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IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETION AND RESULTS REPORT

TF-B0231

ON A

SMALL GRANT

IN THE AMOUNT OF USD 1.12 MILLION

TO THE

HILAL AHMAR FOUNDATION

FOR A

SOCIO-ECONOMIC REINTEGRATION PROJECT IN SOUTHERN THAILAND (P170730)

DECEMBER 23, 2021

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BPH	Bringing People Home
BRN	Barisan Revolusi Nasional
CDD	Community-Driven Development
CMS	Case Management System
Covid-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CPF	Country Partnership Strategy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DWB	Doctors Without Borders
E&S	Environmental and Social
ECOPs	Environmental Codes of Practice
ESS	Environmental and Social Standard
GNI	Gross National Income
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
HAF	Hilal Ahmar Foundation
ICR	Implementation Completion and Results Report
IPB	Individual Project Beneficiary
ISOC-4	Internal Security Operations Command, Region 4
ISR	Implementation Status and Results Report
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MELS	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning System
MHC-12	Medical Health Center, Region 12
MIS	Management Information System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSC	National Security Council
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
PDO	Project Development Objective
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RTG	Royal Thai Government
SBPAC	Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre
STEP	Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement
THB	Thai Baht
USD	United States Dollar
VIC	Village Implementing Committee
WDR	World Development Report

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DATA SHEET

BASIC INFORMATION

Product Information

Project ID	Project Name
P170730	Socio-economic Reintegration Project in Southern Thailand
Country	Financing Instrument
Thailand	Investment Project Financing
Original EA Category	Revised EA Category

Organizations

Borrower	Implementing Agency
Hilal Ahmar Foundation	Hilal Ahmar Foundation

Project Development Objective (PDO)

Original PDO

The development objective of the project is to assist the government in piloting an enhanced socio-economic reintegration process for selected former combatants.

The project will pilot a new approach to reintegration with a focus on social and economic measures, and with inclusive and transparent delivery modalities. The aim of the Pilot is to test new approaches and civilian implementation modalities that should improve the socio-economic reintegration experience of former combatants. If the project is deemed successful, the government will have at its disposal a set of social and economic support processes, and an implementation arrangement with systems and procedures that it can draw upon in the future. At the same time, would-be former combatants will have better prospects for a viable return to civilian livelihoods, a clearer understanding of reintegration support they can expect, and a better understanding of how and by whom it will be delivered.

**FINANCING**

	Original Amount (US\$)	Revised Amount (US\$)	Actual Disbursed (US\$)
Donor Financing			
TF-B0231	1,350,000	1,119,509	1,119,509
Total	1,350,000	1,119,509	1,119,509
Total Project Cost	1,350,000	1,119,509	1,119,509

KEY DATES

Approval	Effectiveness	Original Closing	Actual Closing
14-Nov-2019	15-Nov-2019	31-Dec-2020	30-Jun-2021

RESTRUCTURING AND/OR ADDITIONAL FINANCING

Date(s)	Amount Disbursed (US\$M)	Key Revisions
20-Feb-2020	0.50	Other Change(s)
13-Aug-2020	0.74	Change in Components and Cost Change in Loan Closing Date(s) Reallocation between Disbursement Categories Change in Implementation Schedule
19-Mar-2021	1.24	Change in Components and Cost Cancellation of Financing Reallocation between Disbursement Categories Change in Financial Management

KEY RATINGS

Outcome	Bank Performance	M&E Quality
Highly Satisfactory	Highly Satisfactory	Substantial

RATINGS OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE IN ISRs

No.	Date ISR Archived	DO Rating	IP Rating	Actual Disbursements (US\$M)
01	09-Feb-2020	Moderately Satisfactory	Satisfactory	0.50



02	20-May-2020	Moderately Satisfactory	Satisfactory	0.50
03	26-Jan-2021	Moderately Satisfactory	Satisfactory	0.93

ADM STAFF

Role	At Approval	At ICR
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As a pilot, the Socio-Economic Reintegration Project aimed to demonstrate that a development-focused approach to the reintegration of former combatants and detainees in southern Thailand can be effective and be implemented effectively. Considering the importance of reintegration in any transition to peace, this Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR) provides a detailed review of the Project's experiences. In so doing, it makes the lessons and recommendations more accessible to the government and other stakeholders if and when the time is right to scale up the approach.

I. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE

A. Context at Appraisal

1. **Context.** Thailand's four southernmost provinces are the center of a protracted sub-national conflict. The conflict area includes the provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani and Yala, and four districts of the province of Songkhla – the so-called 'Deep South'. These four present-day provinces once formed part of historic Patani, an independent Malay Sultanate which was annexed by the Kingdom of Siam in 1909. Since the region's incorporation into Thailand, the local Malay Muslim population, which today represents about 75 percent of the total population in the area, has experienced a deep sense of social and economic exclusion, discrimination, marginalization, and resentment against a perceived lack of responsiveness and accountability of state agents. Violent resistance against the government's assimilation policies and perceived domination of the state in the Deep South occurred over several periods during the second half of the 20th century. The current phase of insurgency started in 2004 and is ongoing.

2. At the time when the Socio-Economic Reintegration Project ('the Project') was prepared in 2018, the Peace Dialogue Panel of the Royal Thai Government (RTG) had initiated an 'open dialogue' with all insurgent groups as well as civil society organizations (CSOs) working in the region to gather inputs and recommendations on ways to resolve the conflict. Although a formal peace process with the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN), the insurgent group to which most of the current fighters belong, has yet to materialize, this dialogue has allowed for local discussion of critical peace issues, such as forms of local governance, recognition of Malayu/Islamic identity, and addressing injustices and grievances, including with regard to the treatment of former combatants, detainees, and conflict victims.

3. **Social and economic development.** The Deep South of Thailand continues to lag behind the rest of the country on important social and economic indicators. Although decades of economic growth and expansion of state services have resulted in marked gains throughout the country, poverty in the southernmost region is chronic and headcounts are well above the national average. Whereas the Deep South provinces covered only 2.6 percent of the total population in 2013, they accounted for 7.8 percent of the poor in Thailand.¹ In 2018, two of the four provinces, Pattani and Narathiwat, had the country's second and fourth highest poverty rates, at 39.5 percent and 30.1 percent, respectively.²

4. Access to services in the Deep South is relatively limited and government programs are widely mistrusted and perceived as lacking responsiveness to the needs and cultural preferences of local

¹ World Bank. 2016. *Getting Back on Track. Reviving Growth and Securing Prosperity for All*. Thailand Systematic Country Diagnostic.

² World Bank. 2020. *Taking the Pulse of Poverty and Inequality in Thailand*.



communities as well suffering from shortcomings in transparency and accountability. On education, the provinces remain at the bottom of the national standardized test scores and the rate of ‘inactivity’, defined as neither working nor studying, is among the highest in the country, with 19 percent of the population aged 15-65 having been inactive in 2013, with male youth particularly affected.³

5. **Sectoral and institutional context.** The Southern Border Provinces Administration and Development Policy 2017-2019, prepared by the Thai National Security Council (NSC), explicitly recognized the complexity and sensitivity of the causes of the conflict. Building on a growing understanding of local problems and needs, the policy acknowledged the value of, and set out to achieve, broad-based participation by and inclusion of people, civil society, and disadvantaged groups in problem-solving and peace-building efforts in the region. It also sought to promote trust and cooperation between the state and the people. Strengthening local communities and improving incomes and livelihoods were cited as key requirements for solving the conflict in the Deep South. Furthermore, and more broadly, the government’s National Strategy 2018 – 2037 emphasizes peaceful dialogue, harmonious coexistence, and conflict resolution.

6. A critical challenge for the government’s policy has been supporting the transition of former combatants and detainees⁴ to civilian life, the importance of which the RTG recognized in the broader context of peace and its Deep South policy. To this end, the government started providing reintegration support in 2010 and established the Bringing People Home (BPH) program in 2012. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the program has since served over 4,000 beneficiaries (former fighters, individuals in non-combat support roles, and sympathizers) through a multi-pronged approach that has included judicial elements, skills training, livelihood support, and grants for reintegration support in areas of return.⁵

7. The RTG has acknowledged the shortcomings of its BPH program, which include the following: institutional fragmentation; insufficient responsiveness to the needs and aspirations of beneficiaries; a focus on security; no treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder; lack of community involvement in the reintegration process; no gender differentiation; no participation of non-government stakeholders; and no monitoring and evaluation.⁶

8. During Project identification, consultations with returnees⁷ and communities helped to confirm the rationale for targeted reintegration assistance. First, villagers recognized that returnees who felt marginalized could create problems for the community. Second, many returnees, knowing that they

³ World Bank. 2018. Thailand – World Bank Group Country Partnership Framework. 2019–2022.

⁴ In the context of the Deep South, former combatants are individuals who were at some stage formally associated with one of the armed groups but who have now renounced violence. Former detainees are individuals who had been convicted and imprisoned under national security-related laws and the criminal procedural code and who were subsequently released and absolved of related legal obligations. See also World Bank. 2016. Thailand: International Experiences and Lessons on Reintegration and Peace-Building.

⁵ By early 2017, the total number of individuals charged with ‘internal security related offenses’, the potential beneficiaries of the BPH program (and any future, scaled-up Project), was close to 10,000.

⁶ See para. 66 for more information about the Bringing People Home program.

⁷ In the Deep South, former (or ex-) combatants and detainees are often referred to as ‘returnees’. Although the Project Paper sometimes used the term ‘former (or ex-) combatant’ (including in the development objective and several indicators), Project beneficiaries included individuals of both groups and the Project made no distinction between them. The ICR thus uses the term ‘returnees’ when referring to individuals from both groups, except as otherwise stated.



remained under surveillance by government security actors and thus might cause trouble for the community, preferred to isolate themselves from their communities and to not travel outside their area.⁸ Third, many families of returnees faced financial stress due to limited income and increased debt.

B. Rationale for Bank Involvement

9. The World Bank's Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Thailand (FY19-22) covers the entire Project period (see para. 48). Within this framework, the RTG sought World Bank support to redesign its approach to reintegration because of the Bank's: (i) extensive experience in supporting peace-building measures in southern Thailand for over a decade;⁹ (ii) standing as an inclusive and widely respected partner for peace-building in the Deep South; and (iii) global experience in the area of demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants.

10. The Project was the cornerstone of the third generation of World Bank engagement in the conflict-affected areas in southern Thailand. Through its growing understanding of the local context and actors and their respective capacities, as well as its work on community development and CSO capacity building, the World Bank had established a reputation among a wide range of stakeholders, including the government, civil society, and local communities, as a responsive and results-focused development partner for peace-building.

11. Even though the reintegration of returnees is a particularly sensitive topic in a context of ongoing conflict and the RTG has been reluctant to 'internationalize' the conflict by bringing in development partners, it requested the World Bank to finance the Project. This signaled not only the RTG's commitment to testing a new approach to reintegration but also its confidence in the technical and operational abilities of the World Bank.

C. Results Chain

12. At first sight, the results chain (Chart 1) that underpinned the Project was similar to that of other reintegration projects. It took into account the lessons from numerous evaluations of reintegration projects funded by the World Bank and others as well as the findings of the World Development Report (WDR) 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development. The design parameters included the following:

- **Economic reintegration** support for returnees is necessary but not sufficient; it needs to be complemented by **social reintegration** support that helps to build relations with the communities of settlement.
- **Program management** needs to be as close as possible to the beneficiaries and communities; hence the critical importance of outreach staff to accompany the sub-project cycles from beginning to end.
- **Participation.** Sustainability of results can only be achieved when there is full participation of beneficiaries and their communities. This in turn requires an early focus on process so that the project's stakeholders can actively and meaningfully participate.

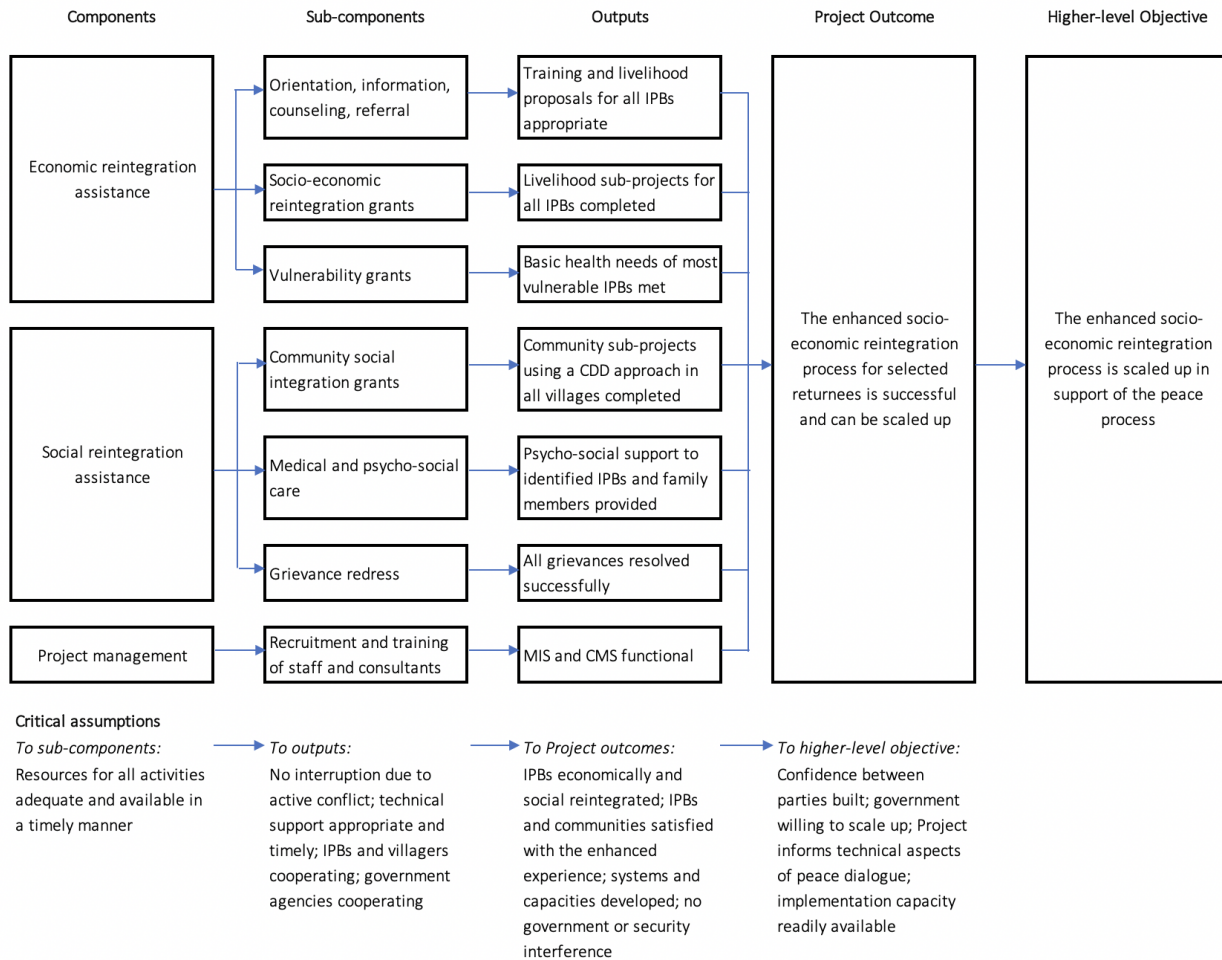
⁸ Unwillingness to travel also limited employment opportunities under the Project's livelihood grants.

⁹ Kang, Suhyoon. 2020. Working on Fragility, Conflict, and Violence in Middle Income Countries: Thailand Case Study. World Bank.



13. With economic and social reintegration assistance delivered effectively, which depended on critical assumptions being fulfilled (see Chart 1), the Project’s objective and targets could be reached. This in turn would signal to returnees and their communities of settlement that the RTG was committed to a fairer, more transparent, and more relevant approach to reintegration. This commitment signal could thus help to build confidence between the parties to the conflict.

Chart 1: Results Chain



14. The Project diverged in two important, interrelated aspects from the design of ‘mainstream’ reintegration projects. This implied that the results chain would work in a specific way. First, the Project was prepared and implemented while conflict was ongoing. With very few exceptions, reintegration projects normally follow a peace agreement. In order for the Project to succeed, the RTG needed to distance itself from implementation, i.e., it needed to move from a security to a development perspective on reintegration. The chosen transmission mechanism were the Agreed Principles and Standard Operating Procedures that clearly defined the RTG’s role in Project implementation and oversight (see paras. 62f.). Consultations with local stakeholders during Project preparation indicated that they viewed the Project as an opportunity to assess the government’s sincerity to build confidence.



Considering the importance of this change of perspective, therefore, such adherence was included in the Project's design as an intermediate results indicator.

15. Second, the Project moved from a purely government-implemented approach to a partnership-based institutional arrangement in which civil society and government agencies collaborated. Importantly, the Project was implemented by a local non-governmental organization (NGO). The rationale for this decision needs to be understood in the context of the ongoing conflict in the Deep South. The hypothesis that the Project tested was that only an agency that had the trust of both beneficiaries and communities, on the one hand, and the government, on the other hand, could achieve the desired results. Without such trust, returnees, who are still perceived as a potential security threat by the RTG, as well as their communities, would be reluctant to engage and thus fail to take full advantage of the Project's activities. In the same vein, the Project emphasized cooperation between civil society and government agencies as a more collaborative approach would help to shift the focus from security to more achievable development outcomes.

16. The RTG selected the Hilal Ahmar Foundation (HAF) as the executing agency for this grant. In addition to fulfilling the essential criterion of trust, HAF had an established presence in the Deep South and had implemented part of the earlier World Bank-funded community-driven development (CDD) projects satisfactorily.¹⁰

D. Project Development Objective

17. The Project Development Objective (PDO), as stated in the Grant Agreement, was to assist the government of the Kingdom of Thailand to pilot an enhanced socio-economic reintegration process for selected former combatants.

E. Key Expected Outcomes and Outcome Indicators

18. Project achievements were to be measured by the following two PDO-level results indicators:¹¹

- At least 70 percent of core Individual project beneficiaries (former combatants) satisfied with the program approach and services provided; and
- Scalable case management system established for provision of services and opportunities to ex-combatants.

19. The five intermediate results indicators were as follows:¹²

- Livelihood prospects of IPBs¹³ increased through access to opportunities and services provided by the project;

¹⁰ These projects were entitled *Community Approaches in Conflict Situations in Three Southernmost Provinces in Thailand (2009-2013)* and *Expanding Community Approaches in Conflict Situations in Three Southernmost Provinces in Thailand (2013-2017)*.

¹¹ As stated in the Project Paper.

¹² Idem.

¹³ 'Individual Project Beneficiaries', see para. 20.



- At least 70 percent of core IPBs take part in project supported or other relevant community activities;
- Coordinated services provided to all IPBs referred to government institutions;
- Government adherence to the agreed principles and standard operating procedures; and
- At least 70 percent majority of population in villages satisfied with program approach.

F. Beneficiaries and Targeting

20. The Project introduced two categories of beneficiaries: (i) 200 individual project beneficiaries (IPBs) and (ii) community beneficiaries in 16 villages. The term ‘Individual Project Beneficiary’ was chosen due to the potential sensitivities and stigma associated with the terms ‘ex-combatant’ and ‘ex-detainee’.^{14,15} IPB family members were eligible for economic and social reintegration in agreement with the IPB.

21. The criteria for selecting the 200 IPBs were agreed by the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) and the World Bank and were as follows: (i) IPBs needed to be individuals formerly charged with security-related offences who were absolved of related legal obligations; (ii) they needed to be willing to participate and enthusiastic in taking part in the Project; (iii) they needed to have returned home to their community within the last 10 years; and (iv) they needed to be considered poor. The PAC delegated IPB selection to HAF which in turn established a six-member selection committee in each participating sub-district. The selection criteria and process criteria were appropriate and the process was properly executed.

22. Some potential beneficiaries declined to participate in the Project as they had had negative experience from previous projects that came to collect information while not delivering support. As a result, some less poor returnees who were willing to participate in the Project were selected. In fact, many IPBs only participated after they received an explanation that this was not a government project with funds coming from the government.

23. All IPBs had taken part in combat in one way or another and all had been detained at some point in time. Their experience was thus close to that of active combatants, which could add value to the relevance of the approach in view of a possible scaling-up. In other words, if the Project proved successful and was scaled up, would-be returnees would have better prospects for a viable return to civilian livelihoods, a clearer understanding of reintegration support they can expect, and a better understanding of how and by whom it would be delivered.

¹⁴ ‘Demobilization’, ‘reintegration’, and associated terms are sensitive in many countries. (See, for instance, Institute of Bangsamoro Studies. 2018. Needs and Skills Assessment of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF Members), on the use of the term ‘normalization’.) The Project Paper (para. 20) rightly argued that the terms ‘ex-combatants’ or ‘ex-detainees’ risk keeping individuals stuck in conflict roles that they are seeking to leave behind as part of their reintegration process.

¹⁵ The Project Paper distinguished between ‘IPBs’ and ‘core IPBs’. The latter group included only returnees whereas the former group also included family members who would receive support under components 1 or 2. As only a few spouses benefitted directly under either component, the ICR uses the term ‘IPBs’ for returnees except as otherwise stated.



24. The Project was implemented in 16 villages with a population of approximately 18,350; these were the Project's community beneficiaries. There were three conditions for villages to be selected. First, at least ten IPBs needed to reside in the village, to achieve minimum economies of scale. Second, community leaders and villagers needed to be willing to cooperate. Third, HAF counselors needed to have access to the village, be able to carry out their work on the ground, and be accepted by the population. Because of the first criterion, no ethnically and religiously heterogeneous villages were included; there were only very few IPBs living in these villages (see also para. 150).

G. Components

25. The Project consisted of the following components: 1) economic reintegration; 2) social reintegration; and 3) project management.

26. **Component 1: Economic Reintegration** (at appraisal: USD 692,000; actual: USD 531,801). This component supported the economic reintegration process of IPBs and their families through the provision of two types of activities:

27. *Orientation, information, counseling, and referral services.* These services are essential accompaniments of the reintegration process of returnees. HAF hired an extensive outreach team to provide close support to IPBs (see para. 35).

28. *Socio-economic reintegration (livelihood) grants* for education, skills training, and livelihood improvement support. Each IPB was to receive Thai Bhat (THB) 50,000 (estimated at USD1,667 at appraisal) that s/he was able to use to access education/skills training opportunities, apprenticeships, and/or livelihood support, according to her/his choice. The grant amount was calculated in relation to the standard of living in the Deep South.¹⁶ A higher amount could have created jealousy among other returnees, communities, and conflict victims. IPBs were required to prepare a short proposal specifying the intended use of the grant. The proposals were reviewed and approved by the community, to both ensure that proposals are realistic in the specific local economic context and give the community a stake in successful reintegration.

29. *Vulnerability grants.* The Project's design envisioned vulnerability grants in the amount of THB 18,000 (equivalent to USD 589 at appraisal) to each IPB in dire circumstance, through unconditional cash transfers. The inclusion of this type of grant was based on field research with would-be beneficiaries during the identification phase. This research found that the economic standing among returnees stretched from the very poor to the relatively well-off. It was estimated at appraisal that 40 IPBs would require special assistance (including new returnees; see paras. 43 and 164).

30. **Component 2: Social Reintegration** (at appraisal: USD 243,000; actual: USD 209,557). The Project was unique among reintegration projects in that it contained a fully-fledged CDD element to facilitate social reintegration.¹⁷ This component supported IPBs, their families and communities of settlement through the provision of three types of activities:

¹⁶ According to data from the National Statistical Office for FY 2018, the gross provincial product per capita in Pattani and Narathiwat provinces was THB75,697 and THB62,066, respectively.

¹⁷ In other contexts, social reintegration was supported through, for instance, theater plays for training on social reconciliation (World Bank. 2015. Central African Republic Community Reintegration Project. Implementation



31. *Community social integration grants* to participating villages for social activities (sub-projects) following the CDD approach. These grants were not focused on poverty reduction but rather aimed to promote and normalize relations between the IPBs and their communities. Each village was to receive a one-off grant in the amount of THB 200,000 (estimated at USD 6,667 at appraisal). Sub-projects needed to involve community members and IPBs alike. Sub-projects involving civil works were not eligible.

32. *Medical and psycho-social care* for IPBs and their families. Prior World Bank-funded research¹⁸ as well as field research during identification highlighted the depth of mental health issues among returnees and their family members as a result of the conflict in the Deep South. This sub-component was outsourced to Doctors Without Borders (DWB),¹⁹ an international NGO with an established presence in southern Thailand, as well as to the Medical Health Center, Region 12 (MHC-12), the government agency specialized in providing mental health support in the Deep South of Thailand.

33. *Grievance redress*. The feedback and response (grievance redress) mechanism (GRM) formed an important part of the Project's citizen engagement actions and monitoring, evaluation, and learning system (MELS). In addition to resolving grievances, this activity served to build confidence; it signified a critical departure from the RTG's own BPH program where providing feedback was deemed too risky by returnees and communities alike.

34. **Component 3: Project Management** (at appraisal: USD 415,000; actual: USD 378,152). This component financed the overall management of the Project, including incremental operating costs, goods, the MELS, and external audits. HAF, which is based in Pattani, managed all aspects of the Project. It hired various consultants to implement the Project, including for grievance redress, environment and social risk management, procurement, financial management and accounting, communications, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

35. *Outreach staff*. HAF hired the following outreach staff:

- Ten *case workers*, each working with 20 IPBs. They served as the direct contact between the Project and the IPBs, ensuring the IPBs were inclusively and continuously supported. Working closely with the counselors and facilitators, case workers guided and mentored IPBs through the reintegration process, provided information on the Project and benefits available, and coordinated with the consultants and agencies providing livelihood and psycho-social support. Case workers were recently graduated social workers who were recruited locally as they were required to have local language and social skills to engage closely with IPBs. Case workers, eight

Completion and Results Report. Report No. ICR00003461), the establishment of economic associations by individual beneficiaries (World Bank. 2020. DRC Reinsertion and Reintegration Project. Implementation Completion and Results Report. Report No. ICR00005126), and civil works for the rehabilitation and/or construction of community infrastructure (World Bank. 2020. Mali Reinsertion of Ex-Combatants Project. Restructuring Paper. Report No. RES34703).

¹⁸ Center for Conflict Studies and Cultural Diversity. 2014. Men and Youth in Thailand's Conflict-Affected Deep South. Pattani, Prince of Songkla University.

¹⁹ Psycho-social care was budgeted under Component 2 but DWB (as well as MHC-12) did not take any fees for its services in order to maintain its neutrality and independence. The USD 64,300 set aside for this activity was returned to the World Bank; see para. 132.



- of whom were female, were not from the project communities, nor were they returnees.²⁰
- Four *livelihood consultants* with expertise and experience providing livelihood support for various projects in the Deep South were contracted to help IPBs prepare their proposals and support them through sub-project implementation.
 - Four *community facilitators* supported all aspects of community sub-project implementation to ensure the meaningful participation of community members and IPBs. They worked with the Village Implementing Committees (VICs) and other community members to develop sub-project proposals, coordinate with relevant agencies, identify the capacity-building needs of and arrange support to the VICs, and monitor and report on sub-project implementation progress and results. The facilitators had previously worked on the World Bank-funded CDD projects in southern Thailand.
 - Three *counselors* coordinated and facilitated the on-the-ground work of the case workers and community facilitators. They were returnees and, as such, had first-hand experience with reintegration challenges, had a trusted relationship with IPBs, and had a full understanding of the broader context. However, they had limited or no project implementation experience. This was a purposeful trade-off: it was less difficult to build capacity than to build trust.

36. *Local level.* At the village level, HAF established VICs to manage the sub-project cycle for social integration grants. The VICs were modeled on the village committees under the World Bank supported CDD projects in southern Thailand and were an essential mechanism for empowering communities and fostering transparency, for instance through the use of social audits. VIC members were elected by the villagers. VICs managed the grant funds and sub-project implementation. The VICs had equal representation of males and females. As requested by the Project, village heads and religious leaders were advisors to rather than members of the VICs.

37. The IPB selection committees (see also para. 21) also served as tambon (sub-district) advisory committees, which were a key mechanism for successful Project implementation. Committees members comprised representatives from local government and religious organizations as well as local leaders. They had close relations with IPBs and community beneficiaries and as such were trusted. The committees provided important guidance and advice and helped to resolve various problems.

38. *Oversight arrangements.* The RTG established the PAC to provide overall guidance to the Project. It was chaired by the Secretariat of the Peace Dialogue Panel at the NSC and included representatives of the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, the Internal Security Operations Command, Region 4 (ISOC-4),²¹ and the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre (SBPAC).²²

²⁰ Reasons for this specific skills profile included the following: 1) having case workers who were themselves returnees and had had a higher rank than the IPBs could lead to a relationship based on power; 2) returnee case workers might be biased in favor of or against those IPBs whom they knew personally; 3) interaction between older male or returnee case workers and IPBs could be perceived as suspicious by both the IPBs and the security services.

²¹ ISOC is a special government agency under the Prime Minister's Office with power and responsibility for the maintenance of internal security.

²² SBPAC's primary roles are to develop and implement development strategies and plans according to the Southern Border Provinces Administration and Development Policies, coordinate government services, and improve government performance in the Deep South.



H. Significant Changes During Implementation

39. The PDO did not change during the duration of the Project. The indicators and targets also remained the same. The initial implementation period was from November 2019 to December 2020. The Project was financed by a grant from the World Bank-administered Korea Trust Fund for Economic and Peace-building Transitions. The initial Project cost was USD 1,350,000; the final cost was USD 1,119,509.²³ The geographic focus was eight tambons in the provinces of Narathiwat (six tambons) and Pattani (two tambons).

40. The Project was restructured three times. These restructurings did not lead to significant changes in the Project's objective, results chain, or indicators.

41. The first restructuring was approved on February 20, 2020. It responded to a request by HAF to explicitly mention three expenditure items under the Project's operating costs as defined in the Letter Agreement dated November 15, 2019: (i) HAF's social security contributions to the Project's consultants according to the Thai Social Security Act; (ii) accident insurance for Project staff and consultants who work in conflict-affected areas; and (iii) management fee. These expenditure items were justified and their cost had already been included in the Project management budget. However, they had to be stated explicitly as required by Thai law.

42. The second, level-2 restructuring was approved on August 13, 2020. It included four changes: (i) Project closing date change from December 31, 2020 to June 30, 2021, in order to account for implementation delays emanating from the Covid-19 nation-wide travel and other restrictions; (ii) attendant changes to the implementation schedule based on a time-bound action plan; (iii) the reallocation of the Project budget between categories. Specifically, planned activities under Component 1 (USD 81,418) were dropped and funds reallocated to Component 2 (USD 19,950) and Component 3 (USD 61,468); and (iv) a change in risk ratings for a) sector strategy and policies, b) technical design of the Project, and c) data/monitoring and evaluation as well as the overall risk rating from 'substantial' to 'moderate'.²⁴ Changes (i) and (ii) were justified considering the delays resulting from the spread of Covid-19 in the country. Change (iii) was justified and is explained below. Change (iv) was justified to reflect the successful implementation of various risk mitigation measures.

43. The initial design provided space for up to 40 new returnees in case the peace process proceeded positively, to test the new approach on a target group that was very closely related to IPBs but also faced specific circumstances, notably with regard to the demobilization process and any attendant legal process. This would have allowed for the demonstration of a small but quick win, a key feature of early post-war transitions as identified in the WDR 2011. As (i) no new demobilization took place during the implementation period, and (ii) full implementation was delayed due to Covid-19, the

²³ The Korea Trust Fund also supported Bank supervision of the Project through a Bank-executed trust fund. The initial amount of this trust fund was USD650,000, the revised amount was USD764,219.

²⁴ The Restructuring Paper (RES41875) stated that the environmental and social risk rating was retained as 'substantial'. However, the ISR sequence no. 2, which preceded Report RES41875, indicated that the E&S risk rating was downgraded from 'substantial' to 'moderate'. Considering that the E&S performance rating was (and remained) 'satisfactory', environmental impacts were few and minor, and social issues were properly addressed during implementation (see paras. 122ff.) – in particular, the mitigation measures stated in para. 79 of the Project Paper were carried out successfully – a downgrading of the E&S risk to 'moderate' would have been justified.



funds set aside for this group were reallocated as part of the Project's restructuring. This built-in flexibility did not jeopardize the relevance of the Project.

44. The third, level-2 restructuring was approved on May 19, 2021. It included two changes: (i) cancelation of the unused budget in the amount of USD 114,218.80. Due to Covid-19, some activities had to be canceled or reduced in scope. Additionally, exchange rate changes increased the amount available in Thai Baht. However, HAF was not able to use these funds because of the approaching Project end date; and (ii) reallocation of the unused funds from the Project to the Bank-executed trust fund to cover additional costs that resulted from the six-month extension, including supervision, outreach, training, and knowledge management as well as completion reporting. These changes were also justified.

II. OUTCOME

A. Assessment of Relevance Rating: High

45. The PDO remained highly relevant in all respects: country context, government policy, and World Bank engagement in Thailand.

46. **Country context.** On the whole, the peace process did not advance noticeably throughout the duration of the Project. In and of itself, this justified the choice of a small pilot to test a new approach. The World Bank was not in a position to seek feedback from combatants as to the Pilot's relevance. However, anecdotal evidence collected during ICR preparation suggests that combatants and related stakeholders had a positive view of the pilot: they supported the rationale and understood how they could be assisted as part of any future demobilization. Similarly, as the baseline survey indicated, communities recognized that pushing returnees away would isolate them, which in turn may lead to more conflict in the future, thereby confirming the Project's relevance.

47. **Government policy.** The RTG found that the Project fully aligned with the National Strategy 2018 – 2037 and the Southern Border Provinces Administration and Development Policy 2017-2019, the Project's main *policy* reference pillar which was extended and remained valid for its entire duration. Moreover, the RTG refrained from implementing the BPH program, the Project's main *program* reference pillar, in the Project areas. In so doing, the RTG affirmed its commitment to piloting this enhanced approach to the socio-economic reintegration of returnees.

48. **World Bank country engagement.** Under Focus Area 2: Strengthening Inclusion, the CPF explicitly supports the RTG's above-mentioned policy and thereby peace-building in the sub-national conflict in Thailand's three southernmost provinces. The Project, with its emphasis on supporting the livelihoods of vulnerable groups (individuals and communities affected by conflict), empowering communities (through a CDD-type approach), and strengthening state-civil society relations, was and remained fully consistent with the CPF.



B. Assessment of Efficacy

Rating: High

49. The Project piloted an enhanced approach to reintegration over the RTG’s BPH program which primarily centered on: responsiveness to individual needs; transparency and inclusion; addressing psycho-social challenges; civilian implementation; and robust monitoring and evaluation. Per the results chain, the Project hypothesis was that individual and community beneficiaries would be satisfied with the new approach, if all intermediate results indicators were met. Additionally, if processes were put in place and capacities created to effectively manage implementation, the pilot could be scaled up to any level that may be required to support the implementation of a future peace agreement. In this way, the Project would provide critical evidence in order to help build confidence between the two parties, a critical ingredient for building peace.

50. In order to capture the different dimensions of the enhanced approach, the team developed composite indicators whereby several depended on activities under more than one component and addressed more than one underlying aspects (Table 1). This section assesses the achievement of the indicators and discusses the counterfactual whilst Annex 3 unpacks the results chain along the two main activity areas: (i) economic reintegration; and (ii) social reintegration.

Table 1: Composition of Project Indicators²⁵

	Economic Reintegration	Social Reintegration	Case Management	Critical Assumptions
P1: At least 70 percent of core Individual project beneficiaries (former combatants) satisfied with the program approach	•	•		•
P2: Scalable case management system established for provision of services and opportunities to ex-combatants			•	
I1: Livelihood prospects of IPBs increased through access to opportunities and services provided by the project	•			
I2: At least 70 percent of core IPBs takes part in project supported or other relevant community activities		•		
I3: Coordinated services provided to all IPBs referred to government institutions	•	•		•
I4: Government adherence to the agreed principles and standard operating procedures				•
I5: At least 70 percent majority of population in villages satisfied with program approach	•	•		•

Notes: Indicators as stated in the Project Paper. P: PDO-level indicator; I: Intermediate results indicator.

²⁵ As stated in the Project Paper.



Assessment of Project Indicators

51. The two PDO-level indicators were appropriate and the relationships between the interventions and the outcomes direct. Additionally, the five intermediate results indicators were adequate for capturing the contribution of the Project's components, activities (sub-components), and outputs toward achieving PDO-level outcomes. All indicators were specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound and baselines and targets were available.

PDO-level indicator 1: At least 70 percent of core individual project beneficiaries (ex-combatants) satisfied with the program approach and services provided

52. The Project exceeded its target: 99 percent of IPBs were satisfied (68 percent were very satisfied) with the assistance (services) provided, and 98 percent were satisfied (61 percent were very satisfied) with the approach. Only two respondents said that they were dissatisfied with the assistance provided and four with the way the Project worked.

53. As reported by the endline survey²⁶, satisfaction can be gleaned from both the economic and social dimensions of reintegration. First, almost all IPBs (95 percent) said that the assistance was helpful because they felt that it would improve their income. Over three-quarters (76 percent) said that the Project had given them new skills and 73 percent that it had provided them with new assets. Second, IPBs felt the Project had had positive impacts on their relationships with others. Seventy-nine percent said the Project had helped improve relationships within their family, 76 percent said that it had helped them to better link to other people, and 57 percent and 56 percent, respectively, said it had helped to change other people's attitudes towards them and created acceptance of them in the community. Collectively, this boosted IPBs' self-esteem, which 70 percent of IPBs identified as a result of the Project.

54. A smaller yet important proportion (39 percent of IPBs) felt that the Project had also improved the well-being of the community they live in. As the HAF completion report pointed out, livelihood activities like grocery shops, coin laundries, and mechanic workshops expanded the supply of local goods and services and also lowered prices, which benefited communities as a whole. Similarly, the endline survey also found evidence from focus group discussions that other community members often felt that the assistance provided to IPBs had had positive economic impacts.

55. Two other factors contributed to the positive perception of the Project among IPBs. First, all IPBs received the same amount, which made them feel treated equally regardless of their position in the movement.²⁷ Second, becoming economically more active helped IPBs to deal with their mental health problems better.

PDO-level indicator 2: Scalable case management system established for provision of services and opportunities to ex-combatants

²⁶ The endline survey used four data sources: (i) a quantitative survey of all 200 IPBs conducted by case workers; (ii) three qualitative focus group discussions each (with women villagers, male villagers, and IPBs and members of IPB selection committees) in eight randomly selected Project villages with a total of 178 participants, conducted by an independent team from Prince of Songkla University; (iii) the Management Information System; and (iv) the baseline survey of IPBs.

²⁷ Under the BPH program, the amounts that returnees received differed without there being any apparent criteria.



56. For large-scale post-conflict reintegration projects, which peace agreements often stipulate be undertaken soon after signing, a well-performing case management system (CMS) is an indispensable tool for the transparent and efficient provision and tracking of benefits, services and opportunities to different groups of beneficiaries. A functional CMS would help the RTG to implement a larger project rapidly if and when circumstances permitted.

57. As set out in the Project's results framework, HAF set up a tailor-made, cloud-based CMS as a central component of the Project's management information system (MIS), and documented it properly. The user manual, designed for use as a training manual as well, included a description of the system functions and capabilities, contingencies, and alternate modes of operation, step-by-step procedures for system access and use, and how to use various modules to record and update information on the beneficiaries (see also paras. 110ff.).

Intermediate Results Indicator 1: Livelihood prospects of IPBs increased through access to opportunities and services provided by the project²⁸

58. The Project exceeded the target of 80 percent: 86 percent of IPBs thought that the Project had helped to improve their livelihoods a lot and another 13 percent said it had improved livelihoods a little. Although the implementation period of the Project was short, and the endline survey was conducted shortly after IPBs received assistance, 95 percent of IPBs reckoned that the Project had already improved their income or would improve their income in the future.

Intermediate Results Indicator 2: At least 70 percent of IPBs take part in project-supported or other relevant community development activities

59. The Project exceeded the target: 89 percent of IPBs stated that they had participated in community grants of whom 45 percent and 44 percent participated a lot and a little, respectively. This high rate of participation compares favorably to other reintegration projects²⁹ and speaks to the adequacy of the Project's design (inclusive of specific social reintegration activities) and its implementation model (employing outreach staff for close and regular contact with beneficiary groups).

Intermediate Results Indicator 3: Coordinated services provided to all IPBs referred to government institutions

60. Prior to the Project, few returnees were willing to contact government service providers. However, not all the services that they need are offered by non-governmental or civil society organizations. The Project, therefore, explicitly linked benefits to government service provision in two areas: specialized training and mental health support. HAF coordinated these services for all IPBs effectively.

²⁸ Considering the Project's duration and the fact that IPBs in general had established basic livelihoods, this indicator was considered appropriate. For projects with a longer implementation period the change in income of beneficiaries would be a better indicator, albeit one that is more sensitive and more complex to measure.

²⁹ This, for instance, compares to 73 percent participation in community activities under the World Bank-funded reintegration project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. World Bank. 2020. DRC Reinsertion and Reintegration Project: Implementation Completion and Results Report. Report No. 00005126.



61. The indicator was fully met. The 32 IPBs who chose training offered by a government agency, received it. This included courses in carpentry, animal husbandry, and aquaculture provided by the provincial departments for skills development, livestock, and fisheries, respectively. All participants were satisfied with the quality and usefulness of the training received. With regard to mental health support, the MHC-12 screened all 71 cases, of whom four were family members, that had been pre-identified by HAF case workers as having high levels of stress.

Intermediate Results Indicator 4: Government adherence to the agreed principles and standard operating procedures

62. During implementation of the BPH program, government security staff were in regular contact with returnees, which created a lot of anxiety and distrust among program participants. In adopting the Agreed Principles and Standard Operating Procedures for the Project, the RTG committed that its security forces will not interfere in or monitor Project implementation and agreed on a transparent process in case of a violation, among other measures. Former combatants and detainees supported this indicator during consultations held as part of Project preparation.

63. The indicator was fully met. Early during implementation three incidents were reported where security units questioned a returnee. These cases were not related to their participation in the Project.³⁰ HAF intervened immediately with ISOC-4 and was able to resolve the issues quickly in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedures. Thereafter, there were no reports of further infractions, neither through the Project's GRM, nor directly to the World Bank, nor informally to HAF outreach staff. No security officials checked on or attended Project meetings or other activities. The RTG thereby demonstrated its full commitment to achieving the Project's objective. Anecdotal evidence gathered during ICR preparation also suggested that this restraint contributed to building IPB and community confidence in the RTG.

Intermediate Results Indicator 5: At least 70 percent majority of population in villages satisfied with program approach

64. The Project exceeded its target by a wide margin. One-hundred percent of male villagers who participated in the endline survey and 98 percent of female villagers expressed satisfaction with the Project, as did 100 percent of IPBs. Across these three groups, 85 percent said that they were very satisfied.

65. The endline survey noted that there was initial skepticism towards the Project in some villages. In the early stages, many villagers did not understand the Project and were suspicious about whether or not the money would arrive. However, these issues faded over time as villagers received training and started to understand the process, and the block grants were disbursed. Another reason for the high level of satisfaction was that people felt that the money was used well: because the communities themselves decided how funds were used, the activities funded fit their needs.

³⁰ HAF did not communicate the names of IPBs to ISOC-4 for reasons of confidentiality. Not knowing the names of the Project beneficiaries led to concerns by the RTG and ISOC-4 that active combatants might receive Project funds. This was, however, not the case.



Counterfactual

66. The Project did not include a formal impact evaluation: no control groups of non-Project villages or non-Project returnees were included in the endline survey. Nevertheless, a counterfactual can be established by comparing the Project's outcomes with those of the BPH program, which allows for an identification of trends between Project and non-Project areas.

67. The RTG did not undertake a formal evaluation of the BPH program. However, a World Bank-financed report,³¹ as well as anecdotal evidence from interviews with returnees, community members, and government officials carried out during identification found that the BPH program had some limitations. Among these were – in relation to the Project's PDO-level and intermediate results indicators:

- institutional fragmentation and limited transparency and monitoring;
- not responding adequately to the livelihood needs of returnees;
- a focus on security with government security personnel interacting with and surveilling returnees; and
- not focusing on building relations between community members and returnees and their families.

68. The RTG halted the BPH program in the Project area during the implementation period. Since closing, the RTG has restarted some activities. Anecdotal evidence collected during ICR preparation suggests that the enhanced approach of the Project was preferred as it was implemented by an NGO that was considered neutral.

69. Whereas a direct comparison between the two approaches is not possible and firm data are unavailable, the enhanced approach was necessary to achieve the Project's results and contribute to building trust that would help both parties to advance the peace dialogue. The findings and lessons of this research informed the design of the Project.

C. Assessment of Efficiency **Rating: Substantial**

70. As the Project Paper indicated, quantifying the economic costs and benefits of a reintegration project has proven notoriously difficult. Consequently, this ICR compares the costs of the Project's economic reintegration component, the community social integration grants, and management with those of other World Bank financed reintegration projects.³²

71. Such comparisons have shortcomings other than those related to design features. In the case of the Project, three factors were most significant. First, IPBs had already been living in their communities. Second, conflict in Thailand's Deep South was ongoing during implementation. These two factors had potential, opposite effects on achieving the PDO. Third, the Project was a small pilot project that was not able to benefit from economies of scale regarding management costs. Consequently, this analysis does not produce precise data. It does, however, allow for an assessment of whether the results were achieved with reasonable resources.



72. **Economic reintegration component.** The cost efficiency of reintegration support can be calculated in two ways. First, by comparing the per capita costs of different reintegration projects.³³ As Table 1 in Annex 4 indicates, the per capita reintegration costs of the Project were, in absolute terms, roughly in line with other projects. Second, by comparing the per capita reintegration costs to the national per capita income. The same table shows that the support that each returnee received under the Project was, in relative terms, only slightly more than one-third of the Thailand's Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, a ratio that was significantly lower than in other countries. From this perspective, and considering that the comparator countries were low-income countries at the time of approval, IPB concerns that the grant amount was too low for sustainability is justified. That said, it was appreciated as it conferred a degree of dignity to many IPBs and helped them economically.

73. Considering that the Project achieved its intended objective, it can be surmised that Project funds were used efficiently. Furthermore, even though the per capita income in Thailand's southernmost provinces is below the national average, the Project cannot be seen 'rewarding violence', an argument often raised in other countries where former combatants receive a multiple of the per capita income. Nevertheless, if coordinated with a project in support of conflict victims, a higher per capita allocation could be considered for future returnees under a scaled-up version of the Project.

74. **Community social integration support.** Given the Project's CDD approach, the most relevant comparisons are to: (i) the per capita grant amounts of other World Bank funded-CDD projects; and (ii) the per village allocation under the World Bank's CDD projects in Thailand. Table 2 in Annex 4 shows that the actual per capita allocation under the Project was significantly below that of other World Bank-financed projects. Furthermore, the Project provided only one block grant to participating villages. By contrast, the second Thailand CDD project had three cycles for each village and each annual block grant was 22 percent higher.

75. During the design stage, a per capita allocation of USD 16 was used based on an estimate of the population in the Project villages. This would have put the Project in line with other World Bank-financed projects. Once the 16 villages were identified, the actual population (18,337) turned out to be significantly higher, which reduced the per capita allocation to USD 5.8. The smaller amount did not, however, prove detrimental to the Project's acceptance. On the one hand, the community grants helped to offset any jealousy community members may have felt toward IPBs. On the other hand, the Project did not finance more expensive community infrastructure works and the amount was sufficient for the activities undertaken. On the whole, therefore, the costs of the community social integration grants are considered reasonable in relation to the achieved objective. For a scaled-up version of the Project, an increase in the number of cycles rather than a higher block grant amount could be considered.

76. **Project management.** At 34 percent (actual), the share of management in total Project cost is two to three times higher than for other World Bank-funded reintegration projects (Annex 4, Table 3).

³¹ Vichitrananda, Sutthana, Nuchanad Juntavises, and Ekkarin Tuansiri. 2019. Reintegration: Voices from the Conflict-affected Deep South. World Bank.

³² No budget data are available for the BPH program. Anecdotal evidence from field interviews during identification suggested that the per capita cost of this program was significantly higher than that of the Project.

³³ The cost of reintegration includes both the direct benefits to IPBs and the services provided to them, in particular orientation, information, counseling and referral.



Two reasons explain the high management costs of the Project. First, benefits were low compared to other reintegration and CDD projects, which increased the relative weight of management in the Project budget. Second, as a small pilot, the Project invested extensively in developing capacities and systems to generate the evidence for scaling up the approach to a potentially much higher caseload if and when the situation warrants. This pertained in particular to the large number of outreach staff and the development of the MIS.³⁴ By way of example, and noting that the design of the Project was unique in combining fully designed reintegration and CDD components, increasing benefits and staff-to-beneficiary ratios to comparable levels would reduce the share of management in total cost to 20 percent, with other things being equal.³⁵

77. In addition, the actual management costs compare reasonably well with those of reintegration projects implemented by international agencies.³⁶

D. Overall Outcome Rating **Rating: Highly Satisfactory**

78. The overall outcome rating is explained as follows. The relevance of the PDO was high as the Project responded directly to central aspects of the RTG's and the World Bank's engagement in the conflict-affected provinces of southern Thailand. The Project's design was sound and all PDO-level and intermediate results indicators were met or exceeded despite the Covid-19 pandemic and various implementation challenges. The costs for reintegration (benefits) compared favorably with those of similar projects. Although management costs were high when measured against World Bank-funded reintegration projects, they are deemed reasonable and justified and the results could not have been achieved more efficiently.

79. As the endline survey indicated, the model of using a non-state provider increased local trust in the Project in an area where many have little confidence in the State. In fact, 99 percent of IPBs supported an expansion of the Project to cover other returnees, both current and future, and communities. Also, as the HAF completion report highlighted, many IPBs participated in the Project because it was not a government project. Interviews during ICR preparation indicated that interest in the enhanced approach among (would-be) returnees is indeed high. The pilot thus fully accomplished its purpose.

³⁴ Arguably, the MIS and other systems developed for the Project can be adapted to other development initiatives.

³⁵ This includes the following assumptions: (i) increasing IPB benefits by 38 percent (such that they equal the average per capita gross provincial product of Narathiwat and Pattani); (ii) raising community grants to USD 16 per person (like in Sierra Leone); (iii) doubling the ratio of IPBs to case workers to 40 to 1 (as in the DRC); and (iv) increasing the number of villages covered by each facilitator from four to eight (like in Myanmar). Sources: (i) National Statistical Office. 2020. Phitsanulok Provincial Statistical Report 2562-1019; (ii) Wong, Susan. 2015. What Have Been the Impacts of World Bank Community-Driven Development Programs? World Bank; (iii) World Bank. 2015. Reinsertion and Reintegration Project. Project Appraisal Document. Report No. PAD1244; (iv) World Bank. Myanmar National Community Driven Development Project.

³⁶ Available evidence suggests that management costs reached 31 percent (Democratic Republic of Congo) and even 43 percent (Haiti) of project cost; Knight, Mark. 2002. Comparative Analysis of the Costs of Nineteen Demobilization and Reintegration Programs. World Bank background paper; and World Bank. 2008. Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program. Program files.



E. Other Outcomes and Impacts

80. **Gender.** Despite efforts by HAF to identify former female combatants as IPBs – all else being equal, priority should be given to women – only six met the selection criteria, representing three percent of all IPBs. Nevertheless, HAF undertook a range of activities to increase gender awareness and women’s participation.

- HAF staff received training in gender mainstreaming regarding how men and women, boys and girls, are impacted by the conflict, how they have coped, and how they should be included in Project operations. The training used, among others, previous World Bank-funded research on the experience of male youths and returnees.
- Women were actively engaged in all phases of the community social integration grants and as members of VICs – although there were only a few women presidents.
- Recognizing the stress placed upon spouses of IPBs with mental health disorders, they received mental health screening and those with significant symptoms received treatment. Family members also received behavioral counseling to support their ability to serve as responsible spouses and parents and to fulfill care caregiving responsibilities for elderly dependents.
- Gender-related interventions were tracked through various tools such as the socio-economic profile and beneficiary surveys. Sex-disaggregated data were collected in all surveys, meetings, and trainings and monitored and assessed for lessons learned. HAF also prepared and disseminated a fact sheet on *Women, Livelihoods and Reintegration*.
- HAF outreach staff actively involved the spouses of returnees in their activities, for instance, in planning and implementing the IPBs’ livelihood proposals. The fact that eight out of ten case workers were young female graduates greatly facilitated this work. The HAF completion report noted that women felt empowered through such activities.

81. **Institutional strengthening.** Building the capacity of HAF was an important feature of the Project. Its organizational and technical capacities were strengthened in all relevant operational areas: environmental and social management practices, financial management, procurement, monitoring and evaluation, conflict sensitivity (peace lens), gender, and psycho-social screening. Given the specific context, guiding outreach staff in identifying concrete points throughout the Project duration where there are risks of exclusion or where the Project could inadvertently cause conflict and, conversely, where opportunities for supporting peacebuilding may arise, was particularly relevant. The participatory trainings incorporated close attention to conflict-sensitive communication in the vernacular and also helped to build the Project team and confidence among team members. Building and applying this institutional capacity was a core part of the approach tested by the Project.

82. **Community capacity.** Similar to the earlier World Bank-funded CDD projects in the Deep South, the Project exposed communities to a new approach to community development which differed markedly from that of the more top-down government projects. Although amounts were small and only for one cycle, many villagers voiced frustration with the lengthy start-up process and cumbersome financial management and procurement procedures, and VIC members were elected in a rush and had difficulties understanding their roles and responsibilities fully at the beginning, benefits went beyond the Project’s social reintegration purpose.



83. Among the many facets of community empowerment that the Project enabled were the following: (i) the Friday shops (see Annex 3) generated additional income for the communities; (ii) the social audits enabled villagers to jointly review the results achieved, the budget spent, and obstacles encountered, and to draw lessons; (iii) more community members were willing to actively participate in village activities; and (iv) villagers recognized that the CDD process could easily be replicated for local decisions unrelated to this Project in the future. Moreover, with the RTG providing this space, the Project helped to reorient its relations with the Project communities.

84. **Government sensitization and support.** The Project created a new, decentralized approach for government projects which put sensitization of government entities involved, both civilian and security, at a premium. Recognizing this challenge, the task team regularly met government officials at the national, provincial, and local levels during supervision missions. Moreover, HAF presented its progress reports to core PAC members (especially ISOC-4 and SBPAC) as well as to local government agencies. This engagement not only deepened the RTG's awareness of the Project, but also contributed to its success.

85. The PAC met, as envisaged, three times during Project implementation to review and assess progress. It saw value in the Project and supported the approach. PAC members also communicated with lower levels of government in the Deep South – although not as systematically as would have been desirable as local government officials were not always fully aware of the Project. The PAC viewed the Project's design and implementation process favorably, acknowledged the good access to and relationship with IPBs, and appreciated the close support and strong M&E arrangements.

86. As the Project evolved, following participation in the mid-term review mission, two government agencies increased their level of participation. The Ministry of Labor assigned graduate volunteers at the tambon level to identify livelihood training needs in project villages. Subsequently, Ministry of Labor staff provided training, free of charge, to several villages, especially women's groups. Moreover, the extension staff at Department of Livestock Development, Ministry of Agriculture, provided technical support to IPBs with animal husbandry sub-projects.

87. **State-civil society relations.** The Project continued long-established World Bank support to strengthening relations between the state and civil society. CSOs working with traumatized children and orphans recognized the importance of the skills and resources that the Mental Health Department brought to bear for the Project's psycho-social care sub-component. Toward the end of Project implementation, the World Bank's Human Rights and Economic Inclusion Trust Fund approved a project entitled "Addressing Psycho-social Disabilities in the Deep South". The Mental Health Department and CSOs working in this field in the Deep South agreed to cooperate in overseeing that project. The Project acted as one of the catalysts for this cooperation. Furthermore, based on the Project's activities and achievements, the Mental Health Department consulted with HAF on framing a new policy on mental health support in southern Thailand.

88. **Public perception.** Reintegration of returnees was and remains a sensitive topic in the Deep South. The creation of a public space to discuss the issue and regular engagement with a wide range of non-government stakeholders were thus considered essential for the Project's success. Important groups included CSOs and NGOs, local media, religious leaders, and victims of violence. The task team undertook numerous consultations and sensitization meetings, both informal and formal, during



Project identification and preparation, building on the extensive network of contacts it had built under earlier interventions.

89. During Project start-up, HAF prepared and then implemented a publicly disclosed stakeholder engagement plan through both formal and informal activities (see also para. 123). HAF, supported by the task team, also undertook extensive, conflict-sensitive communications about all aspects of Project through a variety of means, including dissemination events for pertinent research, academic fora, videos, brochures, and a regularly updated website. Through implementing the stakeholder engagement plan, HAF raised awareness and created a better understanding about the need for reintegration assistance to returnees among the stakeholder groups. It also received valuable inputs on the appropriateness and implementation of the Project.

90. Especially important stakeholder groups were victims of violence, both Muslim and Buddhist, and Buddhist CSOs. They saw the BPH program as a reward for perpetrators of violence whilst they themselves received little or no assistance. HAF and the task team held a series of meetings with representatives of both groups in order to raise awareness, clarify misperceptions (for instance, that the Project was a counterinsurgency measure³⁷), and explain the differences in approach to the BPH program. As a result, CSO leaders had a better understanding of the Project overall.

91. Nevertheless, some concerns remained due in part to weaknesses in communications capacity (see paras. 97f.). Interviews during ICR preparation pointed out that HAF had not adequately included some important CSOs, both Buddhist and Muslim, in consultations. Similarly, informal feedback received during World Bank supervision missions suggested that the importance of reintegration support within the broader peace dialogue process was not always fully appreciated. A sense remained that returnees were receiving too much attention. Any possible Project scale-up would need to strengthen communications, make this link more explicit, and complement support to returnees with support to other conflict-affected groups, especially victims and the internally displaced.

92. **Developments in the peace dialogue.** Both parties to the conflict recognized the potential role that the approach tested under the Project could play as part of the peace dialogue. Interviews with non-government stakeholders during ICR preparation confirmed the importance and success of the Project from their perspective. In September 2020, the Pattani Provincial Islamic Council submitted a series of proposals to the RTG's Peace Dialogue Panel on issues that it stated should be addressed in the peace process. While there has been little progress regarding the peace dialogue since, in large part due to Covid-19 restrictions that have prevented meetings being held in Malaysia, it is noteworthy that one of the proposals dealt with the reintegration of returnees, which broadly followed the design of the Project. Soon after, the NSC also recognized that the model proved effective and expressed interest in scaling up the approach. The evidence provided by the Project was thus both relevant and timely.

³⁷ Reflecting the diverse political and CSO landscapes in southern Thailand, some people continued to perceive the Project as possibly being an RTG counterinsurgency measure and viewed HAF with suspicion, notwithstanding the broad support the Project and HAF enjoyed among IPBs, communities, ethnic and religious leaders, and most CSOs.



III. KEY FACTORS THAT AFFECTED IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOME

A. Key Factors During Preparation

93. **Project design.** During preparation, the task team aimed to find a balance between a design that was simple and one that could test a holistic, and thus more multi-faceted approach to reintegration. The task team placed strong emphasis on outreach to IPBs and communities in order to mitigate the greater complexity of the design. The careful determination of the required staff profiles proved particularly important in this regard.

94. The complexity centered around the principles of transparency, accountability, and participation. The Project required processes that both IPBs and villagers, in the early stages of implementation, felt were too long and cumbersome. An initial lack of clarity with regard to their roles and responsibilities added to the confusion. The design choice was vindicated once funds started to flow and IPBs and villages realized how the various processes and the training they had received fitted together.

95. **Risk assessment.** Since the Project was prepared and implemented while the armed conflict was active, risk identification and management were a particular focus during preparation. In determining the risks, the task team built on the World Bank's extensive engagement in the Deep South that dated back to 2005, almost to the time when the current conflict started. Subsequently, the team's risk analysis underwent a thorough internal review. This helped to refine the design and develop actionable risk mitigation measures. The downgrading of the overall risk (see para. 42) was testimony to their adequacy.

96. **Readiness for implementation.** The Project was not ready for implementation at the time of effectiveness. A slow start was anticipated due to the selection of a relatively small NGO as executing agency; this was also recognized by HAF itself.³⁸ Major emphasis was thus placed on recruiting staff and consultants quickly and training them. Nevertheless, the time requirements for some activities were vastly underestimated, including for the preparation of the operations manual and the development of the MIS (see paras. 112ff.).³⁹ In this sense, the delays resulting from Covid-19 restrictions (see paras. 105f.) allowed HAF to complete the necessary preparatory activities, including staff training and the procurement of necessary equipment. The Project was certainly ready for implementation once restrictions were lifted in June 2020.

B. Key Factors During Implementation

97. **Coordination and communication.** While communication was regular, HAF had more limited engagement with local governments. Mainly due to miscommunication, the NSC did not set up the envisaged technical support group at the provincial level comprising representatives from relevant local

³⁸ Arguably, the prior experience of HAF staff with implementing the World Bank's CDD projects was overestimated and a risk rating of 'substantial', instead of 'moderate', for institutional capacity for implementation before mitigation would have been justified. The mitigation measures were appropriate and effective, however.

³⁹ Preparation of the operations manual, approval of which was a condition of withdrawal for economic and social reintegration activities, was planned for November 2019 and was accomplished in June 2020. The MIS was fully operational in March 2021 against an initial target date of January 2020. The final communications strategy was submitted in June 2020 rather than December 2019.



government and line agencies as well as academia, NGOs and the private sector. An opportunity was lost to raise more awareness about the Project among these stakeholder groups⁴⁰ and to provide possible additional support to the IPBs and communities.

98. Moreover, communication centered more on information sharing and less on placing the Project in the context of a latent peace process, as a result of which it took longer to raise understanding about its specific nature. At the same time, the HAF completion report noted that communication with local government agencies was to some extent limited on purpose in order to not give the impression to IPBs and villagers that the Project was affiliated with the government, which would have negatively affected their trust in it. HAF intensified communication with local government agencies once the IPB sub-projects had been completed. A further complication arose from the budgeting cycle of deconcentrated government agencies. Work plans are usually prepared two years in advance. The short Project duration thus precluded a full reorientation of government funding to Project activities

99. These shortcomings notwithstanding, HAF worked with the district officers overseeing the Project area to mobilize additional support from relevant line agencies, including staff from the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Public Health, and local universities.

100. **Human resources and organizational capacity.** Commitment and determination by HAF and its staff were central factors for the successful achievement of the Project's targets. Of particular importance were the number and profiles of outreach staff and their acceptance by villagers. This is borne out in the endline survey which reported that 95 percent of IPBs found case workers and counselors to be very helpful. The strong emphasis on staff training throughout implementation also contributed to the Project's overall success even though Covid-19 restrictions meant that staff training could not be as frequent or effective as planned. Managing numerous tasks along a multifaceted process proved difficult in various instances, however. While these challenges did not ultimately undermine the achievements, it made reaching them unnecessarily demanding. Noteworthy examples include the following.

101. HAF faced difficulties in managing short-term, local consultants to fulfil their responsibilities on a timely basis. These consultants were not available for the Project to the extent required, and also lacked the technical expertise to some degree, especially with regard to work in conflict areas. This included consultants working on the MIS and communications. In order to address the issues and deliver timely services to the IPBs, the responsibilities of these consultants were shared with office management staff and case workers, and for the MIS - also with the task team. The extra workload not only created additional stress for staff but also reduced the time for carrying out their normal activities.

102. These challenges were especially pronounced regarding technical assistance for livelihoods. The identified academic institute, which was recognized for its capacity in the field, eventually decided not to participate in the Project. Consequently, HAF had to contract individual livelihood consultants. The consultants, whose levels of competence varied widely, were assigned geographically rather than according to their expertise. This led to a mismatch between the Project's technical assistance to livelihoods and the needs of a few IPBs. Furthermore, communication by HAF with regard to the level of detail needed for livelihood proposals was not sufficiently clear, which created additional work and left both livelihood consultants and IPBs frustrated.

⁴⁰ This would have been particularly relevant for local government officials as they tend to rotate frequently.



103. Overall, 72 percent of IPBs found the livelihood consultants to be very helpful, which reflected both appreciation of the support (such as for career planning and developing ‘soft skills’) they had provided and a somewhat strained relationship in several cases as some of the consultants had difficulty building relationships of trust. While HAF was able to resolve most issues, the delays in disbursing funds to IPBs and the costs involved in terms of staff work load were avoidable. Moreover, the consultants, who had a CSO background, favored self-employment and missed opportunities for job creation by not reaching out more to the private sector, such as the local chamber of commerce and cattle cooperative.

104. In addition, HAF placed sometimes too much emphasis on procedures. This included very detailed and arguably unnecessary steps in the sub-project cycles, including with regard to environmental reporting and local procurement forms (see paras. 128 and 135, respectively). While understandable from an accountability perspective – HAF wanted to distinguish the Project from normal government projects as clearly as possible – the narrow focus on processes sometimes put the achievement of the PDO at risk. Both IPBs and community members voiced their frustration with the long delays and many steps they had to undertake to finally receive the grants. This was not helped by the facilitators who, while experienced, were sometimes seen as too attached to a time-consuming process.

105. **Covid-19.** The RTG first introduced strict restrictions in March 2020 before lifting them in June 2020. These restrictions included bans on local travel and large group meetings and brought field implementation to a halt. This left many IPBs and villagers uncertain whether the promised support would ever arrive. HAF used this period to finalize various tasks, including the operations manual and initial communications plan. It also adjusted its work plan for restarting activities appropriately. Importantly, outreach staff remained in contact with IPBs, community leaders, and other stakeholders, and supported IPBs in developing their livelihood proposals remotely as much as possible. Moreover, HAF held small group meetings (with fewer than ten attendees) in several villages to prepare for future CDD community meetings. In addition, community facilitators, supported by the task team, conducted a brief survey to understand the social impacts of Covid-19 in the Project area. These activities greatly facilitated the full reengagement with stakeholders and resumption of field operations once travel and meeting restrictions were lifted. Nevertheless, the endline survey indicated that restrictions-induced delays in the transfer of funds to beneficiaries lasted until September 2020.

106. Covid-19 restrictions were reintroduced in April 2021 and lasted until June 2021. By this time, most of the livelihood and social integration activities had been completed, thus direct impact was limited. However, several training activities had to be canceled, which particularly affected IPB training in higher skills (like pattern design for dressmakers, internet advertising techniques, and photography). Furthermore, one village was unable to carry out its social audit. On the whole, the Covid-19 interruptions led to delays and some cancelations but, due to the six-month extension, did not negatively affect Project outcomes.

107. **Natural disasters.** Major flooding occurred in two Project villages during December 2020 and January 2021. HAF assessed the damages to the activities (small animal husbandry) of two IPBs and provided an additional THB 4,100 for them to restart their sub-projects. The flood also affected some social integration activities in the villages but the VICs were able to resume implementation after the flood receded; they completed the activities without further complications.



108. **Conflict and instability.** Implementation of the Project during an ongoing conflict had been expected to encounter periodic delays due to insecurity. HAF reported a total of eight violent incidents near Project communities. Thai security forces subsequently visited the areas concerned to investigate or search for evidence and Project activities were postponed or paused due to concerns over staff and beneficiary safety. As none of the Project villages were directly impacted, the sole effect of these incidences was on the implementation schedule. In addition, HAF reported that some IPBs in two villages had complained that too many outsiders were visiting them. To them, it felt “almost like a military project”. These IPBs preferred to only interact with the case workers and their concerns were thus resolved.

C. Quality of Monitoring and Evaluation

109. As a pilot, the Project needed to generate sufficient information to determine whether and if so how, the components and implementation modalities could be scaled up. Consequently, the task team placed significant emphasis on: (i) developing a robust MELS as part of Project implementation; and (ii) building the capacity of HAF to manage it. Monitoring tools, methods and arrangements, and feedback mechanisms were developed specifically with the goal of adaptive learning in mind. Central to the MELS were the CMS/MIS, which built on the World Bank-supported reintegration (normalization) project in the Philippines.

M&E Design

110. The Project’s design envisaged a comprehensive MELS that would meet the requirements of a scaled-up operation rather than simply monitor and evaluate the pilot’s implementation. The cloud-based, modular MELS, as laid out in the operations manual, would center on the CMS as the single database for information on beneficiaries, benefits and services, which was to be documented in a user manual.

111. The main instruments of the MELS would be: a Socio-Economic Profiling Survey at the start and one at the end of the Project; a Community Perception Survey at the start and one at the end of the Project; and numerous forms to collect routine data for the CMS (such as on livelihood proposals, enrolment in skills training, medical treatment, and grievances). Data for IPB profiles and community perceptions would be collected with paper questionnaires at the beginning and using Android handhelds once the system was developed. The MELS would pull all information together in a relational database in order to track and measure progress in achieving results as defined in the results framework. The MELS would thus be fully consistent with the results framework and fully embedded institutionally.

112. HAF established a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning unit to develop and implement the MELS. The unit included a full-time MIS officer, a part-time monitoring consultant, and a part-time MIS IT consultant. HAF started early with training staff in data collection. It eventually fully executed the MELS as planned – but with varying degrees of success and numerous delays. The MELS, therefore, reached its full potential only toward the end of the Project. The shortcomings were a function of management and consultant decision-making rather than a result of the system’s design, which was largely appropriate for the purpose. Given that the goal was to develop a model for later scale-up, the delays had no material impact on the Project, however. In this sense, development of the MELS became a *de facto* component in itself, with work continuing through most of the implementation period.



M&E Implementation

113. With regard to M&E during Project implementation, two dimensions need to be distinguished. First, the development and implementation of the MELS, specifically the CMS and MIS. Second, the monitoring and reporting on Project progress. Ideally, the latter would have used the data produced by the former. Given the delays in fully establishing the MELS, however, HAF was required to use a manual method instead.

114. The baseline Socio-Economic Profiling Survey of IPBs and Community Perception Survey were undertaken in February-March 2020. A workable version of the cloud-based system, including a user manual, was ready by November 2020. The process to receive Google Play approval of the Android application for real-time data collection and monitoring took longer than expected; it was finally received during the same month. Unforeseen technical complexity combined with the required English language skills and weak consultant support were important causes for the delay in finalizing the MIS. User training and system testing for the Android application was eventually completed in March 2021. The IPB and community endline surveys were undertaken in April and May 2021.

115. Several difficulties were encountered in the use of the MELS. Importantly, neither monitoring nor baseline data were entered into the MIS database via desktop or laptop before the Android application became available even though this would have been possible using the PC version of the MIS data entry application. As a result, the data, though available, were not fully analyzed, and the baseline IPB profile and community report were not finalized.

116. While these difficulties limited the use of the MELS, the system was fully developed as designed and became fully functional before the Project closed. The MIS user manual was of good quality and MIS training included a YouTube video on how to use the Android application for data entry. The complete MELS is thus available for scaling up reintegration activities in the future.

117. Challenges with getting the MIS up and running notwithstanding, case workers and community facilitators routinely used the forms for IPB grants, psycho-social support, and community grants to collect monitoring data for livelihood and community activities according to the procedures established in the operations manual. The data were accurate and of good quality, and enabled HAF to carry out progress reporting – albeit manually, which placed a heavy burden on the case workers and facilitators for entering data on paper forms and the MIS officer for analyzing the information and preparing the reports.

M&E Utilization

118. The HAF progress reports provided solid information about Project implementation, but focused mainly on reintegration support activities as well as management issues (such as procurement and financial management, grievance redress, and communications). The information thus provided was completely adequate to assess progress in implementation, and thus adequate to inform decisions about Project restructurings and adjustments to the impact of the Covid-19 restrictions. Moreover, the endline survey report, HAF completion report, and ICR were able to make full use of the, by then established, CMS and MIS.



119. That said, the delay in establishing the MIS translated into an incomplete use of, in principle, available monitoring data for assessing progress toward achieving the PDO and results as the data were, in practice, often not accessible. For instance, the case workers collected monthly monitoring information on IPB satisfaction with the assistance received, which would have corresponded to a PDO-level indicator and an intermediate results indicator if it had been analyzed. Moreover, information for other indicators (such as for the scalable CMS, the provision of coordinated services, and RTG adherence to the Agreed Principles and Standard Operating Procedures) was embedded in HAF progress reports but not explicitly analyzed.

120. Beyond monitoring and reporting on progress, HAF used MIS data for learning and evaluation, in three categories: (i) lessons learned exchanges between IPBs as well as Project communities; (ii) lessons learned exchanges and dissemination events with CSOs, academia, and government agencies on relevant topics, for instance, international reintegration experiences; and (iii) the production of a set of knowledge products on various issues such as *From Wage Earner to Small Business Owner* and *Restoring the Family Fabric Through Livelihoods*. Additionally, HAF prepared two lessons learned notes on Project implementation: (i) on IPB livelihood assistance; and (ii) on community assistance. These knowledge products were shared at dissemination events with non-government stakeholders before Project closing.

Justification of Overall Rating and Quality of M&E

Rating: Substantial

121. The rating of the MELS takes three perspectives into account. First, the MELS generated the information necessary to properly assess the achievement of the PDO and results indicators and test the links in the results chain. While there were shortcomings in analysis and reporting, the quality of the data was good and the information sufficient to inform course corrections. Second, the Project also monitored and evaluated the development and use of a comprehensive MELS. The delays encountered in the process meant that the MELS only became fully functional when most activities had already been completed. However, viewing this comprehensive MELS with its CMS as an explicit output of the Project, the PDO-level indicator was fully achieved. Third, the Project had a strong emphasis on learning, knowledge generation, and dissemination. Combining these three perspectives, the MELS generated valuable information for the scalability of the enhanced approach, and is itself ready for a scaled-up operation – provided it is managed in a sound manner.

IV. COMPLIANCE ISSUES, BANK PERFORMANCE, AND RISK TO DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME

A. Environmental, Social and Fiduciary Compliance

122. **Environmental and social (E&S) risk management.** The E&S risk classification at appraisal was ‘substantial’, primarily due to the conflict context and HAF’s unknown E&S risk management capacity. Environmental risk was considered ‘moderate’ as the economic reintegration grants and community social integration grants were small and expected to have minimum negative effects. The social risk rating was ‘substantial’ given the sensitive conflict context and some concerns about the acceptability of Project activities at the time of preparation, leading to an overall E&S risk rating of ‘substantial’ (see also footnote 24). Throughout implementation, HAF complied with all E&S requirements and applicable policies. The Project’s E&S performance, which considered E&S management by HAF and the capacity of its E&S staff,



was consistently rated 'satisfactory'. All environmental and commitments under the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan were completed satisfactorily.

123. The following environmental and social standards (ESS) were relevant to the Project: ESS 1 (Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts); ESS 2 (Labor and Working Conditions); ESS 3 (Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management); ESS 4 (Community Health and Safety); ESS 6 (Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources); and ESS 10 (Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure). The HAF developed and implemented the following E&S instruments: Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (disclosed November 2019) and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (November 2019) (see paras. 89ff.) as well as Environmental Codes of Practice (ECOPs) and Labor Management Procedures (disclosed as part of the operations manual in June 2020). An Environmental and Social Management Framework was not required for the Project.

124. Relevant E&S procedures were captured adequately in the operations manual. This included ECOPs for ESS 1, ESS 3, ESS 4, and ESS 6 as well as guidance on the sub-project cycles. Furthermore, the operations manual included a negative list of activities that the Project could not finance, further reducing the risk of significant environmental impact. HAF hired an E&S specialist, who had worked on the World Bank's CDD projects in southern Thailand, to oversee all E&S activities and train outreach staff on the E&S requirements and instruments and the use of related forms. The number and capacity of staff working on E&S issues were sufficient.

125. During sub-project preparation, all proposals were screened for E&S impacts as outlined in the ECOPs. The E&S screening form as well as typical ECOPs and specific mitigation measures for each sub-project were attached to sub-project proposals. The E&S consultant and HAF case workers (for livelihood grants) and facilitators (for social integration grants) continuously monitored E&S aspects of sub-project implementation. No significant concerns on E&S impacts from the implementation of sub-projects were noted. Reporting on E&S risk management in HAF progress reports was uneven but of acceptable detail in the HAF completion report.

126. Over 90 percent of IPB sub-projects had no E&S impacts and for those that did, IPBs mostly followed the standard mitigation measures identified in the ECOPs. In a limited number of instances, IPBs did not fully adhere to the standards, for instance arguing that the use of protective gear was uncomfortable or that they are not familiar with hygiene requirements for food preparation. Regarding the social integration sub-projects, most had no impacts, and the risks were properly managed for those that did. E&S requirements also had some broader positive consequences. For example, as a result of their livelihood grants, IPBs kept their animals in hygienic stalls rather than letting them wander freely in the villages – which reduced the smell and manure villagers had to contend with previously.

127. It took IPBs and community committee members some time to understand E&S requirements and procedures but field visits during supervision missions confirmed that most were aware of the specific requirements related to their activities. Practical explanations by case workers and facilitators were deemed particularly helpful. Nevertheless, some issues emerged. For instance, a few IPBs intended to use their livelihood grant for ineligible activities, such as buying a monkey to collect coconuts or purchasing a vehicle for transporting bricks. Not being allowed to do so created some frustration for them.



128. Confusion also arose as the livelihood consultants had not received E&S training. While their responsibilities did not include E&S issues, they worked closely with IPBs on the sub-project proposals and thus required some familiarity with the E&S management issues. They eventually received some training and were instructed to coordinate with outreach staff on E&S implementation and monitoring. Lastly, the mitigation measures that HAF required for some of the sub-projects with very minor impacts were overly detailed and impractical; they would merit simplification in case of a scaled-up project.

129. The Project design elevated grievance redress to a sub-component, which is explained in paras. 33 and 179ff.

130. **Financial management.** Overall, the project complied with the Bank's financial management policies and requirements. Interim unaudited financial reports covering the full implementation period were submitted to the World Bank on time. Furthermore, the two external audits for the periods November 2019 to December 2020 (during which funds for all regular IPB and community sub-projects were disbursed) and January to September 2021, respectively, concluded that the financial statements had been prepared in accordance with the project's Financial Management Manual, with both reflecting unmodified (clean) audit opinion and without significant issues identified that would require issuance of a Management Letter. Petty cash was maintained properly and accounted for and the fixed assets register was properly updated. A number of issues were, however, encountered. The accounting transactions were not recorded in a timely manner upon incurrence through an accounting software. For instance, by the time of the mid-term review in November 2020, the last accounting entry in the system was at the end of August 2020. Some minor expenses for travel, meals and workshop attendance were not paid according to the provisions of the operations manual or properly recorded, and supporting documentation was on occasion missing in the system, but available in paper copy.

131. These minor shortcomings did not jeopardize the achievement of the Project's objective. The Project closed with a 'satisfactory' financial management performance rating.

132. **Disbursements.** The World Bank disbursed USD 1,235,781 to HAF. All withdrawal applications were accompanied by proper documentation. As explained in para. 44, the third restructuring canceled USD 114,219. At closing, another USD 116,473 remained unused⁴¹ due to the Covid-19 related cancellation or reduction in scope of several activities; HAF returned these funds to the World Bank in October 2021. The total Project cost thus amounted to USD 1,119,509, or 83 percent of the estimated cost.

133. **Procurement.** Procurement activities were undertaken by HAF and VICs. Considering the conflict environment in the Project area, simple procedures were used to the extent feasible. Most procurement activities at HAF used simple procedures, for example, the shopping method for goods and the direct selection method for hiring consulting services. The procurement activities of the sub-grants at the community level followed the simple procurement procedures and forms provided in the operations manual.

134. Although staff hired by HAF had worked on the World Bank's CDD projects in the Deep South, their understanding of World Bank procurement was somewhat limited. The procurement post reviews, which audited the HAF's procurement activities, identified a number of weaknesses especially in

⁴¹ This included interest earned.



uploading documents in the World Bank's system, Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP). For instance, while documents were filed in STEP, some of the information was initially wrongly placed and other information missing though available in paper form, including inspection, acceptance, payment and completion documents. (Re-)filing the information took longer than anticipated as staff had to get acquainted with the proper processes. These limitations notwithstanding, the two procurement post reviews found no major irregularities. They also confirmed that HAF carried out the procurement processes in accordance with the agreed procedures and procurement plan, as revised.

135. By and large, community members deemed the procurement training well delivered and useful. However, both IPBs and community committees encountered difficulties implementing the required procurement steps in practice, some of which were introduced by HAF but not necessary under World Bank guidelines. For example, VICs needed to compare prices of and document low-cost items such as stationery. On the whole, procurement of goods⁴² for community sub-projects was managed well but procedures were deemed cumbersome and VIC members sometimes had difficulty comparing prices or completing paperwork. That said, the facilitators supported the VICs in both financial management and procurement matters effectively.

B. Bank Performance

Quality at Entry

136. The Project was prepared very well as the task team followed three operational virtues: a deep understanding of context, the generation of evidence, and patience. The task team brought to bear the World Bank's extensive, global experience with reintegration projects for former combatants and adapted this experience to the specific context of southern Thailand. Equally importantly, the task team built on the strong relations with the RTG and civil society stakeholders that the World Bank had established during previous activities in the Deep South. It engaged with both civilian and security government agencies as well as returnees for an extended period of time prior to commencing Project preparation.

137. Already in 2016, the World Bank initiated research into options for reintegration in southern Thailand,⁴³ which laid the foundation for policy dialogue with senior government officials that started in early 2017. The World Bank also organized a study tour for a Thai delegation to Colombia later that year, to learn from the reintegration experience of another middle-income country. Simultaneously, the task team initiated consultations with returnees about their reintegration experiences and the BPH program, which led to dedicated research⁴⁴.

138. During preparation, the task team followed a participatory and iterative approach so that the views of all stakeholder groups could be fully taken into account in the Project's design and implementation arrangements. The team also applied findings of a study co-funded by the World Bank that recommended, among others, working with government and civil society, improving conflict sensitivity, and supporting programs that will be necessary as the peace process advances.⁴⁵

⁴² Communities used their own resources for any required minor renovations or repairs of public spaces.

⁴³ World Bank. 2016, op. cit. This research in turn built on the 2014 study on men and youth in the Deep South: Center for Conflict Studies and Cultural Diversity, op. cit.

⁴⁴ Vichitrananda, Juntavises, and Tuansiri, op. cit.

⁴⁵ Burke, Adam, Pauline Tweedie and Ora-orn Poocharoen. 2013. *The Contested Corners of Asia: Subnational Conflict*



139. Though the theory of change was not elaborated explicitly in the Project Paper, by placing the Project in the framework of the WDR 2011 the task team built the results chain on a solid and appropriate conceptual foundation. It recognized at the outset that some of the design elements could prove complex. It accepted these risks in light of the pilot nature of the Project, and mitigated against them deliberately and adequately.

Quality of Supervision

140. Throughout Project implementation, the task team followed activities very closely and attentively with the desired higher-level objective (see Chart 1) in mind. Between Project effectiveness and closing it undertook six formal implementation/technical missions, including virtually during the period of Covid-19 restrictions. All the while, the task team remained constantly and constructively engaged with HAF on all Project-related matters. Combined with fortnightly meetings by phone since the start of the Project, HAF and the World Bank exercised flexibility appropriately to respond to any evolving issues quickly, from the need to restructure the Project to updating the procurement plan.

141. The task team provided feedback and just-in-time guidance to HAF regularly and succinctly. Issues pertaining to, for instance, the roles and responsibilities of outreach staff, the operationalization of the MIS, budget reallocations, and reporting, were identified clearly in aide-memoires and other documents (such as the procurement post review reports). The task team also provided continuous guidance on ESF and fiduciary requirements during Project implementation, undertook post-reviews of sub-project proposals and procurement, and identified areas for improving implementation in these areas. Furthermore, it helped to resolve management problems and also provided direct technical support when necessary, for instance to accelerate MIS development and guide implementation of the psycho-social support sub-component.

142. Importantly, complementing the implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan by HAF, the task team engaged regularly with key groups. This included regular field visits to meet IPBs and communities, briefing meetings with provincial governors, other government staff in the Project area and senior officials of ISOC-4, and a series of meetings with Buddhist CSOs to seek their views. The World Bank also invited members of the Project Advisory Committee (from the Ministries of Labor and Justice) and a representative from civil society to join the mid-term review mission. Their participation not only generated valuable suggestions, for instance regarding communication and how the two ministries could support Project activities (in skills training and grievance redress). It also strengthened the partnership between HAF and government agencies and, more generally, enhanced the RTG's sense of ownership of the Project.

143. The Implementation Status and Results Reports (ISRs) appropriately identified the critical issues for management attention. Nevertheless, there were occasional, yet immaterial inconsistencies in reporting.⁴⁶ Furthermore, performance ratings in the ISRs were not always clear. Progress toward

and International Development Assistance, The Case of Southern Thailand. The Asia Foundation.

⁴⁶ By way of example, the ISR sequence no. 2 of May 2020 stated that the establishment of the CMS had been completed whilst the back-to-office report of the technical support mission of September 28 to October 5, 2020 noted that the CMS was being finalized; a distinction between a workable draft and the completed version would have been helpful. In the same vein, said back-to-office report indicated that all procurement-related information was uploaded in STEP whereas the mid-term review of December 2020 noted examples of documents not yet filed



achieving the PDO was consistently rated ‘moderately satisfactory’. While only the endline report could fully determine the degree to which all targets were reached, the ISR sequence no. 3 of January 2021 could have included information for those indicators where data were available from HAF’s progress reports and/or the mid-term review mission. Available (including anecdotal) evidence appears to have been strong enough to warrant a ‘satisfactory’ rating. By contrast, overall implementation progress was consistently rated ‘satisfactory’. Considering that several activities were evidently delayed (see footnote 39), that technical assistance for livelihood support had to be redesigned, and that reporting the baseline IPB and community survey results encountered quality problems and delays, a rating of ‘moderately satisfactory’ could have been given in the ISR sequence no. 2.

144. The task team included recognized country and sector specialists and kept most of its members throughout the Project cycle, from identification to closing. The continuity of their engagement facilitated the conducive work relationship with HAF. A new co-task team leader was appointed during implementation, a transition that went smoothly because of his technical expertise, knowledge of the local conflict context, and familiarity with the Project.

Justification of Overall Rating of Bank Performance

Rating: Highly Satisfactory

145. The services provided by the World Bank undoubtedly helped to ensure the operation’s quality at entry and, notwithstanding some minor issues with reporting, aided effective implementation through appropriate and close supervision and technical support. Throughout the Project cycle, the core team was supplemented with technical specialists in different reintegration areas (MIS, mental health, etc.). Both local and international staff on the task team were fully cognizant of the local context and very respectful of all stakeholder groups involved, a quintessential element for the World Bank to operate successfully in situations of fragility and conflict. Anecdotal evidence gathered during ICR preparation affirmed the World Bank’s acceptance by the local population for carrying out this sensitive Project. World Bank management provided the team the space necessary to work in this complex environment, and showed flexibility to accommodate and resolve emerging issues.

C. Risks to Development Outcome

146. Risks need to be assessed in two ways, in terms of: (i) the Project’s outcomes as a pilot intervention; and (ii) the livelihood and community sub-projects.

147. **Risks to Project outcomes.** The pilot demonstrated that the enhanced approach to reintegration was successful. The relevant risk, therefore, is whether or not the approach will be used, and possibly scaled up, in the future. There are two determinants to consider. First, the RTG’s willingness to use the approach for the remaining returnees who have not yet received adequate assistance. Second, the readiness of the RTG and the BRN to engage in and successfully conclude the peace dialogue.

148. At the time of ICR preparation, the peace dialogue has not yet advanced. The NSC is considering scaling-up the Project but support from other ministries, possible implementation arrangements, and a timetable remain unclear at the time of ICR preparation. Consequently, the likelihood of the approach not

in STEP (for contracts already concluded before September 2020). In the end, all documents were properly filed.



being taken forward anytime soon, while uncertain, is not negligible. Even so, the processes and procedures are tested and available and can thus be used at any point in the future. The main impact of a delay would be the potential loss of institutional capacity which HAF may not be able to maintain if the gap between the pilot and any future operation was too long. Since the approach is properly documented in the operations manual, financial management manual, MES manual, the completion and endline reports, and this ICR, however, rebuilding this capacity would not pose an insurmountable obstacle.

149. **Risks to reintegration outcomes.** Maintaining the outcome of IPB livelihood sub-projects depends primarily on the economic situation in southern Thailand which in turn is subject to external factors, long-term effects of Covid-19 being a notable example. Moreover, the short Project duration did not allow the outreach staff to accompany the IPBs' reintegration process for very long. The likelihood that detrimental changes may occur thus exists. Mitigating this risk is the fact that a majority of IPBs used their grants to expand already ongoing activities. They are thus familiar with operational requirements and market conditions. Therefore, the impact of detrimental changes on the sustainability of livelihood activities, and thus the economic reintegration experience, is expected to be limited.

150. At the same time, detrimental changes that put social reintegration at risk are unlikely since the Project communities are ethnically and religiously homogenous and returnees have been accepted as full members. The World Bank-financed CDD projects in the Deep South were implemented in heterogeneous communities and applied citizen engagement techniques inspired by, among others, the Aceh/Indonesia experience, including participatory conflict and resilience analysis.⁴⁷ This experience could be brought to bear if the Project was scaled up.

V. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

151. **Scalability.** The Project achieved its development objective and reached, or surpassed, all its targets. The RTG thus has at its disposal the critical building blocks of an enhanced approach to reintegration that it can expand to accompany the peace dialogue and any future peace agreement. This ICR and the completion and endline reports identified a number of lessons with regard to both implementation and management that will need to be taken into account if the RTG decides to scale up the approach. For so doing, the design will need to be adapted, if the future case load of returnees is higher and/or if they have integrated, or will integrate, into more heterogeneous communities. To this end, close involvement of all stakeholder groups in project design and implementation would be critical.

152. **Use of a local NGO.** The RTG and the World Bank agreed that the Project be implemented by a local NGO. This approach was contrary to World Bank-funded reintegration projects at-large that have commonly been implemented by national agencies. Other such projects have routinely been carried out by UN agencies or international NGOs. Using this local model of implementation was correct – especially with its strong emphasis on outreach – and it is replicable in similar contexts. The pilot also demonstrated, however, that the capacities of HAF were overstretched on several occasions. Consequently, if the RTG expanded the project, as well as if this model was chosen in other contexts, management capacity would need to be reinforced. This, for instance, could be achieved by using an NGO consortium or subcontracting specific activities to other NGOs and/or CSOs.

⁴⁷ See for instance, Barron, Patrick, Erman Rahman and Kharisma Nugroho. 2013. *The Contested Corners of Asia: Subnational Conflict and International Development Assistance, The Case of Aceh, Indonesia.* The Asia Foundation.



153. **Using CDD for the reintegration of former combatants.** Demobilization and reintegration programs for former combatants routinely include activities to support their social reintegration in the communities of settlement. This was the first World Bank reintegration project to use a CDD approach. It had to overcome many of the same challenges that full-scale CDD operations encounter, such as the need to build community capacity and the frustration that start-up that is perceived as slow often creates. Nevertheless, the Project's participatory nature proved important not just for aiding the social integration of returnees, but also for reorienting the relationship between the state and the Project communities.⁴⁸ The up-front investment in the Project's CDD process proved effective, and should be considered for future World Bank reintegration projects for former combatants in both conflict and post-conflict settings.

154. **Reintegration during conflict.** Unusual for most World Bank-funded reintegration projects, the Project was undertaken in a context of ongoing conflict and approved at a time when a formal peace dialogue had not yet started. In this sense, the Project can be considered part of the 'next generation Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration' (DDR) which can take place before a peace agreement is reached.⁴⁹ This makes reintegration more political, risky, and complex. Lessons from other countries such as Afghanistan and Colombia have informed the World Bank's approach in southern Thailand. Contrary to other settings, the Deep South context was more conducive to reintegration before negotiation. Nevertheless, some important lessons can be drawn for future operations elsewhere. First, reintegration cannot succeed if it is constructed or construed as a counterinsurgency measure. Second, reintegration cannot be a self-contained activity but needs to be embedded in a broader vision about peace, not least to increase the likelihood of its sustainability. Third, an explicit and measurable commitment by the parties to not take actions that may undermine the very purpose of a project is essential to help to build trust in both reintegration and a peace process.

155. **The role of the World Bank in peace processes.** The Project's design was on purpose narrowly focused on the economic and social dimensions of reintegration. Whilst the Project was conceptually and practically embedded in the peace dialogue, its objective and targets were technical and transparent, and not aspirational. By, in a sense, reducing the political character of reintegration to its technical aspects, the World Bank played an important role in helping to demonstrate that the enhanced approach is workable. There are economic and social dimensions to any conflict and the World Bank can lend its global expertise to any peace process. To do so to its full potential it would need to: (i) deconstruct what may seem to be purely political issues to ascertain their economic and social dimensions; (ii) take the time and invest in relations with all stakeholder groups concerned – trust cannot be rushed; (iii) build the evidence and base any dialogue on it; and (iv) provide continuous, hands-on guidance and support – and the required resources – where capacity is weak or the neutral role of the World Bank is sought.

⁴⁸ See also Myint, Nikolas and Corey Pattison. 2018. Operationalizing the Pathways for Peace Study in Community-Driven Development Operations: Guidance Note. World Bank.

⁴⁹ See for example, Muggah, Robert and Chris O'Donnell. 2015. Sequencing Next Generation Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration in Peace Processes. CRPD Working Paper No. 29. Center for Research on Peace and Development, Leuven.



ANNEX 1. RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND KEY OUTPUTS

A. RESULTS INDICATORS

A.1 PDO Indicators

Objective/Outcome: The Project Development Objective was to assist the government of the Kingdom of Thailand to pilot an enhanced socio-economic reintegration process for selected former combatants.

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
At least 70 percent of core Individual project beneficiaries (former combatants) satisfied with the program approach and services provided	Percentage	0.00 30-Nov-2019	70.00 31-Dec-2020	70.00 30-Jun-2021	99.00 30-Jun-2021

Comments (achievements against targets):
 99% of IPBs satisfied with assistance provided
 98% of IPBs satisfied with the approach

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Scalable case management system established for	Text	No case management system	Operational CMS documented in	Operational CMS documented in	CMS established



provision of services and opportunities to ex-combatants		30-Nov-2019	manuals 31-Dec-2020	manuals 30-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2021
Comments (achievements against targets): CMS developed, documented, and fully functional					

A.2 Intermediate Results Indicators

Component: Component 1: Economic Reintegration

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Livelihood prospects of IPBs increased through access to opportunities and services provided by the project	Percentage	0.00 30-Nov-2019	80.00 31-Dec-2020	80.00 30-Jun-2021	99.00 30-Jun-2021
Comments (achievements against targets): 99% of IPBs felt Project had helped improve their livelihoods 95% of IPBs felt Project will improve their income					

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
At least 70 percent of core IPBs	Percentage	0.00	70.00	70.00	88.00



takes part in project supported or other relevant community development activities		30-Nov-2019	31-Dec-2020	30-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2021
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Comments (achievements against targets):
88% of IPBs said they participated in the community development part of the Project

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Coordinated services provided to all IPBs referred to government institutions	Percentage	0.00 30-Nov-2019	80.00 31-Dec-2020	80.00 30-Jun-2021	100.00 30-Jun-2021

Comments (achievements against targets):
All IPBs and family members referred by the Project to a government agency for training or mental health support, received adequate assistance

Component: Component 2: Social Reintegration

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
At least 70 percent of core IPBs takes part in project supported or other relevant community development activities	Percentage	0.00 30-Nov-2019	70.00 31-Dec-2020	70.00 30-Jun-2021	88.00 30-Jun-2021

Comments (achievements against targets):
88% of IPBs said they participated in the community development part of the Project



Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Coordinated services provided to all IPBs referred to government institutions	Percentage	0.00	80.00	80.00	100.00
		30-Nov-2019	31-Dec-2020	30-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2021
<p>Comments (achievements against targets): All IPBs and family members referred by the Project to a government agency for training or mental health support, received adequate assistance</p>					

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
At least 70 percent majority of population in villages satisfied with program approach	Percentage	0.00	70.00	70.00	100.00
		30-Nov-2019	31-Dec-2020	30-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2021
<p>Comments (achievements against targets): 100% of male villagers satisfied 98% of female villagers satisfied 100% of IPBs satisfied</p>					

Component: Component 3: Project Management

Indicator Name	Unit of Measure	Baseline	Original Target	Formally Revised Target	Actual Achieved at Completion
Government adherence to the	Number	0.00	100.00	100.00	100.00



agreed principles and standard operating procedures		30-Nov-2019	31-Dec-2020	30-Jun-2021	30-Jun-2021
Comments (achievements against targets): The RTG fully adhered to the agreed principles and standard operating procedures					



B. ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PDO

Objective/Outcome	
Outcome Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least 70 percent of Individual project beneficiaries (former combatants) satisfied with the program approach and services provided 2. Scalable case management system established for provision of services and opportunities to ex-combatants
Intermediate Results Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Livelihood prospects of IPBs increased through access to opportunities and services provided by the project 2. At least 70 percent of core IPBs take part in project supported or other relevant community development activities 3. Coordinated services provided to all IPBs referred to government institutions 4. Government adherence to the agreed principles and standard operating 5. At least 70 percent majority of population in villages satisfied with program approach
Key Outputs by Component (linked to the achievement of the Objective/Outcome)	<p><i>Component 1: Economic Reintegration</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 200 IPBs undertook 238 training activities - 200 IPBs carried out 253 livelihood activities <p><i>Component 2: Social Reintegration</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A participatory CDD process was carried out in all 16 Project villages - 63 community sub-projects were implemented in the 16 villages - 4 IPBs and 2 IPB spouses received PTSD treatment - 23 IPBs and family members with high levels of stress and 125 IPB spouses received self-care training on mental health - All 22 cases of grievance and inquiry were resolved <p><i>Component 3: Project Management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The MIS and CMS were developed and documented



ANNEX 2. PROJECT COST BY COMPONENT

Components	Amount at Approval (USD)	Actual at Project Closing (USD)	Percentage of Approval (%)
Component 1: Economic reintegration	692,000	531,901	77
Component 2: Social reintegration	243,000	209,557	86
Component 3: Program management	415,000	378,152	91
Total	1,350,000	1,119,509	83



ANNEX 3. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

A. Economic Reintegration Support

156. **Orientation, information, counseling referral.** Endline survey results showed that satisfaction levels with Project staff and consultants, and the services they provided, were very high (see paras. 52ff.). The ratio of IPBs to case workers, at 20 to 1, was comparatively low, which allowed staff to be in very close and regular interaction with beneficiaries, a feature confirmed as essential in other reintegration settings. Indeed, IPBs greatly valued the fact that they could turn to advisors any time that they faced with a problem.

157. **Socio-economic reintegration grants.** All 200 IPBs received a reintegration grant of THB 50,000 to support their livelihoods. There were several activities under this sub-component. Firstly, HAF developed socio-economic profiles for each IPB at the beginning of the Project to help to identify tailored livelihood strategies. Secondly, the livelihood consultants provided technical support to IPBs to develop livelihood proposals and training plans. Thirdly, IPBs received training in specific areas related to their livelihoods proposals. And fourthly, the livelihood consultants aided the IPBs in implementing their activities; each IPB could undertake multiple activities within the amount of the reintegration grant.

158. The most common livelihood activities were raising animals (34 percent of all IPBs), business/trading (23 percent), and farming (12 percent). In most cases, the sub-projects supported the IPBs' ongoing careers as middle-aged or older IPBs were generally reluctant to try out a new approach, such as organic farming. Younger IPBs, by contrast, were less clear about their career path and thus more willing to consider new activities. In total, the Project supported 253 livelihood activities. Fifty-four percent of IPBs implemented their livelihood activities themselves and 43 percent together with family members. In three cases, a family member implemented the activity because of poor physical or mental health of the returnee.

159. The endline survey found that IPBs, especially those who were somewhat better off, considered the grant amount to be rather small. At the same time, the grants had a catalytic impact by helping IPBs to purchase additional equipment or livestock for their existing livelihoods, which they could not have easily afforded otherwise. This allowed them to generate additional income. In fact, the HAF completion report found that 60 percent of IPBs invested their own money in grant-supported activities and that IPBs who involved family members in their activities implemented them more effectively.

160. Training, which was paid out of the IPBs' reintegration grants, was not mandatory but livelihood consultants encouraged IPBs to receive training to deepen the skills they already possessed. Most training activities were specifically designed for IPBs. Two-thirds of the trainings was provided by CSOs and non-profit organizations, with government agencies and private businesses accounting for 16 percent and 15 percent, respectively.

161. By far the most common training activity for IPBs was accounting (71 percent), with raising animals a distant second (19 percent). Training in accounting, which was seen as critical to the sustainability of activities, included book keeping, stock management, and carrying out price comparisons before purchasing goods. Overall, the Project funded 238 training activities; only eight IPBs did not participate in any training. Many IPBs deemed the trainings beneficial. The HAF completion report



suggested that study visits for cattle raising, integrated agriculture, and organic pest control were especially useful for the 86 IPBs who participated. These visits enabled them to learn from experienced professionals and build an informal support network.

162. IPBs had between six and twelve months to implement their sub-projects. Thirty percent of IPBs had less than nine months, a period some indicated was too short. Feedback from the endline survey indicated that the process of disbursing funds to IPBs, which in most instances followed the completion of livelihood planning and training, could be long and complex and thus frustrating. Extrapolating from their experience with projects in the past, some IPBs were unsure whether or not they would actually receive their grants. Major issues arose with only five IPBs, however, who tried to utilize their grants for other than the intended purposes. HAF was able to help them to successfully complete their sub-projects through a combination of encouragement (through the IPB selection committees) and coercion (sending warning letters).

163. In the end, the endline survey found very high levels of satisfaction with the reintegration grants. In retrospect, IPBs acknowledged that the step-by-step process, even though it was time consuming, improved the quality and adequacy of the support they received. Moreover, regular interaction with the livelihood consultants, case workers, and counselors and their recognized commitment to their work were critical success factors. On the whole, there was also no apparent relationship between implementation time and the success of the sub-projects as perceived by the IPBs. Seemingly only one IPB was not able to complete the sub-project in time before the Project ended.

164. **Vulnerability grants.** When IPBs were identified (see para. 21), it turned out that none of them was considered destitute and thus in need of a vulnerability grant. Nor was there any new demobilization. Consequently, the USD 24,000 allocated to this sub-component was reallocated to other components (see para. 43). This did not materially affect the results chain.

B. Social Reintegration Support

165. **Community social integration grants.** Each of the 16 villages received a grant in the amount of THB 200,000. The sub-project cycle was based on the one developed for the World Bank-funded CDD projects in the Deep South. A series of meetings was held in each village for villagers to identify their sub-project(s), of which there could be up to eight. Sub-projects needed to: (i) enhance relations between community members and IPBs; and (ii) not be included in a negative list.

166. In total, the Project supported 63 sub-projects, the most common being community religious events (15), 'Friday shops' (11), very minor renovations of mosques and tadikas (informal Islamic schools)⁵⁰ (9), and sports and fundraising events (8 each). Three villages undertook five sub-projects and ten villages four sub-projects. Most sub-projects supported the whole community (14 villages) while activities in two villages focused primarily on youth and activities for women's groups.

167. The endline survey identified a common practice whereby villagers used a portion of the grant in order to raise additional funds, especially through opening, renovating or expanding shops that serve customers on Fridays ('Friday shops'), the time in the week when community members take time off from

⁵⁰ Through the communities' own resources; see paras. 167 and 172.



work and often congregate for religious and social activities. Revenues from sales at Friday shops were used to finance activities such as organizing sports events and religious dialogues and repainting mosques and tadikas. By investing in this revenue generating activity, Project funds went a lot further than they would have if the block grant had been spent on one event only.

168. A total of 10,580 villagers participated in community grant activities, including attending meetings and participating in activities; some of these people, however, will have participated in multiple events. The CDD process helped to convince community members who had not previously participated in village development affairs to engage actively. Over 41 percent of participants were women. Eighty-five percent of IPB family members also participated either a lot or a little. Furthermore, 66, or one-third of IPBs, were elected as members of VICs, making up 26 percent of the 256 VIC members across the 16 project villages. Three VICs were headed by IPBs.

169. These results are significant as they reflect not only the inclusion of IPBs in the Project but also their acceptance by community members. Equally notable is the fact that 111 VIC members, or 44 percent, were female. It can be argued that although the Project had by necessity a male bias in terms of IPBs, villagers considered it from a community development perspective, an approach fully consistent with the goal of social integration.

170. These facts need to be placed into context. The endline survey and supervision missions found that, by and large, relationships between IPBs and community members had already been good in most areas, for at least two reasons. Firstly, most of the IPBs had returned home many years earlier. Specifically, 76 percent of IPBs had returned at least four years prior to the Project. Secondly, IPBs had returned to religiously and ethnically homogenous communities that did not hold a negative attitude towards them (see para. 24).

171. Nevertheless, many villagers noted that the Project had helped to contribute to wider solidarity in their communities. The main mechanism was less through improving perceptions of IPBs amongst community members but, rather, through giving IPBs more confidence to interact with others in their village. Field research during identification observed that many returnees, even when the warrants on them had been cleared, kept to themselves and did not mingle with others. The HAF completion report confirmed these findings especially for younger IPBs. The activities and collective actions that the Project supported thus helped them to feel like normal citizens again and brought them to interact with the community, deepening social bonds.

172. Furthermore, the Project helped communities to realize the value of working together, something they had not been accustomed to under government-funded projects. An initial concern of villagers was the number of meetings that it took to get to sub-project implementation. This made mobilization difficult. However, satisfaction grew when the community grants were disbursed. The satisfaction of the 16 villages can also be gleaned from the fact that they made voluntary contributions in many forms, such as labor, money, materials, and food, totaling THB 754,470, equivalent to 24 percent of the block grants received.

173. In two villages, local leaders tried to interfere in Project management and the work of VIC members. HAF staff were able to resolve the issues in collaboration with the tambon advisory committees through awareness raising and creating more understanding about the Project.



174. **Medical and psycho-social care.** As a first step, HAF case workers received training from DWB on identifying and understanding the signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), being observant of mental health issues in their engagement with the IPBs and their families, and interacting with IPBs and families with trauma. Additional training to staff was provided by the MHC-12 on knowledge of symptoms and treatment options for mental illnesses, in addition to self-care. Overall, the case workers felt that the trainings were sufficient to equip them with knowledge on how to engage on psycho-social-related tasks and understand the protocol.

175. In a second step, the case workers pre-screened IPBs and their family members for mental health issues; the socio-economic profile (baseline survey) also contained related questions to identify potential cases. Case workers identified two types of cases: IPBs and family members who showed signs of PTSD, and IPBs and family members with high levels of stress. The pre-identified PTSD and high stress cases were subsequently screened by DWB and MHC-12 professional health staff, respectively.

176. The six confirmed PTSD cases (four IPBs and two wives) were referred to treatment at the provincial DWB clinics as they did not want to receive treatment at a government facility. HAF case workers and DWB staff collaborated effectively in facilitating and providing treatment⁵¹, respectively. Case workers also followed the IPBs and their family members closely throughout the process through observation and regular visits. Because the case workers were closer to and more trusted by the IPBs than the psychiatrists of DWB, in some difficult cases the psychiatrist asked the case worker to discuss with the IPB patients who were not cooperating with the treatment, such as by refusing to have a conversation or not returning to follow up treatments.

177. Treatment encountered several other difficulties as well: (i) the required high frequency of visits posed a challenge for following the schedule; (ii) the slow progress of recovery compared to what IPBs had expected; (iii) denial of mental health issues; and (iv) the distance some needed to travel to visit the DWB clinic, which required absence from work. Case workers and DWB's social workers managed this process carefully by sharing information and assisting IPBs to solve the concerned issues to make attending the clinic possible. The families of IPBs were key to this process. In the end, two IPBs discontinued the treatment. The two IPBs and their spouses who completed the treatment were happy and reported improvements in their mental health.

178. HAF collaborated with DWB to treat the 23 cases experiencing high levels of stress. They received a group training on self-care and stress management, including relaxation techniques and emotional management. Case workers continued to monitor these cases, especially the wives of IPBs and female IPBs who have occasionally expressed strong emotions of stress. In addition, DWB organized a similar training for 125 women, who were family members of IPBs, for self-care and basic mental health care for their family. All participants found the trainings beneficial.

179. **Grievance redress.** The GRM served to capture, process and resolve Project-related grievances and inquiries. Its multiple channels included email and a dedicated phone line as well as four boxes in each village, the locations of which were identified by the villagers themselves. HAF trained all staff in the use of the GRM. The HAF grievance officer, a returnee himself, regularly informed the Project

⁵¹ IPBs and family members had to sign a consent form prior to receiving any treatment supported by the Project. All treatment records were kept under patient confidentiality.



communities about the GRM and attendant process. IPBs were comfortable sharing information with the GRM officer and counselors. The grievance officer also coordinated with local government officials and the RTG's grievance systems: the community justice mechanism under the Ministry of Justice and the Damrongdhama Center under Ministry of Interior. The agencies agreed to pass on any grievances about the Project that they might receive to HAF. In the end, no grievances were conveyed through these channels.

180. During implementation, HAF received a total of 22 grievances and inquiries of which nine related to the need for Project information, five related to violations of policies and procedures,⁵² five dealt with staff performance,⁵³ and three were other grievances.⁵⁴ Twelve of the grievances and inquiries were lodged by IPBs and four and three by community members and VIC members, respectively. Almost half of the cases, ten, were received by HAF's grievance officer and six by case workers and five by counselors, respectively. Twelve grievances were conveyed by phone and ten in person.

181. HAF resolved all cases satisfactorily with a service standard of ten days from receipt of the complaint. After an initial delay, HAF properly documented the cases and inputted them in the MIS. The grievances about perceived exclusion from the Project did not lead to sustained tensions.

182. Anecdotal evidence from interviews during ICR preparation suggested two explanations for the relatively small number of cases. Firstly, people in the Deep South generally prefer not to use formal mechanisms to convey their grievances. Secondly, the close and constant interaction between Project outreach staff and IPBs and communities helped to address many issues before they became a grievance.

⁵² Examples: complaints about implementation delays, complexities of Project requirements, and some members of selection committees asking IPBs to share part of their grant funds with them (which was seemingly a practice under other projects).

⁵³ Examples: complaints about frequency and delays of appointments with livelihood consultants and complaints about impolite behavior of some livelihood consultants.

⁵⁴ Examples: some individuals requested an explanation why they had not been selected as IPBs.



ANNEX 4. COMPARATIVE EFFICIENCY DATA

Table 1: Comparison of Per Capita Costs of Reintegration Projects

Country	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Burundi	Democratic Republic of Congo	Mali 1/	Thailand
Actual reintegration costs per capita (USD)	2,583	1,497	2,298	3,444	2,659
Ratio of per capita reintegration costs to GNI per capita 2/	1.73	7.48	5.00	4.47	0.37

1/ Estimated costs as the project is ongoing.

2/ GNI per capita income, Atlas method (current USD) in the year of project approval was used as the reference. In the case of Mali, the reference year was the year of project restructuring.

Sources: World Bank. 2005. Bosnia and Herzegovina Pilot Emergency Labor Redeployment Project: Implementation Completion Report. Report No. 31344; World Bank. 2014. Burundi Emergency Demobilization and Transitional Reintegration Project: Implementation Completion and Results Report. Report No. ICR00003344; World Bank 2020. DRC Reinsertion and Reintegration Project: Implementation Completion and Results Report. Report No. 00005126; World Bank. 2020. Mali Reinsertion of Ex-Combatants Project. Restructuring Paper. Report No. RES34703.

Table 2: Comparison of Per Capita/Village Allocations of CDD Projects

Country	Indonesia BRA-KDP	Myanmar NCDDP	Sierra Leone GoBiFo	Thailand EACSC	Thailand Reintegration
Block grant per capita (USD) 1/	22—27	11—16	16	-	6
Block grant per village	-	-	-	c. 8,000	6,667
Cycles	1	3	1	3	1

1/ Range depending population and conflict intensity (Indonesia KDP-BRA) and on population (Myanmar).

Sources: Wong, Susan. 2015. What Have Been the Impacts of World Bank Community-Driven Development Programs?, World Bank; World Bank. Myanmar National Community Driven Development Project; World Bank. 2018. Expanding Community Approaches in Conflict Situations in Three Southernmost Provinces in Thailand: Implementation Completion and Results Report.



Table 3: Comparison of Project Management Costs of Reintegration Projects

Country	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Burundi	Democratic Republic of Congo 1/	Democratic Republic of Congo 2/	Thailand
Share of management in total project cost	11%	16%	15%	31%	34%

1/ DRC Reinsertion and Reintegration Project, IDA-DO600 and TF-A0087.

2/ Project entitled “Rapid Reaction Mechanism in support of the Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-combatants in the DRC”, funded under the World Bank’s Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program, and implemented by a United Nations agency. The management costs excluded consultants.

Sources: World Bank. 2005. Bosnia and Herzegovina Pilot Emergency Labor Redeployment Project: Implementation Completion Report. Report No. 31344; World Bank. 2014. Burundi Emergency Demobilization and Transitional Reintegration Project: Implementation Completion and Results Report. Report No. ICR00003344; Democratic Republic of Congo: World Bank. 2020. DRC Reinsertion and Reintegration Project: Implementation Completion and Results Report. Report No. 00005126; Democratic Republic of Congo: World Bank. 2008. Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program. Program files.



ANNEX 5. GOVERNMENT AND RECIPIENT COMMENTS

The NSC and HAF reviewed the draft ICR but did not provide any written feedback. However, they provided verbal feedback on the Project, which is summarized below.

Royal Thai Government

The NSC considered the Project very useful. It helped a vulnerable target group that the government cannot reach. It also provided livelihood support so that beneficiaries can have a better life. The Project organized a series of knowledge exchanges, public hearings, and consultations on issues related to reintegration and Project implementation, which made results more sustainable. The Standard Operating Procedures were very useful and clear and provided a framework for implementation. The NSC appreciated the World Bank's cooperation with and progress reporting to the NSC and government agencies.

The Project was well planned in terms of its development-centered design, costing, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation, which made for smooth operations. In general, the Project's implementation model was very useful and using an NGO was appropriate. HAF had experience working with both government and returnees and was, therefore, able to reach the target group and support their integration into their communities. While HAF did not understand all the government rules, the NSC and HAF discussed and solved problems together.

If the RTG determined that a scale-up of the Project was called for to reach a larger number of returnees, it would consider using this process and seeking World Bank technical and financial support. In this case, however, the NSC deemed it important that civilian line agencies like the Ministries of Labor and Justice be involved more closely so that they can learn from the project and adjust their approaches to support the target group. The role of the Ministry of Justice would be especially important so that it can deal with any legal issues with existing warrants. In the meantime, the RTG welcomed the World Bank's continued knowledge sharing on reintegration and on the Project's experiences both locally and internationally.

Hilal Ahmar Foundation

The ICR reflects the Project's achievements and challenges, many of which were also described in the HAF completion report. The approach worked in practice, making the Project a useful model for demobilization and reintegration under a future peace agreement. The Project Advisory Committee provided helpful guidance to HAF during implementation. Furthermore, the government's civilian and security agencies followed the Agreed Principles and Standard Operating Procedures, which helped to build confidence among local stakeholders.

For a possible scale-up, HAF proposed, in addition to the recommendations in the completion report: (i) close collaboration between the RTG, civil society, and religious leaders to adapt the design; and (ii) hiring case workers from civil society.



ANNEX 6. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Project Studies and Other Reports

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ANNEX 7. MAP

