

Summary

1. Outline of the Project	
Country : Republic of Nicaragua	
Project title : Project for Strengthening of SILAIS Granada	
Issue/Sector : Community Health	
Cooperation scheme : Technical Cooperation Program	
Division in charge : Human Development Dpt. 4 th Division	
Total cost : 499,000,000 yen	
Period of cooperation	(R/D) : October 31, 2000 (Implementation) : December 1, 2000 – November 30, 2004
	Partner Country's Implementing Organization : Ministry of Health (MINSA) Supporting Organization in Japan : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Department, Tokyo University • National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Health, Labour and Welfare Ministry • SHARE
Related Cooperation : Grant Aid for "Hospital of Japan-Nicaragua Friendship (HAJN)" and "Improvement of Medical Centers in the Pacific Coast Area"	
1-1. Background of the Project	
<p>In the Republic of Nicaragua, the health sector reform has been promoted, which includes the strengthening of the Local System of Integral Health Attention (SILAIS) of Granada and the integration of prevention and medical attention in order to offer equitable and effective health services to the population. Supporting such efforts, in 1997 Japan implemented the grant aid for remodeling the Granada Hospital (present Friendship Hospital of Japan-Nicaragua). On the other hand, to reinforce the local health system it was necessary not only to improve the hospital but also to establish the reference and counter reference system between the primary level of attention such as health centers and the secondary level such as the hospital, and also to improve quality of health staff who works in the network of health attention. In this situation, it required the Project to strengthen the SILAIS Granada, including the improvement of the reference-counter reference between the Granada Hospital and the health institutions of the primary level of attention.</p>	
1-2. Project Overview	
(1) Overall Goal	
Improve health status of population in the Department of Granada	
(2) Project Purpose	
Improve the health status of the population in the communities of all regions, especially those who belong to the risk group (children under 5 and women of childbearing age) through the health services with better quality in the community, and in the primary level of health attention, under the decentralization policy of the Health Ministry.	
(3) Outputs	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The participation of the community is increased in the efforts to solve the health problems. 2. With the medical equipment and the training of the personnel, the primary health units improve their capacity for better medical services and to solve health problems. 3. The mechanisms of reference and counter reference in the community between the primary and secondary level is strengthened. 4. The administrative capacity of the directive groups of the SILAIS Granada and its municipal offices is 	

improved.

(4) Inputs (as of the Project's termination)

Japanese side :	Long-term Experts : 7	Short-term Experts : 20
	Trainees received : 16	Equipment : 75,000,000 yen
	Local cost : 58,000,000 yen	
Nicaraguan side :	Counterpart : 14	Local cost, land and facilities

2. Evaluation Team

Members of	Yuki Ohashi : Consultant, Interworks Co., Ltd.	
Team	Betty Soto Vásquez : Teacher/ Researcher, Centre for Investigation and Study on Health (CIES)	
Study Period	November 6, 2007 – November 11, 2007	Type of Evaluation : Ex-post

3. Project Performance

3-1. Performance of Project Purpose

The transition of the indicators of the Project Purpose proved that although the performance of those indicators such as the family planning, prenatal control, institutional delivery, puerperal control, examination of uterus cancer, and attention in VPCD (Monitoring, Promotion, Growth and Development) for the children was affected significantly in 2005 and 2006 by the strikes of the unions of physicians, it has been improved according to the latest data (up to September 2007). Therefore, it can be expected that the final data of 2007 also will result in better than previous years. In terms of the cover ratio of vaccines and the number of cases which could be prevented by vaccines, they have been improved continuously since 2005.

Regarding the Output 1, according to the result of survey for the personnel of SILAIS Granada, they evaluated that the participation of the communities has been increased, and the community activities such as midwives, brigadistas (health volunteers) and COL-VOL (workers for the prevention against malaria) and groups of adolescents have been generally maintained. Regarding the Output 2, the result of the survey identified that the capacity of health units of the primary level has improved, and the trainings and the activities of basic health team (EBS) have been maintained. With respect to the maintenance of the equipment of the health units, it was identified that there were cases which did not fulfill the plan of maintenance properly and in time. In terms of the Output 3, although the quantitative data did not show the improvement of reference and counter reference, the survey evaluated that the system of reference and counter reference has been improved, since the collaboration between all service networks has been strengthened, especially through the joint meetings between those primary and secondary health units. However, it was identified that the counter references needed to be strengthened further. Regarding the Output 4, the survey showed that the administrative capacity of SILAIS and the collaboration with NGOs as well as other donors have been improved, and then the activities to improve health status have been maintained. However, it is still necessary to improve the maintenance of the equipment donated to the main office and the municipal offices of SILAIS Granada.

3-2. Achievement related to Overall Goal

The maternal mortality has diminished year after year. Regarding the infantile mortality (children under 1 year old), mortality of the children under 5, and mortality of the children under 5 by Acute Diarrhea Disease (ADD) and Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI), in general they have been improved significantly in 2007 although they were affected by the strikes and epidemic of Rota virus in 2005 and 2006.

3-3. Follow-up of the Recommendations by Terminal Evaluation Study

In the final evaluation of the Project the following recommendations were made: 1) investigate the feasibility to

develop a new project on the health of adolescents and reproductive health, 2) give sufficient follow-ups so that the results of the project can be firmly fixed, 3) continue the monitoring of the activities and trainings in the coordination with other donors, and 4) the Japanese experts and Nicaraguan counterparts should continue making the academic presentation based on the knowledge and techniques gained through the Project. Regarding the 1), the "Project for the Strengthening of Sexual and Reproductive Health for Adolescents of Nicaragua" has been implemented since November 2005. In terms of the 2), SILAIS Granada carried out the follow-ups and got good results in general, and on 3) the collaboration with NGOs and donors was maintained as they were mentioned above. With respect to the 4), it has been identified that the Japanese experts and counterparts of SILAIS Granada have given several times the presentation on the Project. Therefore, it was confirmed that the sufficient follow-ups were given to the recommendations.

4. Results of Evaluation

4-1. Summary of Evaluation Results

(1) Impact

As it was indicated in the "Performance of the Overall Goal", the indicators of the health status in the Department of Granada have been improved in 2007. With the new policy of the Model of Integral Health Attention (MAIS), the continuous improvement of the indicators can be expected although still there are weaknesses in the provision of services and in the uncontrollable negative external factors. Therefore, it can be said that the expected impact has been achieved in 2007 and with the present situation of the health services better results can be expected in the future if there is no severe influence of uncontrollable negative factors.

It is difficult to identify the direct causality between the Project and the impact since the Project promoted the original activities of SILAIS Granada, which it had to carry out with or without the support of the Project. In addition, in the Department of Granada there are various activities to improve health status apart from the activities of the Project, under the programs of other NGOs and donors. In this situation, it is difficult to measure exactly the level of influence given by the Project. However, the Project was the only direct cooperation given to the SILAIS Granada, which tried to strengthen its function and capacity. Therefore, it has evaluated that the contribution of the project was significant.

Regarding the important assumptions, although there is a concern about the increase of cases in sexually transmitted disease (STD) and HIV/AIDS, MINSA has begun new efforts from 2006 which resulted in an increase of the number of detected cases. In terms of the social and economic situation, it has raised the prices of commodities significantly and affected the life of the population.

About unexpected positive impacts, it has been identified that the experiences of the project have been introduced to the national level and other SILIAS. Also the SILAIS Granada has been corresponding without hindrance to the new strategy of the MAIS, having the similar experiences through the Project. On the other hand, any unexpected negative impact of the Project was not identified in the study.

(2) Sustainability

The sustainability in the policy/system aspect has been strengthened significantly by the implementation of new policy "MAIS" which promotes the coordination between primary and secondary level and the extension of the health coverage in communities. In the technical aspect, the sustainability has been confirmed since most of the activities that began through the Project have been maintained. However, the weakness in the system of maintenance of the equipment and the capacity of mechanics was identified. About the organizational and human resource aspect, in the

consequence of the change of government the directors of MINSA and SILAIS Granada were changed. Also there were relocations of staff within the SILAIS Granada, which affected the progress of the Project's activities. However, most of the staff who received trainings through the Project has not resigned. In addition, there was no significant change in the organizational structure after the Project, although it is expected to have a change in the near future according to the new policy. On the financial aspect, the budget of the SILAIS Granada was slightly increased, mainly in the item of human resources only. Since there was no sufficient budget for the activities after the Project, it needed to depend on NGOs and municipal governments to continue the activities, especially those carried out in the communities. However, since this year an additional budget for the extension of coverage and community activities has been disbursed in accordance with the new policy. Therefore, the financial sustainability was strengthened recently in 2007.

4-2. Factors that have promoted the Project

(1) Impact

The implementation of new policy of MAIS with purpose to promote the same activities with the Project, the continuous supports of NGOs and other donors, and the construction of 3 health centers and the donation of equipment by the Japanese Grant Aid were identified as the factors that have promoted the Project.

(2) Sustainability

After the completion of the Project, the budget and human resources of SILAIS Granada and the supports of other donors and NGOs were maintained to continue the activities, although they were not sufficient. It has budget of MAIS from September 2007 which covers where lacked the budget. Also with the MAIS some activities of the Project, such as coordination between primary and secondary level of attention and the extension of coverage, were institutionalized, which has strengthened human resource and financial aspects.

4-3. Factors that have inhibited the Project

(1) Impact

The strikes in 2005 and 2006 influenced significantly to the availability of health services, and resulted in worsening the health indicators. In 2005 there was an epidemic of Rota virus. It is necessary to keep paying attention to the epidemiological changes. The Department of Granada is weak in natural disasters such as hurricanes, tremors and eruptions of volcanoes as equal to the rest of Nicaragua, which has been one of the risks for the health status. Although most of the staff continues working for the SILAIS Granada, the interview and survey revealed that the relocations of eligible staff even within the same SILAIS can complicate the progress of activities. In addition, the low quality of the provided medical instruments and materials has been a problem for the provision of health services.

(2) Sustainability

Before the implementation of the MAIS it lacked the financial resources for activities as well as the transportation and personnel. However, after the disbursement of the additional budget for the activities the situation has been improved significantly.

4-4. Conclusions

Most of the activities of the Project were maintained after 3 years from the completion of the Project, and some of the activities were developed and extended in accordance with the new policy of MINSA. The health indicators have improved in 2007, although there was a problem of strikes in 2005 and 2006. Therefore, in spite of the weakness to the negative external factors, the Overall Goal has been achieved recently, and the Project's activities have been maintained. Consequently, it can be expected better results in the future.

4-5. Recommendations

- The problem of administration and maintenance of the equipment donated by the project was identified. In order to take advantage of those equipment efficiently, it is desirable to administrate and give maintenance adequately. As budget and technical limitation exists, it is necessary to realize the preventive maintenance by the operators, like a cleaning and daily check.
- It is desirable for SILAIS Granada to consider the continuity and convenience of the activities when it is necessary to relocate personnel within themselves.
- Although the registry system of indicators such as the number of attention of VPCD, family planning, and examination of PAP was changed in 2004, it is necessary to keep paying attention to the better registration of the data in order to monitor the activities and analyze the present situation correctly.

4-6. Lessons Learned

- Equipment can be easily neglected when there is a difficulty in obtaining locally the parts to repair it. When there is a need to purchase equipment, it is desirable to select considering the convenience of repair as well.
- Considering the evaluation as a part of the project, and for the effective administration of project, it is desirable to determine specific indicators with target before the beginning of the project and utilize them along with the general health indicators.