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Strengthening Local Governance through Community Mobilisation

Coaching IFSP Community Mobilisers IV

INTEGRATED FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMMME
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ABBREVIATIONS

ADE	Assistant Director of Education
AI	Agricultural Inspector
CATAD	Centre for Advanced Training in Agricultural and Rural Development, Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CM	Community Mobiliser
DoAD	Department of Agrarian Development
DPS	District Planning Secretariat
DS	Divisional Secretary
FO	Farmers' Organisation
GO	Governmental Organisation
GN	Grama Niladari
GS	Grama Sevaka
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
IFSP	Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee
LDO	Livestock Development Officer
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam
MOH	Medical Officer Health
MPCS	Multi Purpose Co-operative Society
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NHDA	National Housing Development Authority
PHI	Public Health Inspector
PNA	Participatory Needs Assessment
PS	Pradeshiya Sabha
RDS	Rural Development Society
RDO	Rural Development Officer
VS/LDI	Veterinary Surgeon / Livestock Development Inspector
YSO	Youth Service Officer

1. INTRODUCTION

The Integrated Food Security Programme is supported by the Sri Lankan and German governments. The implementing partners are the North-Eastern Provincial Council and German Technical Cooperation (GTZ). IFSP is working in Trincomalee since 1998. The aim of IFSP is, to contribute to village development with emphasis on food and nutrition security, to enhance processes which support the integration of local communities into markets and to contribute to stability in a conflict-to post conflict environment. IFSP has a strong focus on the empowerment and capacity building of local communities, partner institutions and organisations. IFSP is facilitating interaction between communities and service providers to strengthen governance in the area.

To support this process IFSP has established a concept for community mobilisation. A community mobilisation team practises, adjusts and further develops the concept in cooperation with village communities and service providers. The community mobilisers (CMs) are expected to support the identification of target group needs for services and to link village communities (groups of people, community based organisations, ethnic groups, interest groups etc.) to service providers. The integration of communities into the local and regional economy would be an additional objective.

The IFSP-CMs have gained extensive experiences in conducting their field work, through learning-by-doing, training on the job, coaching and feedback sessions and reflection within the team as well as through extending of IFSP's activities in the field. Sequential coaching has been established as a support mechanism for the IFSP-CM team. Besides the first development of the community mobilisation concept in 2000, to date three coaching and concept development sessions were conducted.

The aim of these coaching sessions is to assist IFSP to continue its efforts to exercise community mobilisation in a professional and at the same time pragmatic way. IFSP promoted an iterative process of developing a model for CM on the basis of state-of-the-art and experiences in cooperating with local communities and partner institutions (best-practices). This could serve as a model for community mobilisation efforts of other donor agencies and government institutions in the country.

2. AIM OF THE 4TH COACHING SEQUENCE

The aim of this 4th coaching sequence was to look into aspects of sustainable impact of community mobilisation activities of IFSP.¹ The focus of this coaching was therefore on further integration of the community mobilisation approach into partner structures. Enhancing the cooperation with partner institutions, building upon the best practises of community mobilisation and to create more spaces for dialogue and capacity building among communities and partners is seen as entry point for further integration of the CM concept. This would be expected to contribute to strengthening of local governance.² Therefore guiding questions addressed during field visits and reflection sessions were:

- *Who are the relevant actors to address the needs, problems or conflicts at the village level? Where do we (as CMs) already cooperate with those actors and where could the cooperation be extended?*

¹ See Term of Reference (TORs) in Annex 1

² A strong local governance system would mean that all actors (state institutions, community organisations, NGOs etc.) are able to cooperate in a way that common needs, and conflicting issues can be effectively addressed, which calls for democratic, transparent and inclusive structures and (formal and informal) institutions.

- *What level of participation of communities have we (CMs) achieved through our work? What level do we want to achieve and how can we achieve it?*
- *What is our (CMs) contribution to capacity building of communities, CBOs, local leaders and partner institutions? How can we extend these efforts?*

While facilitating development processes for nutritional food security at community level, the CMs have established a good access to communities as well as to various service providers (government as well as non-government organisations). The work of the CMs could directly and indirectly supports the strengthening of governance structures at local level.

Based on the focus of this mission and the expectations of the CMs, the coaching team addressed the following topics during the four days coaching sessions:

- Review of the community mobilisation concept on the basis of the experiences gained since the start of CM activities in 2000.
- Reflection of field work, with special focus on entry points for people's participation and capacity building of communities and partners
- Skills to improve communication and negotiation
- Identification of entry points for conflict mitigation of community conflicts
- Skills to improve the capacity for precisely describe, analyse and interpret situations and conclusions for alternatives and solutions for decision making, as well as skills for promoting positive attitudes and behavioural changes
- Addressing gender as cross-cutting issue

3. PROGRAMME AND METHODOLOGY

For a sequential coaching short blocks of four to five days over a longer period of time (three years) are considered as adequate. The coaching is integrated into the daily routines as well as into conceptual reflection. This coaching sequence (7.10.-10.10.2002) dealt with a range of issues concerning the community mobilisers, like the concept of community mobilisation developed so far and the experiences in applying it in the field.

The coaching sequence comprised group discussions within the team of community mobilisers and other field staff, joint field visits and interaction with representatives of various local institutions (Divisional Secretariat, government departments etc) and community based organisations (CBOs). Feedback sessions, skills training through role plays and communication training sessions were conducted.

In line with earlier coaching sequences **active learning** was encouraged. The participants were asked to contribute throughout the process by giving their feedback, experiences and observations on their work rather than merely listening to the consultant team.

The coaching started with a **reflection of positive and negative experiences** of the community mobilisers' work since the last coaching sequence (December 2001). The presented positive and negative examples were discussed and the underlying understanding what successful community mobilisation would be was reflected. The **development of the concept** of community mobilisation of IFSP and possible future applications were discussed on the basis of a presentation of the concept by the CMs (see Annex 3). The role of CMs in strengthening governance was discussed in a **brainstorming session**, identifying important partner structures and networks of the CMs.

The following two days were spent **visiting projects** and CBOs in the DS Divisions of Gomarankadawela, Kuchchaveli, Muthur and Eachchilampattai. The coaching team together

with all CM and other field staff of IFSP observed respective meetings with communities. The meetings were organised as regular meetings to discuss aspects of ongoing projects. The coaching team and the CMs observed their colleagues on-the-job, thereby looking into strength and shortcomings of e.g. communication, subject matter discussion/presentation, efforts towards facilitation, as well as behavioural and attitudinal aspects. At the end of each field visit the CMs were encouraged to reflect on their observations and to give a **feedback** to their colleagues.

Thereafter some selected situations observed during the field visits were reviewed by using **role play** as methodology. Own perceptions and attitudes, especially with regard to the question "Whether we tend to dominate the dialogue with target groups through the language we are using"? (Whose projects are we talking about? IFSPs' projects or communities' projects?) were reflected upon. By reframing certain situations **listening and communication skills** of the CM were addressed and trained. In a final session the core issues of this coaching sequence were reviewed.³

4. THE COMMUNITY MOBILISATION CONCEPT OF IFSP

4.1 The participatory project approach as framework for community mobilisation within IFSP

IFSP follows the GTZ concept on "development-oriented emergency aid" (DEA). DEA aims at providing assistance to vulnerable groups before, during and after emergencies (crisis and disasters) without undermining – or better while paving the way to future development efforts. It pursues a policy of prevention and mitigation and aims to lessen people's vulnerability (Korf 2002). This calls for a participatory peoples-centred project approach, encouraging self-help capacities and creating a feeling of ownership.

Community mobilisation has become a central element within the IFSP project cycle. A participatory and integrated development approach is the framework of IFSP's activities for food and nutrition security (cf. Project Concept, GTZ 1998, Bauer et al 1999). The project cycle starts with participatory village workshops for needs assessments (PNA) where communities and specific vulnerable groups analyse their problems and identify priority projects.

Community mobilisation was seen as necessary support system to facilitate the different phases of the project cycle (needs assessment, project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation). In this regard the CM often have to act as extension workers or coordinators, supporting the planning and implementation of projects. On the other hand it was discussed from the beginning that community mobilisation aims to improve the self-help capacities of local communities and especially vulnerable groups (cf. Bigdon & Engel). It was also stressed that considering the need for immediate action within a war/conflict to post-war/conflict environment, it should rather be a "purposive strengthening of existing groups and structures" while planning and implementing priority projects of communities (Bigdon & Engel 2000: 7).

The question of **how to balance the required coordination activities with the objective to facilitate and mobilise peoples' own resources** was one of the challenges for the CMs. It is only in the recent phase of IFSP that the CMs have acquired necessary skills for their work to be in a position to understand their role more as facilitators of development processes than purely as coordinators. Yet this focus would require further consolidation.

³ See detailed time-schedule of the coaching in Annex 2

The community mobilisation concept of IFSP was developed in an iterative process, building upon the experiences gained through field work. The reports of the previous concept development and coaching sequences reflect the step-wise development of the community mobilisation concept and are therefore summarised in the following.

4.2 The Step-wise development of the concept

The community mobilisation concept of IFSP was elaborated by Christine Bigdon and Antonia Engel in cooperation with the newly established community mobilisation team of IFSP in February 2000.⁴ The concept was revised in a first round of coaching of CMs with the focus on promoting dialogue as well as providing feedback to the IFSP management by Benedikt Korf in December 2000.⁵ The second coaching sequence was provided in May 2001 by Christine Bigdon and C. Sivayoganathan, focussing on the practical applications of community mobilisation in the field (do's and don'ts) and introducing "golden rules of community mobilisation".⁶ S.A. Sachithanandam conducted the third coaching sequence by looking into perception, attitudes and behaviour of communities as well as various other aspects of the mobilisation process.⁷

Looking into the conceptual development of the community mobilisation approach of the IFSP the following stages and developments took place:

a) Developing the CM concept (Bigdon & Engel, April 2000):

- Social mobilisation, as it was named in the first concept paper, was described as entry point for a people centred development process.
- It was build around and upon Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA). The mobilisation process began with the PNA⁸ and continued throughout the duration of project implementation.
- Elements of the mobilisation process were from the beginning awareness creation for own potentials and resources, motivation for self-initiative, encouraging peoples participation and contribution, capacity building and facilitation of contacts to other service providers.
- It was stressed that considering the need for immediate action and confidence building / promotion of local stability, it should rather be a "purposive strengthening of existing groups and structures" while planning and implementing priority projects of communities (Bigdon & Engel 2000: 7).

b) Promoting Communication and Dialogue (Korf, December 2000):

- In the second stage of concept development the term community mobilisation was introduced replacing the earlier used term of 'social mobilisation'. Social mobilisation approaches have been implemented by many agencies including the Sri Lankan government for often politicised welfare programmes (Samurdhi) in a top down manner. Countrywide programmes in the context of the welfare state resulted in a kind of "spoon feeding mentality" thereby discouraging people to become active and independent.

⁴ Bigdon, Christine, Engel, Antonia: Social Mobilisation Concept for IFSP, Trincomalee, April 2000, Working Paper 27

⁵ Korf, Benedikt: Promoting Communication and Dialogue, Trincomalee, December 2000, WP 32

⁶ Bigdon, Christine and C. Sivayoganathan: Coaching of Community Mobilisers, Trincomalee, WP 34

⁷ Sachithanandam, S.A.: Perceptions Count. Coaching IFSP Community Mobilisers, Trincomalee, WP 47

⁸ Korf, B. (2000a): Field Guide to Participatory Needs Assessment, Technical Paper No. 6, Integrated Food Security Programme (IFSP), Trincomalee

- The renamed "community mobilisation" approach of the IFSP was stressing the group strengthening aspect: community mobilisation integrates existing CBOs as well as informal action groups into local and regional markets.
- The revised concept of community mobilisation also reflected on the right balance between coordination for physical project progress and community mobilisation for ownership building and empowerment of CBOs and local leaders. To achieve sustainability of project impacts the need for a parallel process of physical project progress and building ownership among communities for 'their projects' was stressed.

c) Coaching Community Mobilisation (Bigdon & Sivayoganathan, June 2001):

- Conceptually this report followed the understanding of the earlier reports but rather concentrated on the question which project procedures (criteria, packages etc.) and what kind of management support as well as skills of the CMs should be developed.
- Realising that CMs are often under pressure to show project progress, it was again stressed that community mobilisation within IFSP still needs to balance between co-ordination of project implementation and mobilisation in the sense of motivation of target groups, capacity and ownership building.
- Building upon the experiences of the CMs of working within a conflict-prone environment it was pointed out that CMs advocate for the needs of vulnerable families in the village, but do not interfere in existing power structures.
- This coaching sequence summarised do's and don'ts of community mobilisation and introduced the "Golden Rules for Community Mobilisation"

d) Perceptions Count (Sachithanandam, December 2001):

- Conceptually this report challenged the tendency of community mobilisation being equivalent to co-ordinating, i.e. connecting or linking to service providers and other resources. It was also stressed that participation of communities should not be understood as contribution of labour and contributions in kind by the people to 'GTZ projects'.
- Community mobilisation was instead redefined as *'Changing attitudes, development skills and capacities of service providers and resource persons and at the same time people belonging to vulnerable groups. This should lead to a situation that service provider support appropriately and in timely fashion the people, that they are able to develop themselves'*. The coaching sequence was therefore mainly focussing on awareness creation, sensitisation for the value of perceptions and skills training to create appropriate spaces for the community mobilisation process.

4.3 The community mobilisation concept of IFSP - Where do we stand right now?

At present the project is working in a post-war to post-conflict environment. The Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Sri Lankan Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in February 2002 provided the basis for a ceasefire agreement as a first step towards peace building. This political process has its impact on the ground situation in Trincomalee district, where more people start to resettle to their original places and invest into the construction of assets. The post-war situation leads to new challenges for the CMs to support the rebuilding of governance structures and reintegrating communities into the local and regional markets.

This 4th coaching session focussing on "Strengthening Governance through Community Mobilisation" builds upon the definition of community mobilisation elaborated in the 'perception count' report. The consultants and the IFSP-CMs believe that

if community mobilisation is well understood and applied it will contribute to the restructuring of community development through strengthening of local governance, which means strengthening of existing partner and support structures as well as problem-solving capacities on village level.

Although the CMs of IFSP have to operate within a specific framework of procedures, socio-cultural perceptions and interests, there are opportunities at each and every field visit to create spaces for capacity building of communities and partners. Hence the importance for dialogue among IFSP, communities and partner institutions is stressed within this report. This 4th coaching sequence was focussing on sensitisation and communications training on how to create these necessary spaces.

Besides the conceptual changes we also have to look into the development of the application of community mobilisation. The changes become visible if we look back to earlier coaching sequences: In the beginning basic mobilisation skills needed to be developed as the community mobilisers were all new to the job and partly not experienced in field work. The IFSP was still in a parallel process where the technical details of projects and the selection criteria were developed step by step. This made the first mobilisation attempts particularly difficult as the CMs often did not have the necessary information what and how projects will be implemented and on the other hand they were lacking experiences and skills in the communication with communities and partners.

The first period of IFSP's community mobilisation was rather a motivating of communities to participate in project planning and implementation and to be ready to contribute in cash and kind. During the following years procedures became more and more clear and the CMs developed a sound understanding how projects are implemented and which partners and what resources were playing important roles. Although there might still be some uncertainties of procedures for specific projects, the CMs have all in all developed more confidence in implementing these procedures.

Mobilisation and facilitation skills were developed gradually through external training and on-the-job. This allowed moving further towards another understanding of what community mobilisation could mean beyond project co-ordination and peoples' contribution. We have learned that projects cannot be successful without the ownership of the communities for 'their projects'.

Today the understanding among IFSP's CMs is that a sustainable project impact requires that communities and partner structures are strengthened through capacity building and the creation of new avenues for cooperation and negotiation spaces. Here, awareness and skills for applying this needs to be further consolidated.

The major challenge for the present project phase and the final stage from January to December 2003 is the question **how to integrated the community mobilisation concept more into the partner structures** using the experiences gained and mainstreaming best-practises for the development processes in Trincomalee district. As IFSP is in its final stage the question of phasing out needs to be addressed.

The CMs of IFSP presented their understanding of the development of the community mobilisation concept of IFSP to the coaching team. The major turning points, conceptual changes and ideas for the phasing out have been reflected in the discussion following their presentation (see Annex 3 and Chapter 6). In the following chapter (5) the discussions on the experiences with the community mobilisation concept and the major findings from the coaching in the field are summarised. Chapter 6 then provides an outlook and recommendations for the **further integration** of the concept into partner structures and **phasing out options**.

5. ASSESSMENT OF EXPERIENCES WITH COMMUNITY MOBILISATION

5.1. Positive experiences with IFSP's community mobilisation approach

In the first coaching session the CMs were asked to describe encouraging and discouraging experiences of their field work. As positive experience many CMs mentioned that some CBOs or 'Sanghams' have started to be active, finding solutions for their problems themselves and take over more and more responsibilities for the project progress. As another positive experience the PNA workshops were mentioned where people are actively involved in decision-making. In some cases attitudinal changes are visible and the skills of CBO-members and leadership have improved. It was also mentioned that e.g. the theatre performance on health was very helpful and successful to raise awareness among communities.

Some CMs expressed satisfaction with their own improved skills. They now do know how to facilitate a discussion and how to stop big talkers in meetings, giving space for expression to other neglected groups. It was also experienced that more people participate in meetings after they have been shifted to the later afternoon. Another positive aspect is the high degree of transparency in the procedures of working with CBOs. A good indicator for success of the CMs' work is that there is sometimes a positive feedback from other institutions, that the CBOs are now addressing them more specifically.

A recent World Bank funded investigation on community participation in development had ranked the IFSP approach towards community mobilisation within a post-conflict environment high among a number of projects. Generally the high commitment of the field-staff, the seriousness in trying to encourage communities to get active partners in development processes as well as the high contributions of the communities to the ongoing projects have been positively recognised.

5.2 Challenges and open questions with regard to IFSP's community mobilisation approach

The integration of the projects within the partner and particularly community structures was seen as a critical factor. As critical experiences of the fieldwork most CMs mentioned problems with negative attitudes of some CBOs leaders, who are not active and supportive in organising meetings.

The role of NGOs working in Trincomalee District and their negative impact on IFSP's attempt to create ownership and contribution of communities was critically reflected. As many NGOs do not ask communities for any contribution they increase the recipient mentality and dependency syndrome of people. As a negative effect CMs of IFSP often experience that communities first accept the cooperation criteria's of IFSP but later on refuse to contribute.

Another difficulty of integration of the community approach of IFSP into partner structures is, that the field staff of departments is often not willing to join the CMs for their field visits and that the field officers also feel superior and are therefore not willing to take up recommendations or best-practises from IFSP-CMs.

Other problems and open questions, which were raised by the CMs and discussed with were:

- "NGOs or governmental departments pay a certain percentage to the CBOs (RDS, FO) to implement projects. IFSP is not doing this, which often leads to a lack of motivation among the CBOs to take over responsibility for the project progress. *"People want only the profits, not our meetings."*

- "It is difficult to explain to the people the IFSP approach. Although it is already explained during the PNA it does not reach them. People compare IFSP with NGOs which are not asking for their contribution."
- "Is it dangerous to start with concrete projects instead of starting with a process of awareness raising? Should not the awareness and mentality change be the central focus of our work?"
- "What to do, if inactive CBOs are not reviving and are not getting active?"
- "What can we do if the CBO president is not supportive and rather hinders the progress of the project? Can we intervene in the existing power structures of the CBO?"
- "How can we tackle political divisions within communities. If supporters of one party come, often the others would not come to our meetings."
- "Internal conflicts between office bearers of the CBOs are undermining the mobilisation efforts and are difficult to resolve. Sometimes the problem seem to be resolved in front of the CM but afterwards comes up again."
- "How do we change cultural habits which affect the nutrition status of family members, like females?"
- "Contribution for projects can be achieved but the bigger problem is to create ownership among communities for the maintenance."
- "How to transfer planning skills to the people that they own the process?"
- "How to deal with internal conflicts, which we created through our work, e.g. conflicts between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries?"
- "Who will mobilise the CBOs and communities after IFSP has left?"

Some of the answers to the open questions, which were discussed in the coaching session are:

- "We have to see that there are other influencing factors, which have an impact on our work. We can't control everything."
- "We can't expect to be in a position to change cultural habits or major socio-cultural problems through our work. Our efforts will have limited impact on a local level and need to be supported by national campaigns (examples: gender equality in household food distribution, waste management etc.)."
- "We have to develop a positive attitude to deal with difficult situations. Problems are challenges. Difficult cases are interesting cases."
- "Conflicts are natural outcomes of any social process. We can't avoid them. We should rather see them as challenges and encourage communities and partners to find ways to deal with them in a more proactive and constructive manner. If communities can better handle their internal conflicts they are strengthened."
- "You have to look for 'structures' in the social settings, which have an impact on the project progress, like cast, clan problems, gender, political patronage etc. Often those have an important impact on the success or failure of our work."
- "You have to assess how the people think, how the CBO works etc to be able to understand their likes and dislikes."
- "Many problems occur due to language problems. We often don't speak the language villagers understand. Misunderstandings come up. We have to find simple ways to express what we mean and try to use pictures the people know."
- "People pick those sentences, which confirm their picture of you. If you want that your messages reach the people it is often necessary to repeat certain important messages by using different wording."
- "People will be more attracted by true recognition than by money."
- "A lot of time is needed to work with the poor. One can approach them only step by step."

6. FURTHER INTEGRATION OF CM INTO PARTNER STRUCTURES

6.1 Sustainability through governance strengthening

The focus on integration and sustainability of the community mobilisation concept of IFSP was introduced starting with a brief reflection on the nexus between poverty alleviation and good governance. Definitions for good governance as applied by GTZ and some ideas of the role of CMs in strengthening local governance were presented (see Box.1).

GTZ stresses the importance of **enhancing the problem-solving capacity and acceptance of institutions and thereby contributing to a strengthening of good governance.**

Especially in a conflict to post-conflict environment a functioning local governance system, which is more responsive, efficient and participatory can contribute to conflict mitigation from different angles:

- *Conflict prevention*: an effective, transparent, fair and inclusive local government system can root out the potential areas of conflict themselves, which lessens the burden on the conflict resolution mechanism.
- *Developing conflict resolution mechanisms*: the local governance system, which is closest to the people can develop mechanism for dialogue and establish platforms to address the issues, where they are easier to resolve, encouraging people's participation

IFSP's efforts to work in an integrated manner with partners and communities towards food and nutrition security aims at reaching a sustainable impact through strengthening of the governance system. In this regard it is important to further strengthen the capacities of partner institutions and village communities to plan and implement priority projects. Community mobilisation plays a key role in this regard, as it directly engages department staff and communities in the development process, contributes to capacity building and empowerment and increases links between partner institutions and CBOs.

With regard to a sustainable impact of the community mobilisation efforts of IFSP there is a need to integrate the concept further into partner and community structures through better cooperation, training and mainstreaming of best practices into department procedures.

Box 1: The nexus between poverty alleviation and good governance – GTZ's approach⁹

- The overall goal of the German development cooperation in Sri Lanka and of GTZ as implementing agency is poverty alleviation. This is supposed to be achieved through supporting sustainable development. Sustainable development encompasses measures to achieve social justice, environmental sustainability, economic efficiency, as well as measures to support democracy, the rule of law and peaceful conflict management. The success of those measures, however, strongly depends on the efficiency of institutions, meaning formal and informal rules, which are functioning and are accepted by people and the institutional actors.
- Often the main obstacle towards poverty alleviation in development countries is not the lack of institutions. Institutions in many cases are either inaccessible for the poor or are not aiming at their welfare but at ensuring the particularistic interests of a small elite.
- Good governance aims at empowering people, that they demand necessary services with the aim to further integrate them into the development processes. This could be one entry-

⁹ Some of the following definitions are taken over from a draft paper of the Quality Management Group of GTZ Sri Lanka on "Good Governance as Crosscutting Issue" prepared by Dr. Sabine Schmid

point towards increasing the responsiveness and efficiency of institutions, and thereby is one of the most important factors in eradicating poverty and promoting development.

- GTZ's definition of good governance includes state institutions as well as actors and rules within the market and the civil society and the interrelation between the three institutional categories. The view changes away from a hierarchical state, which controls everything to a dynamic multi-actor approach in which economic institutions, civil society organisations, media etc. play an important role in the setting of the policy agenda. The balance of power between the state and the society is a prerequisite. Networks and negotiation systems become important aspects in the interaction between society and institutions and among institutional actors.
- "In this regard, methods which contribute to the decision making processes of the society and the complementary transformation of non-governmental and governmental organizations in order to enable their participation in the decision-making process are becoming the key areas of good governance" (GTZ - Schmid).

6.2 Existing level of integration of community mobilisation in partner structures

Within the existing governance structures of Trincomalee District IFSP has established procedures for the identification, planning and implementation of projects for food and nutrition security. To mention just a few of the established procedures and coordination mechanisms:

- The **village data sheet** and **village profiles** provide the basis for a criteria-based (vulnerability context), transparent and fair selection of villages
- The **Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA)** provides a joint platform for the identification of priority projects by integrating department, IFSP staff and communities into the planning process
- **Sectoral Meetings** with the departments facilitate further planning and coordination of activities and projects
- Besides this, IFSP Management is also participating in the **District Coordinating Committee** meetings and **NGO-Consortium** for coordination of projects

Within these efforts to contribute to development processes towards overall food and nutrition security and rural development, community mobilisation is considered vital. Community mobilisation aims at changing attitudes, developing skills and capacities of service providers and people belonging to vulnerable groups.

Empowering communities to become active in the development process of their own village and creating links between the people and institutions (governmental departments, NGOs, private sector institutions) is one important entry point for the strengthening of the local governance system. Among the various activities the CMs are undertaking the following aspects are considered to be important entry points for the monitoring and strengthening of existing governance structures:

- Identifying important actors of the local governance system (government officers, NGOs, but also community based organisations and community leaders in particular)
- Linking CBOs with other institutions like governmental departments, Divisional Secretariats, Pradeshiya Sabhas, NGOs, private sector etc.
- Capacity building of community based organisations and local leaders on various aspects
- Capacity building of field-staff of partner institutions through exchange of experiences and 'best practices'
- Monitoring of activities and follow-up of responsible staff of government institutions and non-governmental organisations

- Feed-back to IFSP management on responsiveness of government actors and NGOs
- Monitoring the degree of satisfaction of people with the service provision and accountability of the service providers and feedback to the respective institutions
- Monitoring of interferences of other intervening actors e.g. armed actors (army, LTTE)

In a brainstorming session the CMs identified all partner institutions they are cooperating with, especially during the fieldwork. In a 'Venn-Diagram' the relation between the CMs and the respective cooperation partners was assessed. The distance of the respective partner institution and organisation to the CMs in the 'Venn-Diagram' shows the importance of the collaboration from the point of view of the CMs. The closer the partner the better the collaboration (see Annex 4).

The Venn-Diagram reveals that the CMs have already established an extensive cooperation network. Hence the quality of the cooperation and the role of the CM within this network needs further reflection, as the right balance between active coordination of projects and facilitation in the sense of encouraging communities and partner institutions to take over responsibility in the process still needs to be envisaged.

The CMs who have a good access to the communities and various service providers, like governmental or non-governmental organisations should act mainly as "facilitators" and avoid to take over too many task of the project progress on their own. Sustainability of project impact requires that the CMs are not the "doers" but rather aim at strengthening the existing structures, supporting empowerment of people and peoples' organisations.

Box 2: Facilitator

Community mobilisers are facilitators ("link persons") between the village community, CBOs, action groups and service providers and support institutions/organisations. Facilitation means that the community 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 (Korf 2000, IFSP Working Paper 32, p. 28).

Facilitators are not doer's:

If community mobilisers are getting too much actively involved in organising and managing project implementation they would not act like facilitators but rather like doer's.

People would then be pure recipients but not active participants. Facilitation would mean "aiming at enhancing ownership and capacity of the people/communities for a higher degree of independence" (Sachithanandam 2001, IFSP Working Paper 47).

6.3 A framework for further integration of the community mobilisation concept of IFSP into partner structures

It was revealed that the community mobilisation approach of IFSP has been developed and improved over the last years and is applied in a successful manner within the existing project structures. To improve the sustainability of the project impact, challenges of further integration of the community mobilisation approach of IFSP have been identified and discussed in this coaching sequence. The challenges can be seen on two different levels:

- a) The **partner institutions** (service providers) of IFSP need to be integrated to a higher degree in project planning, implementation and community mobilisation efforts. The aim would be that the service providers consider the IFSP funded projects as part of their mandates and take over established data bases and procedures (towards community integration) into their routine work.
- b) The **CBOs** need to be further strengthened through training and capacity building on the job. Handing over more responsibilities for project planning and implementing to the communities will contribute to their empowerment and hence support sustainable project impact.

In the following the major issues towards further integration are discussed.

6.3.1 Stronger integration into partner structure (service providers)

In the discussion on the cooperation and collaboration with partners it was stressed that it is of utmost importance to mobilise all available services, skills and resources of the local governance system. To achieve this aim the collaboration with field officers of departments could still be extended. However the following challenges with regard to the cooperation with IFSP-partner institutions have been revealed by the CMs:

- Many partner institutions still perceive all IFSP funded village projects as 'IFSP-projects' and not as their own responsibilities. Therefore the field-staff of the respective departments are often not joining IFSP-staff for project implementation.
- The CMs feel that it is easier to work directly with the CBOs than through partner institutions as the latter have their own management structures which are often not effective and difficult to change. Only few of the government departments are receptive to take up some procedures or data established by IFSP (like e.g. the village vulnerability profiles).
- One problem stressed by the CMs is, that IFSP CMs are not authorised to teach other field staff how they should do their work. Other institutions might otherwise feel that IFSP tries to intervene into their matters. Therefore the strategy of the CMs is to invite others cooperation in a friendly and informal way.
- However, as positive development it was mentioned, that some of the partner institutions already practice good cooperation and take up good practices as well as improve their skills. According to the CMs the communication between and among different government actors and communities has improved through IFSP's facilitating role.

To achieve sustainability it would be important to strengthen the partner structures as well as the CBOs. The CMs are also engaging the IFSP management in the process of capacity building of partner institutions. The CMs monitor the field situation and inform the IFSP management about the need to interact with particular institutions, to ensure that certain processes are set in motion. It became clear in the discussion that the CMs themselves do not deal with the top officers of government departments as this is seen as responsibility of the IFSP management.

The CMs do not seem familiar to actually 'direct' the IFSP management to encourage partner institutions towards increased capacities. In this regard the field staff of IFSP could still make better use of their expertise and field experience for feedback and directions to the IFSP management.

It was discussed whether it is already the right time that IFSP withdraws its direct interventions at the CBO / village level in favour of more indirect collaboration through

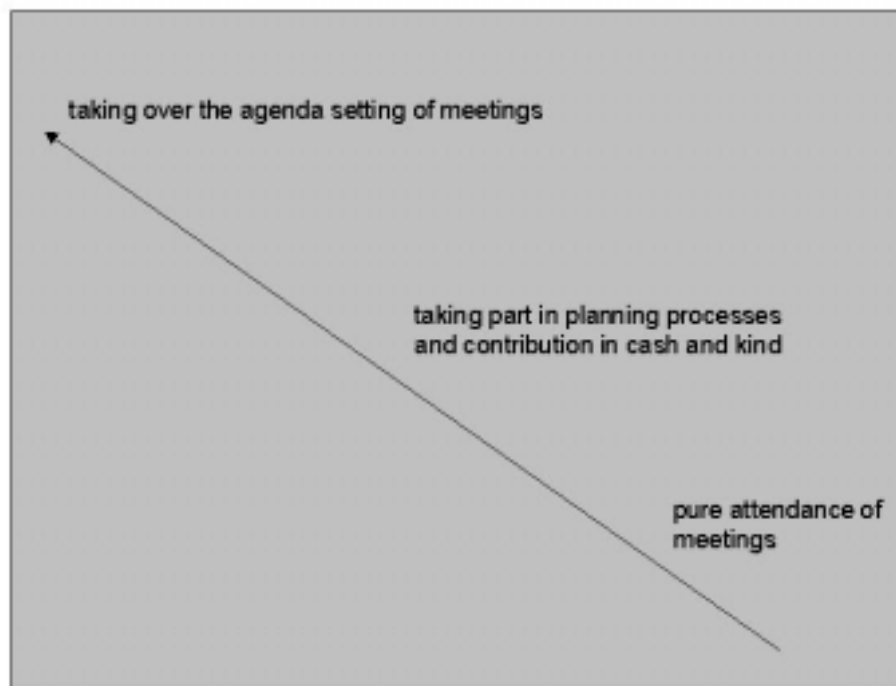
partner institutions. Indirect intervention is considered an adequate approach to reach a sustainable impact, which requires to concentrate now on the further integration of established procedures and 'best practices' into the partner institutions.

6.3.2 Handing the coin to the communities (effective participation and ownership)

Through joint field visits with the CMs to project sites and observations of their activities with communities and CBOs some entry points have been identified, where CMs could extend their efforts in strengthening existing positive structures and capacity building of CBOs. The observations were discussed in extensive feedback sessions with the CM-team, where CMs gave their own observations and recommendations to their colleagues. Through role plays selected situations were reviewed and reframed, trying to create better spaces for capacity and ownership building of CBOs and partners.

It was discussed that one can talk of participation of communities by meaning **different levels of participation**. We distinguished in the following between a lowest level of participation in the sense of pure attendance of meetings by people, a higher level of participation in the sense of taking part in planning processes and contribution in cash or kind to projects as well as a highest level of participation, where people would take over the agenda setting of meetings and the decision-making process.

Chart 1: Levels of participation



Reviewing the field visit it was agreed that the level of people's participation within the IFSP supported projects is usually between the lowest and the middle level. Seldom it reaches the highest level of participation, where people start to take over the agenda setting of the meetings.

Experience shows that if the level of participation is not reaching a higher level the ownership of the communities for the projects is also not high. To reach a sustainable project impact a strong ownership of the communities for "their projects" is essential. It was discussed how this highest level of participation could be envisaged: Each meeting bears opportunities to

hand the coin over to the CBOs and other local partners and thereby giving more responsibilities for the projects to the communities.

One important finding was that the CMs themselves often perceive the projects as **"IFSP's projects"** to which people contribute. This is reflected in the way they speak about the projects when they address the villagers, e.g. "... IFSP is ready to provide you seven wells. We will construct them in this and that manner. We expect from you a contribution of". This automatically leads to the fact that communities and partner institutions also talk about "IFSP's projects" instead of "their projects".

In the role plays that were exercised how one could reframe certain sentences e.g. when starting a meeting one could begin "... **You have decided to construct several wells for needy families. IFSPs' contribution to your project is this and that...**".

Another important mechanism could **be to ask the CBO president to prepare the agenda for the meetings**. The CMs can then add the points they want to discuss.

6.3.3 Participatory planning and the creation of spaces

The planning process was another aspect, which was looked into. Planning can be done in a thousand different ways. Villagers would often plan different to how we as agents of development would do it. Handing over the coin would mean to **let people plan more in the way they would do it** and **support them to find their own indicators for the planning process**. For the selection of beneficiaries, **villagers will have much better criteria** than we might have. Facilitating the process of agreeing on certain indicators will lead to more ownership amongst people for the selection and planning process and ideally to less conflicts with non-beneficiaries.

In the meetings it is important to **create spaces in a way that people can make their own choices** on a sound and informed basis. Even during the PNA process there is a danger that the actual choices or decisions are made by the outside planners instead of the villagers. We have to be **conscious how we are creating those spaces of planning and decision-making**. Often the CMs are pre-occupied with their own agendas in mind, what they want to discuss with the communities. This makes it difficult to be open to the issues that the communities themselves want to put on the agenda.

The selection of a committee, which should decide on the beneficiaries was one example how CMs tried to **encourage the communities to take over responsibilities and decision making** in the planning process. Still, the way the selection of the committee was done could be done in a different way. During the field visit the villagers were asked to form a committee on the spot resulting in a less transparent procedure, where some names were suddenly on the list.

It was recommended to ask the CBO president to **form a committee before the next meeting** and to discuss with all participants of the meeting what kind of people should be on this list. Gender balance, knowledge, experience etc. could be criteria for the selection of the committee members. In the following meeting the CBO president should read out the criteria for the selection of the members of the committee as well as their names. This process could **bring about transparency** in the selection process as well as contribute to the establishment of accepted procedures.

6.3.4 Community conflicts: challenges and opportunities

An important issue was **how to deal with problems and conflicts** which come up in the process of beneficiary selection and project planning. There are many cases that CMs face problems due to unfulfilled expectations of villagers especially those who have been left out. In one case we had to face complains by the RDS president who himself received complains from some villagers who had already sold some jewellery to be able to contribute for toilet construction. Unfortunately they were not included as beneficiaries of the programme. The RDS president was now worried that he might lose face if these families did not get toilets as the other beneficiaries.

It seems to be common that the representatives of the CBOs always direct these kinds of problems to the CMs **making IFSP responsible for the internal conflicts**. The CMs on the other hand tend to take the burden on their shoulders and **feel responsible for the conflicts**. When we discussed how these conflicts could be solved the CMs' solution was to provide toilets as well to those families who have now sold their jewellery. In the role-play sessions we elaborated different ways to deal with these problems. There is clearly a **need to develop a different approach to handle conflict situations**, as they are part of any development process.

It is of course important to avoid raising wrong expectations by making the selection criteria for beneficiaries clear from the very beginning. CMs especially tend to take the blame on their shoulders if they had promised something which was later on rejected by the IFSP management. Still, these are situations which happen even within governmental departments and the field staff of other institutions have to face the same problems when the service delivery cannot take place due to lack of resources or other reasons. Even if no promises have been made there are always avenues for misunderstandings and we can not avoid that there will be people who are not satisfied at the end. The question is **whose responsibility is it to solve internal conflicts**.

Again the suggestion was to **hand the coin to the communities** and the local leaders and to get them involved in the problem-solving process. There is clearly a need that the RDS president as local implementing partner takes over responsibility in resolving problems within the community and not just handing the stick to IFSP. The CMs could facilitate and encourage that meetings are held where problems like this (toilets) are discussed within the community or that the RDO provides conflict resolution training to the RDS president. If CMs take over full responsibility for everything, then there are no opportunities that communities strengthen their problem-solving capacities, which is one important aspect of empowerment.

We can strengthen the partner structures only through progressive and proactive ways and methods to tackle these problem situations. If we only see the solution in giving what the unsatisfied are asking for we increase the dependency syndrome of communities from outside agencies.

Good governance is all about conflict management. If we help to create a participative environment to resolve disputes in a non-violent manner we contribute to empowerment of communities. Community mobilisation is successful, if **people and institutions are taking over responsibilities for problem solving**.

6.3.5 Finding entry points for capacity building of communities and partner institutions

The most important aspect of this coaching session was that the CMs could use more entry points to concentrate on capacity building for communities and partner institutions. **Handing over the coin to the communities** whenever possible would mean:

- After PNA the CM can spend more time with the communities asking how they will take up the projects discussed. Let CBOs first become more active and monitor what they do and what not. Tailor your approach to the respective situation of the CBO.
- Mobilise local knowledge by exchanging experiences with the villagers. They know a lot and it is therefore good to encourage them to come out with their doubts about certain project procedures developed by IFSP.
- Use any opportunity for capacity building, e.g. through explaining step by step e.g. why less material is sufficient for the toilet construction.
- Let the meetings be organised by the CBO president. Let the community decide on the agenda of the meeting and add your own points to it. Let the CBO president call other officials, like department field staff to join certain meetings.
- CMs can always be the advisers, providing the necessary information and encourage the communities to take action. The action should come from the communities.
- It is important that the CMs make themselves approachable for the people through a non-snobbish attitude, use of simple language and listening skills. Don't tell people what they should do, rather ask questions why they do this or don't do that.

To build capacities and ownership for the development process among communities is a long-term process. We have used the picture of building brick by brick for a strong foundation of a house. It also means that we have to **repeat again and again important messages**, like the concept of food security which gives people the necessary information what projects IFSP could support.

It is important to make sure that the leadership potential of a local leader is not undermined due to our work. We should make sure that we give him (or her) the authority for the agenda setting and preparation of the meetings and strengthen him (or her) in dispute settlement. **Handing over the coin to the partner institution**, like field staff of other departments would also be necessary **to improve the sustainability** of the project. Field staff of departments need to be informed about the progress of projects and encouraged to join in whenever possible. It would be the ideal situation if they were taking over their part in the projects not leaving it to the IFSP field staff. There are some cases where respective field staff is already involved, like the RDO in Vattam, who would join all the important meetings and support the RDS president to fulfil his duty.

The **facilitator role of the CMs** allows that existing pattern, like e.g. cultural habits are sometimes challenged. The CM can always recommend that women should join certain meetings, like meetings on health or sanitation programmes - even in Muslim communities. For this it is important to influence the selection of a **suitable meeting place**. If the meeting is held in the 'Madharasa' women can't join. As outside agent one has the **opportunity to challenge certain structures**, which in our eyes undermine the success of development work. We should make use of this.

6.3.6 Steps towards further integration

Integration is strongly related to capacity building of partner institutions and CBOs and involves improved co-operation procedures and exchange of experiences. Once it is understood that Community Mobilisation is facilitating a dynamic interaction of vulnerable and marginalised communities with service providers, then capacity building of communities and partner institutions becomes central to its work. Two questions maybe asked of this process:

- a) Are the communities adequately aware to apply a rights based approach to their basic

needs, and have sufficient in-built capacities to access, control and utilise the resources provided?

- b) Do the service providing institutions have the necessary institutional mechanisms for responding effectively to community needs within a framework, which assures transparency and accountability?

Several entry points have been offered in the course of the implementation of IFSP for capacity building of communities and partner institutions. The goal is to enable these various actors to plan and implement programmes as well as IFSP does or even better. If that is so, then the communities and the service providers must be in possession of the skills and capacities possessed by the IFSP.

- The PNA itself is an excellent entry point. At present it is mostly used as a forum where needs are articulated by the community. In addition to this function, it can also serve to educate the community on the criteria for planning in terms of prioritisation and resource allocation. Rather than impose the criteria developed by the IFSP, it will be also useful to allow the free and rational use of the criteria that the community may have had from its previous experiences in the implementation of common programmes.
- PNA also can be used to encourage the staff of partner institutions (including that of service providers) to learn about the different hierarchies and power structure existent in a village, and the intricacies of establishing participatory structures in development. Support should be extended to document what is learned so that experiences are shared and the institutional memory is enhanced. Indeed this process should continue throughout the programme implementation.
- The next important entry point for building capacities is beneficiary selection. It will be useful for the CBO to have the necessary skills for setting up monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Once the criteria for a successful project have been determined by them through the application of these mechanisms, the communities could be given full responsibility in the selection of beneficiaries. The inevitable conflicts that arise during the process of beneficiary selection are other entry points that facilitate the local leadership to imbibe the skills of conflict transformation. The term transformation is used here in order to emphasise that conflict has the potential to change existing status quo and it becomes a transformative conflict when purposely used as such.
- The implementation process helps the community to learn about collective decision making, delegation of duties, transparency and accountability. It also enables them to learn about the technical aspects of infra structure projects and construction activities. For instance, explaining step by step the construction method and material inputs in a toilet construction project will help the communities to be that much more aware of the implications of the resource utilisation of that project.
- At the conclusion of a project, its evaluation is another entry point. It is more useful to enable the communities (through the CBO) to conduct their own evaluation and discuss the findings with the service-providing institutions, than an independent evaluation carried out perhaps by the IFSP alone.

7. OUTLOOK AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of IFSP is to support the livelihoods of communities who are affected by war, social deprivation and food insecurity. The livelihood systems approach followed by IFSP clearly shows that various dimensions like physical capital, social/political capital, financial capital, human capital and natural capital determine the vulnerability situation of families. Apart from the vulnerability context, transforming structures and processes will influence and shape behavioural pattern of people.

In the process of community mobilisation it is important to identify what structures (institutions, organisations, laws, policies) are present in the livelihood context and how these structures are performed and acted? Processes would thus refer to the actual institutional arrangements (rules of the game, (dis)-incentives). A 'livelihood focussed' development approach would aim at removing constraints to the realisation of potentials of building strength of people (Korf et al, 2001).

IFSP emphasises its efforts on the empowerment and capacity building of local communities and institutions/organisations and on facilitating interaction between the communities and respective service providers. The objective is to strengthen existing positive structures and processes and thereby strengthening the local governance system. In this attempt the work of the CMs of IFSP (as well as health officers and engineers) are of major importance.

We have to see and appreciate what has already been achieved and what skills have been developed over the last two years. Now it is the time that these skills and processes are further improved and consolidated. It is important to change the prevalent understanding that 'development' means mainly economic or simply material development. The livelihood systems approach stresses the importance of other assets, like social and political capital. If CMs limit their understanding of development to "economic or material development" this will hinder the progress towards strengthening structures for good governance.

Recommendations:

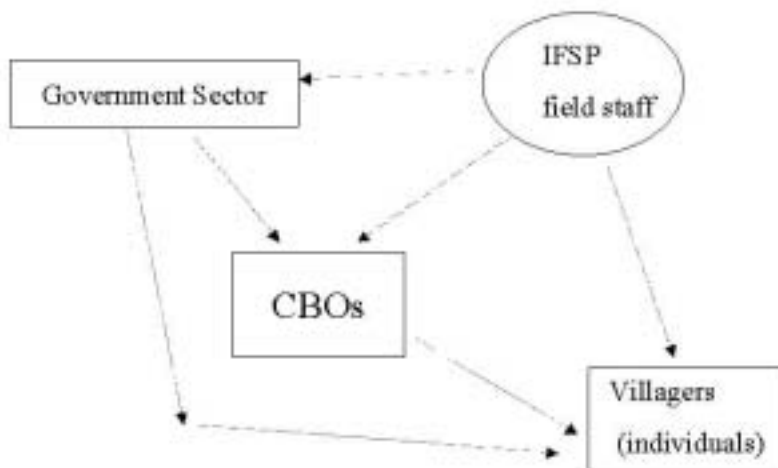
- **Phasing out:** The CMs described the future perspective of their work that IFSP should slowly phase out by reducing direct contact with the CBO level but rather continues to strengthen partner institutions. Partner institutions should then take over playing a more active role vis-à-vis CBOs and that successful procedures of community mobilisation are integrated into department and government field-work.
- IFSP could focus on extending the creation of communication spaces by inviting more partners (private sector, NGOs) to join (see Annex 3). This vision of phasing out requires more integration of IFSP's community mobilisation concept into the partner structures. It was discussed that a successful phasing out would require that the CBOs are already confident enough and well strengthened to demand services, which is partly not yet the case.
- **Capacity building:** In the recent phase there need to be more concentration on capacity building of CBOs and their leaders. This could be done on the one hand through training. On the other hand it can be reached through handing over more responsibilities to CBO-leaders, that they learn on the job necessary skills to plan and implement their own projects. CBO-leaders could get more actively involved by taking over the organisation and facilitation of the meetings at village level.
- **Identifying 'best practices':** An important entry point could be to find a platform, where IFSP CMs can share their experiences and best-practices with field-staff of departments or NGOs. The question is, whether the sector meetings with the departments could be extended to the field staff, that they can share experiences on a more regular basis.
- Another option would be to organised joint exposure visits of IFSP's CM and field staff of departments and NGOs to new project sites, observations of CM work and feed-back discussions on the observations.
- Generally it is recommended that the field visits of the CMs are more coordinated with department activities in respective villages, that field-staff of departments and IFSP jointly conduct their field visits. This could support the development of a common understanding of a community mobilisation concept and best-practises.

- In the last coaching session it has been emphasised that 'mutual learning' among the CMs would be important to improve the mobilisation skills by sharing of experiences and 'best practices'. It does not seem that this has been instituted within the office structures. CMs should not only report to their co-ordinator but also make time available to discuss and learn among them. This is a field where one cannot say that learning is completed. The process of learning will continue.
- **Mainstreaming community mobilisation in Trincomalee district:** The approach to community mobilisation adopted by IFSP is also influenced and enabled by the resources possessed by the IFSP. The existing structures in the district have to not only imbibe the values related to a people-centred development, but also match their resources to that of the IFSP. Also, they need comprehensive and task specific training for their staff on a long term basis. For these reasons, we have to see what the community mobilisation approach of IFSP can achieve within the existing structures.
- Difficulties come up due to **competing approaches** in the region of different donor agencies as well as government departments and local NGOs. The approaches of other agencies who continue to spoon-feed their target groups by providing everything free and by paying people to attend meetings clearly makes any attempt for a different approach towards empowerment of communities difficult.
- It would be useful if the Sri Lankan **partners and other agencies working in Trincomalee would assess their approaches on community mobilisation and agree on certain 'good practices'**, to avoid counterproductive competition. The know-how and positive experiences of the IFSP approach on CM could contribute to a process of mainstreaming of a common approach.
- In 2003 IFSP has to find a way to slowly withdraw direct support to communities. It would be especially important that **governmental departments and their field staff take over** step by step responsibilities for community mobilisation following the **'good practices'** of IFSP to continue the dialogue with the marginalised communities in the district.

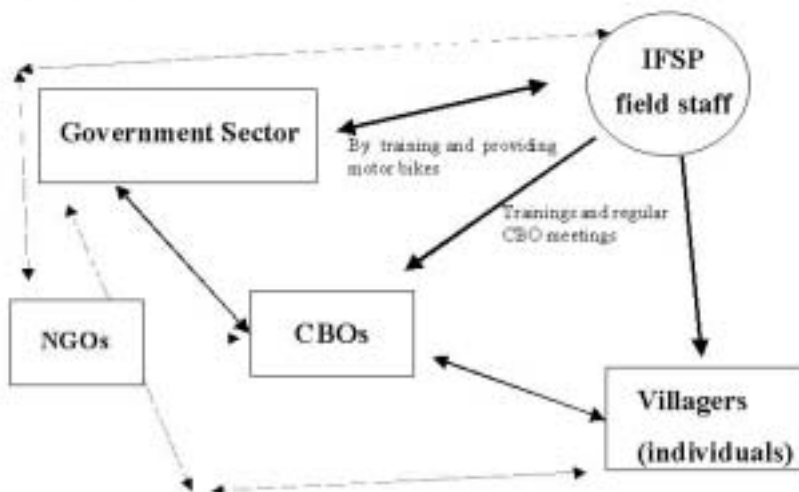
Changing Pattern of Community Mobilisation 2000 – 2003

Presentation by IFSP-CMs

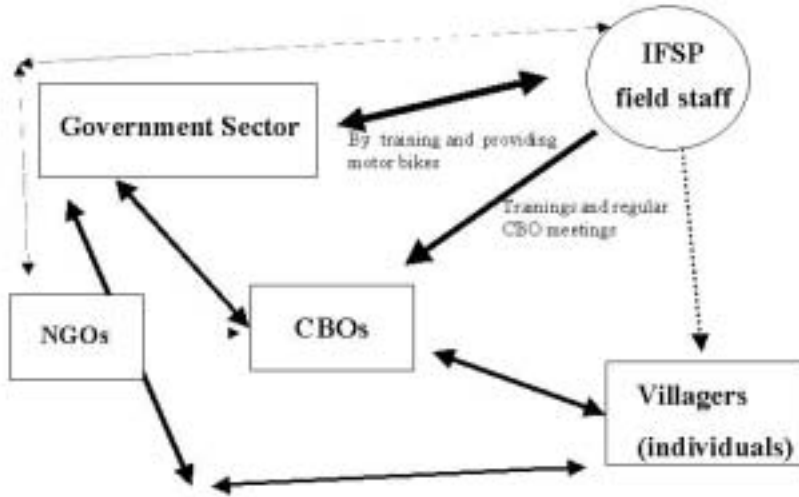
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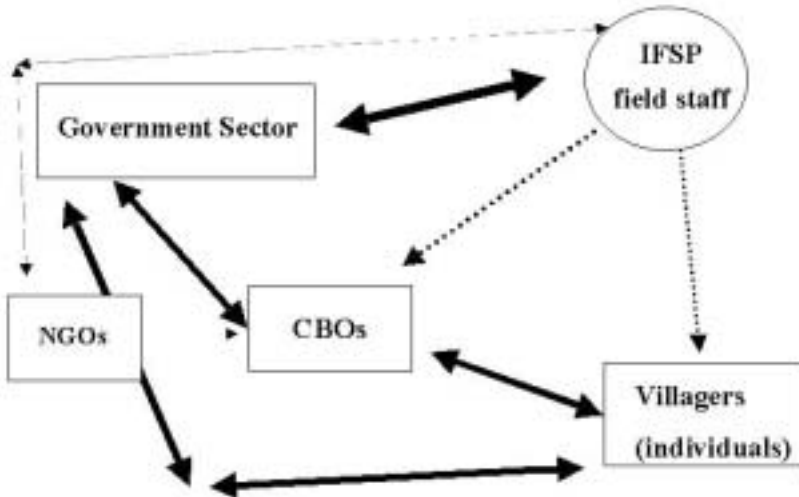


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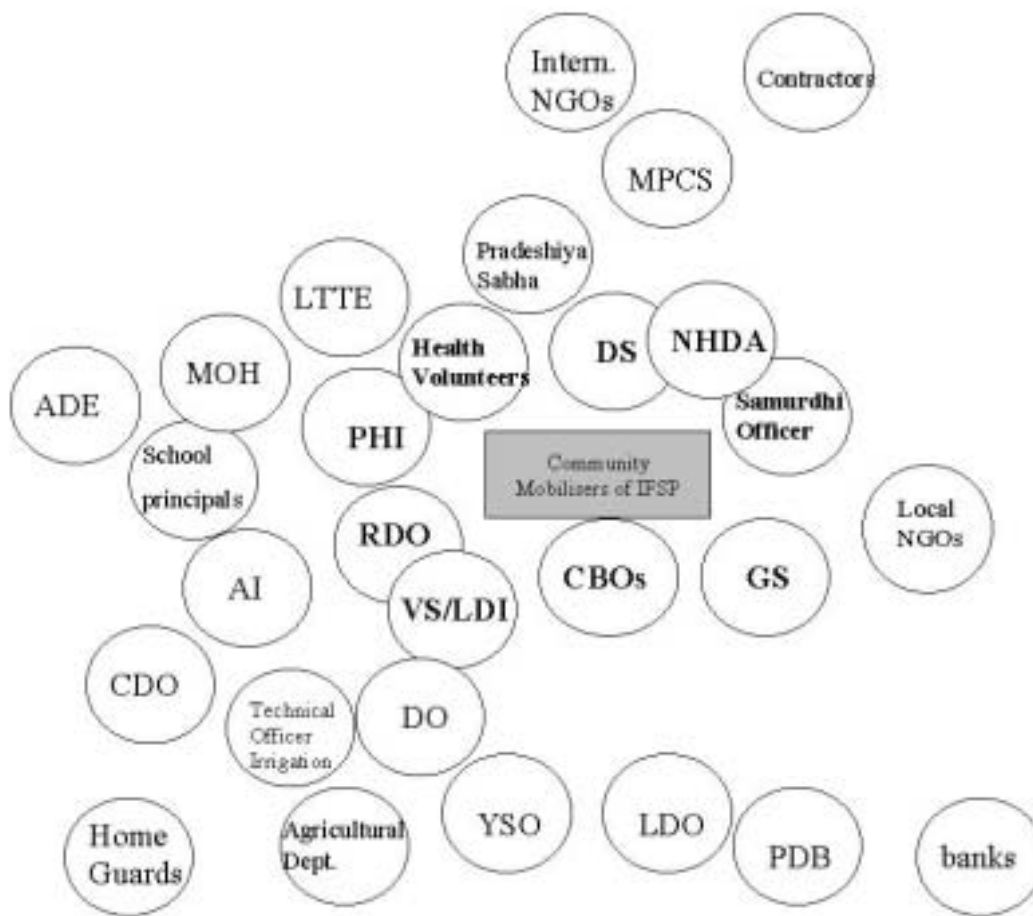


Future Perspectives:

Year 2003:



Venn-Diagram: Cooperation Partners of the IFSP CMs



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Terms of Reference (ToR)

SEQUENTIAL COACHING AND TRAINING FOR THE COMMUNITY MOBILISERS OF IFSP

SEQUENCE 5: STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNANCE THROUGH COMMUNITY MOBILISATION

Sequential Coaching of the Community Mobilisers

This is the 5th coaching session to further conceptualise community mobilisation within the IFSP and partner institutions. The process of sequential coaching shall contribute to improve and adjust the community mobilisation concept of the IFSP with particular aim to further promote dialogue with target groups and partners. Coaching of community mobilisers and other field staff aims at improving communication skills, which will contribute to improved cooperation amongst all stakeholders. Better communication and cooperation amongst all stakeholders also supports to create a higher degree of ownership amongst communities for their development projects and thereby contributes to reduce vulnerability. Perceptions on the side of the community mobilisers (CM), target groups and partners as well as third parties, e.g. security forces, LTTE are addressed.

To date four coaching and concept development sessions were conducted. The aim of the exercise is to assist the IFSP to continue its efforts for community mobilisation in a systematic and at the same time pragmatic way based on state-of-the-art and experience in cooperating with local communities and partner institutions.

Some specific training needs for this coaching sequence identified by the CMs are:

- Coaching towards communication and understanding of the core problems
- Brief introduction and application techniques on conflict management skills in the field
- Development of observation and analytical skills
- Address and application of gender issues

For a sequential coaching we consider short blocks of four to five days over a longer period of time (three years), which are integrated into the daily routines as well as into conceptual work. Based on the previous coaching sessions and the expectations of the CMs the following topics could be addressed:

- Reflection of field work, e.g. entry points for peoples participation and capacity building
- Review of the community mobilisation concept on the basis of the experiences gained
- Skills to improve communication and negotiation and conflict management
- Sensitisation for entry points of capacity building and strengthening of communities and partner structures
- Finding entry points for conflict mitigation of community conflicts
- Skills to improve the capacity to precisely describe, analyse and interpret situations and conclude alternatives and solutions for decision making, promoting positive attitudes and potentials
- Addressing gender in a pronounced way

Aims of the 5th Coaching Sequence

The 5th sequence has the aim to review the community mobilisation concept of the IFSP considering its contribution to a sustainable impact through strengthening the local governance system. In the process of facilitating development processes on community level, the CMs have a good access to the communities as well as to various service providers, like governmental or non-governmental organisations. The aim of IFSP in the long

run is, to contribute to village development with emphasis on food and nutrition security, to enhance processes which support the integration of local communities into markets and to contribute to stability in a conflict-to post conflict environment. IFSP has a strong focus on the empowerment and capacity building of local communities and institutions / organisations and on facilitating interaction between communities and respective service providers with the goal to strengthen governance in the area.

In this process the role of the CMs is crucial. To give just a few examples, what activities can contribute indirectly or directly to a strengthening of the local governance system:

- c) Identifying important actors of the local governance system (government officers, NGOs, but also functioning community based organisations as well as community leader)
- d) Linking community based organisations with other institutions like Governmental Departments, Divisional Secretariat, Pradeshiya Sabha, NGOs, Private Sector etc.
- e) Capacity building within community based organisations on various aspects
- f) Monitoring the activities and follow-ups of responsible government and non-governmental staff
- g) Feed-back to IFSP management on responsiveness of government actors and NGOs
- h) Monitoring of satisfaction of people with the service provision and accountability of the service providers and feedback to the respective institutions.
- i) Monitoring of interferences of other, e.g. armed actors (army, LTTE)

The aim of this 5th coaching sequence is to identify the entry points of strengthening local governance through community mobilisation, leading to a sustainable project impact. With this focus in mind the CMs will be coached in the field and the community mobilisation concept of IFSP will be revisited on the basis of the work experiences and conceptual considerations. Group discussions within the Community Mobilisation Unit, joint field visits and interaction with various local institutions (Divisional Secretariat, government departments etc) and organisations (NGOs and CBOs) will be undertaken.

Expected Results

1. A time-schedule is developed which includes on the one hand brainstorming and discussion session with the CMs as well as with partner institutions. On the other hand, the programme needs to contain exposure field visits to review the interaction between CMs and communities as well as local institutions.
2. The practical field work of the CMs is reviewed through discussions and joint field visits with regard to their interactions with communities as well as local governance actors and their strengthening impacts.
3. The experiences of selected local governance institutions with the facilitating role of IFSP-CMs are reviewed through observation of community mobilisation in the field and discussions with respective officers/representatives.
4. The findings and experiences gained during the coaching sequence are discussed with the CMs and IFSP management. The results could furthermore be discussed on a partner workshop with representatives from governmental and non-governmental organizations.
5. The findings of the coaching and recommendations are documented in a concise report and submitted to IFSP by 20.10.02.

Coaching Team:

Shanti Sachithanandam

Social Scientist and NGO activist. She is expected to focus on the coaching process with emphasis on perceptions, attitudes and behaviour of CMs as well as perceptions and feelings of target groups and partners in particular (responsible tasks). She is expected to contribute to re-visit the community mobilisation concept (joint task).

Christine Bigdon

Political Scientist; Phd-candidate at the University of Heidelberg on the topic “decentralisation and good local governance” and advanced training in participatory methods and approaches.

She will be responsible for the review of sustainability aspects of the community mobilisation activities, governance strengthening aspects (individual task) and jointly of the review of the review of the community mobilisation concept of the IFSP.