

to a great degree. The Project has seen substantial outcomes particularly in the area of small-scale infrastructure development by using the CCS and also in some areas of agricultural skills development.

The Project was also able to conduct genuine participatory CAP on the ground which served as a basis for undertaking a range of livelihood improvement activities including infrastructure, agriculture and off-farm skills development without causing confusion or antagonism among villagers. The key stakeholders of community development now understand the efficacy of CAP and recognise the importance of having a Divisional level coordinating body such as PIC, which is leading to increased and animated participation of frontline government officials in their extension work to the target communities.

The Project, however, is not without shortcomings. The main shortcomings include insufficient function of PIC and insufficient effectiveness of off-farm income generation training. Having said that, it is still reasonable to conclude that the Project is successful in implementing, or facilitating the implementation of, a total of 224 identified action plans, out of those 387 plans suggested by the communities. The action plans implemented are generally well received by the communities and the Project was able to earn recognition from a range of stakeholders in development and to garner support from relevant government and non-government organisations. Therefore, the level of achievement of the project purpose should be considered to be high.

### 3.5. Prospect of the achievement of the overall goal

The overall goal is set as "Income and livelihood of the people in areas within Hambantota and Southern Province will be improved by introducing the community approach programme for participatory rural development, which is acknowledged by stakeholders through the project". Table 34 below summarizes the indicators, present situation and prospect of the level of the achievement regarding each indicator.

Table 34 Prospect of the achievement of the overall goal

Indicator	Present situation	Present level of achievement
1. Proportion of households whose income increased in GN divisions formulated CAPs in Hambantota district.	Data not available (Analysis of qualitative data: achieved to a certain extent)	N/A (Analysis of qualitative data: Moderate)
2. Number of GN Division who formulate CAP in Hambantota district.	No CAPs are formulated except for those target areas undertaken by the Project	Low
3. Proportion of CCS projects formulated and implemented from formulated CAPs.	No CCS projects are formulated and implemented from CAPs except for those target areas undertaken by the Project	Low

**Indicator 1** (Level of achievement: N/A)

As explained in the section of “Indicator 4” in 3.5, reliable data pertaining to the household income in the target GN Divisions was not available. It is not possible at this point in time to judge if the community members will be able to raise their income level three to five years after the Project is terminated. However, anecdotal information from the interviewed community members suggests that if the infrastructure developed and agricultural techniques transferred to the community members continue to be used and applied in an effective manner, the prospect of people increasing their household income is relatively high. Other off-farm income generation activity, however, has many challenges as explained earlier. Therefore, the overall assessment of the achievement of this indicator based on the qualitative data should be ‘moderate’.

**Indicator 2** (Level of achievement: Low)

At the time of the evaluation, no GN Divisions (apart from those already included in the Project) in the Hambantota District had embarked upon formulating CAPs. Although the concerned Sri Lankan governments, in corporation with the Project team, were attempting to expand the CAP approach to outside the Project areas, no tangible outputs had been produced so far.

**Indicator 3** (Level of achievement: Low)

As was the case with Indicator 2, CCS projects had not been formulated or implemented outside the Project areas.

**Prospect of the achievement of the Overall Goal: Moderate**

Impact of the Project is very closely related to sustainability of the Project in that continuation of the project activities and production of outputs three to five years after the Project’s termination is the key to make impact in wider areas of Hambantota. In this sense, it is very difficult to accurately assess impact because foreseeing the future direction of the Project is still very much in uncertainty.

It is true that there have been some attempts to integrate the CAP approach in existing community development systems. Some GN Divisions have produced Village Development Plans (VDPs), which is a government-led rural development initiative, by incorporating CAP. Another GN Division attempted to synthesise the VDP with the village-level development plans made by CARE International.

In some GN Divisions, the village level coordination body, Village Coordination Committee (VCC), set up by the Project has been incorporated into “Jana Sabha Coordination Committee” in order to avoid duplication of interventions by different development institutions and also to centrally channel resources and funds from external assistances. The forthcoming “Jana Sabha Act” by the Ministry of



Economic Development, which tries to legislate the Jana Sabha system, has a great stake in ensuring the long-term effectiveness of the function of Jana Sabha. The Project's impact is highly dependent on the policy framework to be set by this Act.

### **3.6. Issues concerning project implementation and management**

Although most of the activities were implemented without delay, there were several issues concerning the project implementation system.

The major issue was the insufficient involvement of the CP. For example, while the APMs have not been able to spend more than two days a week for the Project, the national staff employed by the Project often took important roles to substitute for the CP, conducting frequent field monitoring and solving problems faced by the communities. As a result, technical skills and knowledge, particularly in the areas of CAP formulation and overall project management, were often transferred not to the CP but to the national staff, who were not included in the government institutions and subject to leave after the Project.

The community member often pointed to the fact that frequent monitoring and technical advice given by the Project Team contributed immensely to the success of the community's individual projects. This in turn means that without appropriate monitoring system, activities on the ground are hard to manage. Without the members of the Project Team, and only with CPs' limited opportunities to spend time in the field, it may be difficult to maintain the current level of monitoring at the community level after the project terminates.

### **3.7. Hindering and promoting factors to the Project**

#### **3.7.1. Hindering factors**

The Team observed several factors which may hinder the implementation process and effects of the Project in certain ways.

##### **(1) Aid dependency and lack of ownership**

The Hambantota District, like other neighbouring Districts in the South, has suffered from colossal tsunami damage in 2004. The area received an unprecedented flux of external assistance after the incident. Together with nearly 30 years of experience of receiving international aid from multinational and bilateral aid agencies and NGOs, people in the Hambantota District are used to outside interventions which call upon very few endogenous efforts for development.

Such interventions tend to be patchy without much coordination among them and often short-term or one-off events without continuation. Given this situation, there is a tendency that the community members do not feel a sense of ownership over development interventions promoted by the external agencies.

In the field, the Project encountered difficulties encouraging villagers to take action and try new techniques and businesses, which were necessary for their livelihood improvement. Although some positive changes have been seen, particularly among community members, who undertook the core responsibilities of CCS, passive attitude about development is still deeply engrained in people in the area and this acted as a hindering factor to the Project.

(2) Insufficient involvement of the counterpart personnel

As already explained in the earlier section, insufficient involvement of the CP was one of the main hindering factors.

(3) Importance and difficulty of matching needs of the community

The Ihalakumbukwewa GN Division, which is now excluded in the scope of the Project, presented an issue concerning importance and difficulty of matching needs of the community with the project priority. The Project's feasibility study on the proposed construction reached a conclusion that it was not appropriate to undertake the work both from the technical and financial points of view. The GN Division was unable to reach consensus on which infrastructure work should be started mainly because their first priority project (the de-silting of the Ihalakumbukwewa tank) was not selected by VCC. Although the villagers concluded to give up the tank plan at the meeting, strong disappointment spread among some community members. Some influential local leaders then led to take action against the Project, agitating the rest of the community members to oppose to the whole project activities. The stakeholders of the Project, in the end, formally decided to exclude this GN Division from the scope of the Project because rectifying the situation filled with misunderstanding and non-cooperation was found impossible. This lesson tells us that it is very important for the community to get their pressing needs matched by the external assistance. If the external organisation fails to do so, even once, the community may refuse to work any further with the organisation due to the members' disappointment and/or anger. The organisation, on the other hand, has its own priority, time schedule, and work procedure as well as budget limitations and it is not always possible to meet the needs of the community. Therefore, it is often difficult to satisfy the community members by providing what they need. In such cases, further partnership building between the organisation and the community will become extremely difficult.

(4) Difficulty in coordination with relevant government and non-government organisations

Action plans proposed by the community through the CAP process can often include responsibilities of multiple government institutions such as agriculture, irrigation, health, social welfare, etc. Since the sectoral and regional governmental institutions in Sri Lanka are so complex that the Project had to spend a considerable amount of time identifying the line departments and coordinating related



institutions. A similar situation holds true with NGOs. A myriad of NGOs are active in the target Divisions. They have their own agenda, priorities and time schedule to accomplish their missions. Coordinating all these main stakeholders at the village and Divisional levels lowered efficiency of the Project.

(5) Disruption over the periods of election campaigns and preparations

The project activities were often disrupted due to various election campaigns and preparations. The government officials became too busy with election-related work to engage in the Project. The community members were also called upon for various meetings. Training, workshops and meeting the Project was planning to hold were often forced to cancellation or postponement. A day before and after the election day, the Project office was not able to open sometimes due to safety reasons and field activities were also disrupted.

(6) Influence of large-scale development projects in the area

The recent problem of the disruption of Karamatiya road and Kalawelkoliara canal in Weliwewa explained in 3.3.3 was created by the fact that the local authorities such as the Provincial Irrigation Department, Pradeshiya Sabha of the Sooriyawewa Division and the members of Sooriyawewa PIC were not informed of the impending large-scale development projects in the area. The development plan of the international airport, harbour, road networks and other large facilities by the central government was, in fact, announced and implemented abruptly without consultation with the said local authorities. The local authorities, without prior knowledge of the massive development plan, were not able to avoid the future problem of the Karamatiya road and Kalawelkoliara canal and proceeded to the implementation of the community plans on CCS, resulting in the physical damage of these infrastructure facilities in 2010.

The influence of such massive projects on villagers' everyday life is also observed. Many people are now engaged in manual work in construction sites and do not have time to attend meetings for CAP implementation. The villagers' interest in small community-based projects is considerably undermined because they think they can receive benefits from larger development projects without taking action by themselves.

Lastly, the large-scale construction sites are the areas where elephants used to live. It is very likely that loss of elephants' habitat will lead to intense human elephant conflict (HEC) where HEC is already fierce.

### **3.7.2. Promoting factors**

Apart from the hindering factors discussed in the previous section, there were also factors which may contribute to smooth implementation of the Project and to maximise the effects of the Project.

(1) Strong project team, appropriate expertise and professional networks

Communication between Japanese experts and national staff including Project Manager was maintained very effectively and, as a result, a strong team was developed over time. The Project also took advantage of professional networks built by Project Manager and Deputy Chief Advisor in their former government positions as agricultural experts. Such networks facilitated Project's smooth entrance into complex sectoral government institutions. The Project Team members, both Japanese and Sri Lankan, also possessed appropriate expertises in each sector so that the government officials had a lot to learn from them. These elements of the Project Team contributed immensely to effective and efficient project implementation.

(2) Capitalising on business potentials in a timely manner

In recent years, the Hambantota areas have seen large-scale development in and around the built-up areas, typified by construction of physical structures including the Hambantota harbour by the Chinese. The Chinese workers usually live in workers' quarters near the construction sites and stay there for an extended period of time. The number of such Chinese workers is significant and the demand for the food stuff of Chinese dishes is increasing, although it is still a niche market.

Taking this opportunity, the agriculture producers groups embarked upon cultivating Chinese vegetables such as Chinese kale, Pakchoy, Choi Sam, etc. The sales of such vegetables are accelerating despite the fact that the farmers involved in this activity have very limited experience in vegetable production.

There seems to be a high chance that these farmers groups will increase their household income significantly and raise their living standard in the medium- to long-term. Identifying and capturing the promising business opportunity was the key for success. The Project benefited from such business potential available in the target area.

(3) Collaboration with NGOs, HPPC and Gaja Mithuro Committees

During the process of implementation of CAPs, collaboration with various organisations, both government and non-government, was sought to achieve successful outcomes in an efficient manner. Among many collaborative cases, collaboration with CARE International in formulating VDP in some GN Divisions, HPPC in promoting processed food and handicrafts through the concept of OVOP, and Gaja Mithuro Committees in mitigating human-elephant conflict (HEC) are some of the most successful cases the Project benefited from.