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Promoting Communication and Dialogue

Coaching of Community Mobilisers I

INTEGRATED FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMMME
TRINCOMALEE

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Preface

To improve the living conditions of the rural population and to promote reconstruction and redevelopment the Sri Lankan Government proposed a support programme for food and nutrition security for Trincomalee and Ampara districts in 1996. This proposal was appraised in September 1997 and the Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee (IFSP) sponsored by the Federal German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) was agreed for a first phase starting from August 1998 to May 2001. Ampara district is included in the IFSP with a food-for-work component. The project progress review mission of July/August 2000 has proposed a second phase up to end 2003.

The objective of the Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee is:

“People who are at risk of food insecurity and who are affected by the conflict, diversify and intensify their food and income sources and improve their diet and health care.”

The IFSP has been implementing a participatory approach for community mobilisation. A large number of small scale projects have been implemented. Cooperation with service providers from government and non-government sector has been established. Systematic planning and mobilisation of target groups - people from all three communities who are affected by the ongoing conflict and are at food risk - are preconditions for sustainability. Food security in conflict aims at contributing to stability at various levels.

To support the project management and to enhance co-operation with partner institutions and organisations IFSP applies short-term expertise, covering a number of subjects. The short-term experts perform subject matter tasks which include training of partner staff.

Investment in human resources and institutional support are key aims of German Development Co-operation. In this respect external expertise meets the needs of partner institutions and staff for applying advanced know-how and skills, enhancing communication and encouraging individuals in their career development. The particular situation in Trincomalee makes it even more important to have international and Sri Lankan short-term experts working with personnel from partner institutions and organisations.

IFSP has established a documentation which includes planning documents, working papers, technical papers and photo documents. These documents reflect project progress and are expected to assist the project management in planning and implementation and at the same time enhance co-operation with partners. The views expressed in the reports are shared by IFSP, however, remain the responsibility of the authors.

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Trincomalee, December 29th 2000

SUMMARY:

- 1 malnourished and impoverished. The **purpose** of the Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee (IFSP) is to enable needy and impoverished groups whose food situation is precarious to raise and diversify their nutrition and income levels as well as to improve their health.
- 2 The **objective of the consultancy** mission was to review practice of community mobilisation under IFSP, to train dialogue with villagers, to support field related work and to contribute to capacity improvement of IFSP and partner staff. The consultancy mission was therefore carried out as **coaching and supervision exercise** in the field.
- 3 The **community mobilisation concept** of IFSP is a group-based approach which seeks to **purposely strengthen** local institutional capacities 'on the job', viz. while planning and implementing community and poverty projects. IFSP promotes a new profession of community mobilisers who engage in capacity building on village level.
- 4 **Two dimensions of project work** can be distinguished: (1) project co-ordination (logistics, organisation) and (2) community mobilisation. How can we achieve physical project progress while at the same time encouraging local implementing partners to take on ownership (sustainability)?
- 5 Review of field work with community mobilisers (CM) showed that communication with target groups is generally good, mobilisation of CBOs is slowly but constantly improving. Nevertheless, CM could use more informal contacts with villagers to build up mutual trust.
- 6 The prevailing **ground conditions** remain a serious issue: IFSP has established various procedures (green light policy, four eyes principle, back-to-office reporting) to promote staff security, even though a certain risk will always prevail.
- 7 **Ex ante planning** as well as **documentation** are essential for efficient field work. It is proposed to follow fixed time frames for field visits and to form field teams of CM and engineers. This could reduce the time requirements for planning and co-ordination considerably.
- 8 IFSP has established various procedures of monitoring and documenting field progress. It is now essential to **manage** this diverse **knowledge**, to draw conclusions (lessons learnt) and to subsequently adapt procedures to the requirements of the field. Dissemination of this knowledge within IFSP and to partner institutions is important.
- 9 **Community mobilisation is the responsibility of many agents**, not only of CM. Partner institutions and IFSP engineers should avoid to overload CM with logistical tasks or to leave the whole mobilisation work solely to the CM.
- 10 **Sharing responsibilities** with governmental field staff (Samurdhi Development Officer (SDO), Grama Sevaka (GS) etc.) could complement the mobilisation efforts of CM. Taking local particularities into consideration, CM should hand over as many responsibilities to these officers as well as to the CBO or action group as possible (principle of subsidiarity).
- 11 **How to reach women?** It remains difficult to recruit female staff for field work. This reduces the possibilities of IFSP to gain the trust of women who are particularly hit by malnutrition due to cultural particularities of intra-household food distribution and income allocation.
- 12 IFSP understands itself as '**learning site**': Step by step, community mobilisation will be further elaborated into a systematic approach by reflecting good practices and lessons learnt from the field. (What comes after project completion? What intensity of village-visit is appropriate? etc.) This is the task of the CM themselves with the support of IFSP management. Continuous coaching in the field is a prerequisite for success.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACF	Action contre la faim (Action against Hunger)
CATAD	Centre for Advanced Training in Agricultural and Rural Development
CBO	Community-based organisation
CDO	Community Development Officer
CM	Community Mobiliser (IFSP)
DAPH	Department of Animal Production and Health
DAS	Department of Agrarian Services
DCC	District Co-ordinating Committee
DO	Divisional Officer
DPS	District Planning Secretariat
DS	Divisional Secretary
FFW	Food for work
FO	Farmer organisation
GN/GS	Grama Nilhadari, Grama Sevaka
GO	Governmental Organisation
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
GTZ	German Development Cooperation
IFSP	Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee
IRDP	Integrated Rural Development Programme
NEIAP	North-Eastern Irrigated Agriculture Project
NEP	North-Eastern Province
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PD	Project Director
PMU	Project Management Unit (NEIAP)
PNA	Participatory Needs Assessment
PPR	Project Progress Review
RDO	Rural Development Officer
RDS	Rural Development Society
SDO	Samurdhi Development Officer
SLF	Sewa Lanka Foundation
STO	Senior Technical Assistant (Department of Agrarian Services)
TA	Technical Assistant (Department of Agrarian Services)
TO	Technical Officer (Divisional Secretariat)
TPC	Technical Project Committee
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
ZOPP	Goal oriented project planning (Zielorientierte Projektplanung)

1 INTRODUCTION

In Trincomalee district an alarmingly high percentage of the population is malnourished and exceptionally impoverished. With a large number of houses, village infrastructures and the production base destroyed, large sections of the population are suffering from alarming chronic and acute malnutrition. The vulnerability of female headed households is particularly striking. The prevailing destabilising security situation is a serious constraint for long-term oriented development co-operation.

The purpose of the Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee (IFSP) in the current phase I (August 1998 – May 2001) is to enable conflict-affected and impoverished groups whose food situation is precarious to raise and diversify their nutrition and income levels as well as improve their health. To achieve this purpose, the following results are aimed at: 1) Social and economic village infrastructure improved; 2) Village health care and health awareness improved; 3) Outreach of existing advisory and extension services improved; 4) Additional employment opportunities available to target groups; 5) Improved provision of financial services to target groups by established and reputable institutions; 6) Project-related institutions in government and non-government sectors are supported in target group outreach and social mobilisation.

The approach of IFSP rests on three major pillars:

- (i) participation,
- (ii) community mobilisation and
- (iii) institutional and capacity building of service providers.

All three communities¹ - the two ethnic groups of Tamils and Sinhalese and the Muslims as a rather religious-based group – are to be treated equally.

IFSP is presently working in seven divisions of Trincomalee district: Padavisripura, Kuchchaveli, Gomarankadawela, Morawewa, Muthur, Seruvila, Eachchilampattai. The project has completed Participatory Needs Assessments (PNA) in 23 villages, carried out by a multi-sectoral team of governmental and non-governmental staff. Project planning and implementation is currently going on. Technical advice for the project implementation is under the responsibility of service providers (GOs or NGOs). The implementing partner is a selected community based organisation (CBO) or action group, as body of the poorest groups in the village.

The project design for the second phase up to the end of 2003 is based on the results of a project progress review and a ZOPP planning workshop in August 2000. It has recently been approved by the Federal German Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ).

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY

IFSP Trincomalee has been embarking on a wide and intensive framework of a participatory and integrated development approach for food and nutrition security (cf. BAUER et al. 1999). The major cornerstone of this approach are participatory village workshops for needs assessment (PNA) where communities and specific vulnerable families analyse problems and identify projects which are supported by IFSP. PNA, however, is only the entry-point for IFSP supported project activities on village level. Community mobilisation facilitates the different phases of the project cycle (needs assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) and improves the self-help capacities of local communities and vulnerable groups (cf. BIGDON & ENGEL 2000).

¹ The term 'community' stands for (i) complete village population and/or groups of villagers, and (ii) the two ethnic groups of Tamils and Sinhalese and the religious-based group of Muslims.

A Project Progress Review (PPR) conducted in July/August 2000 confirmed this approach in principle, but pointed to some deficiencies in the practical implementation of the approach (cf. SCHALL et al. 2000).

The objective of this consultancy is:

- to review community mobilisation,
- to practise and train dialogue with CBOs and partners,
- to support field related work of the community mobilisation concept,
- to contribute to capacity improvement of IFSP and partner staff.

The precise tasks for the consultant are specified in the terms of reference in Annex 1. The structure of the report basically follows the logic of the tasks.

3 METHODOLOGY

IFSP understands itself as a 'learning site', viz. as a system which is constantly promoting knowledge creation and diffusion based on good practices and in-process learning in the field of innovative approaches of participatory planning, community mobilisation and capacity building for food and nutrition security.

The consultancy was therefore conducted as a coaching and supervision exercise for the community mobilisers (CM) to promote dialogue and learning in the field work. A coaching team (the consultant and senior IFSP staff) accompanied the CM to various project locations where the CM conducted organised meetings with the local implementing partners, mostly community-based organisations. These meetings were complemented by spontaneous visits to and informal talks with beneficiaries. After each field day, a comprehensive feedback was given with regard to communication, attitude and behaviour in the field. At the same time, conceptual issues were discussed, mainly concerning the overriding question: What is the task of a CM and how can he (she) achieve it practically on the ground?

Two small workshops have been conducted with the CM and senior IFSP staff on systematic procedures for the work with CBOs and action groups as well as sharing responsibilities with other IFSP staff. The main results of the mission have been presented to IFSP staff in a presentation. Conceptual issues have been discussed with IFSP management.

4 BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE MOBILISATION CONCEPT

Social mobilisation can be defined as a process of empowerment of vulnerable groups and combines awareness creation, self-organisation and action to improve the social and economic conditions of marginalised people. Social mobilisation resp. community mobilisation in rural development has a long tradition in Sri Lanka. Many different agencies and the government itself have embarked on attempts in different locations and with different concepts. The Samurdhi Programme of the GoSL is also labelled as social mobilisation, though its performance on the ground is rather ambivalent (cf. GUNATILAKA & SALIH 1999), in particular in the North-Eastern Province (NEP).

The traditional understanding of social mobilisation propagates a long-term strategy of small savings groups as main cells for further institutional building on local level. Mobilisation work is carried out by a village volunteer residing in the village. Social mobilisation hence creates new institutional structures on top of already existing groups and CBOs to reach the marginal people.

IFSP has developed a concept of community mobilisation (BIGDON & ENGEL 2000) which is shaped to suit the specific environment in Trincomalee District, viz. the unstable ground conditions and the alarmingly high rate of malnutrition which urges for immediate response. Therefore, „the aim of social mobilisation within [...] IFSP has to be more specific and modest. For instance, an empowerment process within an IRDP might start with formation of

village based groups while an IFSP, more realistically, limits such a process to *purposively* strengthen[ing] existing groups.“ (BIGDON & ENGEL 2000: 7). Purposive mobilisation is a process which is inter-linked with the planning and implementation of infrastructure (community) and income generating (poverty) projects. The basic idea is to strengthen CBOs and vulnerable groups ‘on the job’, i.e. while they are taking over tasks and responsibility during project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

IFSP is moving from individual mobilisation to a group approach which should nevertheless have its reflection on the individuals involved. Community mobilisation works through existing community-based organisations (mainly for community projects) as well as through informal action groups (for income-generating groups). Action groups are formed with those vulnerable people who are interested in the same income-generating activity (e.g. crab fattening).

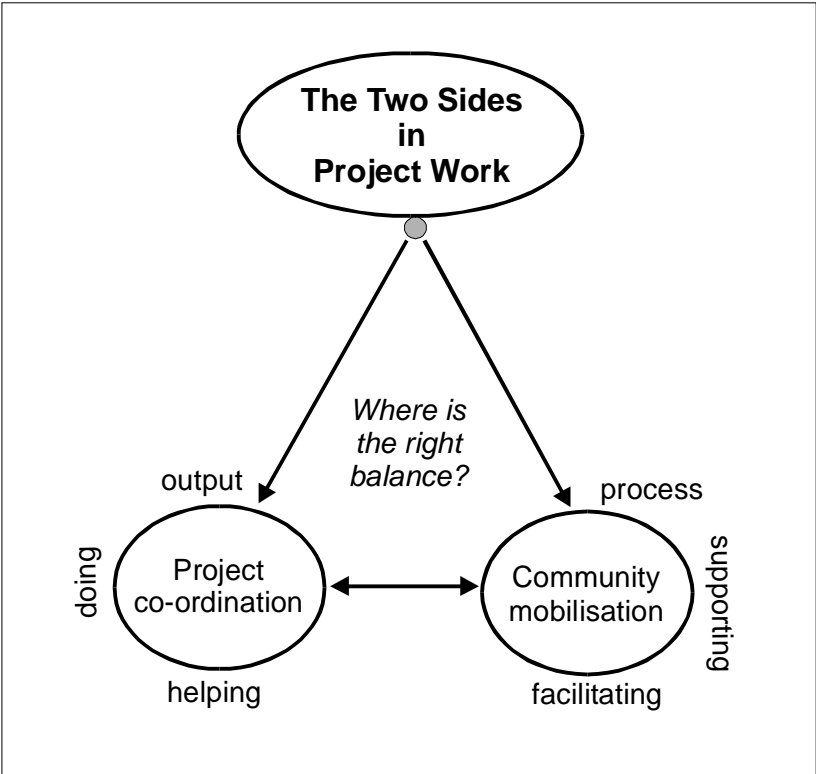


Chart 1: Two Complementary Elements of Project Work

It is essential to find an appropriate balance in the field work between the two aspects of project co-ordination on the one hand, and community mobilisation on the other (Chart 1). How can we achieve physical project progress while at the same time encouraging local implementing partners to take on ownership for the project? Sustainability of project impact on village level can be achieved only, if and when the target groups feel that they are the owners of the development process (that it is ‘their’ project which is supported by IFSP, not an ‘IFSP’ project).

The general expectation to present quick results on the ground (in physical terms) can become counterproductive if it supports the creation of a ‘spoon-feeding approach’: Instead of taking time to encourage and support local action and ownership, community mobilisers might jump into the role of managers who are willingly providing all necessary support to the local CBO or action group. This, however, could rather increase the dependency since the local people have not been enabled to manage problems by themselves.

IFSP management is currently in the process of re-labelling its approach to community mobilisation to emphasise the difference in the conceptual approaches between the 'traditional' social mobilisation concept and the concept of IFSP. Other projects, e.g. NEIAP, are following a different approach and there is a need to exchange experience on community or social mobilisation and participatory project planning. Table 2 highlights some of the differences between the social mobilisation approach of NEIAP and community mobilisation of IFSP. NEIAP has contracted selected NGO's to carry out social mobilisation through employed village officers in specific villages for a prescribed period of one year. In addition, NEIAP plans to assign some villages to divisional field level staff (RDO, CDO etc.) for social mobilisation by paying additional allowances for this work. IFSP, on the other hand, works through own project staff which is responsible for community mobilisation in a selected number of villages. These community mobilisers also support co-operation and dialogue between service providers and the local population. It is the explicit aim of IFSP to promote a new profession of community mobilisers for young professionals.

	NEIAP	IFSP
Institutional set-up:	sub-contracted NGO's who train CM in crash courses	own project staff; young graduates who are specially trained
Station:	in the village; narrow view	do not reside in the village; relation to complete project cycle and project management/concept
Coverage:	1 village per social mobiliser	4-5 villages per community mobiliser with cross-sectoral subjects addressed
Mobilisation period:	one year	according to progress and for follow-up arrangements to promote independence of village
Needs Assessment	PNA is part of the NGO contract (NEIAP-PMU can hardly monitor what kind of assessment is really done in the field)	PNA through an interdisciplinary team of partner staff (gov. dept., engineers), supported by community mobilisers PNA field guide (manual) available

Chart 2: Comparison of Social Mobilisation Concepts of NEIAP and IFSP

The prevailing diversity of perceptions and conceptual ideas on what social (or community) mobilisation is really about, has led to the formulation of the following guiding questions for the mission and for IFSP management. Some of these questions are discussed in the present report, others will have to be addressed in the further advance of field activities:

- (1) *Is IFSP on the right track in community mobilisation? If yes, how can the approach in the field be consolidated?*
- (2) *How can community mobilisation be done in uncleared areas?*
- (3) *How can the community mobilisation process be rooted in the village (sustainability)?*
- (4) *How can we strengthen existing CBOs, and how can we work with newly founded action groups?*
- (5) *How can the diverse knowledge acquired in the field (good practices, lessons learnt) be disseminated to partner and IFSP staff?*

5 REVIEW OF FIELD WORK AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Review of the Social Mobilisation Training (Sewa Lanka Foundation)

Sewa Lanka Foundation (SLF), a national NGO with experience in social mobilisation and participatory approaches, was commissioned for the training of community mobilisers and selected divisional officers (DO). The training consisted of a two-weeks class-room training and an exposure visit to Anuradhapura and Vavunya districts where SLF has established a network of village-based societies. It is difficult to assess the impact or quality of a training workshop ex-post without attending it. The current points are derived from training material, the training programme and from discussions with some of the training participants as well as a short telephone conversation with the co-ordinating trainer from SLF.

The class-room training concentrated on two main aspects: (1) to familiarise with the background of the district (agriculture, economic impact of conflict etc.); (2) to develop communication skills, group dynamics and personnel attitudes which are essential for field workers approaching villagers. In addition, there was an introduction to PRA-methods and to savings & credit programmes. As an important teaching method, several management games were conducted to develop the team management and leadership skills of the participants.

Assessment:

- (+) Sound training in communication and moderation skills as well as in attitudes development.
- (+) The participants especially appreciated the field visit to Anuradhapura and Vavuniya, since it provided a clear picture of what it means to mobilise groups in the field.
- (-) No clear-cut step-by-step guideline for field work provided (manual-like). As a result, the ideas about what mobilisation really means are still vague. Experience with PNA has shown that the PNA field guide (manual) of IFSP with clear explanations about the consecutive steps in the field was highly appreciated by field staff.
- (-) Social mobilisation concept of Sewa Lanka focuses on building of small savings groups. No policy was given about how to strengthen existing CBOs. CM are confused about whether the SLF concept can be transferred to strengthening of existing CBOs. The issue of dependency and vulnerability through protracted relief was not raised.

Recommendations:

- Community mobilisation can hardly be cut down to a precise step-by-step approach. Nevertheless, CM need guidelines for a systematic approach in the field (manual-like). IFSP management and CM should jointly develop such procedures out of the field experience. A first rough outline has already been elaborated in a workshop with the CM during this consultancy mission (see Annex 10).
- Further on-the-job coaching in the field by IFSP management is therefore essential to close this gap and might be more important than additional class-room training.
- Further training, sensitisation and coaching is urgently needed in gender issues.

5.2 Field Work (Communication with Target Group, Security)

Community mobilisers generally cover 4-5 villages (see Annex 5). In the current phase of planning and implementing PNA projects, they are visiting each village once or twice a week. During an average working month they spend approximately 15-18 days in the field, the other days are used for organisational issues, office work and co-ordination meetings of IFSP. In general, the CM feel to be overburdened with logistical tasks which are preventing them from doing mobilisation work in the field ('We do not have enough time to do mobilisation').

CM spend plenty of time for travelling to remote project sites. This is particularly true for uncleared areas in Muthur and Eachchilampattai divisions. Security restrictions in these areas further reduce the available time for field work to a few hours a day. It does not allow to spend evening hours for informal talks with villagers. These are clear limits for mobilisation.

Personal security remains a serious issue for the field staff. Security incidences have happened in most of the working areas of the CM. Obviously, CM do not feel safe when going to the field either by motor-cycle or by hired vehicles. Some are afraid to go to the field, especially when going on a motor-cycle. IFSP has established policies to better deal with the prevailing ground situation: (1) Green light policy: field staff is only allowed to go to the field after the IFSP office has given the permission after having checked the ground situation and having obtaining 'clearance' from the security forces. (2) 'Four eyes' principle: Field staff should join with other staff members and should avoid going alone to the field. In addition, (3) CM are supposed to report back to IFSP office immediately after arrival from the field. This de-briefing is essential to monitor the prevailing ground conditions and to promote staff security.

One important issue, however, remains unresolved: What happens if a CM faces a serious problem in the field (e.g. breakdown of motor-cycle) without being able to contact IFSP office (Muthur uncleared, Eachchilampattai, northern part of Kuchchaveli)?

Assessment:

- (+) Generally friendly attitude and manner of communicating with target group. Open-minded, encouraging, polite.
- (+) Moderation skills for conducting meetings are continuously advancing, and have reached a good level.
- (+) Community mobilisers have a clear understanding of IFSP policies, in particular the concept of food security and of enhancing self-reliance and ownership (local contribution etc.).
- (+) The 'green light' policy for field staff is strictly followed by staff members. Back-to-office reporting and de-briefing is an important step to promote staff security and to monitor the security situation.
- (-) Concerning communication skills of CM, the coaching team observed a tendency to preach when explaining general ideas of IFSP policy, e.g. the need for maintaining the new assets. Shy people, especially women, could still be addressed more intensively in group meetings.
- (-) In most meetings in Tamil villages, there were hardly any women. The PPR mission has pointed to the importance of gender aspects in nutrition security.
- (-) As a result of poor or unrealistic time planning, the team was hardly punctual for the arranged CBO meetings.
- (-) The CM do not feel safe when going to particular areas where tension is high. This frame condition is a serious impediment to reach overall job satisfaction among the CM.

- (-) Four eyes principle is not yet practised in the field due to logistical reasons. Its implementation could restrict the individual mobility of field staff.

Recommendations:

Principles of communication and mobilisation:

The following communication rules have been discussed during feedback sessions in the field with each CM. Chart 1 (below) was utilised to assess the communication behaviour towards the target group.

- **Less is more:** Rather spend time in one village instead of hunting to different places. This will allow CM to establish more personal links to some of the villagers. By this, they might also get access to internal information about what is going on the village, personal perceptions and views of villagers.

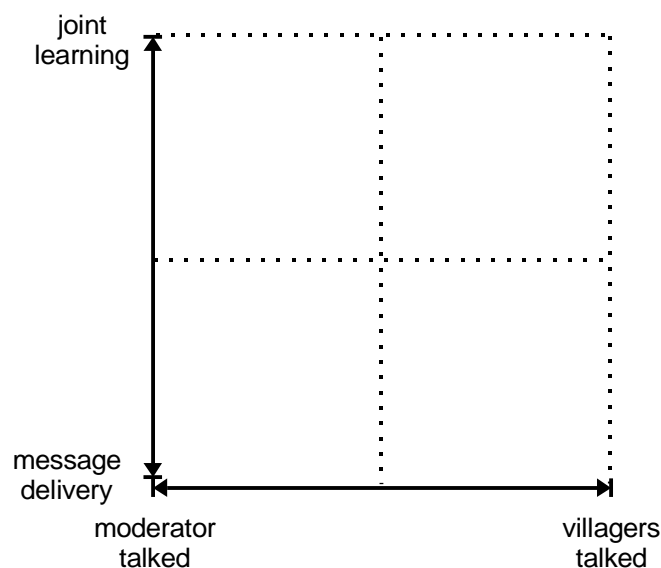


Chart 3: Who talks more? Reviewing the moderator's role in a cross-cultural setting

- **Message delivery versus joint learning:** Experience from extension and adult education shows that preaching a message even with a high degree of rhetorical skills hardly triggers a change in thinking among the listeners. It is more important to ask some questions and to stimulate a discussion process where people come to a conclusion or insight by themselves. This is in particular true for the subject of maintenance. It is hardly realistic that villagers will be convinced of a speech explaining them the necessity of self-reliant maintenance. To change their views is a long process which demands continuous discussion in large meetings as well as in small informal talks with local key persons.
- **The art of asking questions:** Avoid leading questions, i.e. 'Do you all agree that ...' Instead ask open questions, such as 'What do you think ...', 'How ...?' or 'Why ...?' (cf. PNA Field Guide).
- **Listening skills:** Do not put yourself under pressure to make a certain point. This will reduce your listening capability, since you are thinking about what you want to say, but you hardly receive the message from the other person. Let people finish their statement first.
- **Chatting as mobilising tool:** Use your time in the village for informal talks with family members, especially women (Gender!). Walk more through the village talking here and there with villagers (transect-like). Before and after official meetings, use time to chat

more with villagers how they liked the meeting, what they particularly thought about the topics discussed (not all will dare to open their mouth in a meeting) or about general issues. Use this opportunity also to address women in particular.

- **Sharing responsibilities ('let them do')**: Assign as many tasks to the local implementing partner as possible. Support and train them in administrative procedures. Provide logistical support only where really necessary (e.g. security clearance in uncleared area). Organising, buying and transporting material should be done as much as possible by the local partners themselves even if that might delay or slow down work progress.

Field visits of senior staff:

- **Avoid on-the-spot-decisions**: Senior staff of IFSP should avoid immediate promises for any kind of action or projects while joining field staff of IFSP. In general, senior staff should refrain from moderating CBO meetings or informal talks, but leave the communication with the target group primarily to the responsible CM.
- **Avoid large teams in the field**: IFSP management should avoid sending large groups of officers to the field, especially when expatriate staff joins the team. The presence of a large number of officers including high ranks can otherwise create expectations among the local population. It is afterwards a difficult task for the CM to scale these down to a realistic understanding of what IFSP is able and willing to provide.

Security:

- **Security should always come first!** It is essential that IFSP management shows a caring attitude towards CM in this regard and tries to promote their feeling of security as far as possible.
- IFSP management should **promote the security** of its field staff as much as possible. **Visibility** in the field is one of the prime rules followed by IFSP and other international organisations in Trincomalee. While it can hardly be avoided to use motor-bikes for field work, IFSP management should avoid to send hired vehicles to the field wherever logistics allow to do so.
- IFSP should organise a technical training programme for CM (and engineers) where they can learn basics of technical repairs for motor-cycles (What can I do when my motor-bike breaks down?).

5.3 Organisation, Co-ordination, Documentation

IFSP has established a system of co-ordination and documentation. One CM with considerable field experience is appointed as *co-ordinator*. The co-ordinator takes part in the weekly management meeting where general problems, project progress, security issues and policy issues are discussed. In addition, he is a member of the *Technical Project Committee* (TPC) which is in charge of screening PNA projects. Furthermore, he joins the monthly *sectoral meetings* with service providers where problems in co-operation with the partners are discussed. The co-ordinator has also been involved in addressing and settling conflicts between staff members of IFSP engaged in field activities, in organising field visits for consultants and visiting groups, and for specific logistical arrangements, in particular with the District Planning Secretariat (DPS).

IFSP management and the CM meet monthly to discuss progress and problems in the field. In addition, IFSP has recently institutionalised a monthly *PNA progress review meeting* where engineers and CM report about the progress of PNA projects. The results are documented in a given format (see Annex 7). The progress review is an important tool for process monitoring of ongoing activities.

The CM co-ordinator is responsible to co-ordinate and prepare the weekly programme of the CM. Each CM forwards his weekly plan in advance to the co-ordinator who prepares a chart for the IFSP office (see Annex 6 for an example). In addition, the CM prepare a movement chart where they document the real field activities (deviation from weekly work programme due to unforeseen events. CM individually co-ordinate their activities with other field staff from service providers as well as IFSP engineers. Documentation of field activities is twofold: (1) The field book serves for personal notes of the CM on project visits and meetings. (2) The project book is handed over to the implementing partner (CBO or action group). It contains the project agreement. In addition, all field staff should document any visit (purpose, activities, topics, conclusions etc.).

Assessment:

- (+) Co-ordination procedures within IFSP are appropriate and should not be overloaded with even more progress or co-ordination meetings. Otherwise the CM will have less time left for field work.
- (+) The work of the CM co-ordinator is highly appreciated by the other CM. He also was successful to mediate in conflicts between different staff members. He is recognised as experienced field worker who can guide other CM in improving their field work.
- (+) Formats have been developed to ease documentation of project progress.
- (-) CM co-ordinator appears to be overloaded with administrative and logistical tasks which reduce his time for joining field work.
- (-) There is overlapping in the information documented in the various formats.
- (-) Some CM do not yet follow a systematic approach of preparing and planning the field day. This leads to poorly co-ordinated field activities. Sometimes, CM visit villages only for petty activities.
- (-) Documentation in the field book is not systematic. Important information for process monitoring gets lost, in particular monitoring the progress of CBO strengthening. The documentation is hardly understandable for outsiders.
- (-) Documentation of project activities in the project book is not yet done in an appropriate manner which would allow outsiders to understand the progress of the project. Partner staff from service providers in many cases do not regularly document their project visits in the project book.

Recommendations:

Co-ordination:

- The CM co-ordinator should focus his work on coaching and supervision in the field. He should join the respective CM wherever there is an important meeting (e.g. signing of agreements, evaluation of projects, particular problems). In addition, the CM co-ordinator should coach the newly recruited CM in the field.
- It is proposed to employ an administrative officer (preferably assign the task to a seconded DPS staff) who would be responsible for handling all logistical arrangements to release the CM co-ordinator.
- The procedural arrangements for assessing project progress are in place. It is now essential that the lessons learnt from the field are also adequately communicated to IFSP staff, partner institutions etc. How can the results of PNA project progress meeting systematically utilised to improve procedures and field work (process monitoring and evaluation)? The progress meeting should also be utilised to further elaborate on procedures and to discuss general policy issues (see Section 5.5).

- The CM should enhance the sharing of positive experiences from the field among themselves. Exposure visits of CM to other divisions where they are not working is essential to gain an understanding of the geographical diversity of the district. It also serves to exchange the knowledge on success stories, new ideas about project agreements etc.

Organisation of field visits:

- **Ex-ante planning:** CM should more carefully prepare and plan field visits. This includes a checklist of those topics to be discussed or dealt with in each of the visits, activities to be prepared prior to the field visits (e.g. contacting certain officers), and a realistic time planning (including 30 mins. buffer time before any arranged meeting).
- **Fixed time frame of field visits:** A standard weekly time frame for field and office activities eases the co-operation with other field staff (they know when a CM is where) and increases the reliability for villagers (they know that their CM comes every ...day). As an example, Monday could be reserved for office work in Trincomalee, Tuesday could be reserved to field visits in village A, Wednesday for contacting relevant officers at DS office and field visits to village C etc.
- **Avoid extra-visits:** Field visits of outsiders (IFSP management, visitors to the project, consultants) should be integrated into the normal working schedule of the CM. By this, a duplication of meetings can be avoided and time can be saved by releasing the CM from otherwise necessary additional arrangements.

Documentation and knowledge management:

- The **documentation system** should be **simplified**, since some information documented is overlapping. For each documentation format, IFSP should first determine its purpose, its users, and how the information documented is utilised during further project implementation. Formats should be as simple as possible.
- Use **simple formats** for the project book, similar to those developed for other purposes. This might remind CM and field staff to document their visits and supports a certain standard of documentation. Similarly, the CM should standardise their documentation in the field book (see Charts 2 & 3)

Date	Purpose of visit	Subjects	Process

Chart 2: Documentation Format For Field Book (Example)

Date	Purpose of visit	Subjects	Comments, agreements

Chart 3: Documentation Format For Project Book (Example)

- It is suggested to **abandon the format 'PNA Project Activities'**. If field book and project book documentation is standardised as proposed above, the use of the PNA Project Progress Review Chart would be sufficient to provide an overview for IFSP management about the status of ongoing activities. It provides information about constraints (possibly also opportunities) encountered and suggestions for further procedure (process monitoring + lessons learnt).
- **Knowledge management:** Documentation serves a purpose and is not an end in itself: The utilisation of the information collected in these documents can give important hints for improving field work. It is essential to document the process of mobilisation: Are villagers becoming more active in discussions? Have they started own activities? What other behavioural changes can be observed?
- Define simple qualitative **indicators** for assessing the performance of local implementing partners: How can we observe whether the capacity of a CBO or action group has improved or not?

5.4 Co-operation with IFSP Engineers and with Partner Staff (Service Providers)

Planning and implementation of PNA projects involves various field staff from IFSP and partner institutions. Technical expertise is provided by IFSP engineers, the IFSP health team, and through departmental staff (e.g. goat rearing). On village level, the Grama Nilhadari (GN) or Grama Sevaka (GS) and the Samurdhi Development Officers (SDO) are also engaged in development activities, in particular the latter through the Samurdhi Task Force.

Due to scarcity of available time, it was not possible to assess the perception of the service providers (departments) on the performance of and co-operation with the CM. Discussion with SDO and Samurdhi Managers in selected divisions (Eachchilampattai, Kuchchaveli) revealed a high interest from their side to get more involved in IFSP project activities. The co-operation with the Divisional Secretary (DS) is very close in some of the divisions (Muthur, Eachchilampattai).

Close co-operation between engineers and CM is essential for successful project implementation and mobilisation. Some related activities in planning and implementation can be clearly assigned to one side, but there is over-lapping of responsibilities. There are clear technical guidelines for most of the construction work, but not for mobilisation work. CM and engineers were asked to document the consecutive activities performed by them in planning and implementing a village project in a workshop. The results (Annex 8) show that it is still difficult to define activities related to mobilisation more narrowly. This in turn makes it difficult to share the responsibility and assign a clear division of roles to each of the two field workers.

Field staff of various departments take charge of project implementation. In many cases, project implementation is done without direct involvement of the community mobiliser: In tank rehabilitation works, mobilisation is assigned to the DO. In the case of goat and chicken farming, the field staff of the Department of Animal Production and Health (DAPH) is providing delivery and extension. These examples underline the different aspects of what 'community mobilisation' includes: on the one hand, to initiate activities and engagement on the ground making people 'ready', and, on the other hand, to promote the capacity of service providers to deliver services which support these local activities.

Since IFSP does not intend to implement projects independently from partner institutions and organisations and no parallel structure is to be established, cooperation with departments, Divisional Secretaries and NGO is vital.

Assessment:

- (+) Systematic co-ordination procedures between IFSP and sectoral departments are in place and functioning (see Section 5.3).
- (±) Co-operation with divisional secretaries, GN/GS and SDO depends to a large extent on the personal initiative of each individual CM. In most cases, there is considerable room for a more intensive co-operation.
- (-) Some departments assign organisational tasks to the CM (e.g. logistical arrangements for training classes, transport etc.), which are not part of their original mobilisation task. This adds to the already high organisational work load which prevents the CM from doing 'real' mobilisation work.
- (-) A communication gap exists between the field work of CM and activities of the DPS. The mission could observe a case where the CM faced requests for FFW deliveries for project activities he was not informed about. This should be avoided.

Recommendations:

- **Sharing responsibilities:** SDO should be more involved in mobilisation work wherever possible. CM should assign specific tasks and responsibilities to them. Since performance will differ considerably from village to village, a flexible approach should be adopted: co-operate in those cases where the SDO shows a genuine interest in project work. As a rule of thumb, CM should assign as much duties as possible to field staff (and to local implementing partners, see above)
- CM should get involved also in those projects which are currently implemented by departmental staff alone, in particular in the two above mentioned cases (livestock, tank rehabilitation). The governmental field staff is only partly familiarised with the IFSP approach (e.g. through PNA training). In both cases, mobilisation of the beneficiaries is difficult to achieve.
- The **tasks** between engineers and community mobilisers must be more specifically defined and **clarified**. Although conflicts about responsibilities and personal co-operation between engineers and CM have been solved in the past, the sharing and assignment of responsibilities in the various stages of project planning and implementation need to be improved (see Annex 8).
- IFSP management could consider to promote a combined team management approach for CM and engineers with the formation of **field teams**. This would mean that one CM and one engineer share the work in the same villages. That could strengthen their co-operation links compared to the situation now where one CM co-operates with two or three different engineers in the various villages and projects. During the PNA Progress Review Meetings, particular emphasis should be placed on assessing the mobilisation process apart from physical project progress.

6 STRATEGIC AND CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

The overall assessment of field work has revealed that the performance of CM is reasonable. Communication with target groups is very good (with minor improvement possible), the institutional arrangements in place for co-ordination are appropriate, and formats for documentation format are widely in place even though documenting field progress could still be more systematic.

The main deficits observed relate either to the ground conditions (which cannot be influenced by IFSP) or conceptual issues (which partly derive from training deficits, partly from the prevailing perception of government departments (IFSP projects as burden instead of 'our' project) and partly from the fact that certain IFSP policies are yet to become more specific). Community mobilisation needs a clear, simple and systematic line in the various activities to be carried out, to avoid unstructured on-the-spot decisions.

The following points highlight some of the open questions which IFSP management should address:

Practice of mobilisation:

- **How can we purposively combine (physical) project progress with mobilisation (process) progress to reach sustainability in impact?** Community mobilisation is a means to achieve sustainability on the ground (not an end in itself). Pressure from any side for quick project implementation might be counterproductive for sustainability if it harms mobilisation efforts and ownership building.
- **How can community mobilisation practically & systematically be carried out?** Until now, the CM lack a clear idea about all the activities involved in group strengthening and empowerment of vulnerable households. A manual-like description of the consecutive steps of CBO strengthening (and action group promotion) and of different tools in community mobilisation could be a significant help to assure a more systematic approach in the field. It is essential that the CM themselves think about a systematic step-by-step approach following their field experience and common sense. During a one-day-workshop, the CM started elaborating on CBO strengthening and on self-help promotion of action groups (Results are given in Annex 10). These preliminary ideas should be further developed in consecutive and regular meetings (e.g. after the monthly PNA project progress review meetings) and gradually shaped to standard guidelines, utilising the lessons learnt from the field and relevant literature on participation and community mobilisation. This learning and coaching exercise would contribute to enable CM to become professionals in their field.
- **What comes after project completion? Another project? When does a CM face out of a village? How many projects IFSP is ready to implement in one village?** It is recommended that follow-up of projects should depend on the performance of the local implementing partners during project implementation. IFSP should slowly phase out of those villages which are obviously not eligible according to the poverty criteria of the village data sheet, but which were selected before the village data sheet was established. What should be avoided is that IFSP automatically goes down the priority list and provides one project after the other. Also, local contribution could be gradually improved in the implementation of the second, and third project implemented in one particular village.
- **What intensity of village-level visits is appropriate at which stage of project implementation and mobilisation?** This question raises the basic point that more is not always better: Visiting a group or village too often is a spoon-feeding rather than mobilisation approach. The intensity of village visits should be reduced with the advance of project and mobilisation work.

- **When is a local partner (CBO or action group) sufficiently mobilised to initiate a self-sustaining local planning and development process?** Simple indicators for performance assessment should be jointly elaborated by IFSP management and CM in a short workshop and then be adapted according field experience (e.g. number of people participating in group meetings has increased, local CBOs start own initiatives etc.).
- **Fine tuning PNA and social mobilisation?** The institutional analysis during PNA provides important information to screen potential implementing partners (CBOs). It should, however, be avoided to assign projects to specific CBOs already during PNA. This leaves more room for the CM to assess and identify the most suitable local partner organisation. The format for project identification under PNA (and possibly the PNA field guide) would have to be adjusted accordingly.
- **What quality of (physical) works is appropriate?** Technical staff shows a tendency to opt for the prime technical solution (e.g. the community centre in Kumpurupitty or the road to Nalloor), but not for the most appropriate one at the least costs which serves the intended purpose.

Target groups:

- **How can poverty projects and action groups better be utilised to promote vulnerable households (empowerment)? How can women be supported more specifically (gender)? What specific activities can be carried out with the youth?**
- **How to reach women?** It would be essential to employ female mobilisation staff as **gender officer(s)**. The gender officer would join CM in the field and particularly address women (at home and in women societies). Priority should be given to very poor areas (e.g. Muthur uncleared, Eachchilampattai). In addition, outsourcing of women-specific activities to competent organisations in the field of women advocacy could complement the activities of CM and the gender officer.
- **More CM employed?** IFSP management should continue its efforts to employ more Sinhala field staff (engineers and CM) as soon as possible to release the other CM and to improve outreach to the target groups.
- **Who are the appropriate persons to be mobilised?** This question refers in particular to tank rehabilitation. At some sites, labourers under food for work are not the beneficiaries of tank rehabilitation, since they are not the land owners. An approach of local contribution aiming at creating 'ownership' and thus a sense for maintenance will fail if those contributing are not those cultivating the land. In addition, this situation forces vulnerable people to work for half the wage rate (thereby providing the local contribution), while the real beneficiaries get the work done for free. This issue should be addressed during the planned mid-term evaluation of the tank rehabilitation programme.

Ground conditions:

- **How can mobilisation be done in uncleared areas?** Eventually, IFSP might not be able to follow a fully-fledged mobilisation approach in these specific areas. Due to the specific ground conditions (restrictions in the flow of goods etc.) and the limited availability of government services, communities in uncleared areas will depend much more on direct support from the community mobiliser than those in cleared areas. In addition, group formation and empowerment might interfere with certain interests of concerned parties. CM have not yet experienced interference from any conflict party on the mobilisation part of their work. Nevertheless, IFSP should continue its policy of regular consultation with both conflict parties to inform about ongoing field activities.
- **Is IFSP staff creating trouble, triggering conflicts through mobilisation?** In view of the still volatile and unpredictable ground conditions, the consultant recommends to sensitise CM more for all issues related to ethnicity, social conflict and the mediation in conflicts. Field staff needs a simple instrument of conflict impact assessment to avoid that project or mobilisation work might contribute to aggravating existing tension among

communities and between the conflict parties ('do no harm' principle). The point is that this assessment should be simple but systematic. Otherwise it is left to the personal sensitivity of each field worker whether he or she follows a conflict-sensitive approach in the field.

Consistency of village-level activities:

- **How can sharing of information and co-operation be enhanced with national and international NGO's?** During the field visits to Eachchilampattai, the team observed field staff of Action contre la Faim (ACF) doing needs assessments (also in PNA villages). It should be avoided that different organisations offer the same projects to villagers under different conditions. On the other hand, the organisations could complement each other, e.g. ACF taking a leading role in agricultural support where the partner institutions of IFSP are rather weak (e.g. home gardening, school gardens). The field manual on PNA recently proposed by IFSP as standard procedure through the District Co-ordinating Committee (DCC) and the NGO consortium would contribute to a common approach of project identification on village level by all agencies.
- **How can IFSP better manage its diverse knowledge?** Here, IFSP has taken important steps by establishing a comprehensive documentation system on planning and sectoral approaches as well as best practices in the field. This contributes to transparency within IFSP as well as with regard to other agents. Documentation and monitoring as well as progress review meetings are essential but miss their target, if the lessons learnt are not systematically forwarded to all staff members, partner institutions, and necessary adjustments in current procedures are not discussed and adopted within IFSP as well as among partner institutions.

Micro-finance:

- **Savings and credit?** IFSP is not following a long-term social mobilisation approach with small savings groups (such as Sewa Societies of SLF). Nevertheless, income-generating activities often involve some loan component or revolving fund (which is different from savings group as mobilisation approach). IFSP management should come to a final decision about its loan and recovery policy as soon as possible.
- **Financial strengthening of CBOs?** Samurdhi Task Force and other CBOs expect a profit margin for getting involved in project activities. In principle, IFSP should not condemn financial strengthening as such. In case, local implementing partners perform well during project implementation, IFSP could consider to provide an **open fund** for village-level activities. The CBO could then start own village projects with the approval of the TPC. Nevertheless, the open fund should not become a standard instrument in CBO strengthening (i.e. giving a profit margin for implementing projects), but be reserved for successfully strengthened CBOs.

Strategic planning:

- A rough **planning frame for the next project phase** (2001-2003) would help to determine what can be achieved by IFSP in community mobilisation in the remaining time: How many villages IFSP is able (and willing) to address with PNA and community mobilisation? What does this imply for the intensity of village visits by CM? How many villages in which stages of implementation would then be covered by one single CM? How many visits in a month in one particular village are feasible? How many follow-up activities can realistically be carried out in PNA villages? How many new PNA rounds could then be carried out in 2001 and 2002? (See Annex 9 for more details)

7 LESSONS LEARNT: OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

What are factors which impact positively or negatively on people's participation and contribution? It was observed that participation and readiness to contribute is high where people are very poor, and thus most in need. But participation is often difficult to stimulate in certain communities where food insecurity is not a pressing issue and which are economically better off. Participation is also hard to achieve in scattered irrigation settlement schemes. In general, the community mobilisers have been observing an improved response from villagers with the advance of project implementation. Participation at joint meetings with CBOs and villagers increased substantially at some project sites. This is considered a positive sign that the approach adopted by IFSP bears fruitful results. Still, it might be too early to say whether the field activities will be sustainable at least in the medium-term, and what the impact has been of the mobilisation efforts.

The real challenge arises with operation and maintenance (O&M) of infrastructure. Will CBOs be willing and able to organise and finance operation and maintenance work by themselves? This would be a clear indicator for medium-term sustainability of mobilisation efforts. What external mobilisation efforts will be necessary after project completion to stimulate self-reliant O&M? Similarly, we have to look at the medium-term effects of poverty projects. Are vulnerable households able to utilise the project offer to upgrade the social and economic situation of their families? Are they – in the long run - able to handle their income generating activities without outside assistance? Do vulnerable groups make use of the action groups to exchange ideas and to support each other?

IFSP should continue to encourage the partner institutions, in particular the sectoral departments, to assume their responsibilities in community mobilisation. It should be avoided that departments withdraw from these activities while pointing out that mobilisation was the task of the IFSP – CM alone. It is essential to support their institutional capacities purposively for IFSP related activities to achieve medium-term sustainability in service provision (ex-post sustainability). This would also improve the consistency of service provision on the ground. It will be difficult for CM to overcome the dependency syndrome, if other organisations and partner institutions of IFSP continue to follow an approach where goods and services are provided without any local contribution. In this regard, it would be a big step forward if the PNA field guide served as a blueprint for other organisations (as is foreseen by the DCC). However, the scope of possible achievements in improving co-ordination of project policies still seems limited.

IFSP has initiated innovative concepts in rural development in Trincomalee District. It is assuming the function of a learning site: By gradually collecting more and more experience in the field, it can constantly adjust its procedures. In the case of community mobilisation, the concept developed by BIGDON & ENGEL (2000) is only partly in place. It is essential that IFSP management and field staff jointly draw the lessons learnt and constantly elaborate further on practical guidelines for field work. Step by step, community mobilisation will become more systematic, efficient and consistent on the ground.

The prevailing unstable ground conditions still constitute the main risk to community mobilisation and sustainability of project impact. It is difficult to predict any future development in political, social as well as economic terms. What are the ground conditions where community mobilisation is still useful? What is the 'exit point' where the security situation does not allow sensible mobilisation work any more? And finally, it is also important to observe the impact of community mobilisation on the conflict situation at local and district level ('do no harm' principle).

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ANNEX I: Terms of Reference (ToR)

Review Community Mobilisation

Objective

Review community mobilisation of IFSP and practise/train dialogue with CBOs and partners. The consultancy shall support field related work of the community mobilisation concept. It is expected to practise dialogue with representatives of CBOs and partners to further improve the capacity of the IFSP staff and partner staff in responding to needs of target groups.

Cooperating partners

- i) Social mobilisers (SM) of IFSP. The SM presently employed shall be called community mobilisers or village developers or village coordinators in future to more specifically address their role and function. Since the term social mobiliser is related grass root level work of volunteers and amateurs it is felt inappropriate for the young professionals IFSP is presently employing for encouraging capacity building at village level and with and for partners of IFSP (service providers). IFSP intends to promote a new profession.
- ii) Engineers and subject matter staff of IFSP.
- iii) Partner staff of IFSP, e.g. TA, TO, DO, AI, LDI etc. and DS as well as heads of departments and personnel from NGOs.

Tasks

- i) Review communication and dialogue of SMs with target groups and CBO representatives in preparing, planning, implementing PNA projects.
- ii) Review mode and quality of cooperation with CBOs and partners with emphasis on promoting enhanced involvement of officers, e.g. TO and DO at divisional level and encourage ownership at CBO level.
- iii) Review and advise on recording, reporting and documentation of field work/progress with a view to support activity monitoring.
- iv) Exercise with SMs adequate behaviour and practical approaches to ensure IFSP commitment is effected timely and according to requirement and contribution and commitment from CBOs is enhanced.
- v) Review training experienced with SLF and contribute to fine-tune and as far as deemed appropriate the approach towards sequential learning.
- vi) Present finding, conclusions and recommendations in a 1-day workshop.
- vii) Reporting: Summary report incl. possible manual-like recommendations of max. 15 pages; draft ready prior to departure.

The tasks of the consultant shall be predominantly done at projects sites of IFSP, i.e. PNA villages and other locations, e.g. tank sites/FOs. A schedule is to be worked out at the beginning of his assignment.

Logistics

To be organised by IFSP; coordinator SM is in charge.

Short term consultant

Mr. Benedikt Korf, civil engineer and training expert.

Schedule

04. – 20. December 2000; travel to Trincomalee on 04. Dec., preparatory works 5. & 6.12.; field work from 7. – 16.12.; preparation for presentation thereafter and presentation on 18.12.; return to Colombo and Germany on 19./20.12.2000.

ANNEX II: Working Schedule

- 04.12. Travel Colombo – Trincomalee
- 05.12. Management meeting: review of tentative work programme; Discussion with Mrs. Rohini Singarayer, GTZ Communication Specialist, Mr. Emmanuel, Co-ordinator Community Mobilisers (Experiences with social mobilisation up to now).
- 06.12. Workshop with community mobilisers and engineers (Mr. Jeyamaran, Mr. Yaseem, Mr. Emmanuel, Mr. Nesharashaa, Mr. Sivasuthan, Mr. Murali, Mr. Gowriswaran); Exchange of experiences with social mobilisation, NEIAP (World Bank): Mr. Ramanathan, PD and Mr. M. Jeganathan, Part. Micro-Project Development Specialist
- 07.12. Supervision and coaching in the field, Kuchchaveli Division (Mr. Murali, Mr. Ainkaran. Observers: Mrs. Singarayer, Mr. Emmanuel, Mr. Gowri): Meeting with Samurdhi Animators and Samurdhi Manager; CBO meeting in Periyakulam.
Discussion with Ms. Morelli, Head, UNHCR Trincomalee (security situation)
- 08.12. Supervision and coaching in the field, Kuchchaveli Division (Mr. Murali, Mr. Ainkaran, Mr. Emmanuel, Mr. Gowriswaran, Prof. Sivayoganathan): informal action group meeting in Cassim Nagar, CBO meeting in Kumpurupitty. Feedback and discussion with Mrs. R. Singarayer.
- 09.12. Participation in field visits and round table discussion with GTZ Training group on 'Conflict mitigation and peace building', Dr. Ropers & Prof. Bächler.
- 10.12. Documentation
- 11.12. Supervision and coaching in the field, Muthur Division (Mr. Nesharashaa. Observers: Mr. Emmanuel, Mr. Gowriswaran): Discussion with Mr. J. Husaindeen, ADP Muthur (Co-operation with DS), informal discussion with RDS president and selected beneficiaries in Vaddam (toilet project), meeting with Mosque Society in Jinna Nagar (drainage project).
Discussion with Mr. Emmanuel, Co-ordinator CM (planning, co-ordination, documentation); discussion with Mr. Nesharashaa (documentation, co-operation among CM and with service providers)
- 12.12. Supervision and coaching in the field, Muthur Division . uncleared (Mr. Nesharashaa, Mr. Emmanuel. Observers: Mr. Gowriswaran, Prof. Sivayoganthan): Discussion with action group (prawn fishing) and RDS (road construction) in Nalloor.
Discussion with Mr. Sivasuthan (documentation, co-operation among CM and with service providers).
- 13.12. Supervision and coaching in the field, Eachchilampattai DS Division (Mr. Sivasuthan, Mr. Gowriswaran. Observer: Prof. Sivayoganthan): Discussion with Samurdhi Manager, Samurdhi Development officers and Samurdhi Technical Officer in DS office (Co-operation, involvement in IFSP projects); meeting with RDS in (follow-up PNA) in Elankadurai Mugathuvaram.
- 14.12. Supervision and coaching in the field, Gomarankadawela DS Divsion (Mr. Sugath, Mr. Singarayer, TA - DAS; Mr. Ilameldenya, STA - DAS. Observers: Mr. Emmanuel, Mr. Gowriswaran, Prof. Sivayoganathan).
Preparation of workshop with community mobilisers.

- 15.12. Workshop with community mobilisers: Group work on: (1) Steps in CBO strengthening, (2) How to work with an action group. Preparation of presentation to staff meeting.
Discussion with Mr. Ainkaran, with Mr. Sugath (planning of field work, documentation, co-operation within IFSP)
- 16.12. Preparation of Staff meeting; Documentation
- 17.12. Documentation
- 18.12. Management meeting (Mr. N. Pugendran, Dr. Geinitz, Dr. Reinhard, Mrs. Singarayer, Mr. Emmanuel, Prof. Sivayoganathan): Discussion of findings, strategic decisions.
Staff meeting IFSP – Presentation of findings (assessment of field work, results of CM workshop on Friday).
- 19.12. Travel Trincomalee – Colombo

ANNEX III: List of Discussion Partners

Apart from IFSP staff (project management, community mobilisers and engineers), the following persons have served as discussion partners on social mobilisation, political development in Sri Lanka and the situation of conflict:

Mr. Jeganathan	Participatory Micro-Project Development Specialist, NEIAP.
Ms. Bigdon	Resident Representative, Colombo Branch, South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg, Germany
Mr. Creek	Fisheries Consultant, Colombo.
Mr. Halbach	GTZ Team Leader, Jaffna Rehabilitation Programme, Colombo.
Mr. Mayer	Former Resident Representative, Colombo Branch, South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg, Germany
Ms. Morelli	Head of Office, UNHCR Trincomalee.
Mr. Ramanathan	Project Director, North-East Irrigated Agriculture Project (NEIAP)
Dr. Ropers	Director, Berghoff Research Centre for Constructive Conflict Management, Berlin (Germany).

ANNEX IV: Terms of Reference of Community Mobilisers

What is community mobilisation?

Community mobilisation is the entry point for a people centred development process. It aims to encourage selected groups to make better use of own resources and to improve their capacity and capability. Community mobilisation or social mobilisation creates awareness for own potentials and possibilities and thus supports the shift from passive recipients to active stakeholders in development. Community mobilisation within IFSP is furthermore closely related with Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA). Community mobilisation prepares the ground for PNA and afterwards builds upon the momentum created during PNA. For example, community mobilisation focuses on the strengthening of different interest groups (CBOs as well as action groups) identified during PNA.

Community mobilisation also intends to reduce the so-called dependency syndrome or recipient mentality which is in Trincomalee district assumed to be more prominent compared to not conflict-affected districts of Sri Lanka. Displacement and resettlement often force people at least temporarily into dependence from relief and welfare.

In respect to the ongoing conflict in Trincomalee district another emphasise of community mobilisation is to help mitigate conflicts and tensions within the village people by supporting common subjects and interests. To avoid that the project might indirectly increase existing tensions as well as to avoid any negative side-effects in general careful impact monitoring is proposed to be another issue of community or social mobilisation within IFSP.

Profile:

- Dynamic, motivating and optimistic character with good communication skills, team spirit and organising capabilities
- University degree in a technical field and/or social science, political science or any other related field
- Women shall have equal opportunities and would be even preferred
- Experience in community work and exposure to participatory process/methods
- Fluency in Tamil and preferably in Sinhala with a good command of English
- Age less than 40 years preferred
- Preferably from the project area
- Willing to work with village community intensively and perform extensive field work

General:

The Community Mobiliser shall be employed as GTZ-IFSP staff for a period of up to two years with an option to continue his/her assignment until the end of phase II of IFSP.

Places of work:

IFSP offices at 42, Huskison Street and District Planning Secretariat, Kachcheri and any other location assigned to perform the tasks.

Reporting: directly through the coordinator of the community mobilisers to the GTZ-IFSP team leader; in day-to-day work to the Nutrition Adviser and the Specialist for Agricultural Extension and Communication as agreed with the team leader.

Cooperation:

The Community Mobiliser shall closely cooperate with the GTZ advisors, the IFSP-GTZ staff, Project Director IFSP/DD Planning and the IFSP-DPS team and, with all departments, divisions and institutions and organisations relevant to IFSP and, with third parties, e.g. consultants temporarily employed by IFSP.

Duties and tasks:

The Community Mobiliser is expected to actively join all IFSP field work with emphasis on getting PNA project proposals implemented by strengthening CBOs and local action groups

and by cooperating with partner institutions and organisations, e.g. departments, divisional secretaries, NGOs etc. Duties and tasks of are – inter alia – as follows:

Facilitation

Community mobilisers are facilitators between the village community, CBOs, action groups and service providers and support institutions/organisations. Facilitation means that the social mobilisers are expected to bridge the gap between service providers and village communities and to support the application of a target group specific approach. The mobiliser's main task is the encouragement of local communities to enable them to become more independent and more competent in socio-economic terms and hence, less dependent and vulnerable.

Detailed Tasks

1. Preparing for cooperation
 - Building up mutual confidence with entire village community
 - Motivating the people to become involved in an learning and action oriented development process
 - Sensitising for the negative and positive development factors and the cause/effect relationships of poverty
 - Creating space for the less powerful and poorer groups to express their needs
 - Gathering and compiling village data and checking data from various sources, e.g. Samurdhi, DS, DPS etc.
2. Preparing for and participating in PNA
 - Preparing the villagers for the Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA)
 - Facilitating and supporting the GS to arrange and prepare PIV and PNA logistically (accommodation, food, meeting time)
 - Supporting the PNA-team with additional information about the village, without interfering in their work
 - Involving PNA team members in project planning and during implementation
3. Supporting group formation
 - Sensitising groups for the benefits of collective action
 - Discussing the role of the groups in the community, their strengths and weaknesses
 - Assisting the groups to determine common goals and objectives
 - Assisting the groups to select one contact person per group
 - Building up the capacities of the contact persons that they can act as a link person between the different stakeholders and can assist the social mobiliser in motivating the group members
 - Training the groups in self-evaluation
4. Establishing relations between local groups and IFSP for project implementation
 - Providing additional information about the socio-economic situation in the respective villages to the Technical Project Committee (TPC)
 - Assisting the service provider to elaborate sound project plans in a participatory way
 - Informing the groups about the project approval
 - Facilitating implementation and monitoring of projects by ensuring the participation of the envisaged target group; by facilitating service provision co-ordinating the joint implementation of service providers and village communities and by monitoring of project progress and training the target groups in self-monitoring
 - Informing the groups about existing credit/loan schemes and their conditions and linking interested groups with representatives of respective institutions

- Monitoring the process & progress of project implementation
 - Moderating discussions within the groups and facilitating dialogue between different groups in the village and identify common subjects and interests
 - Observing and reporting to IFSP-management undesired negative impacts of projects
5. Consolidating local groups and support independence
- Arranging meetings with other experienced groups
 - Analysing previous experiences of groups with income generating activities and to draw conclusions for future activities
 - Encouraging villagers to start additional income generating activities and small enterprises
 - Training of groups in general group management
 - Training of groups in financial management to enable them to calculate family income and expenditure and costs and benefits of the envisaged projects themselves
 - Embedding the feeling of ownership for project implementation and project maintenance, through clarification of responsibilities of the groups (contribution, maintenance) and through awareness creation for own resources and possibilities.

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ANNEX V: Village Assignments to Community Mobilisers

PNA Projects - Follow up responsibilities

Village	Community Mobiliser	Engineer
<i>Kuchchaveli Division</i>		
Cassim Nagar	Ainkaran	Jayamaran
Gopalapuram	Ainkaran	Haritharan
Jaya Nagar	Murali	Jayamaran
Kumpurupitty	Ainkaran	Jayamaran
Periyakulam	Murali	Haritharan
Pulmoddai	Murali	Jaseem
Valaiyootu	Murali	Bhavan
<i>Muthur Division</i>		
Aalim Nagar	Nesarasa	Jaseem
Allai Nagar East	Sivasuthan	Jaseem
Barathipuram	Sivasuthan	Haritharan
Jinna Nagar	Nesharasa	Jaseem
Kumarapuram	Nesharasa	Haritharan
Mallikaithivu	Nesharasa	Haritharan
Nalloor	Nesharasa	Haritharan
Vaddam	Nesharasa	Bhavan
<i>Gomarankadawela Division</i>		
Pulikandikulam	Sugath	Jayamaran
Kalyanapura	Sugath	Jayamaran
<i>Padavisiripura Division</i>		
Paranamadawachchiya & Kolongolla	Sugath	Bhavan
Seevalipura	Sugath	Bhavan
Singapura Track 13	Sugath	Bhavan

Morewewa Division		
Athabandiwewa	Sugath	Jeyamaran
Eachchilampattai Division		
Verugal Mugathuvaram	Sivasuthan	
Illankaithurai	Sivasuthan	

Note: Reassignment of villages is needed soon as we are going to recruit new SM and Engineer

Prepared by : T.C.Emmanuel
29 Nov. 2000

ANNEX VI: Weekly Work Programme of Community Mobilisers (Example)

Date & Day	T.C.Emmanuel	T. Nesharaashaa	K.T.Ainkaran	R.Sivasuthan	Sugath Wijetilaka	T.Murallidaran
27.11	Discussion with C.C.B. SM management	Discussion with C.C.B. SM management	Discussion with C.C.B. SM monthly meeting	IFSP office meeting with CDO Meeting with management	Habarana ayurvedic garden to collect information	IFSP office meeting with CDO SM & management meeting
28.11	Management IFSP office pass arrangement	Field visit to vaddam-Toilet Meet DS to release DPS contribution	Caseem Nager toilet & Kumpurupitty toilet programme	IFSP office finalized IGA projects	IFSP office K..... to meet A.S. manager	Periyakulam IGA projects
29.11	Motor cycle service, Ifsp office, Eachchilampattai IGA materiel arrangement	IFSP field office, Muthur to do arrangement work eg: plumping evening- Alimchenai - IGA	Kumpurupitty IGA	Eachchilampaththai arrange the programe Allai Nager, Barathipuram material	Kantale DS office to collect data with Bahvan	IFSP office Report writing
30.11	Anbuvalipuram Field visit IFSP office Beni Tentative programme preparation	Muthur, Sampur, Chenaiyoor, Koonidevu to select beneficiaries for coconut cultivation	Gopalapuram toilet & IGA	Eachchilampattai arrangement with IGA b.....	DS office to collect data Town & Gravets	Valaiyoothu IGA, Goat & toilet beneficiaries selection with GS, VS and SDO
1.12	IFSP office sm.report preparation	- do- Evening-Jinna Nagar - Drainage	Gopalapuram IGA arrangement	Allai Nager Barathipuram A/C finalized came back to the office	Kantale DS office to give village data sheet Education DCP Kantale	IFSP office Report writing

Prepared by : T.C.Emmanuel, Co-ordinator,

ANNEX VII: Project Progress Formats Currently Used

These are two formats currently utilised by IFSP to report and monitor its field activities. Community mobilisers and engineers are responsible for regular updating.

(i) PNA Project Activities (updated weekly)

Community mobilisers regularly update the current status of project implementation.

Division: **Village:**

Projects	Project Status	Next Steps	Responsibility & Time Frame

(iii) PNA Project Progress Review Report (updated monthly)

This report is prepared for the monthly PNA Project Progress Review Report. Participants: Community mobilisers, engineers, Technical Project Committee

Village	Time/present status	Constraints	Suggestions/Next steps

Common Problems:

Constraints	Suggestions

ANNEX VIII: Tasks of Engineers and Community Mobilisers

GROUP WORK: (Murali, Nesharashaa, Emmanuel, Sugath and Gowriswaran for community mobiliser, Yeyamaran and Yaseem for engineers)

Wednesday, Dec 6, 2000: 9.30 p.m.

What are tasks of in a drainage project in village B?

... an engineer	... a community mobiliser
<p>(1) Study the PNA report and finalise the project related to IFSP/GTZ</p> <p>(2) Awareness meeting with (a) priority of problems, (b) contribution and participation, and (c) IFSP concept.</p> <p>(3) Study the problem whether it is feasible in (a) technical (detail surveying), (b) economical (cost-benefit analysis), (c) social (no. of beneficiaries, land etc.)</p> <p>(4) Get the contribution from service providers & discuss contribution component from GTZ/DPS/SP/CBO/beneficiaries</p> <p>(5) Preparation of feasibility report with design, estimates, time frame (according to the IFSP concept)</p> <p>(6) Get the approval from relevant officers from IFSP/DAS/....</p> <p>(7) Rectification meeting: explain the total estimate and their contribution.</p> <p>(8) Sign agreement.</p> <p>(9) Meeting with CBO and beneficiaries: (a) technical advise, (b) financial method, (c) distribution of material and food.</p> <p>(10) Implementing the work: (a) inspect the work when necessary, (b) preparation and measurement sheet and check roll & pay the food/ money, (c) check the vouchers and releasing next payment, (d) monitoring the work & financial record when necessary.</p> <p>(11) Final report writing with revise quantity sheet and estimate.</p> <p>(12) Handing over (find to whom?)</p> <p>(13) Maintenance. (a) Get the quotation to prepare the estimate, (b) get the concern letter from relevant officer/ CBO. (c) material procedure arrangement/ logistical arrangement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting information about CBO • SWOT analysis • Contact relevant officers • Organise for general meeting with selected CBO. • Explanation of IFSP/GTZ concept • Assist to Engineer for measurement and estimate preparation • Organise the 2nd meeting. And explain the estimate with engineer. Explain their contribution part. • 3rd meeting: Final evaluation. • Explanation or record maintenance. • Support for agreement preparation. • Organise for agreement sign • Commencing the work. • Supervise the work and induce the beneficiaries for participation • Conduct monthly meeting • Organise for hand over • Link with relevant department • Inventory maintenance • explaining mgt. procedure time to time for ex.co. members • Creating common interest when necessary • Project book maintenance and recording. • Assist to CBO for fund releasing from IFSP. • Food arrangement and distribution • Discuss with the CBO regarding O&M • Organise and conduct training programme for ex.co. member.
<p>Joint responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting to TPC committee • strengthening of the CBO • logistical arrangements (from quotation to distribution of food) • get the concern letter from relevant officer. 	

ANNEX IX: Time Framework for PNA and Community Mobilisation

The following calculation is hypothetical and shall serve as an example how IFSP management could get more clarity about what can realistically be achieved in the field in the remaining time of the first and the second phase of IFSP. What would be the implications of the sample calculation below? A calculation such as this sample one can help to determine how many PNA village workshops can be carried out in a particular year or at a particular time without overloading CM (and other staff members) *in the long run*.

Year	No. of PNA villages in present year	Σ (PNA village)	Average No. of villages with activities of CM	No. of villages for one CM
1999	4+4+4+4 = 16	16	n.a.	n.a.
2000	4+3 = 7	23	23	4.6
2001	3+3+3+3 = 12	35	35	5
2002	3+3+3+3 = 12	47	35	5
2003	0	47	24	3.4

Sample Calculation for Planning Frame of PNA and Community Mobilisation

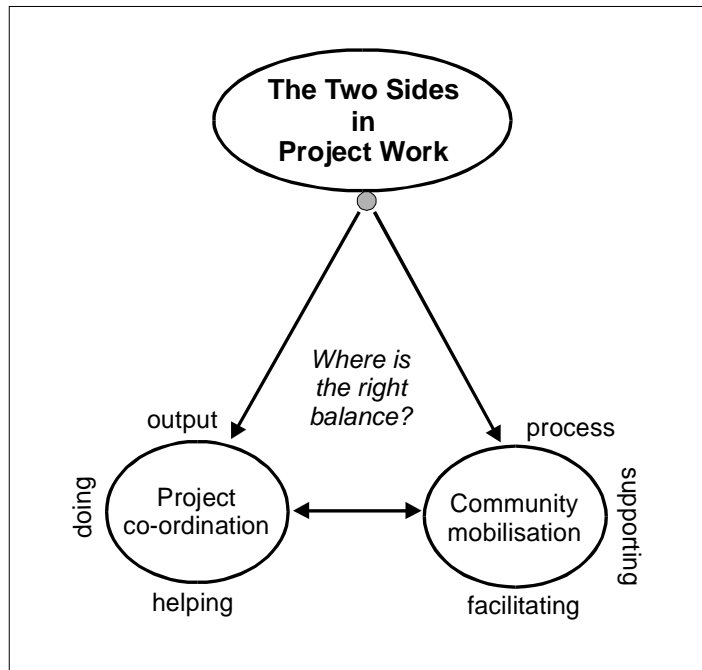
- Assumptions:*
- (1) Four rounds of PNA covering three villages each are seen as the upper ceiling of what can realistically be achieved in one year.
 - (2) The PPR mission has recommended to finalise PNA workshops with the year 2002 so that sufficient time remains for planning and implementation of the identified PNA projects (cf. SCHALL et al. 2000).
 - (3) Follow-up activities in the 23 PNA villages covered up to end of 2000 will continue throughout 2001, and in half of these villages in 2002. Follow-up activities in PNA villages of the years 2001 and 2002 will continue up to the end of the project (end of 2003).
 - (4) The No. of PNA villages in a current year are fully accounted for the whole year (although some PNA workshops are only carried out in second half of the year). This simplification is made, since CM will also be involved in PNA preparation and planning.
 - (5) IFSP employs 7 CM plus one co-ordinator (current status plus one additional Sinhala CM). The co-ordinator is not assigned any specific village, viz. seven field workers share the total number of villages.
 - (6) The 2000 calculation is based on the situation as in December 1999, viz. five CM plus one co-ordinator without village assignments.
 - (7) Additional assignments for CM (e.g. in tank rehabilitation or school gardening) are not taken into consideration.

The assumptions of this calculation can be adjusted according to the situation of IFSP.

ANNEX X: Presentation of Findings

Monday, Dec 18, 2000, Kachcheri: 11a.m. – 1 p.m.

(a) Presentation of Findings:



REVIEW of COMMUNITY MOBILISATION

	What was good	What could be improved?
Communication with target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> open-minded, encouraging, friendly CM have a clear understanding of IFSP policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not preach! Ask questions! Less is more! (villages) ‘Let them do’ (villagers)
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘Green light policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go in teams, avoid hired vehicles in the field
Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan field visits in advance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan field visits in advance Fixed time frame for village visits
Co-ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-ordination procedures established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage your knowledge!
Co-operation with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-operation with DS in some areas well established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign more tasks to SDO Assign more responsible person for logistics, quotations etc. Form field teams (one CM * one engineer)
Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation formats (progress review) elaborated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation in field and project book more systematic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to reach women? What quality of physical works is appropriate? What intensity of village visits is appropriate? What comes after a project is completed? 		

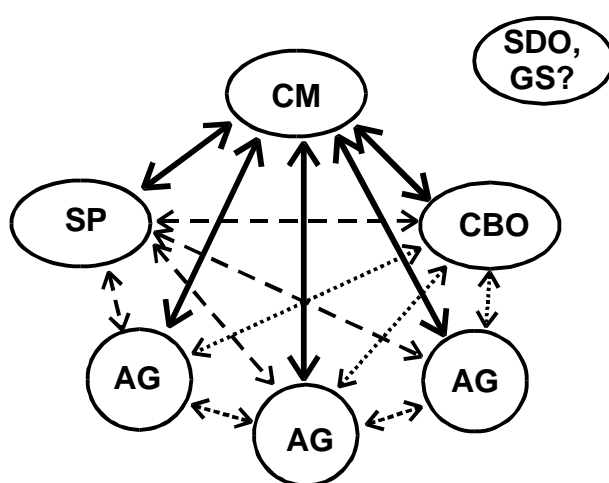
(b) Presentation of Results of CM Workshop (Friday, Dec 15, 2000)

STEPS in CBO-STRENGTHENING (Presented by Mr. Emmanuel):

Planning		Implementation	Follow-up
Before PNA	After PNA		
Go through village data sheet	Discuss with relevant officers (get constitution)	Frequency of meetings, Role of CBO members	Operation and maintenance
Cross-check data with villagers and relevant officers	Meet villagers – CBO informally and introduce, get meeting schedule	Frequent assessment and strengthening during project implementation:	<i>more precise steps necessary</i>
Introduce ourselves to relevant officers	Attend the CBO meeting with relevant officers and observe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend meetings and observe output of our earlier feedback 	<i>Do not think about our project only</i>
Attend the PNA and observe	Give feedback and discuss – way of conducting meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go through office-records and express our views, suggestions for improvement. 	<i>Monitoring</i>
Screen the CBO from PNA	Regularise meeting steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If necessary, change workshop – explain the necessity of transparency of accounts 	<i>Continuous backstopping</i>
	Suggest – organise social work – observe their management capacities, peoples' co-operation and understanding. Give feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give awareness – how to contact NGO/GO 	<i>Exposure visits</i>
<i>Precondition: Savings groups?</i>	<i>Role of savings/funds? – also for O&M</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend meeting and assess improvements 	
<i>What is to be included in the agreement?</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange leadership training – CBO office bearers & selected members 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get feedback – our approaches, improvement in CBO strengths 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit summary report and recommendation 	

HOW TO WORK WITH AN ACTION GROUP (Presented by Mr. Sivasuthan)

What is an action group?	Get together same objective/ interested people	Ex. 1: goat rearing group	Ex. 2: prawn catching group	
Purpose of AG?	Sort out problem within them	Sharing experience	Easy communication	Extra benefits. Marketing (easy, more profit)
How to form an action group?	It can be formed according to needs	Note: If No. too big, it will undergo further division	1. Voluntarily 2. Neighbour 3. Age group ...	Finally select one contact person from each action group by them



What the arrows mean:

From CM to SP, AG, CBO	From SP to CBO, AG	From CBO to AG	From AG to AG
Beneficiaries selection (CM-SP)	Beneficiaries selection (SP-CBO)	Encourage the people (CBO-AG)	Help to each other (AG-AG)
Planning (CM-SP)	Planning (SP-CBO)	Improve their work (CBO-AG)	Share their knowledge and experience (AG-AG)
Organise the action group (CM-SP)	Organise the action group (SP-CBO)	Collect the money (CBO-AG)	
Prepare the agreement (CM-SP)	Technical support (SP-AG)		
Problem feedback (CM-CBO)		Open questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash or kind? How much time spent with SP, CBO, AG Involve village officers Comments: CM = Community mobiliser SP = Service provider AG = Action Group CBO = Community-based organisation	
Organising the action group (CM-CBO)			
Planning (CM-CBO)			
Beneficiaries selection (CM-CBO)			
Settle their problems (CM-AG)			
Encourage the people (CM-AG)			

ANNEX XI: Background Paper on Social Mobilisation Approaches

TOWARDS SOCIAL MOBILISATION:

Lessons Learnt From Other Projects

(IFSP/CATAD Background Paper)

Trincomalee/Berlin, December 1999

by

**Centre for Advanced Training in Agricultural and Rural
Development (CATAD), Berlin**

(Authors: Bigdon, C.; Korf, B.; Terzioglu, E.)

Integrated Food Security Programme (IFSP) Trincomalee

Preface:

This *IFSP/CATAD Background Paper* resulted from a three-month action- and decision-oriented research study. The mission was carried out by a joint team of six post-graduate students and the team leader from the Centre for Advanced Training in Agricultural and Rural Development (CATAD) of the Humboldt University of Berlin and a team of seven staff members of service providers for the Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee (IFSP). The study was conducted on the request of IFSP implemented through the Gesellschaft fuer Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) and the District Planning Secretariat of the Ministry of Plan Implementation and Parliamentary Affairs.

The IFSP/CATAD study team assisted IFSP in elaborating and field testing a participatory and integrated village development approach (PIVDA) towards food and nutrition security. Main tasks were to analyse existing operational procedures, to assess relevant service providers and, on this basis, to design an approach adequate to the particular situation of IFSP Trincomalee. The main findings including a detailed documentation of the approach are presented in the main report of the study which also includes a user-friendly manual (BAUER et al. 1999).

This paper documents the results of an assessment of social mobilisation concepts of selected GTZ funded rural development programmes in Sri Lanka in order to derive a suitable social mobilisation model for IFSP.

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I. Introduction

Social mobilisation is the key for IFSP to achieve sustainability of project impact on village level, and to reach the vulnerable groups within a community, i.e. those most affected by the conflict and by food insecurity. It is the core of the participatory and integrated village development approach towards food and nutrition security (PIVDA). Sri Lanka has a long tradition in social mobilisation, the experience is, however, scattered and not systematically documented. Therefore, the CATAD team visited selected GTZ funded rural development programmes (Badulla IRDP, SILEP, DZP) in order to review presently applied social mobilisation concepts and to exchange ideas. The aim was to identify suitable elements of a social mobilisation component suitable under the specific frame conditions of IFSP.

The present paper documents the policies of these three projects with regard to their social mobilisation approach and their policies with regard to participatory extension and to strengthening of community-based organisations. The paper starts with a short introduction to the tradition and philosophy of social mobilisation in Sri Lanka:

What is Social Mobilisation?

Social Mobilisation is a process of empowerment of vulnerable groups and combines

- Awareness creation
- Self-organisation and
- Action

to improve the social and economic conditions of marginalised poor people. Through group membership people are made aware of their potential and the resources available to them, e.g. existing governmental, non-governmental and private services. Therefore, social mobilisation has two dimensions

1. Changing the individual and psychological dimension of vulnerable groups
2. Changing the social and economic conditions of the situation of exclusion and marginalisation

Why Social Mobilisation?

Since mid 1970 there is a lively discussion about the need for more “people’s participation” and the strengths of self-help-promotion within the international development policy discourse. As output of this discussion the Department of Rural Development in Sri Lanka introduced the “Change Agent” Concept as an approach to encourage greater involvement of “target communities” during the implementation stage of village development efforts.

This approach deemed to be necessary in order to remove three factors that were viewed as impeding the success of developing projects, which were

- the lack of support by recipient community when they do not know much about the project or its benefits
- the tendency of a few local leaders to dominate a project and to accrue the benefits for themselves
- the lack of responsibility shown by beneficiaries with respect to maintain the project after the project period is over.

The **Change Agent Programme** was based on the following principles (see Box):

The Change Agent Programme:

- The Change Agent Programme (CAP) was launched in 1978 in Sri Lanka, integrating participation of the villagers as new approach. The CAP was funded by different donors, mainly Konrad Adenauer Foundation, CARE and SIDA.
- The CAP was introduced with the goal to train government officers how to reach the poorest in the villages, which are often dominated by the local elite and not represented in the Community Based Organisation (CBOs). The role of the officers was changed towards a catalyst and facilitator.
- Representatives from the village were chosen and trained as Change Agents, with the goal to mobilise the poorer strata for collective action and link these groups with the government officers and service providers. Training for Change Agents was conducted by the Rural Development Training and Research Institute (RDTRI), Colombo.
- The philosophy was that the Change Agent works as volunteer for village development and is paid only the expenses to fulfil his duties. The aim is to reach sustainability in the sense, that the Change Agents together with the CBOs are demanding the services from departments or NGOs and are able to formulate project proposals. Further training of the Change Agents was needed in participatory methods, monitoring skills and on marketing issues
- Through CAP the poor people were trained in bargaining power to increase their weight and power within the village community and the CBOs.

The CAP, introduced by the government, gained a good reputation and was therefore used as model for different development organisation. In particular, Integrated Rural Development Projects (IRDP) made the experience, that the poorest where often not reached by their services and interventions. Many IRDPs thus decided to draw on the experiences of the CAP and developed an approach to offset this drawback. The social mobilisation approach which was developed with the assistance of the Rural Development Training and Research Institute (RDTRI) in Colombo was based on the principles and methodology of the CAP. Social mobilisation is introduced to ensure that all villagers are given a chance to participate in the subsequent participatory planning of activities, and has become an essential part of many development and poverty alleviation programmes in Sri Lanka.

With the Sri Lankan policy shift towards productivity growth and entrepreneurial development in the new concept of Regional Economic Advancement (REAP), the philosophy of the Change Agent Programme has lost some of the attention ascribed to it. It remains questionable how REAP shall reach the marginal groups, which have been the focus of attention of social mobilisation. Nevertheless, within projects of international and national donors social mobilisation still usually is integrated and the respective projects have developed their own concepts. The following three projects and their respective approaches provided us with valuable advice, important hints and inspirations for the design of a Social Mobilisation Component for IFSP Trincomalee.

II. Second Badulla IRDP (SBIRD)

1. Project approach and Target Group

The Second Badulla IRDP (SBIRD) succeeds to the First Badulla IRDP (FBIRD) which was successfully implementing conventional rural development projects, with a heavy infrastructure and civil works component. The focus was on hard track projects, mostly infrastructure schemes on village level which were implemented in a top-down manner. The project gained a good reputation under local actors, because it had something to offer. Anyhow, the experiences of the first phase of the project show that the impact on village level, in particular on poverty alleviation and food security is very limited, when the project implementation is not focussed on the poorest groups and combined with social mobilisation and CBO-strengthening. The SBIRD was therefore conceived as an integrated, "bottom-up" approach with an emphasis on mobilisation of the rural poor as a means towards poverty eradication and food security.

This shift corresponds to changes in donor strategy, which includes among others participatory planning and implementation of the rural poor (target beneficiaries), a development focus on the lower levels of government (Province, District, Division), emphasis on improved use of existing and adapted infrastructure rather than large new schemes, focus on integration of components to address poverty causes in a concerted fashion, and an emphasis on involving bilateral agencies and NGOs in project implementation.

The project objectives are:

1. Alleviate poverty and improve the food security and nutrition status of poor inhabitants of the most disadvantaged parts of Badulla District, and
2. Develop a fully participatory approach to planning and resource allocation through a process of Community Mobilisation.

The Second Badulla IRDP (SBIRD) emphasised on social mobilisation and the foundation and strengthening of new CBOs. The project decided not to use existing CBOs, because they do often not function and normally represent mostly the richer strata of the villages. The CBOs founded by Badulla, unify only the poorest groups of the village. The poorest were identified through a survey; the most important criteria was the income line. Information were taken by the GS and Samurdhi Officers, e.g. about people getting food-subsidies or food-stamps. SBIRD is working in 14 Divisions of the district and wants to cover the poorest groups in all villages. The difficulty is how the needs of the newly formed CBO of the poorest are articulated back to the rest of the community to secure the co-operation within the village.

2. Co-operation with GOs and NGOs

The decision was taken to work closer together with local departments and NGOs. Long-term experiences show, that governmental agencies normally do not address the poorest in the village - government officers are more interested to co-operate with the village-leaders who secure their own positions. The need for social mobilisation was seen as pre-condition to assure that the existing services can reach the poor.

NGOs are subcontracted by the project to do social mobilisation and training for villagers. The projects wants them not only to address their own CBOs but to serve the poorest through the newly founded CBOs. The project is not working together with the Samurdhi Programme, because they fear, that the political interest within the Samurdhi groups is too strong.

3. CBO-Strengthening

Social mobilisers form groups and link them with the project. These 'change agents' are selected by the project for each village and trained by RDTRI (Rural Development Training and Research Institute, Colombo). Some SM have to cover two villages due to vacancies. The SM are paid a monthly allowance to fulfil their duties. The SM facilitate the formation of the CBOs (5-10 people), which are formed around certain interests.

The activities and the degree of formalisation of the CBO is decided by the CBO-members themselves. During the last years many CBO-federations (Integrated Community Organisations -

ICO), which combine several CBOs (5-10) were registered under the District Secretariat (DS) and focus on economic activities through savings and loans/credits. The ICOs are entitled to be sub-contractors and carry out construction work below 200,000 Rs, with 10-20% profit. Through these contracts the ICOs can develop their own capital on the top of the existing savings. The money of the ICOs is used for income generating activities and increased through credit activities which started in co-operation with commercial banks, like Bank of Ceylon, Peoples Bank, Rural Development Bank and NGO-banks, like Sanassa and SEEDS. The project emphasis on full re-payment of all loan-activities.

Steps of CBO-Strengthening are:

- Formation of poverty group
- Poverty problem identification and solving (group has to prioritise their problems)
- Savings
- Identification of training needs (skills, social aspects, nutrition, health, etc.)
- Formulation of proposals for projects
- The assumption is: financial capital and capacity is needed for a good CBO.

4. Present Situation of the Project

The project is in its last year. In October 99 an evaluation of the status and sustainability of the existing CBOs and ICOs will take place. The project situation at present can be characterised as follows:

- The present project emphasis is to reach a level where the existing ICOs are sustainable in the sense that they are able to continue their economic activities after the end of the Badulla IRDP.
- A consultancy mission from January 1999 criticised, that the participatory planning process of the project leaves the small groups and the ICOs at the margins, confined to the preparation of the 3-years plan. In many cases the small groups and ICOs are not fully aware of the planning process itself or what has happened to their demands until line agencies start implementation after a lapse of 4-5 months. Beneficiaries are just moderately satisfied about past implementation because they got only a few of their requirements.
- There is no monitoring of the strengths of the CBOs and no criteria developed how to measure strength and sustainability of the existing groups (CBOs, ICOs).
- There is a need for a follow-up training of the SM, to secure the quality of their work.

5. Conclusions for IFSP, Trincomalee:

The following experiences of SBIRD were taken into consideration when further conceptualising the IFSP-approach and designing a social mobilisation component:

- (1) The support of hard track programmes (infrastructure schemes) in the first phase of the programme focussed to satisfy the needs of entire village communities. The result had at least two positive impacts.
 - A positive reputation of the project under important local actors (Gov. Dep., NGOs, villagers), because the project offered some "hardware".
 - A positive impact for the entire village community in the sense that infrastructure had been improved.

On the other hand the impact of the infrastructure schemes on the project objectives poverty alleviation and food security was much less significant.

- (2) Experiences of the Second Badulla IRDP, with the focus on Social Mobilisation of the poorest and most affected groups showed, that a special focus on the poorest groups is needed to identify their needs, to strengthen their self-help and bargaining capacity and finally to reach a positive impact on poverty alleviation and food security in the district. Social mobilisation is seen as entry point to reach the real target group of the project.
- (3) CBOs should be integrated in the full planning and implementation process of local projects to create an ownership feeling and to secure satisfaction with the output.
- (4) Savings and credit activities are an entry point for strengthening CBOs.
- (5) Social mobilisation if possible should be done in co-operation with capable NGOs. Furthermore there are positive experiences with "Social Mobilisers", as representatives from the villages who can facilitate the CBO-formation and link them with the project. The quality of the SM has to be secured through professional training and follow-ups, motivation of the SM can be secured through the payment of a small wage/allowance.

III. Smallholder Integrated Livestock Extension Project (SILEP)

1. Project Objective and Target Group

The Smallholder Integrated Livestock Extension Project Badulla is operating in the Uva and Southern Provinces from the year 1993 on. Since its objective is „to enable agro-based producers to articulate their needs for, obtain and make use of technical, financial and managerial services“, the project addresses small farmers and estate labourers organised in CBOs as direct target groups. Indirect target groups or project partners are the service providers relevant for small-scale farmers. These are government line departments of the agricultural and livestock sector, banks, chambers of commerce, NGOs and small & medium entrepreneurs.

2. The CBO-Approach of SILEP

Initially, SILEP worked with an individual approach of on-farm-research. Addressing individual farmers did, however, not yield promising results. It was due to this experience that the project shifted to a *participatory group approach*. SILEP is relying on the network of already existing local self-help groups and CBOs which have been formed by social mobilisation programmes of other donor-funded projects (e.g. SBIRD). CBOs provided a reliable basis for follow-up activities. In addition working through existing CBOs saved costs and time of establishing new (formalised) groups.

The particular advantage of the project was that in the provinces in which it is operating a number of already existing, mature and strong CBOs is already existing. The project set up several criteria in co-operation with its counterparts to categorise and select suitable CBOs to work with (cf. Box). Groups had to be at least two years old, and team members should dispose of own savings or possess access to loans.

Selection Criteria for CBO partners of SILEP:

- no. of meetings of the executive committee in the year considered
- % of attendance in meetings
- continuity of functions
- audibility of record keeping
- availability of annual audit report
- ability to provide loans according to the demand of the members
- recovery rate for investment loans
- percentage of services provided by own people
- percentage of successful services

A survey on the assessment of CBOs suitable for co-operation with SILEP revealed that quite a number of CBOs were fulfilling the required criteria. Many CBOs had undergone a social mobilisation process over several years. Since few of them, however, had started income-generating activities, this seemed to be an ideal entry-point for SILEP activities. In case of minor deficiencies, training especially in account keeping or managerial skills was provided by a Sri Lankan NGO.

SILEP's CBO approach in the estate sector:

In the estate sector of Badulla District, CBOs did not exist, because the labourers 'touched' by previous projects. Consequently, new CBOs had to be formed. Once groups have been established, technical extension and support through SILEP and line departments starts parallel to the social mobilisation process. This is based on the idea that an early economic advancement will also foster the social mobilisation process. Initially, groups receive grants to form credit revolving funds. In the initial stage, these are administered by respective NGOs until CBOs are able to handle them.

SILEP selected locally based NGOs for the formation of self-help groups (SHG). In a second step, well-functioning SHG will be merged to CBOs on divisional level. In addition, SILEP brought the governmental line departments to these areas to provide services.

From each CBO SILEP is working with, one person was selected who was assigned the position of a „link person“ between the CBO and the service providing field officers and/or project staff. Called „Local Technical Functionaries“ (LTF) they were enabled to provide a few services through some technical and extension training complementary to those of the governmental field officers.

Further relevance of these LTFs becomes clear when considering the „*participatory group approach*“ of the SILEP project. Talented field officers were trained in approaching the farmers of the CBOs (groups) through a participatory approach. Within a period of three days they together assessed problems, solutions and activities and finally set up an activity plan for implementing projects in the identified fields following the *problem-census-problem-solving* method. For implementation, farmers formed so-called *activity groups* for each project. Every farmer could join one activity group according to his/her interests. During implementation the field officers meet farmers regularly, and the LTF played a key role in linking them with farmers.

Experience with the LTF approach revealed some particular problems: Conflicts about responsibilities arose between LTF and field staff of the DAPH, in particular livestock vaccination and treatment. For these services, the LDI from DAPH usually charges the farmers. LTF had to withdraw from the provision of physical services. Secondly, payments of LTF proved to be a tricky issue. It cannot be expected that farmers pay for extension services. SILEP, on the other hand, refuses to pay them due to sustainability reasons. Thus, LTF often have to work on a voluntary basis. Individual dedication of LTF remains the main factor which carries the concept.

3. Conclusions and Implications for IFSP

This approach turned out to be very successful as the already existing infrastructure of social mobilisation was supplemented through complementary guidance to farmers' groups in technical application matters. Concerning a CBO approach and social mobilisation, SILEP recommends:

- to clearly separate responsibilities for social mobilisation (NGOs), technical extension and advice (GOs), and marketing as well as post-harvest technological development (private sector).
- that field officers of government line departments only co-operate with mobilised groups and CBOs or sub-groups of them – the 'activity groups'. Do field officers realise deficiencies in the functioning of those groups, additional training can be provided by NGOs.
- that governmental officers have a very limited potential for social mobilisation due to their technical background.

- that in order to reduce the mistrust and tension between GO and NGO staff, organised regular joint meetings including social events should be carried out.
- that the department heads and mid-level officer be familiarised with the philosophy of participatory methods and a demand-driven approach. SILEP did this in two team-building workshops.
- that to root participatory extension methods in departments, it is essential to work first with motivated and talented field officers who will demonstrate promising results as incentives for others to adapt the approach, too.

IFSP cannot rely on an established network of well-functioning CBOs and village groups as SILEP does. From our, however, limited impressions from field visits and interviews with field and administrative staff of GOs and NGOs in Trincomalee, most villages have a large variety of CBOs, but none is functioning to a satisfactory extent that villagers would trust in their performance. The SILEP-approach is therefore not transferable to Trincomalee District. But some valuable hints mentioned above were incorporated into the elaboration of the social mobilisation model for IFSP.

IV. North Western Province Dry Zone Participatory Development Project (DZP)

1. Project Background

The North Western Province Dry Zone Participatory Development Project – in short DZP – is attached to the Provincial Council of the North Eastern Province and highlights how a large-scale government project started with a participatory planning approach and social mobilisation. It will also be interesting to touch some political issues influencing approach development, e.g. donor pressure, since not all changes in approaches are rational.

The objective of the DZP is threefold, viz.:

- to enable the farm households and their organisations to better cope with increasing resource scarcity and other economic pressures,
- to strengthen local organisations to provide better services to resource-poor farm households as their clients or members, and
- to improve the capability of resource-poor farmers to articulate their needs.

To reach this purpose, DZP provides assistance in the fields of micro-tank rehabilitation, agro-well establishment, development of upland farming, rural finance, goat farming and land regularisation.

The project facilitates participatory planning processes at village level in order to assist farmers in the identification of problems and constraints in the village-based resources, in concluding agreements on development activities and in the formation of groups to jointly implement these. The *Farming and Household System Development Unit* which is funded and assisted by GTZ, introduced a new participatory extension approach called *Participatory Technology Development* (PTD). At present, DZP does not provide social mobilisation, but has some experience with a one-year pilot phase which was not extended due to political reasons.

2. Participatory Introduction to Development: The Village Resource Management Plan (VRMP)

DZP starts a project cycle on village level with a participatory assessment of problems and needs using PRA techniques. Villages are selected according to poverty-oriented criteria. An interdisciplinary team of divisional officers, called Technical Support Team (TST) facilitates the PRA workshop which lasts for two to three days. PRA is essentially used as an entry-point to the village and for initial analysis which shall result in a Village Resource Management Plan (VRMP). The time utilised for the PRA village workshop was considerably shortened from ten days in the beginning to three days. This was done mainly due to the reason that villagers, especially in resource-poor communities, can hardly afford to spend such a long period with 'participation' while they cannot go to work to earn their daily income.

DZP feels that immediate follow-up action after the elaboration of the VRMP is essential to utilise the momentum created. Such project components should be easily implemented and be acceptable to all

involved actors. Often, land registration through the Land Officer has played this role in DZP. It is essential that the staff conducting PRA is also facilitating the implementation and monitoring of projects later on. DZP follows a divisional approach, i.e. the TST takes over the responsibility (cf. Box).

The Technical Support Team (TST):

The Technical Support Team (TST) is responsible on divisional level for the selection of villages, the preparation and organisation of the village workshop, and also carries out the PRA. The team consists of 6-10 members, mainly field level staff of respective departments and the Divisional Office (e.g. DO, AI, LDI). The Assistant Director Planning (ADP) is the head of the team. The TST also is responsible for the co-ordination, monitoring and partly implementation of follow-up activities. Within the team, a work division is possible so that the AI applies tools related to his field. He will then also organise the follow-up in his specific field. The workshop on village level can be the first step to build up a relationship with the target groups.

3. The Interest Group Approach of DZP

Due to negative experiences with farmer organisations (FO) as officially registered CBOs under the Department of Agrarian Services (DAS), project management chose an approach of informal interest groups. During the formulation of the VRMP, the TST promotes the formation of these informal groups for each identified project activity.

Experiences with the Participatory Technology Development (PTD) Approach

Participatory Technology Development (PTD) is an innovative agricultural extension approach to facilitate farmers' on-farm development of technologies. *Farmers as researchers* meet in interest groups and share knowledge and experiences, plan on-farm trials and monitor the results. The role of the extension staff shifts to that of facilitators.

Experiences with PTD revealed the following constraining frame conditions for the institutionalisation of participatory approaches:

- The main challenge are *attitudes* and *behaviour*. Are field officers aware that they are mainly facilitators and not teachers?
- In governmental line departments, many activities receive higher priority than field work. Often, an AI has to cancel an arranged visit in short notice due to meetings at the office. He often is unable to inform villagers in time. For a fruitful co-operation with farmers, however, it is important to keep to appointments in time.
- It was difficult to root participatory approaches within the departments. Therefore, DZP employed five Research Extension Officers who are responsible for supervising and backstopping the agricultural instructors.
- Participatory extension methods only can function when field staff is mobile. The project provided therefore motor-cycles for AIs on a loan basis.

It is not the prime concern of the project to build sustainable formalised CBOs in the long run. Informal groups are regarded a vehicle for implementation of activities. The groups might dissolve after the project has been successfully implemented. Should groups express their explicit wish to form a more stable CBO, DZP will support these tendencies with training. This procedure roots in the philosophy to allow villagers to go their own way.

4. Social Mobilisation

The project started to introduce a social mobilisation component, since it felt unable to reach the less vocal groups in a village. For this task, the project contracted four Sri Lankan NGOs. The NGOs recruited, trained and contract social mobilisers which are paid for their services. The social mobiliser mainly descend from neighbouring villages and have thus a similar social background as their clients.

Village Politics in Field Work of Social Mobilisation and CBO Strengthening

Convince political and religious leaders to support the project, but also avoid to get embraced too much by them. Especially, avoid party politics. Keep out from highly politicised villages. Also keep in mind that GO officers might be part of the game, i.e. they are often close to one specific party.

The village mobilisers start the social mobilisation process with informal talks with individuals and families and facilitate the formation of small groups, which might later merge to larger groups. The mobiliser is obliged to spend at least 15 days in his/her village to keep in contact with his/her clients. During this period of confidence building the mobilisers also facilitate problem identification, clarification of personal obligations (debt, middlemen problems etc.) and supports small groups in savings activities. After six months of social mobilisation phase, the TST conducts the PRA village workshop and facilitates the elaboration of the Village Resource Management Plan (VRMP).

In general, the experiences gained were positive, but due to political reasons, the social mobilisation component was stopped after one year of operation. In particular, tension and competition between GOs and NGOs and internal reasons forced project management to change the concept.

5. Concluding Remarks

DZP has undergone a long period of trial and error approach development. The experiences gained can provide important hints for IFSP:

- According to DZP management, prerequisites for successful mobilisation programme are: (1) Continuous training and backstopping of volunteers; (2) very good commitment between Project, GO and NGO. But are NGO really loyal towards GO?
- In DZP, the common mistrust between GOs and NGOs endangered the success of project work. GO staff fears that NGO regard mobilisation programmes as an entry point to acquire more and more funds, e.g. for service provision and implementation of village projects at the expense of GOs. On the other hand, it is a delicate issue to commission a GO to supervise the work of NGO having in mind the common mistrust between GOs and NGOs. How can project management assess that village volunteers are really working in the field?
- A social mobilisation approach implies to some extent that poor groups are strengthened in relation to the traditional elite. Government officers will not mobilise the poorest strata against the local elite, since they are themselves part of an elite. What is, however, important is to raise awareness among GO staff that they do not only care about the better-off farmers, but also consider the vulnerable groups in a community.
- It was not of prime concern to the project to form sustainable village groups, but to follow an open approach leaving the initiative for further institutionalisation to the villagers. Nevertheless, follow-up of organisational development on village level is essential for a rural finance component (micro-lending).
- When working with established CBOs, be careful with elite domination. On the other hand, do not try to exclude the local elite from group formation, since this can be counterproductive in further community development.
- It is essential that the staff which is facilitating the formulation of village projects, also plays a key role in implementation. In DZP, the divisional TST took over this role.

- Participatory approaches can only function when field officers get incentives in the form of allowances, and the means of mobility enabling them to reach their clients.
- Furthermore, it is essential to sensitise the mid-level and top-level staff in the districts about participatory methods and their importance for sustainable development.

V. Some Concluding Remarks:

'Projects come and go, departments remain.' Field officers as well as administrators face a situation that a variety of donors start implementing projects either parallel or consecutive. They always bring their specific approaches. Even a specific donor might change its approach during implementation phase due to new directives from the head offices or new fashions in development policy. It was such that the word 'participation' arose, though without clear ideas about its practical conceptualisation. Many different tools and methods have since then been developed, tested, applied and abandoned again. New fashions arise constantly. We do not intend to enumerate all of them here. Just consider how confusing it might be for a government officer to adapt every five years to new keywords and fashions. Is it astonishing that resistance from the departmental system towards ever new approaches provided by external experts is high? Avoiding strategies, such as business as usual, become pre-eminent among officer, since as stated above: the remaining constant feature in their work are rules and long-standing relationships in the departments.

The main challenge for participatory development and social mobilisation is the institutionalisation and conceptualisation of the philosophy and principles into applicable procedures under prevalent frame conditions of governmental and non-governmental systems.