

# Annual Report 2004

Impact  
assessment  
Project management  
**DATABASE**  
sustainable livelihood  
approach  
**GIS**  
*participatory  
approaches*  
**COMMUNITY  
MOBILISATION**  
leadership  
training

vulnerability  
poverty  
profile



North East Provincial Council  
Provincial Planning Secretariat

**CIRM**  
CENTRE FOR INFORMATION  
RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

# Foreword

It is a great pleasure to present to you the achievements of CIRM in 2004. The first year of CIRM was successfully finished. CIRM has established itself within the challenging framework of being a unit of the North East Provincial Planning Secretariat but also partly having to finance its own expenses. A wide range of activities was started, the staff was expanded and their capacities were strengthened. CIRM has gained recognition within the provincial administration and also with national and international non-government organisations, donor funded projects and international agencies.

The plan of establishing an organisation like CIRM within the North East Provincial Council (NEPC), started to evolve several years ago with the idea of creating an information system in the NEP. Efforts to build such a system go back to the early 90's. In 1993 the Planning Division of the Ministry of Finance & Planning NEP proposed a NEPIS (North East Province Information System) framework. This was to cover sector information as well as provincial, district and divisional profiles, databases and operation rooms. NEPIS was not implemented but the preparatory work was partly used in a concept note on NEP-MIS prepared by the Planning Secretariat in April 2000. The MIS would support decisions at the senior management level accommodating current flows of information and information needs. The current status is that data on the projects the departments are implementing is collected but is not being analysed and used in the decision making process. Based on a 1994 study on the computerisation of a NEP Divisional Level Data Base, a software package was developed with the purpose of facilitating the divisional planning process; especially the prioritisation of projects. It was planned to be used by the district planning secretariat officers. Although the database was tested it didn't come into operation.

The NEPC began to build an Operational Information System for day-to-day management purpose and policy making (Operations room). This was not so successful due to the constraints placed upon the initiative through the ongoing conflict environment. Various sectoral information system approaches were also initiated during the last years, e.g. the development of a computer-based MIS for the health sector.

Early 2001 discussions started to set up an institute for information resource management to support the development of an information system within the NEP. This discussion was linked with the fact that the GTZ-IFSP was coming to an end. The IFSP already had a lot of knowledge on information systems and had data that could immediately be expanded to all districts in the NEP. During the phasing-out and transfer period of IFSP a concept paper was made to start up CIRM. Next to the functions and objectives concerning information technology that were included in the paper the provincial administration decided that the dissemination of best practices and products developed by IFSP and other projects should also be incorporated in CIRM's functions and objectives. All this resulted in the inception of CIRM on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2004.

With challenging new assignments already having started the year 2005 looks like a very promising year for CIRM. A year in which CIRM wants to consolidate itself further towards the macro level. The work of CIRM now focuses on the micro level and addresses the difficulties of regional development. This will lead to a need to add the macro dimensions that are necessary to inform policy development and strategic planning processes.

The new challenges are and the achievements of 2004 were only possible because of the motivation and commitment of all staff members and the guidance and support from the provincial authorities.

S. Rangarajah,  
Chief Secretary North East Province

Rohini Singarayer  
Director CIRM



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# Background and objectives

## CIRM disseminates expertise and best practices

### ► Rationale of CIRM

The Centre for Information Resources Management (CIRM) was officially announced on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2003 as a unit of the Provincial Planning Secretariat of the North East Province (NEP). It started its activities from 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2004. CIRM continues the knowledge base and institutional capacity of GTZ-IFSP (Integrated Food Security Programme-GTZ) in order to improve the capabilities of the institutions and organisations in the NEP.

There is still a tendency for government institutions, non-government organisations as well as donor supported programmes and projects to develop own procedures and methods for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating of their projects. Much time and money is spent for 'inventing the wheel' again. Furthermore, many assessments and evaluations done by donors have clearly revealed the need to develop and improve the capabilities for planning, co-ordination, integration, and outcome and process orientation. A specifically community centred approach needs to be incorporated into the existing system. CIRM will concentrate on these challenges.

CIRM focuses on improving the capabilities of the institutions and organisations in the NEP in planning, coordinating and monitoring development activities. Two aspects are taken into account. The first is promoting the application of information technology to increase the efficiency of the provincial as well as the district administration. The second aspect is the dissemination of best practices developed and applied by the IFSP Trincomalee and other organisations/projects in the NEP.

### ► Our objectives

- To assist the provincial administration in the processes of developing and applying appropriate concepts, procedures and methods for community development.

- To support the provincial administration in the dissemination and efficient utilisation of best practices and products developed by different stakeholders.
- To harmonise and unify the various approaches, promote the utilisation of information, network and communication so as to increase the quality of development and promotion of transparency for good governance.

### ► The functions of CIRM are e.g.:

- Harmonise all Geographical Information System (GIS) related practices among the institutions in the NEP and develop further applications and practices to promote the application of GIS in the major development sectors to support efficient planning and decision-making.
- Promote participatory development approaches into the existing system of government and non-government institutions and organisations and development projects so as to integrate it into their work processes.
- Promote community mobilisation and awareness among the people of their potential and rights and to utilise their resources so as to enhance rural governance and social integration.
- Assist in building the capacities and human resources at the village level by adopting the best practices promoted by the provincial administration.
- Conduct, assist, co-ordinate and encourage research into all aspects of institutional and community development.
- Participate in the implementation of project activities such as training, research, appraisal, and assessments of donor-supported projects, international agencies, government and non-government institutions and organisations based on business plans.

# CIRM profile

## What and Who

### ► Organisational set-up of CIRM

CIRM is a unit of the North East Provincial Planning Secretariat but is governed by an independent Board of Management. CIRM shall have its focus and concentrated efforts on its defined objectives. It has the mandate to work with government institutions, local and foreign NGOs, international agencies, and donor funded projects. A chart of CIRM's development partners 2004-2005 is annexed to this report.

CIRM partly has to finance its expenses. This money is earned through assignments for local and foreign NGOs, international agencies, and donor funded projects. CIRM receives funds from the NEPC for the basic management requirements.

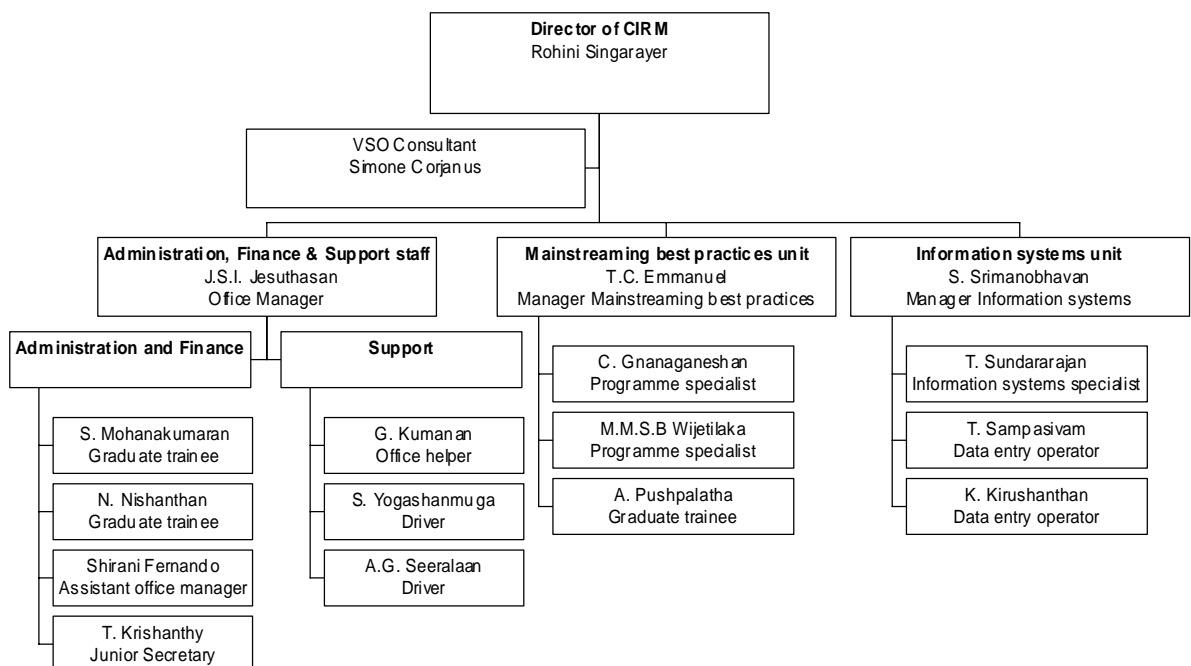
As a self-financing and semi-autonomous organisation, certain flexibility is given to CIRM for establishing itself; setting up the organisational structure.

A board of management was established, of which Mr. S. Rangarajah, the Chief Secretary of the NEP is the chairman. The board consists of ex-officio members. Nominated members from universities and private institutions involved in e.g. information technology will also be appointed. The main task of the board will be supervising and steering the management and reviewing the performance of CIRM.

CIRM has a director under whom come the Mainstreaming best practices unit, the Information systems unit and the support and administration staff.

The organisational chart drawn below further illustrates human resources at CIRM as of December 2004.

## Organisational Chart



► **CIRM's services**

The Mainstreaming best practices unit focuses on disseminating participatory approaches that are based on the best practices of GTZ-IFSP and other projects. The services/products coming from this unit are:

- Develop customised participatory development approaches (e.g.: community and social mobilisation and participatory needs assessment),
- Develop manuals for the dissemination of participatory approaches,
- Train and coach in participatory development approaches, team building, project management, leadership, book-keeping, conflict resolution and effective communication,
- Promote sustainable livelihood approach,
- Promote the application of planning, monitoring and management tools.

The Information systems unit focuses on the development of information systems within the institutions and organisations of the NEP.

The products/services coming from this unit initially are:

- Spatial and sector data based on Geographical Information System (GIS),
- Application of GIS in planning and decision making processes,
- Vulnerability-Poverty Profile (VPP),
- Customised databases to support decision-making,
- Train organisations/institutions in data analysis and the use of relational databases,
- Conduct impact assessments,
- Promote impact monitoring and
- CEFÉ training; Competency – based Economies through Formation of Enterprise.

► **The CIRM team**

The CIRM team consists of 16 members comprising of management, professional, administration and support staff.

CIRM aims to let government officers participate in assignments in order to let them acquire skills and ideas.



From left to right, starting at the front row: G.S.I. Jesuthasan, S. Yogashanmuga, C. Gnanaganeshan, S. Srimanobhavan, Rohini Singarayer, Sugath Wijetilaka, G.Kumanan, N. Nishanthan, S. Mohanakumaran, T. Sampasivam, Simone Corjanus, T.C. Emmanuel, A. Pushpalatha, Shirani Fernando, T. Krishanthi, A. G. Seeralaan, K. Kirushanthan.

## Achievements in 2004

### Focus on planning and decision-support tools

The Information system unit achieved the following:

#### ► Spatial data

For all eight districts in the NEP CIRM is developing GIS based administrative boundaries maps. In the long term CIRM will also develop maps with sectoral information, which are interlinked with topographic features. The following administrative boundary maps have been completed:

- Batticaloa
- Mannar
- Trincomalee
- Vavuniya

For the district of Trincomalee CIRM also developed a map which shows the tsunami hit GN divisions including the death toll and the number of displaced people. We also have a map available for the Trincomalee district showing the Vulnerability-Poverty Data of 2000.

#### ► Vulnerability-Poverty Profile (VPP)

CIRM is developing a Vulnerability-Poverty Profile (VPP) for every district in the NEP. The VPP provides collective information about the present vulnerability-poverty status of each village in a district. The profile is based on specific poverty dimensions resulting predominantly from the conflict, which together determine the poverty rank of a village. The profile distinguishes between vulnerable, poor and less poor villages. The final report contains the poverty profile for every village in a district in which the data for a village will appear in one sheet. An example of a village data sheet is annexed to this report. The VPP has proven to be a useful tool for support in decision-making and impact monitoring in community development activities.

The VPP preparation activities started in February 2004. So far we have completed the VPP for the districts of Vavuniya, Mannar and Batticaloa. For Trincomalee (up-date) and Kilinochchi the VPP is in the final development stage. For Jaffna district the training of the enumerators has started.



Together with the GA Batticaloa and Trincomalee we have to decide when to up-date both VPP's because of the change in situation due to the Tsunami in December 2004.

In each district we start the VPP activities by conducting a stakeholder workshop. The purpose of these stakeholder workshops is to explain the VPP and to obtain suggestions from the participants for district specific adjustments. Present at these workshops are the Govt. Agents, Deputy Directors Planning, Asst. Directors of Planning, Development Officers, Divisional Secretaries, Samurghi Managers and staff from selected NGOs. The data collection is done with the support of the Samurghi Development officers, as enumerators, in the villages. They receive an intensive training on how to obtain the relevant data and how to fill the questionnaire.

Altogether 38 DS divisions, 892 GN divisions and about 2438 villages are already covered. About 1050 enumerators have been trained up till now. The GA's and the District Planning Secretariats closely work with CIRM in the VPP preparation.

Funding for developing the VPP's was secured as follows:

- VPP for Batticaloa district: FSCT-GTZ
- VPP for Jaffna district: NEERP
- VPP for Kilinochchi district: NEERP
- VPP for Mannar district: JICA
- VPP for Trincomalee district: NEERP
- VPP for Vavuniya district: NEERP

The improvement of the VPP concept was supported by the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) Colombo. Their expertise and experience in poverty analysis was very much useful to CIRM.

The North East Coastal Community Development Project (NECCDEP) funded by the ADB, asked CIRM to do a vulnerability assessment in their project area. This includes the Tsunami hit divisions. In the project area we are going to implement an adjusted VPP questionnaire. The outcome of the survey facilitates the selection process of coastal villages for NECCDEP project-support.

- ▶ **CEPA symposium on poverty research**  
From 19 to 21 October 2004 CEPA organised its national annual symposium on poverty research. The focus of this year's symposium was the role of research in understanding the impacts of development interventions on poverty. CIRM responded to the call for papers and was invited to present this at the symposium. The presented paper had the title: Vulnerability-Poverty Profile; Useful tool for poverty interventions management in the North East Province.

- ▶ **Customised database for NEHRP**  
The North East Housing Reconstruction Programme (NEHRP) requested CIRM to develop a customised database to support the selection of beneficiaries for their pilot project. The pilot project comprises of providing financial assistance for reconstruction and repair of 860 houses in 29 villages in all districts of the North East. The World Bank is funding the NEHRP housing programme.

CIRM improved a questionnaire, which was drafted by the NEHRP. The questionnaire was used to assess the damaged houses in the selected 29 villages. Divisional Secretaries and Government Agents had to

identify the beneficiaries based on the primary data collected by them through the questionnaire. The customised database was developed by CIRM to support this selection process. As the selection of the beneficiaries was done at the divisional and



district level, CIRM trained officers from the divisional and district secretariats as well as NEHRP staff. Throughout the use of the customised database, CIRM staff visited the DS Divisions for troubleshooting.

CIRM and the stakeholders together reviewed the pilot project and suggested improvements for the database. CIRM adjusted the database and it will be used for the main project which is a four-year programme expected to include about 46,000 houses in all eight districts of the NEP.

**The Mainstreaming best Practises Unit achieved the following:**

- ▶ **Training programmes on disseminating best practices**  
CIRM team members conducted training programmes on various subjects. In total 345 persons were trained by CIRM staff in corporation with the Management Development Training Department (MDTD) in the NEP, international agencies and projects. The following programmes were conducted:
  - With the MDTD on:
    - MS Access, GIS and cartography for selected Development and Technical officers from all districts in the NEP.
    - participatory approaches for selected local NGO's from Batticaloa district.
    - project management cycle for cultural officers from all districts in the NEP.

- participatory project management for development co-ordinators from all districts in the NEP.
- For the Co-operative Development Department on participatory project management cycle and team building for co-operative development officers.
- For NECORD staff and a selection of its partner organisations (NGOs) on Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA). The two training sessions took place in the districts of Kilinochchi and Vavuniya and were attended by staff from partner organisations from the districts of Mullaitivu, Mannar, Jaffna, Vavuniya and Kilinochchi. The aim of the trainings was twofold: to guide and support partner organisations of NECORD to a common PNA practice and to root PNA in the day-to-day work of the NGO's.
- For the Agrarian Development Department a training on participatory project management.
- For UNDP partner organisations; CBO's and NGO's, on:
  - Office management
  - Leadership
  - Book-keeping
  - Social mobilisation
  - Conflict resolution, see below

► **Conflict resolution training programme**

The conflict resolution training programme was conducted in the Ampara district for selected members of UNDP partner organisations from Ampara and Batticaloa districts. The participants were from



Sinhala and Tamil language speaking communities. For most sessions the groups were mixed and activities were chosen in such a way that the language barrier was not an impediment. For the theory sessions the groups were separated. The objectives of the training programme were:

- to identify mechanisms which stimulate conflict among groups/persons.
- to identify ways to reduce the conflict among groups/persons.
- to change the behaviour and attitude of participants so that they are able to work together.

► **Community mobilisers training for NEIAP**

In December CIRM started to develop a training programme and a manual for 125 newly appointed community mobilisers for the North East Irrigated Agriculture Project (NEIAP).



The training programme started in January 2005. The group of 125 new NEIAP officers is divided in five batches of which four are in Tamil medium and one is in Sinhala medium. For each group the training is a 13-days programme covering the following subjects: the principles and methods of community development, participatory needs assessment, community mobilisation, conducting socio-economic surveys and how to make a community action plan.

# Outlook for the year 2005

Focus on macro level

► Quarterly overview on CIRM's plans for 2005

<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support the major rehabilitation and development projects in applying participatory development approaches; e.g. community mobilisation training for NEIAP.</li> <li>▪ Further develop the Vulnerability Poverty Profiles (VPP) and the GIS based administrative boundaries maps.</li> </ul>	<p>Promote the use of the Vulnerability Poverty Profiles in the decision-making and planning processes of organisations and institutions in the NEP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop further GIS applications and practices to promote the application of GIS in the major development sectors to support efficient planning and decision making.</li> <li>▪ Support the major rehabilitation and development projects in applying participatory development approaches</li> </ul>
<p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop Vulnerability – Poverty Profiles for all Tsunami affected coastal villages in the NEP in co-operation with the District Planning Secretariats.</li> <li>▪ Complete the development of the VPP's and GIS based administrative boundaries maps for all districts in the NEP.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mainstreaming the best products of rehabilitation and development projects in the NEP; e.g. the MIS used by NECORD (North East Community Restoration and Development) and the community action plans implemented by MANRECAP (Mannar District Rehabilitation and Reconstruction through Community Approach Project). MANRECAP is conducted by JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency).</li> <li>▪ Sensitise management level officers in the NEP on participatory approaches.</li> <li>▪ Develop planning and monitoring tools for the rehabilitation and development projects in the NEP.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Design the process and impact monitoring system for the NECCDEP (North East Coastal Community Development Programme) in consultation with the project team and the major stakeholders.</li> <li>▪ Develop and conduct training programme on sustainable livelihood approach for officers in the NEP.</li> <li>▪ Contribute in designing the Project Performance Management System for the NECCDEP.</li> <li>▪ Develop planning and monitoring tools for sectors e.g.: Agriculture, Health.</li> </ul>	

# Institutional co-operation

## Strengthening of CIRM and dialogue with stakeholders

### ▶ VSO

Since October 2003 the British NGO Voluntary Service Overseas, VSO, is cooperating with CIRM. Initially assigned to the Office of the Chief Secretary NEP, the VSO consultant took over support functions within the CIRM team. Tasks assigned include a survey on the potential of CIRM as seen by partner institutions, organisational aspects of CIRM, planning and programming for 2004 and assistance in developing the desired legal framework for CIRM.

### ▶ GTZ

In March 2004 a consultant from GTZ head office worked with the CIRM team for a week. Tasks included finalising the logical framework, developing strategies and approaches for an effective work programme and, identifying the interfaces between the two units of CIRM.

### ▶ CEPA

With the Colombo based Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA), CIRM has cooperated during the second quarter of 2004 to further improve the Vulnerability-Poverty Profile. The comprehensive experience in and knowledge on poverty analysis and monitoring contributes to networking and makes CEPA a very valuable partner for CIRM.

### ▶ GTZ-PIP

Since the last quarter of 2004 CIRM is one of the focal organisations of the GTZ-Performance Improvement Project for development actors in the North East Province (PIP). The GTZ-PIP is a capacity building project that will support the major development actors in the NEP to better plan, co-ordinate and monitor development activities. It will also provide relevant

services to government and non-government organisations, community based organisations and the private sector. PIP will support CIRM among others in getting expertise in quality management.

### ▶ Advise and Exchange

NGOs, GOs, universities, consultants, etc. visit the CIRM office either for advises on best practises applied by the CIRM staff during their GTZ-IFSP period, information about the services and products of CIRM, exchange of knowledge or to utilise the IFSP documentations.

Many IFSP documentations, containing best practises, can still be bought at the CIRM office. Among these documents are e.g.:

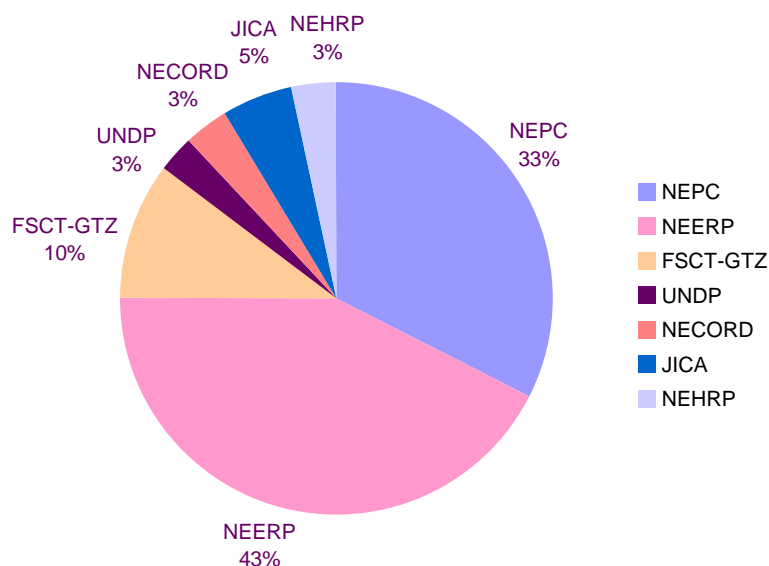
- The VPP baseline information, Trincomalee 2000, for all villages in the district.
- Focused Impact Assessment 2003; in the 170 IFSP intervention villages.
- Impact assessment of the Minor tank development programme, 2003.
- Unintended impacts of Development Aid; 2001.
- Community mobilisation; a concept for community mobilisation, 2000-2003.
- Participatory project management, 2003 with construction designs for community projects.
- A field guide for participatory needs assessment; 2001
- Solid Waste Management in Trincomalee; 2002.
- Water Quality Monitoring in the Coastal Area of Trincomalee District; 2002.

# Financial statement

## Income and Expenditure

Sources of fund				
1.By Provincial Treasury	NEPC		2,400,000	2,400,000
2.By Projects & International Agencies	NEERP		3,139,120	
	FSCT-GTZ		753,310	
	UNDP		202,500	
	NECORD		238,750	
	JICA		389,260	
	NEHRP		249,500	4,972,440
<b>Total fund received</b>				<b>7,372,440</b>
Expenditure				
1.Under Provincial Treasury	a. Personal emoluments		625,874	
	b. Supplies		238,559	
	c. Maintenance		736,982	
	d. Contractual services		732,404	
	e. Other recurrent expenses		48,241	2,382,060
2.Under Projects & International Agencies	<b>Information systems</b>			
	a. Vulnerability Poverty Profile		1,847,500	
	b. Development of spatial data		327,564	
	<b>Mainstreaming best practices</b>			
	c. Participatory development approaches		401,220	
	Capacity improvement		1,926,690	4,502,974
<b>Total Expenditure</b>				<b>6,885,034</b>
<b>% of Expenditure</b>				<b>93.39</b>

Sources of fund received - year 2004





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