



Evaluation Summaries

Evaluation: *The Income Recovery Technical Assistance Programme (IRTAP) project*

Quick Facts

Countries: Sri Lanka
Final Evaluation: Aug 2007
Mode of Evaluation: Independent
Technical Area: Economic Development
Evaluation Management: ILO Sri Lanka
Evaluation Team: Samantha S. Pathirathna
Project Start: Oct 2005
Project End: Sep 2007
Project Code: SRL/05/07NOR
Donor: Norway US \$ 1,839,000
Keywords: Income generation, Economic recovery

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The Income Recovery Technical Assistance Programme (IRTAP) project was started in October, 2005 to uplift the ongoing Income Recovery Programme of the Task Force for the Rebuilding of the Nation (TAFREN) which later became Reconstruction and Development Agency (RADA). RADA covered four sectors: “Get people back into homes”; ‘Get people back to work’; ‘Provide education, health and protection for all’; and ‘Upgrade national infrastructure’. Sectors relating to income recovery and security have been brought together under the heading “Get People Back to Work” which was the main responsibility of the **Livelihood Unit** of RADA. The IRTAP was established by ILO to continue its support through RADA by providing technical assistance to carry out its tasks in the tsunami affected areas.

IRTAP was projected to operate until the end of February 2007. A no cost extension was granted which extended the project life until August 31, 2007.

The Tripartite approach of RADA, CHA and FCCISL would also be an approach to strengthen the coordination and planning mechanism in the livelihood intervention with the special programme linked to the IRTAP. The IRTAP project has provided a coordination mechanism which started at the village level, divisional level and district level to national level by addressing the livelihood needs with implementing agencies and activated through government administration body.

IRTAP decided to carry out an independent assessment to review the outputs and impact of the technical assistant to the programme. PASS Research and Consultancy (Private) Limited, one of the leading Research, Consulting and Training firms in Sri Lanka signed a contract to carry out the final evaluation of IRTAP.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the impact made by the technical assistance provided by the IRTAP at the national and regional levels and its contribution towards planning, coordination and facilitating the role of RADA. In this project evaluation, an attempt was made to highlight that the focus was on the organization which partnered with IRTAP and how they respond to this evaluation.

IRTAP was working with both district level partners (of Kalutara, Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Ampara, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Mullaitthivu, Kilinochchi and Jaffna Districts) and the national level stakeholder institutions. So, the basic understanding was utilized for the sampling of the project evaluation. National and district level potential key informants were identified and subjected for individual / focused group discussions at the respective levels.

As this Project Evaluation was rapid, yet comprehensive, the firm proposed a sampling. Six districts were proposed as the Sample Districts for field level visits by the IET. The next four districts were subjected for evaluation through the reference of secondary sources. Therefore, the final list of Sample Districts consisted of Galle, Hambantota, Ampara, Trincomalee, Jaffna and Kilinochchi. Among a list of comprehensive tools, which were used for project evaluation as appropriate, a combination of tools were utilized per organization or level at which the evaluation was targeted.

Present situation of project

The DLDPs for the nine affected districts were launched except for Mullaiththivu district which was not launched due to the prevailing security situation in the North. So far 738 projects had been committed and the cumulative budget for the committed, on going and completed DLDP projects is Rs. 1532.31 million, benefited by 103,024 beneficiaries.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

Purpose of the evaluation was to assess the impact made by the technical assistance provided by the IRTAP at the national and regional levels and its contribution towards planning, coordination and facilitating the role of RADA.

Therefore, the final list of Sample Districts consisted of districts from the main three provinces where Tsunami severely affected. The members of the evaluation team executed the field data collection with two separate schedules for national level and district level respondents.

Methodology of evaluation

Methodologies included: Participatory Critical Brainstorming Technique (PCBT); Focus Group Discussion (FGD); Semi Structured Questionnaires (SSQ); Comprehensive Questionnaire (CQ); and Stakeholder Analysis (SA).

Main Findings & Conclusions

The IRTAP became effective with the appointment of the Chief Technical Advisor on October 15, 2005 and was projected to operate until the end of February 2007. A no cost extension was granted which extended the project life until August 31, 2007. With the support of the ILO, the World Bank and UNDP, RADA has conceptualized the required income recovery assistance under the following three broad types of instruments:

- **Temporary Income Transfers:** focusing on those affected by the Tsunami disaster who have lost their capacity to earn an income or for whom there is no work. Cash assistance will continue for sometime, especially to vulnerable categories such as widows, orphans and the disabled, until they are brought under the coverage of existing Government social assistance programmes;
- **Cash-for-work:** comprising immediate temporary income creation through small-scale community and public works programmes that will generate livelihoods for those who are able and willing to work; and
- **Support to revive and develop economic activities:** that will move women and men out of dependency to restore previously existing livelihoods and to improve upon them, and to reduce poverty. The initiatives include finance (grants and loans), business promotion, training and other services. The need for support to the recovery of income was addressed at both national and regional levels. In response to the need to address the challenges of co-ordinating and monitoring the delivery of income recovery activities, both at central and district levels, the ILO's IRTAP proposed a development objective and development strategy to continue and direct its support to the government in sustaining the recovery process.

The Development Objective of the IRTAP was to contribute to the (re-) establishment of the sustainable livelihoods for the tsunami affected population and more generally to the reconstruction and poverty reduction in the tsunami affected districts.

The Development Strategy was to provide technical assistance to the RADA livelihood unit, and to the related responsible local and national government authorities to enable RADA to implement the income recovery strategy. This was done by strengthening their capacities at the central, district and local levels to coordinate the target and guide the livelihood recovery efforts.

Conclusions:

It can be concluded that the project concept, approach, instruments, publications and the subsequent support documents and materials were at a very high standard both technically and

professionally. The stakeholders and staff of IRTAP rank the above attributes highly.

- It is also concluded that the practical understanding and operationalization of the project concept and approach focusing on the three main activities are satisfactory at the national level. • It can be concluded that the practical value of the DLDPs is not fully utilized in the districts and divisions.
- In the districts, the intervention for planning and coordination is a timely input as the district initiated coordination was a requirement in all districts. This intervention was made at times when the district coordination was in a mess in certain districts.
- It is concluded that among the studies carried out, NASIR series is popular among district and divisional staff and national level stakes. However, in some cases, the studies have not reached the bottom level of the project players.
- It is concluded that the sub-contracting for the formulation of DLDP's have compromised the quality and standards proposed for the methodology.
- IRTAP has performed well with the three partners (RADA, CHA and FCCISL) it has worked with. Also, it has become possible to work with different players. Hence, this approach of partnership is a model for other project interventions.
- Start of the military activities in North and East has adversely affected the target achievement and full scale implementation of IRTAP activities.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the DLDPs should be subjected to at least another revision and updating to increase the practical value and applicability.
- It is recommended that the mechanism on the Income Recovery Technical Assistance be continued for another year. This will help to build the capacity of officers at the district level of coordination and the officers will themselves work for the sustainability of the intervention. This extension can even be utilized for the timely updating and the implementation of DLDP's.
- It is recommended that in the war affected districts, the technical assistance for livelihood recovery must be strategic and specific to accommodate the IDP resettlement requirements as well. If not, the Income Recovery should be a major component of the overall programme in that area.

- For the livelihood recovery at district and divisional levels, it is recommended to take utilize the lessons of the pilot strategy for the public/private development sector partnership model for future project implementation.
- It is recommended that project interventions work closely with the respective local authority. This can be initiated and maintained through a formal agreement or commitment with the higher authority, e.g. local government ministries. Further, a strong policy level strategy is recommended to integrate these local government bodies.
- It is recommended that with the project phasing out, all the activities and outputs initiated and led by IRTAP are more systematically, formally and procedurally handed over to the national, district and divisional stakeholders and administrators. The national level stakeholders can also include private and finance institutions as they can play a major role in implementing the projects identified under DLDP's. For this purpose also, IRTAP can organize district and national level forums similar to the one practiced for the launching of DLDP's.
- It is further recommended to design, organize and facilitate a national level lessons learning workshop with the active participation of all district and national level players to identify, document and publish positive and negative lessons, best practices and sustainability measures mainly focusing on the livelihood recovery technical assistance and the project management.
- It is recommended to follow both open and competitive bidding procedures and purposive selection as appropriate in the selection of service providers to assure the competitive advantages and quality of service delivery, consisting of different types of service providers. To this effect, it is further recommended to consider the 'cost and quality' based selection approach than considering the cost alone.
- It is recommended that the LED needs considerable support to continue with achievements. Back to Business is a good start but other regional players like development banks and micro-finance institutions, service providers and rural and regional SMEs and entrepreneurs are also needed to be consolidate gains achieve by the project.
- It is recommended to introduce the CAPS data base to other relevant ministries so that the data base will have high use value.