



# **The Role of Integrated Rural Development Projects in Developing Local Institutional Capacity**

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**Studies in Technology and Social Change, No. 2**

**Technology and Social Change Program  
Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011 USA**

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# **The Role of Integrated Rural Development Projects in Developing Local Institutional Capacity**

**Proceedings of a Workshop held at the  
University of Wales' Study Centre at Gregynog  
Newtown, Wales  
20-25 September 1987**

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**Studies in Technology and Social Change Series  
No. 2**

**Technology and Social Change Program  
Iowa State University  
Ames, Iowa 50011  
USA**

©1988, Iowa State University Research Foundation  
ISSN 0896-1905  
ISBN-0-945271-02-6

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

This Workshop was co-sponsored and co-organized by the Technology and Social Change Program at Iowa State University and the Centre for Development Studies at the University College of Swansea. The warden and staff at the University of Wales' Study Centre at Gregynog provided a most pleasant environment for the Workshop. The Workshop was supported by ODA, SIDA, USAID, GTZ, FINNIDA, NORAD, ICA, CRD, IBRD, and UNDP (Habitat) through the provision of travel and maintenance funds for various participants and support for the production of this report. Ms. Rhonda Yoder formatted this report for publication.

## PART I

### SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

A Workshop on the Role of Integrated Rural Development Projects (IRDPs) in Developing Local Institutional Capacity was held at the University of Wales' Study Centre, near Newtown in mid-Wales, from 20 to 25 September 1987. It was sponsored jointly by the Centre for Development Studies, University College of Swansea, and the Technology and Social Change Program, Iowa State University.

This Report summarizes the main proceedings and findings of the Workshop. A number of the papers presented are being published separately as part of a special issue of Manchester Papers on Development (vol. IV, no. 1, January 1988) devoted to integrated rural development.

#### 2. OBJECTIVES

The Workshop focused on the role of IRDPs in developing the capacity of local institutions to plan and implement rural development activities, and in supporting government policy initiatives to strengthen local organizational capacity. The Workshop was organized on the assumption that there is considerable experience in this field in individual countries and projects, but that very little attempt had been made to share these experiences or consider their wider significance.

The aim of the Workshop was thus to facilitate the exchange of experiences among countries, donor agencies and individuals involved in IRDPs where specific attention has been given to capacity-building objectives, in order to facilitate:

- a. Better understanding of IRDP objectives and approaches among host countries and donor agencies;
- b. More effective planning and implementation of future IRDPs, especially in countries with relatively little experience with such activities; and
- c. The general development of knowledge in the field of rural development planning and local institutional development.

A primary goal of the Workshop was to prepare guidelines on how to maximize the role of IRDPs in developing local institutional capacity, for use by governments, donor agencies and those involved in project implementation.

The Workshop objectives were spelled out in some detail in a background paper, which was circulated to all participants in advance of the Workshop. This paper is reproduced as Appendix I.

### 3. PARTICIPATION

The participants were carefully selected to provide a range of relevant experiences. They included:

- a. Representatives from three IRDPs with particularly relevant experiences in relation to capacity-building [Mpika in Zambia, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, and Enga Yaaka Lasemana (EYL) in Papua New Guinea], including representatives from both the host country and the donor agency concerned;
- b. Representatives from other selected IRDPs in these and other countries;
- c. Representatives from other donor agencies with extensive experience with IRDPs in various countries; and
- d. Selected individuals with relevant practical or research experience.

A full list of participants is given in Appendix II.

### 4. PROCEEDINGS

The Workshop was divided into two main parts. The first two days involved the exchange of experiences among participants. The focus of this was the three case studies--Mpika, Hambantota and EYL IRDPs. However, these cases were supplemented by brief presentations from other project and country experiences and from other donor agencies. In most cases presentations were based on written papers which were distributed as background material. A complete list of papers is given in Appendix III and abstracts of the main papers presented are provided in Part III of this Report.

In the second part of the Workshop, participants were divided into six working groups in order to discuss in more depth the various issues raised and to prepare relevant guidelines. The specific topics discussed by the respective groups were as follows:

#### GROUP 1

What implications does a concern with capacity-building have for the identification of project objectives and the way in which a project is initiated and planned?

#### GROUP 2

What type of project organization, management structures and processes maximize the achievement of capacity-building objectives?

#### GROUP 3

What type of internal and external monitoring and evaluation systems are needed to maximize the achievement of capacity-building objectives?

#### GROUP 4

What degree and form of decentralization of government is needed to maximize the capacity-building role of IRDPs and how can such decentralization be facilitated?

#### GROUP 5

How can IRDPs strengthen local organizational capacity in a way which maximizes popular participation and promotes the needs of the rural poor?

#### GROUP 6

How can communication between and within countries and donor agencies be improved, in order to promote and facilitate the capacity-building role of IRDPs?

Edited versions of the reports produced by each of the working groups are provided in Part II of this Report.

In addition to these two main components, one morning was spent by briefly looking at experiences with regional rural development in mid-Wales.

### 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The reports of the working groups provide an effective summary of the conclusions and recommendations of the Workshop. In this section, therefore, it is only necessary to point to two general overriding conclusions.

The first of these concerns the future general role of IRDPs, as well as their specific role as a means of capacity-building. The Workshop recognized that IRDPs have lost much of their earlier popularity as means of rural development intervention, especially among some donor agencies. This has been due largely to many problems associated with such projects in the past, including their failure to result in any significant improvement in local institutional capacity. However, it was felt that the positive experiences presented in the Workshop were an indication that IRDPs can still play an important role in capacity-building, provided that these projects are conceived, planned and implemented in an appropriate manner. In other words, what is needed is a fairly radical change in the approach towards IRDPs, rather than their total abandonment. The main components of the 'new' approach, which are described in detail in the reports of the working groups, are as follows:

- a. A specific emphasis on capacity-building;
- b. The adoption of a 'process' rather than a 'blueprint' approach to project planning;
- c. The location of the project within existing institutions;

- d. An emphasis on decentralization of both project and government activities; and
- e. Special efforts to facilitate popular participation, especially of the rural poor.

The second conclusion relates to the importance of communication within and between countries and donor agencies. It was generally agreed that the Workshop had performed a valuable role in bringing together individuals and organizations with related experiences. It was felt that specific efforts should be made to improve such communication in order to share experiences and avoid the reinvention of the wheel. This would enable host countries to agree upon common policies regarding IRDPs, thereby providing a stronger basis for them to negotiate individually with donor agencies. The Workshop concluded by recommending that there be one or more follow-up meetings, possibly located in Zambia and/or Sri Lanka, in order to pursue certain issues in more depth and involve a wider range of individuals and agencies.

## PART II

### REPORTS OF WORKING GROUPS

#### WORKING GROUP 1 - Implications of Capacity-Building for Project Design

Kofi Amuah, Department of Community Development, Ghana;  
Lars Birgegard, International Rural Development Centre, Sweden;  
Ekkehard Clemens, West German Technical Assistance Agency;  
Ian Goldman, Mpika IRDP, Zambia;  
Bimba Gunatilake, Ministry of Plan Implementation, Sri Lanka;  
Allen Jedlicka, University of Northern Iowa, USA;  
Jim Whetton, Centre for Development Studies, Wales.

WHAT IMPLICATIONS DOES A CONCERN WITH CAPACITY-BUILDING HAVE FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND THE WAY IN WHICH A PROJECT IS INITIATED AND PLANNED?

#### Introduction

Concern with capacity-building arises from the fact that, in the past, IRDPs have tended to concentrate on capital investment in infrastructure and service provision and neglected the development of institutional capacity. Instead of strengthening the capacity of existing institutions to provide and maintain such infrastructure and services, the tendency has been to establish ad hoc organizations, which are temporary, operate semi-autonomously and rely heavily on expatriate human resources. Consequently, many such IRDPs have failed to become self-sustaining after the withdrawal of donor inputs, and as a result the infrastructure and services provided are not adequately maintained or operated.

A capacity-building approach, on the other hand, gives priority to developing the conscious capability of individuals, groups and organizations within the project area, in order to provide a basis for long-term sustainable development. This requires a 'learning by doing' approach to the planning and implementation of project activities and the allocation of resources specifically for training and related capacity-building activities.

#### Implications for Project Objectives

The implications in terms of project objectives are twofold. On the one hand, it is essential that capacity-building objectives are clearly stated and their implications fully considered in the initial stages of project identification and planning. If this is not done, problems will arise when it comes to getting resources for capacity-building activities and evaluating the impact of the project.

On the other hand, it is necessary also to consider the implications in terms of other project objectives. Capacity-building objectives can often only be achieved at the expense of other objectives which donors or people within the country may wish to achieve, at least in the short run. For example:

- a. Donor agencies, and in some cases also host governments and people in the project area, often wish to see rapid, visible and easily measured results. With a capacity-building approach, however, results are achieved more slowly and a considerable proportion of investment is allocated to activities which are less visible and more difficult to evaluate in conventional cost-benefit terms;
- b. Donors often prefer to invest in projects with a specific and relatively short time-frame and in projects where all activities are planned and budgeted in advance. Capacity-building projects, on the other hand, must involve a long-term commitment and a flexible, 'learning process' approach, in which neither the length of the project nor the details of specific activities are planned before the project commences; and
- c. Since capacity-building involves strengthening the bargaining capacity of specific individuals, groups or institutions, it inevitably determines, directly or indirectly, the project's target group(s), and in some cases this conflicts with preconceived views of either the donor or the host government regarding the target groups of rural development programmes. For example, a donor agency committed to working with the 'poorest of the poor' may be reluctant--for obvious and commendable reasons--to work through local government institutions which represent the interests of an existing rural capitalist or bureaucratic elite.

In many cases, these apparent incompatibilities can be accommodated in the project design in a manner which is satisfactory to all parties, along the lines indicated below and in the reports of the other working groups. However, it is important that the implications are fully appreciated and, if the incompatibilities cannot be accepted or accommodated, the project proposal should be abandoned or its objectives reconsidered.

### Implications for the Approach to Project Planning

A concern with capacity-building has implications for the overall approach to project initiation and planning. In particular:

- a. It is especially important that host countries take the lead in initiating and planning projects and that this lead role is accepted by donor agencies. The most successful projects are those that form an integral part of broader national or regional strategies for strengthening local institutions (as is the case in Sri Lanka), and host governments should 'shop around' to find a donor that is prepared to meet their specific objectives and conditions;
- b. The initial planning stage should not involve the preparation of a blueprint plan. The aim should be to identify broad project objectives, to define the general scope of the project (including the approximate scale and form of technical assistance likely to be required), and to

determine the procedures whereby the detailed planning of specific inputs will take place on an ongoing basis as the project progresses (see next section). A conventional cost-benefit approach to project appraisal will not be feasible, since detailed activities will not be planned, let alone costed, in advance, and many of the anticipated benefits will be difficult to measure in quantitative terms. The decision to go ahead with a project will have to be based on other considerations--as is, in fact, often the case anyway, even when a conventional cost-benefit analysis is undertaken;

- c. Project planning should include a thorough appraisal of the nature and capacity of alternative local institutions, in order to determine where capacity-building efforts should be directed and what form they should take and to assess the pace at which implementation is likely to progress. The starting point for such an appraisal is likely to be existing national policy on local government and administration. However, it will be necessary to look at such policy from both national and local perspectives and it is at this point that different priorities in terms of target groups (including differences within the host country as well as between host country and donor agency) may arise and have to be reconciled; and
- d. Those local institutions selected as the target group should be fully involved in the initial project planning. The most effective projects are often those that are actually initiated at local level; but this is often not possible, given the desire of national governments to initiate projects as part of national development strategies and the need to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the various local institutions which may exist.

### Implications for Project Design

As already indicated, the initial project planning should not involve the preparation of a detailed blueprint plan, but it is necessary to identify the procedures for more detailed ongoing planning. These should include:

- a. The institutional arrangements, including the roles of the various individuals and organizations involved within the donor agency, and at both national and project level within the host country. Where appropriate, the formation of project committees should also be included;
- b. The procedures by which decisions are made regarding future project activities;
- c. The procedures for disbursing funds and procuring staff and material inputs; and
- d. The procedures for both internal and external monitoring and evaluation.

These issues are discussed in more detail in the reports of other working groups, especially groups 2, 3 and 6.

## WORKING GROUP 2 - Project Organization and Management for Capacity-Building

John Annan, Town & Country Planning Department, Ghana;  
Karl-Axel Hansson, National IRDP Coordinator, Zambia;  
Mel Jones, Intermediate Technology Development Group, UK;  
G.A.R. Keerthiratne, Newara Eliya IRDP, Sri Lanka;  
Robert Mellors, Mpika IRDP, Zambia;  
Harri Porvali, Finnish International Development Agency, Finland;  
Larry Schroeder, Syracuse University, USA.

WHAT TYPE OF PROJECT ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES MAXIMIZE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF CAPACITY-BUILDING?

### Introduction

One of the implications of adopting a capacity-building approach is that there can be no single model organizational structure or set of management procedures. The structure and procedures must be designed to suit the particular circumstances of the project and must be flexible enough to adapt as the project evolves. However, it is possible to identify the types of organizational and management issues which need to be considered in any project and their implications in terms of capacity-building, and to define some minimum conditions for an effective capacity-building approach. That is the aim of the report of this group.

### Institutional Focus

A fundamental question is which individuals, groups or organizations should be the focus for capacity-building efforts. This must be at least partly addressed in the initial planning stages (compare the report of Working Group 1) but it is often necessary to revise or refine the focus as the project progresses. Both the different level(s) in the hierarchy from national to village level, and the types of institutions at these levels should be considered. Important factors to bear in mind are:

- a. The interest groups represented by the relevant institutions, especially their effectiveness in reaching the most disadvantaged sections of the population;
- b. The powers which the institutions have to plan, allocate resources and execute development activities; and
- c. Their capacity (in terms of human resources, material resources, and managerial capabilities) to execute their powers effectively, especially in support of their respective interest groups.

One of the problems of organizational design is that these factors may have contradictory implications. For example, those institutions which have the powers necessary to plan and implement development programmes may not represent the interests of the poorer sections of the community (see report of Working Group 5 for further discussion of this particular dilemma).

### Institutional Location of Projects

Another fundamental issue which has to be determined in the early stages of project planning is the location of the project in relation to existing institutions. In terms of management and organization, most IRDPs fall into one (or a combination) of the following types (see Workshop papers by Birgegard and Kumar):

- a. Those with a semi-autonomous project management unit; and
- b. Those which are the responsibility of a sectoral agency (e.g. Ministry of Agriculture);
- c. The responsibility of a local government body in the project area;
- d. The responsibility of a non-sectoral national agency with special responsibility for IRDPs; or
- e. The responsibility of a non-government organization (NGO).

From a capacity-building point of view, options (c) or (d) (or some combination of the two), depending on the degree and form of decentralization in the country, are likely to be the most effective. Option (a) is not appropriate because it merely by-passes the existing institutions, while option (b) is not conducive to integrated planning. Consideration of the use of NGOs [option (e)] was really beyond the scope of the Workshop, since it raises very different questions in terms of relations between donors and host governments. However, it was recognized that in some situations NGOs may be more effective than government organizations in facilitating sustainable local development, especially among the most disadvantaged groups.

### Duration and Phasing

Important factors to consider in relation to the duration and phasing of a project include:

- a. The length of donor commitment and the time at which this is determined;
- b. The volume of inputs at different stages of the project;
- c. The relative importance of 'pure' capacity-building activities (e.g. training) and directly productive activities (e.g. provision of infrastructure or services) at different stages of the project;
- d. The timing and methods of reviewing progress and future directions; and
- e. The timing and method of phasing out the donor assistance.

Needs vary considerably from one project to another; but in general, there should be a long-term donor commitment, a relatively small amount of donor inputs at any one time, regular opportunities for review, and a gradual and carefully planned phasing-out process.

## Blueprint Versus Process Planning Approaches

Blueprint and process approaches to planning should be seen as two ends of a continuum, rather than as absolute alternatives. Therefore, although the emphasis should be on a process rather than a blueprint approach to the planning of project components (see report of Working Group 1), the exact mix of the two approaches will vary from project to project and from one component of a project to another.

## Integration within Project

A fundamental objective of IRDPs is to tackle rural development in an integrated rather than a sectoral manner. However, achievement of a truly integrated approach has proved to be very difficult, and attempts to achieve integration have at times been at the expense of efficiency in the implementation of individual project components. The main reasons for this are the sectoral nature of existing institutions and the added complexity of 'integrated' activities. Some important implications of this are:

- a. There is a need to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of increasing integration in any particular situation;
- b. Capacity-building activities should include efforts to improve inter-sectoral coordination and integration and decisions to undertake integrated activities should be made in the light of progress in developing such capacity;
- c. Different types of coordination and integration are both desirable and feasible at different organizational and administrative levels; integration, however, tends to be both more important and more feasible at levels below the national one; and
- d. Integrated planning tends to be both more important and easier than integrated implementation, and is thus often the best place to start.

## Staffing

Project activities may be undertaken by any combination of the following kinds of personnel:

- a. Expatriate technical assistance personnel;
- b. Project staff hired within the country;
- c. Existing civil servants seconded to the project;
- d. Existing civil servants, as part of their normal activities; and
- e. NGO staff.

The relative mix will depend very much on the type of project and the local human resource situation. However, from a capacity-building perspective, the

total number of staff in categories (a)-(c) (i.e. special project staff), and in particular the number of expatriate staff, should be small in relation to the total workforce in the project area.

It is also necessary to consider the type of role to be played by special project staff, and especially expatriates. Alternatives include:

- a. A gap-filling role, in which project staff (usually expatriates) are involved directly in project execution but work with national counterparts, to which they hand over;
- b. A catalytic role, in which project staff are catalysts or facilitators, rather than executors or implementors; and
- c. An advisory role, in which project staff help to establish appropriate systems and procedures but again are not directly involved in implementation.

Again, the choice--or mix--of approaches is likely to depend very much on the particular situation.

Other staffing considerations include the professional backgrounds of special project staff, which are obviously project-specific, and the stability of both project staff and other staff working in the project area, which is very important for effective capacity-building.

### Training and Skill Development

Training can take two main forms:

- a. On-the-job training, including learning by doing, the use of advisors or consultants, demonstration projects and exchange visits; and
- b. More formal training, including experiential workshops and various kinds of short-term and long-term training courses.

On-the-job training warrants particular attention, partly because it is a fundamental component of capacity-building and partly because it is often neglected in normal bureaucratic systems. Formal training needs should emerge from supervised on-the-job training.

Training should also be used as a means of bringing together different types of people, including staff from different sectoral agencies (thus strengthening inter-sectoral coordination), people operating at different administrative levels, and politicians and civil servants. Experiential workshops are particularly useful for this purpose.

### Funding

The four main sources of project funding are donor funds, which may take the form of loans or grants; funds allocated through the national budget; locally raised revenue; and NGO funds.

Most IRDPs are supported by some combination of donor funds with one or more of the other three. The appropriate mix depends very much on the local situation. However, locally raised revenue has a particularly important role in terms of capacity-building, since local financial autonomy is an important factor in determining more general sustainability of development efforts.

In the case of donor funds, loans have the obvious disadvantage that they have to be repaid (a particularly important consideration in the case of capacity-building activities, which are not directly productive), but they may encourage national commitment to the project. It is also necessary to consider the following ways in which donor funds are disbursed:

- a. Funds may be channelled: (i) through the national budget system; (ii) through local government institutions; or (iii) directly to the project administration. Option (ii) tends to be most effective in terms of local capacity-building but its feasibility depends on the degree of financial decentralization and local financial capacity. Option (iii) is often the quickest way of getting money but is the least effective in terms of capacity-building;
- b. Funds may be disbursed in advance or on a reimbursement basis; and
- c. The donor agency must have the capacity to disburse the funds quickly and efficiently; this normally requires a relatively high degree of decentralization to the agency's country office, which should have the capacity to handle this responsibility.

### Privatization of Donor Activities

Many of the activities for which donor agencies are responsible (including project appraisal, hiring of project staff, procurement of material inputs and day-to-day project administration functions) can be undertaken either by the agency itself or by a consultant agency hired by the donor. Certain project activities have frequently been contracted out (e.g. initial project appraisal and mid-term or end-of-project evaluation studies), but more recently there has been an increasing tendency among some donors to contract out other activities as well. Each approach has advantages and disadvantages, but the choice depends partly on factors such as the capacity and degree of decentralization within the donor agency, as well as its ideology. However, when consultants are involved, it is obviously essential that they be selected very carefully, in full consultation with the host country, and that links between donor, consultant and government are clearly specified.

### WORKING GROUP 3 - Monitoring and Evaluation for Capacity-Building

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## WHAT TYPE OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS ARE NEEDED TO MAXIMIZE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF CAPACITY-BUILDING OBJECTIVES?

### Introduction

Monitoring and evaluation are important components of IRDPs, as of any development initiative. They are necessary in order to review objectives, accomplishments and impacts, and to adjust project activities accordingly. This group report does not attempt to deal with all aspects of monitoring and evaluation, since they are well-covered elsewhere. It focuses on those aspects specifically related to capacity-building.

Monitoring and evaluation of capacity-building activities raise special issues and problems. It becomes particularly important to distinguish between monitoring or evaluation of the direct effects in terms of improvements of local institutional capacity, and the indirect effects (or impacts) in terms of socioeconomic development. Moreover, measuring improvements in institutional capacity is difficult; it calls for qualitative as well as quantitative indicators, and has to address questions such as: Is the institution a learning organization (i.e. does it wish to learn and is it acting on its experience and the experience which should be known to it)? Does the organization have a constructive atmosphere and sense of morale? Does it enjoy a good reputation among its peers and clients? Does it adopt a flexible and dynamic approach to its work while maintaining clarity of objectives? Does it differentiate among its clients rather than applying standard, inflexible models?

In addition, monitoring and evaluation have a rather different and very important role to play in a 'process' approach to project planning. They are an essential part of the learning process, in the sense that they provide a means of steering the project in a meaningful direction. Without some sort of monitoring and evaluation, a process approach can easily become a totally unplanned exercise, with no sense of direction whatsoever.

The rest of this report reviews the main implications of these points.

### Types of Monitoring

A system of ongoing monitoring of development activities should be built into the local institutional structure. A permanent institution should be responsible for monitoring all activities in the project area, not only those directly related to the project. In other words, its establishment is itself part of local capacity-building. It should be as simple as possible, so that it can be sustained after donor support is withdrawn.

In addition, there needs to be continuous monitoring of the progress and direction of the project itself, in order to 'steer' it. This should be undertaken by those institutions responsible for project management (e.g. project management or coordinating committees at national and/or project level).

## Types of Evaluation

Several different types of evaluation can be distinguished:

- a. Internal evaluation of all development activities in the project area, including those directly related to the project, should be built into the local institutional structure, together with the internal monitoring activities described above. Like the monitoring system, it should be as simple as possible;
- b. Mid-term external evaluations of the project are designed to assess its progress and make any necessary decisions regarding its future direction. The frequency of such evaluations should depend on the nature and length of the project; however, they may be needed more frequently than in a blueprint planning approach, because of their role in steering the project. This sort of evaluation should be a relatively 'low key' affair, undertaken as far as possible by national institutions and involving those agencies and individuals directly involved in the project; and
- c. Ex-post external evaluations of a project are intended partly to assess its overall achievements and impacts but also to see to what extent lessons learned in the project can be applied elsewhere--in other words, to contribute to the broader process of learning about IRDPs. This evaluation may require a more sophisticated approach, involving professionals with relevant experience elsewhere. However, local institutions and personnel should still play a leading role.

## Local Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation

It may be unrealistic to assume that monitoring and evaluation exercises can be entirely popularly based. But the views of the beneficiaries cannot be ignored. Although IRDPs may be one step removed from the ordinary people, working through ministries or other agencies to reach them, the people must be a basic source of information on the progress, effectiveness and relevance of project activities and on the performance and attitudes of implementing agencies. There should also be an attempt to discuss the main evaluation findings and options in terms of the project's future directions with people's representatives. By doing so, monitoring and evaluation become not only a means for local participation, and consequently capacity-building, but at the same time an aim in itself. It has often been found that when people are at least involved in discussing options, they tend to support any selected option that was relatively high on their list of priorities, even if it was not their first choice. Finally, it is of course important that those people who participate in monitoring and evaluation are the target group, not just 'any people.'

## Monitoring and Evaluation as a Learning Process

It is important that those involved in planning evaluation exercises see it in the right perspective. It should not be regarded as a time for inquisition, or for a public review of the performance of individual project personnel. It should be a time for learning about the problems and accomplishments of the activities under review. Responsible authorities should welcome any genuine

findings, good or bad. There should not be a penalty for negative findings, otherwise shortcomings will never be reported; nor should there be a reward for positive findings which result from exogenous factors, rather than from the project itself. In fact, such authorities should be sympathetic and realistic in understanding the context within which the project is operating. They should consider whether it is operating under unusually favourable or unfavourable circumstances, whether it is showing signs of learning and growth, and whether morale is good.

When the results of an evaluation are available, they should be taken seriously, provided of course that they are considered to be reliable and accurate--something which the responsible authorities should first ensure. As a result of a review of the findings of an evaluation, agreed action plans should be drawn up, specifying timings and agreed responsibilities for implementation.

Monitoring and evaluation should be seen both as an art as well as a science. There are relatively few fixed rules that have to be followed and the main skill is to design a system or approach which is appropriate in a particular situation and responsive to local needs. Moreover, it should not become an academic exercise, designed to test new research methodologies or provide information which is of no direct relevance to the project. Monitoring and evaluation can easily become very expensive exercises and, while it is worth spending money to achieve good relevant results, money should not be wasted collecting irrelevant or marginally relevant information.

### Implications for Donors

Specific implications for donors include the following:

- a. Donors should not try to exercise ownership or control over the project when it comes to evaluation. They should allow local priorities to determine the main focus of the evaluation, allow 'their' project to be evaluated together with other activities if this is considered appropriate by the host government, and accept that they are not the 'star performer.' Encouraging local control over all monitoring and evaluation activities is part of the process of capacity-building which is being sought;
- b. Donors can assure that the results of evaluations are taken seriously by putting discussion of them high on their own agendas and helping to finance actions recommended by evaluations; and
- c. If a donor insists on undertaking its own evaluation, it should ensure maximum local participation, make certain that draft reports are discussed in the country before production of the final version--and that such discussions involve all relevant individuals and agencies, and send copies of the final report to all relevant persons.

## WORKING GROUP 4 - Decentralization and Capacity-Building

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WHAT DEGREE AND FORM OF DECENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNMENT IS NEEDED TO MAXIMIZE THE CAPACITY-BUILDING ROLE OF IRDPS AND HOW CAN SUCH DECENTRALIZATION BE FACILITATED?

### Introduction

Many different environmental factors affect the performance of IRDPs and the Workshop did not attempt to examine, or even identify, all of them. Decentralization of government was singled out for discussion because it is directly related to capacity-building. However, attention was confined to those aspects of decentralization relevant to IRDPs; no attempt was made to provide a comprehensive review of all issues related to decentralization.

### Decentralization and Capacity-Building

Capacity-building in some form or other can take place under virtually any system of government and no particular degree or form of decentralization is necessary for it to occur. In any type of government there are some kinds of local institutions whose capacity can be strengthened without major organizational reforms.

However, the degree and form of decentralization does affect the type of capacity-building initiatives which can be undertaken and their impact on local development. The more decentralization there is to local institutions, the more control they have over local development activities and therefore the more scope there is (all other things being equal) to develop their capacity to have a significant impact on local development. Moreover, decentralization is also important as a means of coordinating or integrating the activities of sectoral agencies and relating these to local needs, both of which are important components of capacity-building for IRDPs. It is therefore no coincidence that the three main case studies examined in the Workshop are in countries where there is a considerable degree of, and commitment to, decentralization. Moreover, in such situations IRDPs can often be used as a means of strengthening decentralized systems of government and thus reinforcing existing national policies.

### Degree and Form of Decentralization

There are many degrees and forms of decentralization, some of which are more conducive to integrated rural development planning than others. The following aspects of decentralization are particularly important:

- a. The extent that power, authority and responsibility are decentralized, especially in relation to those activities most relevant to rural development;
- b. The degree of access to, or control over, resources, and especially financial resources; the scope for sustained capacity-building is greatest where local institutions have substantial revenue-raising powers (compare the report of Working Group 2), but if this is not possible, it is important to have as much control as possible over central government allocations;
- c. The extent to which decentralization promotes popular participation, through devolution of authority to representative bodies, and the extent to which these bodies represent the interests of the less advantaged sections of the population;
- d. The existence of some type of coordinating body and the decentralization of powers to this, rather than to individual sectoral agencies; and
- e. A certain minimum level of management and technical skills (or the base from which to develop such skills), to provide a starting point for capacity-building activities.

#### IRDPs and Decentralization

There are many different factors which influence the degree and form of decentralization in a country, most of which are directly or indirectly of a political nature, since decentralization involves changes in the distribution of power. However, IRDPs may play a small but nevertheless important part in facilitating decentralization or strengthening decentralized systems of government by means of the following:

- a. Providing resources for local institutions and thus increasing their effectiveness and influence;
- b. Improving the capacity of local institutions to make and implement decisions, thus enabling them to exert their powers more effectively and utilize their resources more efficiently; and
- c. Assisting local institutions to develop more responsive and developmental approaches to local government and administration.

#### WORKING GROUP 5 - Local Organizational Capacity and Popular Participation

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## HOW CAN IRDPS STRENGTHEN LOCAL ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IN A WAY WHICH MAXIMIZES POPULAR PARTICIPATION AND PROMOTES THE NEEDS OF THE RURAL POOR?

### Introduction

The term 'participation' is used in this context to mean an active sort of participation, in which ordinary people, operating through their own organizations, work in partnership with those organizations responsible for delivering services, in a manner which brings benefits (in cash and kind) and increased responsibility, and does not result in dependency on the delivery organizations. In order for such participation to result in a more equitable distribution of benefits and responsibilities, people's organizations must represent the interests and wishes of the rural poor.

### Conditions for Achieving Participation and Equity

It is not easy for IRDPs to operate in a way which facilitates participation and equity. In particular:

- a. IRDPs normally operate through government organizations and effective participation will only be possible when there is a relationship of trust between these delivery organizations and the local people, or their organizations, which in turn means that the delivery organizations must have demonstrated that they can provide a useful service;
- b. Rural societies are usually stratified and it is often difficult to establish relations with organizations which represent the interests of the rural poor. IRDPs have to consider how to handle this situation. For example, they may identify those organizations which are most representative and work through them, strengthening them in the process, or they may try to improve the position of the rural poor within organizations where they are not adequately represented. Another alternative is the delivery of goods and services directly to the rural poor themselves. By-passing local organizations altogether, however, is unlikely to lead to sustained capacity-building;
- c. Where there are many different people's organizations in an area, IRDPs may have to choose between working through one main organization, thereby facilitating coordination and concentrating effort, and distributing their attention among a number of individuals or interest groups likely to benefit in some way from the project; and
- d. Since the poor often lack confidence in their own capabilities and knowledge of the alternatives available to them, effective participation may require 'conscientization.' or awareness-raising, efforts.

### The Role of Local Catalysts

In order to operationalize an approach that maximizes popular participation and meets the needs of the rural poor, there is a need for some kind of change agent or catalyst. Such a person should not represent any particular sectoral agency and must be able to:

- a. Coordinate the work of the various sectoral agencies at the local administrative level and thus avoid confusion and duplication;
- b. Elicit the needs of the local community, especially in situations where no permanent formal or informal organizations exist; and
- c. Ensure that the interests of the politically, socially and/or economically weak members of a community are represented.

During the initial planning of the project, it will be necessary to determine whether an existing individual or organization (e.g. the Gramodaya Mandalayas and rural development societies in Sri Lanka or the community development worker in Ghana) is already responsible for facilitating or catalyzing the articulation of needs by the rural poor. If such an organization or individual exists, one should then determine whether it is constrained in any way in performing its task and, if it is, incorporate into the project design the means necessary to remove the constraint. For example, if a community development worker has no means of transport, this should be provided as part of the IRDP. If, on the other hand, there is no individual or organization responsible for playing a catalytic role, the project design should provide for staff to perform this role, or should make donor assistance conditional on the establishment of some sort of cadre of personnel or grass-roots organizations. These requirements are, of course, not easy to meet, since effective catalytic individuals or organizations cannot be created overnight.

The functions of a local catalyst should include:

- a. Assisting in the resolution of conflict between individuals and groups within the community by prioritizing the needs of these individuals and groups in a way which, as far as possible, approaches a consensus view. The rural poor should be allowed to speak with authority and maintain credibility in negotiations with the delivery organizations;
- b. Maintaining the credibility of a delivery organization in situations where the organization does not have the power or resources to meet the articulated needs of the rural poor. This is accomplished by utilizing the relationship of mutual trust which it has developed with the community to explain why the situation has arisen;
- c. Providing information or education to assist local people to understand the causes of their problems and to identify appropriate ways of meeting their needs. This is especially relevant in cases where new opportunities or information have become available (e.g. new sources of agricultural credit or the treatment of diarrheal diseases by oral rehydration, both of which have been communicated to rural people in Sri Lanka through the work of IRDPs); and
- d. Emphasizing the rates of return possible from certain economic investments by the rural poor in activities which were previously neglected by delivery organizations (e.g. demonstrating the credit-worthiness of small farmers to commercial lending institutions in Zambia).

These (and other) functions may be performed in sequence or simultaneously, since it is often the case that as one constraint to the alleviation of poverty

is removed, another becomes evident. Moreover, in some cases they may be provided by several different catalysts, rather than by a single one, because of the way in which extension services are organized. This tends to be less effective than a single multi-purpose catalyst but if it is inevitable, the project should provide for coordination between the different catalysts in order to minimize confusion.

#### WORKING GROUP 6 - Communications and Capacity-Building

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HOW CAN COMMUNICATION BETWEEN AND WITHIN COUNTRIES AND DONOR AGENCIES BE IMPROVED, IN ORDER TO PROMOTE AND FACILITATE THE CAPACITY-BUILDING ROLE OF IRDPS?

#### Introduction

Communication is an essential consideration within any IRDP and there is also a need to consider communication between IRDPs, both within and between countries and donor agencies. This group report makes some general comments on the importance of communication and proposes some guidelines for both types of communication.

#### Importance of Communication

Communication is important in any situation because it is a means of providing information, and therefore a means of minimizing conflict and duplication; supporting coordination; empowering those who gain information; and accelerating the process of change.

However, although its value is well-known, this is often not reflected in the resources allocated for communication. Communication requires time and money, and it is important that those involved in IRDPs recognize this and allocate more resources for communication purposes. This in turn means that there is a need to be able to demonstrate the cost-effectiveness of improved communication, in order to justify the allocation of resources.

#### Communication within an IRDP

Communication within an IRDP has been indirectly touched upon in the reports of the other working groups, especially that on monitoring and evaluation, which are important means of communication. This type of internal communication can be divided into three main components:

- a. Communication with beneficiaries, an essential aspect of development has been touched upon in the report of Working Group 5. The most effective means of communication is through 'change agents' or 'catalysts,' who interact with local people in their own environment and through their own organizations, with the aim of gradually raising their consciousness and awareness, so that they are able to gain maximum benefit from the project. However, mass communication methods are also important and IRDPs should thus include provision for some type of development communication support programme;
- b. Communication between the various government agencies involved in the project involves both vertical and horizontal flows of information. This can be achieved by reporting and monitoring systems and through training activities (see reports of Working Groups 2 and 3); and
- c. Communication with the donor agency raises questions of the role of the donor agency as well as the means of communication. It is important for donors to see IRDPs as government projects (or better still, people's projects), rather than donor projects and not to interfere in their day-to-day implementation. However, it is also important that donors are available when needed, for example, to discuss present or future donor inputs for project activities. Their operations must be decentralized to the extent that the country office has the power and resources to handle most anticipated issues on the spot (compare report of Working Group 1).

### Communication Between IRDPs

Communication between IRDPs also falls into three main categories:

- a. Communication within a country. In most countries, and especially those with a large number of IRDPs, there is a need to improve communication between the various projects, in order to ensure a reasonable degree of compatibility and enable experiences to be shared. This requires appropriate action by the host government, if and when required. The most important actions are the formulation of an overall policy on IRDPs with which prospective donors have to agree to comply, the coordination of all IRDPs by one national agency (possibly including the appointment of an IRDP coordinator), and the organization of regular meetings and seminars for both donors and project staff. Both Sri Lanka and Zambia have made significant progress in establishing such communication;
- b. Communication within a donor agency. It is important that experiences with different projects (especially in different parts of the world) are compared and analyzed within a donor agency, in order to maximize the agency's internal learning process. The implications of this will vary from one agency to another, but basically it means the need for 'subject desks' as well as 'country desks' within an agency and for reporting channels which facilitate communication between the two; and
- c. Communication at the international level. The Workshop demonstrated the value of communication between both donors and countries as a means of sharing experiences and thus avoiding the need to 'reinvent the wheel.' Such meetings also enable host countries to put up a common front from

which to negotiate with donors. Modern communication technology should be exploited in order to make more easily available relevant information on IRDPs for individuals or institutions involved in the development of this type of project. Donor agencies should be prepared to make money available to facilitate these sorts of communication activities.

## PART III

### ABSTRACTS OF PRESENTED PAPERS

1. BIRGEGARD, L.-E., A Review of Experiences With Integrated Rural Development.

The paper provides an overview of the historical background, characteristics and performance of IRDPs, viewed from an international perspective but with specific references to the experiences of Zambia and Sri Lanka.

IRDPs have encountered a number of serious implementation problems, including:

- a. Implementation and management problems, which limit their replicability;
- b. Problems of coordinating activities in space and time and in terms of their impact on beneficiaries;
- c. Problems of organizational design;
- d. A tendency to by-pass government institutions, which then affects sustainability;
- e. Failure to achieve real integration; and
- f. Problems (not unique to IRDPs) in achieving popular participation and reaching the rural poor.

This generally disappointing performance of IRDPs has tended to result either in the abandonment of an IRD approach or in modifications designed to reduce the problems. Experience with the latter suggests the need for:

- a. Projects to work through existing institutions;
- b. Donors to be prepared to adopt a process rather than a blueprint approach;
- c. A low and slowly increasing disbursement of funds;
- d. Decentralization to project level;
- e. Incentives to promote organizational change; and
- f. Reversals in attitudes towards rural problems and the respective roles of rural people and government institutions.

However, there are problems in meeting these requirements, which suggests the need for further modifications to the IRD approach. Two alternatives are suggested. One involves integrated planning but individual implementation of project components through normal sectoral channels in order to simplify the implementation process. The other involves multi-sectoral planning and implementation through an existing local government institution.

NOTE: This paper was published by the International Rural Development Centre, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, as Issue Paper No. 3, March 1987.

2. CLEMENS, E., Capacity-Building in IRD Projects.

The paper outlines the approach to IRD adopted by the German technical assistance agency, GTZ.

The aim of IRDPs should be to achieve self-sustained social and economic development, which in turn requires an approach which focuses on target groups, poverty alleviation and participation, all of which relate to capacity-building. The concept of capacity-building should, however, be extended to include the local population and NGOs, as well as government agencies, which often constitute the main obstacle to the promotion of IRD.

GTZ's IRDPs involve six main phases: project identification (1-2 months); project examination, study phase and the provision of planning foundations (6 months); governmental negotiations; orientation (pilot) phase (3 years); decision process on implementation; implementation (investment) phase and step-by-step handover (12-15 years).

The projects are implemented through existing institutions and the role of technical assistance personnel is to strengthen local capacity by providing advice, not to be directly involved in implementation. Assistance is often provided at national, regional and local levels simultaneously. Capital inputs are planned jointly by GTZ and the host government on an annual basis. Special emphasis is given to education and training, and to communication with the general public. Projects often also include a rural finance system.

3. DALE, R., NORAD's Experience With the Hambantota District Integrated Rural Development Programme (HIRDEP)--With Emphasis on the Promotion of Institutional Capacity.

HIRDEP, which began in 1979, represented a commitment by both NORAD and the Government of Sri Lanka to a significantly different approach to IRDPs. This approach is now being developed elsewhere, both in Sri Lanka and in NORAD projects in Africa.

The main distinctive features of HIRDEP are:

- a. The adoption of a learning process approach, in which the overall structure of the programme has gradually evolved over time on the basis of experience, and individual projects are planned and approved on an ongoing basis within annually negotiated work programmes;
- b. Implementation of the programme through the District Planning Unit of the Ministry of Plan Implementation (in conjunction with the Government Agent, who is the chief administrator of the district), without the establishment of any special institutional structures;
- c. The minimal number and role of technical assistance personnel;

- d. Major emphasis on training and the development of local institutional capacity;
- e. Considerable (although largely informal) decentralization from national to district level within the Ministry of Plan Implementation, and to divisional and village levels within the district;
- f. Decentralization within NORAD to a strengthened country office in Colombo; and
- g. Specific attempts to involve, and strengthen the bargaining power of, the most disadvantaged sectors of the rural population.

This approach has encountered some problems, due mainly to the limited degree of formal decentralization within the political and administrative system as a whole, administrative weaknesses, and social stratification at the local level. Nevertheless, it is regarded as the most effective way of strengthening local institutional capacity. This is seen as a long-term process, which requires support for some years to come.

4. GOLDMAN, I., R. MELLORS & D. WARWICK, IRDP Mpika: An Experiment in Sustainable Development.

This case study describes the design and structure of an ODA-funded Integrated Rural Development Programme operating in three districts of Northern Zambia. This programme has increasingly become regarded as a model for sustainable development in Zambia, and the approach has been adopted as the national policy for all area-based rural development programmes.

The IRDP programme was initially envisaged as a traditional rural development programme, providing multi-sectoral support through a team of expatriate planners and implementors. However, at an early stage the approach was changed to one of developing the capacity of local institutions to provide and sustain the services required by the rural population. These efforts centered on the District Councils established in 1981 as part of Zambia's decentralized local government system, which were given the responsibility for supervising district development.

The programme has provided a team of expatriate officers acting as development facilitators, one to each district, and capital development funds to be used by district institutions to construct and rehabilitate essential District infrastructure. This infrastructure, while necessary for district development, is seen as the means to developing institutional capacity rather than an end in itself.

There was no blueprint plan for the programme. Planning, coordination, and implementation systems were evolved by the District institutions themselves as need arose, with IRDP staff acting as a catalyst for the learning-by-doing process. IRDP does nothing directly and there are no handovers or counterparts. Learning-by-doing requires responsibility and the chance to learn from mistakes as well as successes. This allows the growth of decision-making capacities and systems which will enable long-term development of the District organizations. This is necessary for long-term sustainability of the services they provide to the rural community.

The programme has resulted in improved individual and institutional capabilities in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and the three Districts have completed over 210 discrete projects such as bridges, roads, health centers, and wells in the process. It is difficult at this early stage to assess the long-term impact of these improvements on the ultimate beneficiaries, the rural population, but there is already evidence of improved crop production in the first areas to receive improved District support.

NOTE: This paper was produced after the Workshop. A number of project documents and a video film, "Mistakes are Allowed," were made available in the Workshop.

5. HANSSON, K.-A., SIDA-Supported IRDPs in Zambia--A Revised Approach.

SIDA has recently undertaken a review of IRDP policy in Zambia and recommended, among other things, that:

- a. The main target group should be the rural poor;
- b. IRDPs should adopt a process approach, with the aim of supporting local institutions and the government's decentralization policy;
- c. Donor support should be for 10 years;
- d. Projects should support production as well as social services, and aim to strengthen local human resources and revenue-raising capacity;
- e. Project staff should not occupy line positions;
- f. Coordinating machinery at national level should be strengthened and consolidated in one ministry; and
- g. Coordination between donors should be improved.

6. KALUBILA, B.C., Some Experiences of the Integrated Rural Development Programme in Zambia's Luapula Province in Institutional Capacity-Building.

The introduction of the 1980 Local Administration Act necessitated significant changes in the Luapula IRDP, which previously operated more or less independently of government institutions. It now works through the district council structure, with major emphasis on the ward level, and includes provisions for strengthening these institutions through both material support and training. Present problems include frequent staff transfers and inadequate coordination between district, provincial and national levels.

7. KEMBOL, L., EYL 1985-1988: Making the Pieces Fit.

Enga Yaaka Laseman (EYL) is a World Bank-funded IRDP in the Enga Province of Papua New Guinea. It began in 1982 and is now drawing to a close. Major features of the project include:

- a. The high level of local input into the planning process;
- b. The project's integration into the local provincial government structure, under the direct control of the Provincial Secretary, who is the chief administrator of the province; and
- c. The inclusion of capacity-building components (including a major staff development programme) as well as directly productive activities.

A mid-term evaluation carried out in 1984 identified a number of problems in both types of activities, which the project has subsequently tried to address. Despite the problems associated with the project's integration into the local administrative system and the other capacity-building efforts, this approach is highly preferable to one which by-passes local institutions.

NOTE: This paper is a brief summary of a collection of project reports and documents which were made available to participants.

#### 8. KUMAR, K., AID's Experience With Integrated Rural Development Projects.

USAID's experience with IRDPs has on the whole been disappointing, due mainly to the following factors:

- a. Problems of coordinating relevant agencies and activities;
- b. Weaknesses of government bureaucracies;
- c. Inadequate consideration of local socioeconomic factors;
- d. Inappropriate technical packages;
- e. Inappropriateness of a blueprint approach to project design;
- f. Timing problems;
- g. Failure to develop effective links with beneficiaries; and
- h. Undesirable impacts of national policies.

However, this does not mean that an IRD strategy should be abandoned; it suggests that it should be implemented through a number of independent projects designed within an overall area development strategy, rather than through large, comprehensive, multi-sector projects. An IRD approach is particularly important in certain situations; for example, narcotics control programmes, assistance to remote or famine-affected areas, land settlement schemes, and projects on border areas. When designing IRD projects, the following factors should be considered:

- a. IRD should be seen as a long-term strategy;
- b. There should be a production and income-generating focus;
- c. There should be greater reliance on the private sector;

- d. Technical packages should be carefully selected and continually upgraded;
- e. Socioeconomic inequalities in the project area should be taken into account; and
- f. National policies should be examined and discussed during the project preparation stage.

NOTE: This paper was published as USAID Program Evaluation Report No. 19 in July 1987. It was presented at the Workshop by Dr. Joan Atherton, who also distributed a brief summary paper entitled 'Issues in IRDPs.'

9. MWAALA, S.S., Decentralization of Government (Zambia).

Decentralization in Zambia is a means of establishing participatory democracy, creating an effective system of local development administration, and integrating the various institutions of government at local level. District Councils are the focus of the decentralized system. They have the power to plan and implement local development activities. IRDPs are seen as a means of strengthening the District Council system, through staff development, assistance in planning development activities, and financial support. However, at present it is difficult to fully integrate IRDPs into the local administrative system because the various sectoral ministries through which they have to operate have not yet been fully decentralized.

10. RAMAKRISHNAN, P.S., Some Aspects of the Integrated Rural Development Programme in Sri Lanka--Past Experiences and Future Perspectives.

IRDPs are currently planned or in progress in 21 of the 25 districts of Sri Lanka. Although the IRDPs vary considerably in form, they are all part of a planned programme of decentralized planning, coordinated by the Regional Development Division of the Ministry of Plan Implementation. This programme, which gained momentum in the late 1970s, is one of a number of initiatives to decentralize the country's political and administrative system.

Although the IRDPs are coordinated at the national level, there is a high degree of decentralization to project offices at the district level. These project offices work in close conjunction with district offices of the Ministry of Plan Implementation, and implementation is undertaken entirely through line agencies in the districts. There are considerable differences between those IRDPs funded by multilateral agencies and those funded by bilateral agencies. The latter tend to adopt a more 'process' approach, with greater flexibility in terms of the length, structure and individual components of the projects, and (especially since 1982) to give more attention to participatory planning and meeting the needs of the rural poor.

The main problems which have been encountered to date are inadequate decentralization of other political and administrative institutions, which hampers attempts to develop comprehensive planning at the district level, and difficulties in reaching the rural poor through established institutions.

11. THAMRIN, N., Integrated Rural Regional Development with External Assistance.

The paper provides a case study of an integrated rural regional development project in the West Pasaman area of West Sumatra, Indonesia. It is supported by German (GTZ) technical assistance.

The project is part of a national attempt to strengthen provincial and district level government institutions and develop regional (as opposed to sectoral) planning. The key implementing agency is the Provincial and District Planning and Development Board (BAPPEDA). The regional development strategy adopted, which is based on central place theory, involves the development of two main urban centers and related infrastructure and services. The project has resulted in considerable economic growth and socioeconomic integration in the area, mainly due to an improvement in communications.

However, a number of institutional problems have been encountered, including:

- a. Relations between BAPPEDA and other local institutions;
- b. Coordination between national and donor institutions and activities;
- c. Problems of leadership and the quality and commitment of staff in BAPPEDA and other institutions;
- d. Dependency on donor funding; and
- e. Conflicts between short-term welfare objectives and longer-term objectives of laying a strong foundation to sustain development.

12. TILBURG, P. van., The Capacity-Building Faculty of Integrated Rural Development Projects in the Context of District Development Planning: The Case of Lesotho.

IRDPs in Lesotho have contributed very little to local capacity-building or the evolution of district development planning. This is partly because of the nature of the projects--which have been confined to small areas, operated outside the normal administrative system, concerned primarily with product rather than process objectives and dominated by expatriates--and partly due to the country's political and administrative system, in which there is relatively little decentralization or coordination at the local level. There is therefore a need for a very different approach to district development planning, a bottom-up approach, integrated into the local administrative system, with minimal dependence on foreign capital or technical assistance, and accompanied by at least some degree of administrative decentralization.

13. WILLIAMS, S., Integrated Rural Development in a Private Sector Mode: The Case of Zapotitan, Jalisco, Mexico.

The Zapotitan project is very different from the other IRDPs discussed in the Workshop. Its main distinguishing features are:

- a. It is confined to one community (a small rural town);
- b. It is a long-term project, begun in 1965 and continuing indefinitely;
- c. Its basic principle is that integrated rural development must begin with people; and
- d. Apart from initial seed money from USAID, it has been financed entirely by the private sector, through a non-profit making arm of ICA, a large Mexican corporation.

The paper describes the project and argues that it is more effective than those which operate through public agencies, which cannot provide an effective base for IRD.

## PART IV

### BIBLIOGRAPHY ON IRDPS

Compiled By Tofail Ahmed

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## APPENDIX I

### BACKGROUND PAPER

#### INTRODUCTION

Integrated rural development projects (IRDPs) have formed an important component of aid programmes in many African, Asian and Pacific nations during the 1970s and 1980s, and there is now a considerable wealth of experience among those who have been involved in these projects. However, although there is a growing literature on IRDPs, there have been relatively few systematic attempts to compare experience between countries, between donor agencies, or even between projects within a country. Consequently, the history of IRDPs continues to be a history of many individual experiments, undertaken without any overall methodological framework and without any significant transfer of knowledge and experience between them. The purpose of this workshop is to help to fill this gap by providing an opportunity for the systematic exchange of experience in some aspects of the planning and execution of IRDPs.

#### SCOPE OF WORKSHOP

It is impossible to cover all aspects of IRDPs in a single workshop, especially in view of the variation in scope and objectives between individual projects. This Workshop will therefore focus on the capacity-building role of IRDPs; in other words, on their role in developing the capacity of local institutions to plan and implement rural development activities. Most IRDPs have a dual role, in that they are expected to have both a direct impact on rural development (for example, through the provision of inputs and infrastructure) and an indirect impact, through the strengthening of the local institutions responsible for supporting rural development on a long-term basis. However, the relative importance attached to these two kinds of roles--in intentions and in reality--varies considerably from one project to another.

This capacity-building role takes on a particular significance in countries where government policy gives special emphasis to the development of strong local institutions, through decentralization to local levels of government or administration, through special efforts to develop local planning capacity, or through the promotion of community-based organizations (such as cooperatives). The existence of such policies makes the capacity-building role more important, in order to avoid conflict between these policies and those of the IRDPs--and conflict between local institutions and IRDPs. Moreover, they also make it more feasible, to the extent that they provide a stronger local institutional base on which to build. This does not mean that in such circumstances the direct role of IRDPs in promoting rural development can be ignored, since the two roles are not only equally important but also interrelated. However, it does mean that the capacity-building role warrants special attention and raises special issues and problems. Hence the Workshop's focus on this aspect of IRDPs.

## ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

The Workshop will focus on four specific sets of issues related to the capacity-building role of IRDPs:

### 1. Project objectives

What implications does the capacity-building role of IRDPs have in terms of the overall objectives of IRDP activities? For example:

- 1.1 To what extent are capacity-building objectives either consistent or in conflict with the more direct objectives (e.g. provision of inputs or infrastructure) in terms of the use of project resources?
- 1.2 To what extent are capacity-building objectives either consistent or in conflict with the results which both donor agencies and host governments expect to get from IRDPs?
- 1.3 To what extent are IRDP attempts to develop local institutional capacity constrained by the nature of those institutions? In other words, is it feasible to adopt a capacity-building role irrespective of such things as the degree and form of decentralization, local administrative capacity, and the role of national and local institutions in promoting or impeding equity and social justice?

### 2. Project organization and management

How can the organization and management of IRDPs facilitate their capacity-building role? For example:

- 2.1 Does the way in which a project is initiated and planned affect its ability to perform a capacity-building role, and if so, in what way?
- 2.2 What sort of organizational structures and management systems should a project adopt in order to facilitate its capacity-building role? For example, what are the implications in terms of:
  - project accountability (national and local)
  - control over project finances
  - control over project personnel
  - project leadership
  - planning and implementation procedures
  - training and use of counterparts?
- 2.3 How does the length of a project and the way in which it is phased out affect its ultimate role in capacity-building?

### 3. Decentralization of government

What degree and form of decentralization of government is necessary in order to provide a basis for local capacity-building, and what are the obstacles to achieving such decentralization? For example:

3.1 How does the degree and form of decentralization affect the capacity-building efforts of IRDPs, including:

- the types of powers decentralized
- the levels to which powers are decentralized
- the individuals or organizations to which powers are decentralized?

3.2 What are the main impediments to such decentralization, including impediments to the transfer of powers from the center and impediments to the effective utilization of powers at the local level?

3.3 What sort of coordination machinery is required at national and/or local level to enable IRDPs to provide effective support for government decentralization policies?

#### 4. Equity and social justice

How can IRDPs strengthen local institutional capacity while at the same time promoting the needs of the rural poor? For example:

4.1 How can IRDPs work effectively with local institutions which promote the interests of the existing elites rather than those of the poorest groups?

4.2 How can specific project activities be directed towards particular target groups?

4.3 How can the planning of project activities be decentralized below the project level in order to maximize popular participation?

## APPENDIX II

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## APPENDIX III

### LIST OF PAPERS PRESENTED AND TABLED

#### PRESENTED

- Birgegard, L. A Review of Experiences With Integrated Rural Development.
- Clemens, E. Capacity-Building in IRD Projects.
- Dale, R. NORAD's Experience With the Hambantota District Integrated Rural Development Programme (HIRDEP)--With Emphasis on the Promotion of Institutional Capacity.
- Goldman, I., R. Mellors and D. Warwick. IRDP Mpika: An Experiment in Sustainable Development.
- Hansson, K.-A. SIDA-Supported IRDP in Zambia--A Revised Approach.
- Kalubila, B.C. Some Experiences of the Integrated Rural Development Programme in Zambia's Luapula Province in Institutional Capacity-Building.
- Kembol, L. EYL 1985-1988: Making the Pieces Fit.
- Kumar, K. AID's Experience With Integrated Rural Development Projects.
- Mwaala, S.S. Decentralization of Government (Zambia).
- Ramakrishnan, P.S. Some Aspects of the Integrated Rural Development Programme in Sri Lanka--Past Experiences and Future Perspectives.
- Thamrin, N. Integrated Rural Regional Development With External Assistance.
- Tilburg, P. van. The Capacity-Building Faculty of Integrated Rural Development Projects in the Context of District Development Planning: the Case of Lesotho.
- Williams, S. Integrated Rural Development in a Private Sector Mode: The Case of Zapotitan, Jalisco, Mexico.

TABLED

- Conyers, D. and D.M. Warren. 'The Role of IRDPs in Developing Local Institutional Capacity.' Development Studies Association Annual General Meeting. Manchester: September 1987.
- Warren, D.M. 'A Comparative Assessment of Zambian IRDPs.' African Studies Association Annual Meeting. New Orleans: November 1985.
- Warren, D.M. 'Anthropology and Rural Development in Ghana.' In Horowitz, M. and T.M. Painter (eds), Anthropology and Rural Development in West Africa. Boulder: Westview Press, 1986.
- Warren, D.M. 'The Socioeconomic Impact of Zambian Agricultural Policies.' African Studies Association Annual Meeting. Madison, Wisconsin: November 1986.
- Warren, D.M. 'Decentralization and Local Control: The Need for Training.' Community Development Journal 22 (1987): 159-163.
- Warren, D.M. and P. Blunt. 'Decentralization in Ghana: The Impact on Organizational Effectiveness of Management Training Among District and Regional-Level Officials.' Journal of Comparative African Studies 3 (1983/84): 35-58.
- Warren, D.M. and J.D. Issachar. 'Strategies for Understanding and Changing Local Revenue Policies and Practices in Ghana's Decentralization Programme.' World Development 11 (1983): 835-844.
- Wekwete, H.K. 'The Role of External Development Agencies in Promoting District and Provincial Development Planning in Zimbabwe.' University of Zimbabwe: Department of Rural and Urban Planning.
- York-Smith, M. 'Hambantota Integrated Rural Development Project: The Evolution of a Planning Process.'
- Zambia. IRDP Serenje Mpika Chinsali: Its History and Evolution. IRDP Occasional Paper, No. 13, 1985.

## THE TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL CHANGE (TSC) PROGRAM IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

The TSC Program was established at Iowa State University in 1972. It is an interdisciplinary academic and research program focused on the interrelationships among science, technology, and social change. Both undergraduate and graduate students may declare TSC as a minor concentration area. Core courses are team-taught with faculty representing the humanities, the social, natural, and physical sciences, and the professional areas. Team-taught speciality courses are offered on Farming Systems, Agricultural Biotechnology, and Implementation of International Agricultural and Rural Development Projects. The Development Advisory Team (DAT) Training Workshops are offered twice yearly. These one-week workshops provide opportunities for participants to gain skills in cross-cultural, interdisciplinary teamwork, and in management and planning techniques useful in international development activities.

The Program also supports five interdisciplinary research groups. The research topics are Women in Development, Methodologies for Project Management and Planning, Decentralized Development Planning and Organizational Coordination, Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Development, and Farming Systems Research and Development.

TSC has established formal linkage relationships with the Centre for Development Studies, University College of Swansea, Wales; The Institute of Cultural and Social Studies, University of Leiden, The Netherlands; and the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ibadan, Nigeria. Collaborative activities include jointly-sponsored workshops, research, and faculty and student exchanges.

The Center for Indigenous Knowledge for Agriculture and Rural Development (CIKARD) is supported through the TSC Program. CIKARD was established to provide a global capacity to access, store, and disseminate documentation on indigenous knowledge and decision-making systems in order to facilitate the development process.

A limited number of research assistantships are available through the TSC Program.

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