



Activity Sheet 6

Philippine Case Study

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to identify the key issues arising from the Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning (IRAP) project carried out in the Philippines in the early 1990s. This exercise also provides the opportunity to reflect on ways in which you may have addressed some of the issues identified.

Attached is a diagram showing the context in which the IRAP project took place (page 3).

Group Activity

1. Read the case study sheet provided (page 2).
2. Discuss the following questions:
 - A. *What are the key issues, and how do these influence the effectiveness of IRAP in the Philippines?*
 - B. *What recommendations would you make to increase the effectiveness of IRAP?*
3. Note your points on a flipchart.
4. Elect a person to present your findings to the plenary.



The IRAP project experience in Philippines

Background

The IRAP project was established in the early 1990s in response to develop more inclusive methods of planning at local levels. The planning process was decentralised through the establishment of Local Government Units (LGUs). All provinces, cities, municipalities and barangays (villages) had their own local development councils which were tasked with preparing the LGUs' development and investment plans.

The Local Government Code was enacted into law, which provided guidelines for the decentralisation, devolution and autonomy of the LGUs. The Code provides greater freedom to villages, municipalities, cities and provinces to plot their respective paths to development by giving them functions that used to be vested in national government agencies, additional budget to cover the expenditures for functionaries that are now detailed to them, and by allowing greater flexibility to decide on issues and concerns regarding their areas. The Code allows the LGUs to reject or disregard, theoretically, any planning procedure that may be prescribed by outside groups.

It was into the LGUs that the IRAP procedure was introduced.

What is IRAP?

IRAP is a data gathering and analysis procedure for use in local planning. Its aim is to improve households' access to basic goods, services and facilities.

The direct beneficiaries are local planning and development coordinators in municipalities and provinces provide technical inputs for planning in local development councils.

Project Experiences

Local level planners received training in the use of the IRAP. The project could not provide any other resources to the LGUs apart from the IRAP technology. Local planners tended not to try and access external sources of funding for activities.

The political environment at local levels had a strong influence on how well the information gathered through the IRAP process was used in decision making for planning. The legacy of the old feudal system of land ownership where farmers were dependent on a landlord for economic and social welfare made community participation problematic during the project. Wealthy landowners are often elected to public office.

The lack of a policy statement from government hampered institutionalisation of IRAP, and the co-operation of other government agencies involved in local level planning. At the time IRAP central government endorsed another local level planning tool that focussed on developing benchmark data on minimum basic needs.

Not all villages encompassed in the project area were able to receive improved transport infrastructure such as footpaths and bridges.



Background context in which the IRAP project worked

The Philippines Experience

