**

1. Did you involve in the preparation of a development plan for your area previously?
2. How was the present IRAP process different from your earlier experiences?
3. In your view, whether the IRAP process meets the development planning needs in your area
4. As you recollect, how many workshops were held under the IRAP process
5. Do you think whether the number of workshops held were insufficient/ sufficient/ excessive for planning purpose
6. What community group representatives participated during these workshops
7. Whether representative of all community groups participated in the workshops:  
Women's groups, Vulnerable groups, Ethnic groups, Youth
8. Whether representatives of all the above groups were given sufficient opportunities to express their ideas
9. Whether time allowed for representatives were insufficient/ sufficient/ excessive for expressing their views
10. Are you satisfied on the five service sectors identified for inclusion in the IRAP process (Water, Health, Education, Markets and Roads); If not, what other sectors to be included?
11. Your views and assessment on the ratification procedure followed during the process
12. Extent to which the proposals ratified at the final workshop represented actual community needs of the area
13. Do you think whether the final proposals are comprehensive enough to meet your priority needs
14. Your awareness of the availability of funds for the implementation of planned activities
15. To what extent you are satisfied about the overall IRAP process
16. What additional aspects you propose to include in the IRAP process