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BUILDING SUSTAINABLE SERVICES AND ACHIEVING OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY THROUGH WATER OPERATORS' PARTNERSHIPS : ADB's WOPs PROGRAM

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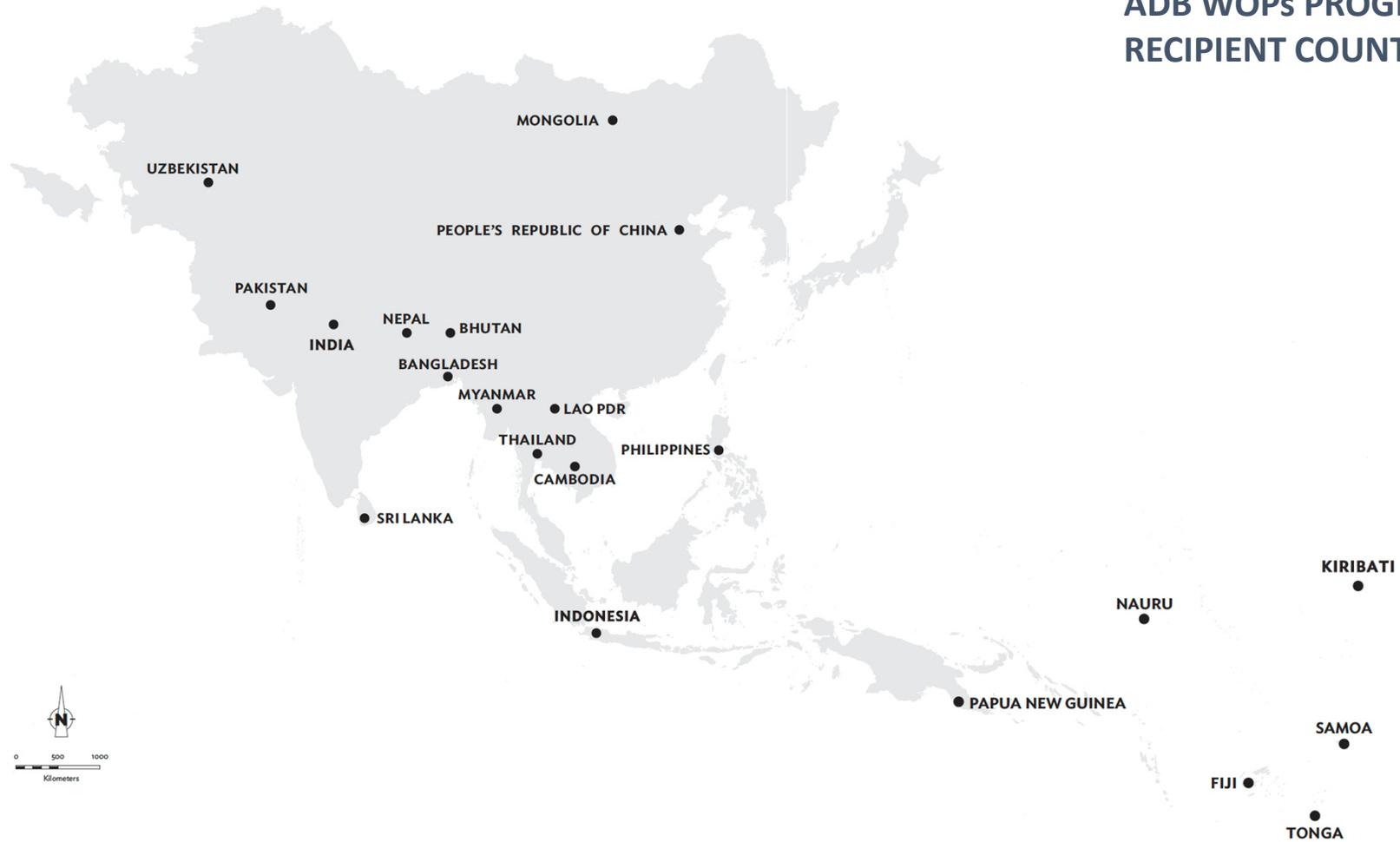
ADB WATER OPERATORS' PARTNERSHIPS (WOPs) PROGRAM

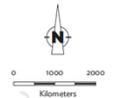
- ADB initiated the WOPs Program in 2007
- 80 WOPs in 21 countries supporting around \$1.1 billion worth of ADB-supported investments
- Improved service coverage and delivery, financial sustainability and overall performance
- Non-revenue water reduction, improved asset management practices for fecal sludge management, wastewater management, public-private partnerships and sustainability
- ADB WOPs duration average 16-18 months
- ADB financing up to \$50,000 per WOP





ADB WOPs PROGRAM RECIPIENT COUNTRIES





ADB WOPs PROGRAM MENTOR COUNTRIES





FINDINGS ON THE EVALUATION OF THE ADB WOPs PROGRAM

RELEVANCE

- Where WOPs support on-going projects, the added value was very high.
- In the absence of investment projects WOPs targeted improved operations.
- WOPs can become less relevant when investments programs are delayed.
- WOPs were designed with flexibility to adapt to the needs of the recipient.
- WOPs were all demand-driven and included a diagnostic exchange between recipient and mentor.

COHERENCE

- WOPs fully compatible with ADB interventions, and aligned with the needs of ADB clients.
- Facilitation of WOPs ensured alignment with project objectives and ADB's interventions.
- Improvement tracks proposed by WOPs were consistent with past/ongoing improvement efforts made by the mentor/recipient utility.
- High coherence of WOPs with new investments when emphasis on asset management and O&M.





FINDINGS ON THE EVALUATION OF THE ADB WOPs PROGRAM

EFFECTIVENESS

- High effectiveness and good results by WOPs with strong ownership and buy-in by the recipient and by the mentor.
- Targets were well designed not to be overly ambitious. They were achievable and realistic, understanding of utilities' constraints and staff capacity at the time.
- Peer-to-peer modality essential to build capacity and transfer skills vs. traditional methods of CD (consulting services). Peer-to-peer south-south is extremely effective, more results than formal training courses.

EFFICIENCY

- WOPs were implemented in a cost-efficient manner as only travel and logistical costs are covered, no staff-time is paid.
- More resources and investments in WOPs would be welcome to do more.
- Duration of WOPs (16-18 months) may not be sufficient. 3 years+ programs are desirable (Pacific).
- Careful selection of the partner utilities and the staff who participate in the WOP. Commitment is related to efficiency.
- Some WOPs moved from a voluntary unpaid arrangement to a paid arrangement.





FINDINGS ON THE EVALUATION OF THE ADB WOPs PROGRAM

IMPACT

- Outcomes for the clients, improved operations, technical and financial sustainability, are real development outcomes.
- WOPs not so successful in generating new projects to add to the investments portfolio.
- WOPs that come prior to the investment, carrying the diagnostic for pre-investment capacity more likely to generate impact.
- Short term vs. long-term phased WOPs. Capacity building requires long-term (8-9 years) programs.
- Although difficult to measure, all WOPs had social, economic and environmental impacts.

SUSTAINABILITY

- WOPs bring both long-term and short-term solutions outcomes.
- Shift from the fire-fighting mode. Setting up systems that can carry on and enhance over time and lay the foundations for long-term performance.
- Risks are related to brain-drain in the region and decline of the skill base, shortage of technicians, operators and vocational workers.
- Potential risks related to unexpected changes, delays in investments, political pressure.





FINDINGS ON THE EVALUATION OF THE ADB WOPs PROGRAM

REPLICABILITY

- Potential for twinning arrangements between municipalities and local governments, river basin organizations and irrigation operators.
- River Basin Organizations are rare in many countries. They present different administrative limits and stakeholders' expectations adding complexity.
- Peer-to-peer exchange is a good approach when stakeholders may have different interests at stake.
- Keep the flexibility of the WOP model. The design can be adapted to any sector.



**Water Organization
Partnerships for
Resilience (WOP4R)**





LESSONS LEARNED

- ✓ Strong ownership by partner utilities
- ✓ WOPs also impact institutional and organizational improvements
- ✓ Flexibility of the WOP model
- ✓ Long-term versus short-term WOPs
- ✓ WOPs are sufficiently funded but more could be done
- ✓ The importance of match-making
- ✓ Tools for the WOP cycle management
- ✓ The particular role of WOP facilitators





RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ADB WOPs and WOP4R

- ✓ Improve WOPs knowledge management
- ✓ Develop/adapt tools and methodologies to support the WOP cycle implementation, M&E
- ✓ Setting up a clear risk analysis and a mitigation strategy for future WOPs
- ✓ Consider longer-term WOPs (beyond 18 months) like 3+ years
- ✓ Better define the linkages between the WOP and the investment intervention with the client
- ✓ More WOPs on financial sustainability
- ✓ More efforts to measure the impact of the WOPs on social, economic and environmental aspects
- ✓ Keep the WOP4R model flexible. Start with something tangible and practical and build trust
- ✓ Explore opportunities for collaborations with other international and regional institutions





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