



Nias Islands Rural Access and Capacity Building Project (Nias-RACBP)

Objective:

For the residents of the participating districts to utilize improved rural transport infrastructure and services and benefit from enhanced access to economic and social services and facilities.

Key Partners:

- National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas)
- State Ministry for the Development of Disadvantaged Areas (KPDT)
- Provincial and District Planning Agencies (Bappeda)
- District Tourism Offices
- District Public Works Offices
- Contractor Associations
- District and Sub-district Offices
- PNPM (Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat) on Nias Islands
- Local Communities

Duration:

3 years (2009 – 2012)

Geographical Coverage:

4 districts and 1 municipality of Nias Islands, North Sumatra

Donor:



Multi-Donor Trust Fund for
Aceh and North-Sumatra
(MDFANS)

Budget:

USD 16,000,000

Contact:

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Project Description

The Nias RACBP was developed to contribute to the post-disaster economic recovery and poverty alleviation of the communities on the Island of Nias affected by the tsunami and earthquake of 2004 and 2005 respectively. The project is financed through the Multi-Donor Fund for Aceh and North Sumatra (MDF). At the end of 2009, the Government and MDF prioritised the use of the remaining MDF funds as follows: for infrastructure improvements; institutional support; improving capacities; and enhanced sustainability of the investments already made.

The RACBP was building on approaches and lesson learnt of the Road Project implemented by ILO in Nias until 2009. The aims of the Nias RACBP are consistent with the country strategy for poverty reduction and sustainable resource management, as well as those of the Government/ MDF funding priorities.

The MDF is financing two closely linked projects on Nias, (i) the Nias-RACBP (USD 16 million) implemented by ILO and (ii) the Nias Livelihood Economic Development Project (Nias-LEDP) (USD 8.2 million) implemented by the State Ministry for the Development of Disadvantaged Areas. Nias-RACBP focuses on the improvement of the rural transport network in areas targeted for livelihood and economic development by the Nias-LEDP.

The Nias-RACBP consists of two components:

- 1 **Construction Works**, including cost-effective, durable and environmentally-sound construction and maintenance of strategic rural roads, trails and bridge access, and construction of a water supply system in the traditional village of Bawomataluo (USD 10.7 million), plus the rehabilitation / reconstruction of traditional cultural heritage facilities, accessible to the public (USD 1.1 million).
- 2 **Training and Capacity building**: This component (USD 4.2 million) aims to enhance the capacity of the involved local government agencies at district and sub-district level, small-scale contractors and local communities in the planning and delivery of investments in the rural transport network. This component also aims to increase the awareness of the importance of cultural heritage preservation.

In December 2011, the Project secured additional funding from the MDF of USD 4.2 million, bringing the budget total to USD 16 million. The project also received a time extension to 31 December 2012 to complete the revised outcomes included under the two components.

Project Strategy

The project maximizes economic benefits, for local community members through the provision of strategically targeted and durable rural access improvements for their use. These improvements facilitate principally economic benefits but also bring social benefits. Individual activity selections are based on agreed criteria and participatory prioritization procedures, with emphasis on serving the location of the Nias-LEDP's economic activities.

The Nias-RACBP seeks to provide cost-effective solutions to accessibility challenges in areas of Nias with very difficult terrain and site conditions. To this end optimal use is made of local labour and locally available construction materials, in combination with appropriate equipment. While initial construction costs are slightly higher than were originally anticipated in the original project document, the resulting benefit to the government and the end users is longer lasting, more durable and safe transport infrastructure. At the same time as improving the roads, trails and bridges, there is a conscious effort to reduce the future maintenance burden on the local community and local government, through judicious design choices, use of durable materials and strong construction quality control.

Environmentally-friendly construction approaches and techniques are being used, such as emulsion bitumen techniques for road works, utilization of bamboo trees for slope stabilization measures and grass planting to prevent soil erosion.

The construction works and the training/capacity building are complementary to each other and mutually reinforcing. Training in design, document preparation, fabrication and construction are complemented by training in community/ worker relations, site supervision and quality control. On-the-job training and mentorship are provided for the local construction industry, young job seekers, community groups and government staff.

The physical works implemented through the cultural heritage part of the project aim to improve



the fabric of the local buildings needing restoration work, and to contribute to enhancing public awareness and ownership of Nias's cultural assets. It also facilitates sustainable public utilization and preservation of Nias's unique cultural heritage and the safeguarding of traditional construction techniques.

Nias-RACBP works through the existing local administration (Camats and Village leadership and committees) while ensuring wider community involvement in decision-making.

Project Achievements

The accessibility target for the project is the improvement / construction of 75 km of roads and trails and 1200m of bridges. By end of 2011, 18 km of roads, 40 km of motorbike trails and 1,100 m of trail bridges are under construction by 30 local private contractors and 56 community groups or TPK (Tim Pengelola Konstruksi). The construction which started in mid 2010 is expected to be completed by October 2012.

Considering the experiences gained and the realities in the field of working in very challenging and remote areas, RACBP decided to follow the successful community empowerment approach, where local communities, through community-based contracts, undertake the construction works for the elements of the roads, trails and bridges that are within their capacity. The works done by local communities have been successful and have proved a better option for overcoming many of the challenges in building roads, trails and bridges on difficult sites.

Nias-RACBP is working with Museum Pusaka Nias on the rehabilitation of cultural heritage assets

(135 traditional houses and 4 megalith sites). Rehabilitation works on 27 traditional houses have been completed and the ongoing works on 52 traditional houses and 4 megalith sites are expected to be completed by February 2012. Preservation works on an additional 56 houses will be started in March 2012. The preparation of a final design and contract documentation (principally for community-based contracts) for the construction of a water supply for the traditional village of Bawomataluo in South Nias will start in January 2012.

In terms of capacity building, the total project target is for 3,100 days of classroom training and 22,800 days of on-the-job training. The project has successfully completed 2 batches of a four-month practical training course for 42 locally recruited site supervisors – 30 per cent of whom were women. The graduates are working for a minimum of six months as site supervisors for the Project's roads and trails. They are expected to assist in the delivery of effective site management and good quality works now and beyond the life of the project. In addition, training has been provided to local contractors, and communities. Now that the local government re-organisation on Nias has been substantially completed, the original training needs assessment for government officials has been up-dated and will be utilised for the planned government capacity building.

Seven vocational school students have completed their apprenticeship works on traditional houses rehabilitation, focusing on carpentry skills. It is hoped that the local government would be able to replicate this training programme in the future.

Local, provincial and national government has benefited from knowledge exchange and idea sharing through workshops and exposure visits on rural accessibility and cultural heritage.

The women and men from local communities benefit through developing skills in labour-based road, trail and bridge construction and through the wage income associated with their participation in community-contracting for simple works, and work for commercial contractors.

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