

DRAFT

**IMPACT MONITORING APPROACHES AND INDICATORS****EXPERIENCE OF GTZ SUPPORTED MULTI-SECTORAL  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN ASIA**

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Why This Study ?

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) has been an important topic of ongoing discussion among the Regional Rural Development (RRD) and Poverty Alleviation (PA) related projects supported under German Technical Assistance (GTZ) in the Asian Region. In 1991 GTZ organized a one-week long workshop on M&E in Kathmandu. A Regional Working Group (RWG) on Monitoring and Evaluation was formed in 1992 as a sub-group of Sector Network - RRD Asia. Eleven projects from seven Asian countries were represented in the RWG. Three regional workshops were held by the RWG during 1992 to 1994 focusing on important thematic issues on M&E and a summary status report was prepared in 1996 (IMU: 1996). The status and achievements of the RWG was discussed in the Sixth Asian Regional Rural Development Workshop held in Kathmandu in May 1996.

Impact Monitoring (IM) stood out as a major issue in all of these deliberations. While the projects usually do have a good system for inputs and outputs (or result) monitoring, almost all projects face difficulty in instituting appropriate systems for impact monitoring due to conceptual problems as well as the complexity of designing and implementing the monitoring system. Consequently, IM do not receive as much attention in the M&E framework of individual projects as it deserves.

The issue of IM was a major discussion theme during the Sixth Asian RRD Workshop. In the past the primary objective of project M&E system was to control project performance. Impact monitoring and/or assessment was considered largely a role of external evaluators. There is now an increasing recognition world wide -- both among bilateral and multilateral donor agencies -- on the need and importance of instituting IM as part of the overall M&E system. In addition to the control function, M&E system should enable the project management to steer the project towards achievement of the specified purpose and goal. Besides, donors, including Germany, are more and more concerned about "impacts" of development assistance. The Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is now putting greater emphasis on assessment project impact. GTZ needs to prove that projects are achieving their intended purpose and contributing to the desired goal of Technical Assistance (GTZ: 1996a).

The workshop recognized the complexities and the difficulties involved in impact monitoring -- ranging from the problems of identification and measurement of indicators to attribution of impact to individual projects. Nonetheless, all participants agreed on the need to institute IM as part of the ongoing project M&E framework. The workshop concluded that IM indicators that are clear, comprehensive and easy to measure are an essential need of the projects and some indicators that are valid for more than one project may be possible to develop. Documentation on the methods and instruments of IM practiced by the RRD/PA (FN 1) projects in the region could provide useful insights and guidelines for ongoing as well as new projects. It was proposed and agreed that a resource manual on impact monitoring containing methods, instruments and indicators which have been tested and applied in the region be prepared.

### 1.2 Objective and Target Group

**The main objective of the study is to prepare a catalogue (or resource manual) on IM approaches and indicators that are relevant, cost effective, manageable and tested in the region based on the experience of the GTZ supported RRD/PA projects.** A similar attempt in the past has not been practical enough (FN 2). The intention of this study, therefore, is not to prepare simply another generalized manual or indicator bank but to review actual experiences of projects in different countries of the region in order to identify and document the approaches, methods and indicators that are actually being used for IM. In this sense the study aims at putting together in one document the diverse project experiences which could be used by both ongoing and new projects for appropriate adoption and improvement in their own IM system.

The second objective is to review and synthesize the important conceptual issues relating to EM and assessment, highlighting the general practices of major donor agencies including GTZ. This would enable project monitoring staff to understand the complexity and difficulties involved in monitoring and assessing impact and indicate various factors that need to be considered in designing an IM system.

The primary target group for this report is the GTZ project management related to the RRD/PA projects --

Team Leaders and persons in charge for monitoring. The report would also be of use to partner institutions who could get a general introduction to the GTZ approach and expectation relating to M&E. This report also complements well to the more general conceptual "Monitoring" orientation prepared by the GTZ Headquarters recently (GTZ, 1983) (FN 3).

### 1.3 The Study Process

A proposal was prepared and sent to twenty RRD/PA projects in twelve Asian countries requesting their participation in the study and also to provide project related documents and information. Fourteen projects from nine countries indicated positive interest. Usable information and documents were obtained from ten projects (see Annex 1)

The study is based on information from three main sources.

- Review of general literature on [M&E](#) \*.
- Review of project documents; and
- Response to a questionnaire from the RRD/PA projects in the region.

Throughout the process, cooperation and support was received from GTZ HQs -- OE 042 Quality Assurance (Volker Steigerwald), OE 425 P&E (Wolfgang Wiesner). Constant conceptual backstopping and organizational support was received from Uwe Kievefitz, OE 425 P&E Regional Advisor for South Asia based in GTZ Kathmandu.

#### 1.3.1 Literature Review

Both conceptual and major donor specific literature were reviewed. We have not attempted to be exhaustive in the literature review since this was not the primary objective of the study. Nevertheless, the most recent conceptual documents of major donors as well as international specialists were consulted (see Bibliography). It has been adequate for synthesizing the important issues and general practices in [M&E](#).

#### 1.3.2 Review of Project Documents

Substantial information was available on the general [M&E](#) status and approaches of GTZ projects from the workshop documents of the RWG on [M&E](#) (GTZ: 1991b; CUP: 1993b; TGHDP: 1993; IMU: 1996). They were not, however, adequate for the needs of this study. Obtaining additional information and documents from projects has not been easy. The level of interest and response from projects differed -- a few projects cooperated consistently providing promptly all the requested information and pertinent documents. These were also the projects which had a clearer concept of IM and had attempted to operationalise the same. Response from others -- naturally from projects where little has been done to monitor the impacts and therefore had fewer information to share -- were not as encouraging. Therefore, it has not been possible to review all relevant documents of the projects. Also IM related efforts of projects are not all documented in the form that can be readily transmitted. Thus the document review may not do justice to the actual efforts and experience of projects in this field.

#### 1.3.3 Questionnaire Administration

In order to take care of the problem of incomplete information, a detailed questionnaire was administered to the projects which had initially indicated to participate in the study. The questionnaire solicited responses on two major aspects of IM -- 'approaches' and 'indicators' -- and included nine specific questions (see Annex 2). Responses were received from the following nine projects representing seven countries.

- Pak-German Integrated Rural Development Project (FRDP), Mardan, Pakistan
- Indo-German Changer Eco-Development Project (IGCEDP), India
- Gorkha Development Project (GDP) (FN 4), Nepal
- Churia Forest Development Project (ChFDP), Nepal
- Marginal and Small Farms Systems Crop Intensification Project (MSFSCIP), Bangladesh

- Thai-German Highland Development Project (TGHDP), Thailand
- Philippine-German Cebu Upland Project (CUP), Philippines
- Bondoc Development Program (BDP), Philippines
- ESP Shandong Project, China

The analysis in the report is further supplemented, where appropriate, by information from the following projects on which relevant information were available.

- Community Based Integrated Rural Development (CRUM), Chakarat, Thailand
- SEAMO - TROPMED, Indonesia, and
- Dhading Development Project (DDP), Nepal

### **1.3.4 Limitations**

The initial study proposal was quite optimistic compared to what we have been able to document in this report. First, there was paucity of project related specific information and documents. Second, in spite of the positive interest, the enthusiasm and response from the projects were not very encouraging. Third, the task itself was quite ambitious considering the complex issue and the problem of coordination with the large number of projects in so many countries having diverse focus. The objective of cataloguing "indicators that are relevant, cost effective, manageable and tested in the region" seemed, with hindsight, a tremendous task to fulfill justifiably even if we had access to substantially more resources and project related information. In fact, the objective initially set seemed quite elusive. The experience has been valuable in the sense that there could be no standard and meaningful set of indicators useful for diverse projects across countries at different levels of development. There could only be diverse indicator, measuring the same parameter of impact; projects need to adopt individual indicators according to given context. In this sense, the catalogue of indicators that we have been able to put together in this report should be quite useful as a reference.

## **1.4 Organization of the Report**

The report is organized into six Chapters. This introductory Chapter is followed by Chapter 2 which discusses the concept, experience and trends on monitoring and evaluation with focus on impact monitoring. The GTZ concept of M&E within the ZOPP planning framework and the Project Cycle Management is elaborated and emerging trend based on general experiences are discussed. The chapter also outlines important issues related to impact monitoring and evaluation. General donor experiences in impact monitoring and approaches are discussed in Chapter 3. Practice, experiences and approaches of GTZ supported RRD/PA projects in the Asian region are described in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 contains the concepts and issues of monitoring indicators and lists a catalogue of impact indicators -- classified into major categories of indicators reflecting changes in living conditions, indicators on capacity building, and indicators on natural resource management -- being used by the projects under review. Chapter 6 provides a brief summary, presents the-study conclusions and raises some policy issues.

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## **Notes**

1. Throughout this report the term RRD/PA (Regional Rural Development / Poverty Alleviation) projects has been used to refer to the multi-sectoral rural development projects.

2. See Team Consult (1989): Indicator bank for Rural Regional Development Programs and Projects. The document provides a good guidelines for specification of indicators and lists comprehensive sets of parameter and indicator for RRD projects at the goal, purpose and output level together with the rationale, definition, validity, cost indication, and instruction for data collection. Somehow, this document does not seem to have been widely used by Asian projects -- perhaps due to the fact that the indicator lists are too general and without specific context. It would be impossible to avoid this problem for any document that aims at a larger audience with diverse characteristics, e.g. the nature and focus of RRD projects in Asia.

We feel that this document is still a good reference material for methodological guideline in elaboration of identified indicators. Another useful reference document for general conceptual issues in identification of indicators and their elaboration is Krimmel et al (1990).

3. The recent update in the conception of GTZ M&E in this report is based on the draft report of GTZ entitled

"Monitoring und Evaluierung" (see GTZ: 1997b). There has been further development in the GTZ

4. Gorkha Development Project also represents the impact monitoring system and experience of Rural Development through Self-help Promotion - Lamjung (RDSP-L), another RRD project that is implemented in a contiguous district of Gorkha and is also under a unified Project Management.

\* M&E conception and the finalized version is now titled "Project Monitoring" which is in print and is expected to be available in both German and English versions by end of May 1998.