

Paper Number 7  
June 1995

## Designing Community Based Development

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*Deepa Narayan*



# Social Development Papers

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

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|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| NIA       | National Irrigation Agency (Philippines)                                   |
| NGO       | Nongovernmental Organization   |
| O&M       | Operation and Maintenance  |
| PROSENEAR | Brazil's Water & Sanitation Project for Low Income Areas of Municipalities |
| T&V       | Training and Visit   |
| UNDP      | United Nations Development Programme                                       |
| WID       | Women in Development   |
| WSSPLIC   | Water Supply and Sanitation Program for Low-Income Communities             |



# Executive Summary

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When properly designed, community based programs can be highly effective in managing natural resources, providing basic infrastructure or ensuring primary social services. Participation in community based development depends on reversing control and accountability from central authorities to community organizations. Successful design requires understanding local needs, building on the strengths of existing institutions, and defining the changes needed in external agencies to support community action.

## Costs and Benefits

There are two persistent myths about community based programs: first, that they cost more than conventional programs and, second, that they take longer. Additional costs may be incurred at the outset in building capacity at the local level; however, these costs are significant only when community level organizations have been so eroded that substantial time and resources have to be devoted to capacity building. And even when initial costs are high, they are more than offset by subsequent gains.

Evidence increasingly indicates that, *when the institutional framework is right*, participatory community based programs actually cost less and are also quicker to implement. In Bank funded projects, the typical pattern has been a slow build up period, while time is invested in community organization and setting the rules for interaction, followed by speedy disbursements.

Once the participatory process is established, the benefits of community based development

include increased efficiency and cost effectiveness. Furthermore, when the success of projects depends heavily on changes in behavior at the community level, promoting participation in community based programs may be the only means of meeting objectives. The examples in Box 1 indicate the potential benefits of a community based approach in three broad areas: managing natural resources, providing basic infrastructure and ensuring primary social services.

## Conditions for Success

From time immemorial, communities have organized themselves to take care of collective and individual needs. And yet, in the last fifty years, so many attempts at getting people to participate and take responsibility for community based development have failed. Experience provides some clear lessons about what works and what does not work. Prominent among the failures have been attempts to achieve results on a wide scale through the infusion of external management, funds, and technology, controlled from distant places. A fundamental prerequisite of successful participatory programs at the community level is *the reversal of control and accountability* from central authorities to the community level.

Experience also points to a series of common elements in the design of successful programs. The first ingredients are knowledge and understanding of local needs, and of the existing network of social interaction at the household, group and community level; this knowledge provides the basis for defining the changes needed, both in existing local

organizations and in external agencies, to meet specified objectives.

### ***Defining Changes Needed at the Community Level***

If a community group is to function successfully, several criteria must be met: the group must address a felt need and a common interest; the benefits to individuals of participating in the group must outweigh the costs; the group should be embedded in the existing social organization; it must have the capacity, leadership, knowledge and skills to manage the task; and it must own and enforce its own rules and regulations. Steps need to be taken, therefore, whether strengthening or modifying existing organizations or establishing new ones, to ensure that these conditions are in place.

What may seem an obvious point but is often neglected is that a group functions only because it is ***addressing a need felt by its members***. A fundamental design flaw in a natural resource management project in the Philippines, for example, was the assumption that upland farmers were interested in forest management. In contrast, the need to solve what is perceived as an urgent problem may bring different class and power groups together, as documented in South India for example, where the entire village manages community based irrigation systems and has developed a monitoring system to discourage water theft. Groups continue to function so long as the benefits of participation to their members continue to outweigh the costs. Hence project design must be based on knowledge of community demand and must ensure that incentives to participation are in place.

In any community, inherited networks of organized reciprocity and solidarity form the basis on which individuals trust and cooperate with one another. New community based programs need to use and build on this existing stock of social capital and, wherever possible, to ***work through existing organizations***. In Nepal, for example, when government policy prescribed the creation of farmers associations,

assistant overseers found many informal groups of farmers organized around irrigation systems. Rather than creating new organizations, these existing groups were encouraged to register themselves as official farmers associations.

Sometimes, notably when existing social organization is highly inequitable, creating new groups is the only means of promoting the participation of disadvantaged people. Many successful projects that specifically target women or the poor have formed special organizations of the poor, such as the Grameen Bank, the Self Employed Women's Association of India, and women's farmer groups in Nigeria and Gambia. These new organizations are the creation of their members, drawing as much as possible on what is already in place. Attempts to speed up a community development process by bypassing existing institutions and investing in new, externally designed organizations have frequently failed in their aims. They also carry the danger of undermining existing institutions, diminishing the capacity of community members to cooperate and organize effectively for other purposes.

An important reason for building on indigenous principles of organization is that, to be effective, ***a group must own and enforce its own rules*** defining membership criteria, the allocation of responsibilities, contributions and benefits, and the mechanisms for ensuring accountability and resolving conflicts. If these rules are dictated from outside, people do not feel obliged to follow them, free riding becomes common, conflicts escalate, and the group becomes ineffective.

Depending on the tasks the group is designed to manage, and the existing capacity of the group, ***investment in training*** may be needed over a period of several years to build the necessary management and technical skills. Groups have failed because too much was expected of them too soon without supportive training.

### ***Defining Changes Needed in Implementing Agencies***

Designing an appropriate outreach strategy to support the community development process often involves difficult ***changes in the structure and orientation of the implementing agencies***.

The technical personnel in engineering agencies are commonly reluctant and ineffective community organizers. Merely adding more community workers makes no difference unless the overall incentive environment rewards higher level staff for responsiveness to clients and support to community workers. Incentives for performance are easier to institute when agencies are required to be financially viable, have autonomy to manage themselves, and have control over hiring and firing of staff.

An alternative to restructuring existing agencies is to ***contract out the needed services*** to NGOs (as in rural water supply in Kenya), the private sector (in agriculture in Malaysia), other government agencies (public health workers for a water and sanitation project in Brazil), or multi or bilateral agencies (UNICEF in low income housing in Guatemala). In Mexico, the National Water Authority has an in-house group of senior social scientists and communication specialists who design the strategy for community outreach, applied research and communications. This is then subcontracted to the private sector.

The choice of ***outreach approach needs to match the goals of the program***. The extension approach, in which the field agent acts

primarily as a channel of information and inputs, and remains accountable to the agency rather than the community group, is not appropriate when the objective is community initiative and responsibility for management. When the success of a program hinges on participation through strong local groups, an empowerment approach is called for, where the field agent is a community organizer acting in liaison with technical agencies. It may be essential to introduce female agents to ensure the participation of women.

The role of the agency and its relationship with community groups needs to be supported by appropriate ***changes in legislation***. Key issues include the mandate of agencies, funding mechanisms, accountability systems, the registration requirements and legal status of community groups, and use and tenure rights over assets (particularly natural resources). Many rules and regulations may also need to be changed, from the required qualifications for community workers, teachers or health educators to procurement rules.

Implementing the institutional and legislative changes necessary to support large scale community based programs inevitably meets resistance from powerful vested interests and needs strong ***political support*** to see it through. Many Bank projects that implement institutional reform are led by reform minded senior civil servants with access to the country's top political leaders.



# 1. Issues in Community Based Development

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*From time immemorial, societies have organized themselves to take care of collective and individual needs. Why then have so many attempts at getting people to participate and take responsibility for community based development failed in the last fifty years? One reason is that never before in the history of humankind has there been such a massive experiment at inducing change through the infusion of external ideas, management, funds and technology, all controlled from places far distant from the site of development.*

## Why Adopt a Community Based Development Strategy?

In many countries, limited government success in managing natural resources, providing basic infrastructure, and ensuring primary social services has led to the search for alternative institutional options. In recent years, a shift has occurred away from supply-driven toward demand-driven approaches, and from central command-and-control to local management or co-management of resources and services. This shift is intended to increase efficiency, equity, empowerment, and cost effectiveness.

One of these options is community based development. The experience in community based development is substantial, both about what works and what does not. From this experience it is clear that there is no single model appropriate for all places and times. Supporting community based development on a large scale requires new institutions which support:

- adoption of goals and processes which strengthen the capacity of a community, its

networks or groups, to organize and sustain development and its benefits;

- reorientation of bureaucracies to support community empowerment and investment in social capital through user participation in decisionmaking including rule formulation; and
- achieving a match between what people in a community want and are willing to pay for and manage, and what agencies supply.

Experience also shows that community based development does not automatically include marginalized groups, the poor, women or ethnic minorities unless their participation is specifically highlighted as a goal, both at the agency and community levels.

Community based development is concerned with the involvement of local stakeholders in decisionmaking. If people in communities are to take initiative, be creative, learn, and assume responsibility for their own development, they must be actively encouraged to participate. This requires building into policies and projects features which enable people's participation.

In order to encourage community based development on a large scale, it is important to first understand the dynamics at the household, group, or community levels. Based on this understanding, what needs to happen to support community action can be defined at successively higher and more distant levels.

Community based development requires reversing control and accountability from central authorities to individuals, groups, and

**Box 1**  
**Community Participation Yields Significant Results**

- In Gujarat, India, during the 1980s, an average of 18,000 forest offenses were recorded annually: 10,000 cases of timber theft, 2,000 grazing, 700 fires, and 5,300 other offenses. Twenty forestry officials were killed in confrontations with communities and offenders, and assaults on forestry officials were frequent. In response, an experiment in joint management with communities was initiated by the conservator, R.S. Pathan. This included community meetings, widely publicized creation of forest protection committees, and profit sharing of 25 percent of timber returns with local groups. As a result, conflicts between officials and community groups diminished, community groups assumed responsibility for patrolling forests, and productivity of land and returns to villages increased sharply. In one year, one village of eighty-eight households harvested and sold twelve tons of firewood, fifty tons of fodder, and other forest products, while also planting and protecting teak and bamboo trees (Pathan et al, 1993).
- In Ceara, one of the poorest areas in Northeast Brazil, infant mortality fell 35 percent to roughly 65 per 1,000 between 1987 and 1991. During this period, despite economic difficulties and high inflation, a state-run community health program involving more than 7,000 workers reached 800,000 families. Female health workers were hired for minimum wages from the communities and were provided supportive supervision and training in specific tasks. Accountability was encouraged by broadly publicizing the job description of health workers and encouraging communities to report poor performance (Freedheim, 1988).
- In Tamil Nadu, India, a community based nutrition outreach program in 9,000 villages resulted in a one-third decline in severe malnutrition. A group of twenty women interested in health issues was hired in each village as part time community workers accountable to the community. The women's groups, formed initially to "spread the word," subsequently branched off and started food production activities on their own. Earlier programs focusing only on the creation of health infrastructure were unable to make any difference in the nutritional status of children.
- In Cote d'Ivoire, a national rural water supply program established community water groups which managed maintenance of 13,500 waterpoints and reduced breakdown rates from 50 percent to 11 percent at one-third the cost. The shift to community level maintenance was managed by taking away the responsibility for rural water supply from the *Société de Distribution d'Eau de Côte d'Ivoire* (SODECI), supporting private sector involvement in spare parts distribution, retraining technicians, and signing contracts with village groups and the water directorate. The results were sustained only in those villages which had high demand for the rehabilitated water point and where well functioning community organizations already existed (Hino, 1993).
- In Nepal, 62 percent of the irrigated land (400,000 hectares) is managed by farmer irrigation associations. Studies have shown that farmer managed irrigation systems average 6 metric tons of production per hectare, significantly more than agency managed systems (which average 5 metric tons per hectare). Farmer managed systems also achieve higher crop intensities. A greater percentage of farmer managed systems have the ability to get adequate water to the head and tail of the system across seasons. For example, in the spring, when water is very scarce, one out of four farmer managed systems is able to get water to the tail; in agency managed systems, the ratio is just one in twelve (Ostrom and Gardner, 1993; Small et al, 1986).

communities. Success is dependent on tapping into local needs and creating local ownership, management (rules, control, authority, and responsibility), and organizational capacity. The challenge facing agencies is to "reinvent"

themselves so that they can support community involvement, participation, and capacity building for sustained change. Community based management on a large scale requires fundamental changes in the

policies, incentives, and structures of agencies. This has costs, but when done properly, the benefits are considerable.

### **What are the Time and Financial Costs?**

There are two persistent myths about community based programs: first, that they cost more than conventional programs and, second, that they take longer. However, evidence increasingly indicates that when the institutional framework is right, community based programs actually cost less and are quicker to implement than conventional programs.

Significant costs are incurred only when community level organizations have been so eroded that capacity building has to begin from scratch. Even where overall costs are the same for participatory processes as for a conventional approach, what is different is the activities and components that are funded and executed. Evaluations of the El Salvador *Fundación Salvadoreña de Vivienda Mínima* (FUNDASAL) housing projects for the poor have found that the unit cost of houses was less than half that of the least expensive standard government dwelling. The FUNDASAL housing unit also had a superior benefit-to-cost ratio compared to any other housing program in either the formal or informal housing sector. (Bamberger et al, 1982).

Once the participatory process for a project is established, total project preparation time is not necessarily longer than it would be in a conventional project. In Egypt, the Matruh Natural Resources Management Project, which used a very participatory and consultative process with Bedouin communities and government personnel to create ownership and develop a project which matched felt needs, made up time invested earlier with a smooth negotiation process. Participatory workshops for stakeholder involvement were used in the preparation of an Urban Works Pilot Project in Madagascar, and subsequently built into the design of the project. The workshops created owner-

ship and shaped the project design, but project preparation was not delayed.

Demand based approaches, with the right institutional framework, also need not take longer. For example, in Nicaragua's municipal development fund, which was based on beneficiary participation in barrio upgrading, the planned five-year project was completed in three and a half years. The rates of return at project completion were 50 percent higher than at appraisal. In Nepal, the deep tubewell irrigation project based on demand and farmer management moved so quickly that additional money was quickly found to increase the project size to \$20 million. The project continued to move quickly and effectively despite problems in the technical support ministries (Meinzen-Dick et al, 1995).

A survey of Bank projects revealed few delays in disbursements resulting from participatory processes. The typical pattern was a slow build up period (during which time is invested in community organization and setting the rules for interaction), followed by speedy disbursements.

### **When Is Community Based Development Appropriate?**

Community based development is not an appropriate strategy for every situation. Three factors influence the prospects for participation. These need, therefore, to be considered prior to adopting a community based approach. These three factors are the nature of the good or service, the nature of benefits, and the nature of the task.

#### ***Nature of the Good or Service***

Collective action is necessary to ensure a flow of services or goods when their provision or management is not attractive to the profit making sector, when resources are scarce, or collectively owned or managed. In such cases, the resource or service must be managed so that those who do not contribute or follow

**Box 2**  
**Does Community Based Development Cost More?**

In Pakistan's Orangi Pilot Project, which provided sewerage facilities to nearly one million people in a poor area of Karachi, costs were one-eighth of conventional sewerage provided by city authorities. This was due to changes in technical design and the elimination of pay offs to intermediaries (Khan, 1992). In Brazil's PROSENEAR project, a ceiling of \$120 per capita has been imposed on sanitation expenditures. Within this cost limit, engineers and community development experts are encouraged to work with communities to devise the most appropriate solutions. Through this process, projects have been designed for as little as \$50 per capita (Watson and Jagannathan, 1995).

Striking findings are also emerging from the irrigation sector. A study of the evolution of the strategies used by the National Irrigation Agency (NIA) in the Philippines established that those irrigation associations which had taken over more operation and management (O&M) responsibilities from NIA distributed water more equitably, were more efficient in collecting irrigation fees, had lower maintenance costs (1.77 pesos as against 4.62 pesos per hectare), and resulted in higher dry season rice yields (93 versus 83 cavans per hectare) (NIACONSULT, 1993). When farmers took over some of the construction, costs went down further because farmers carefully monitored the work of the contractors and materials used. This occurred, however, only after a period in which the capacity of irrigation associations to function independently had been strengthened. Bagadion and Korten (1991) estimate that total capacity building costs were US\$ 25.00 per hectare, approximately 3 percent of construction costs (90 percent of which was derived from community contributions in construction). As properly prepared farmers associations have taken over management functions, the NIA has been able to reduce staff and eliminate subsidies (Svendson, 1992).

In Colombia, the unit cost of a UNICEF developed model of community based day care in urban slums was one-third the cost of government run day care centers. By mid-1989, more than 32,000 such centers were being managed by a "community mother" selected by a community parents' association. The parents' association has decisionmaking control over the expenditure of government funds for the community mother's home upgrade, her stipend, and food rations for children in day care. Organized supervision is also provided by a trained social worker from the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare. Depending on the complexity of tasks, the existing capacity of community groups, and the degree of self management desired, project experience demonstrates that costs have ranged from less than 1 percent to 15 percent of overall project budget. However, in every case, savings and community contributions have offset the investment in capacity building, training and organization.

rules can be denied access. This ability to regulate access is critical for success and is usually determined by a combination of technological and social factors, such as organization, social pressure, and the ability to impose sanctions.

People must also be able to identify the boundaries of the resources. This is particularly important with common margin property resources such as rangeland, watersheds, fisheries, and woodlots. If people do not know what resources they are responsible for, they cannot be expected to manage those resources rationally.

***Nature of the Benefits***

Collective action is easier to stimulate when benefits are quick, visible, and local, when they accrue only to those who participate, and when they are felt to be proportionate to contributions. Benefits are affected by ownership, tenure and land use rights. If benefits from participation in conservation measures such as forestry, fisheries, or wildlife protection accrue only at the district or national level, local communities have little incentive to participate. For this reason, clean up of rivers and lakes is difficult to induce through collective action. The long gestation period before benefits



**Box 3****Quick Benefits Inappropriately Induced are Counter Productive**

Two agency patterns which negate collective action are very prevalent. The first is changing the order in which things are done to “build first, mobilize later.” In an attempt to motivate formation of pastoral associations, the Mali Pastoral Associations project changed its strategy and constructed water points prior to mobilization; an evaluation of the project found that the change had the opposite effect because it violated the principle of local contribution and involvement in decisionmaking (Shanmugaratnam et al, 1992).

The second negative pattern is lowering or eliminating community financial contributions to induce quick action. Once eliminated, contributions are difficult to introduce later in the same area, and result in lack of local ownership and financial viability. In Nigeria, in a rural water supply project, required community contributions were dramatically lowered to induce quick action and accelerate the pace of implementation. This resulted in lowering the stake that community groups had in the success of the boreholes (Boerma, 1993).

The more useful approach to inducing quick benefits, is sequencing tasks and breaking them up into small “do-able” bits. These generate a sense of group satisfaction. This is also one of the reasons why NGOs that are not limited to sectoral activities can start with those activities that produce quick results, and then move gradually to activities for which there is a time lag. The Aga Khan Rural Support Program (AKRSP) in Northwestern Province in Pakistan starts the collective action process by first building one small productive infrastructure in partnership with a community that is identified as the communities first priority (Northern Areas Administration, 1993).

The FUNDASAL housing for the poor project builds on the principle of *incremental development*. Houses are constructed through community self help, in stages; a high priority is assigned to securing tenure and services, completing the basic structure of the house quickly, and letting families expand their houses over time. Houses are constructed by twenty to twenty-five families working together; once completed, the house is assigned by lottery to a participating family. The group then collectively starts construction on the next house (Bamberger et al, 1982).

accrue in forestry and tree planting projects is a disincentive to investment, particularly when combined with insecurity over tenure. Projects which have provided access to fodder, non-timber forest products, and firewood while timber is actually maturing have generally been more successful than those which relied solely on promised timber benefits.

If the resource does not lend itself to quick, visible and localized benefits, community based development should not be attempted unless strategies can be developed that provide quick, visible benefits without violating a demand orientation (Uphoff, 1986). When results are induced artificially by agency initiated short cuts, they may be counter productive to collective action. Communities

may justifiably ask themselves why they should do the difficult work of organization, negotiation, and resource mobilization themselves, when there are easier ways of getting the same results.

***Nature of the Task To Be Performed***

Community based development is dependent on action and change at the community level. This requires a clear goal orientation, definition of tasks to be performed at the community level and agreed upon outcomes at the community level (both physical and capacity building). Among the task characteristics which must be considered are specificity, coordination, and continuity.

*Task specificity* (a clear beginning and end) is important so that communities can understand what it is that they are committing to undertake. Most successful examples of induced collective action are based on clear agreements negotiated with communities on the specific tasks they will perform. The Balochistan Primary Education Program in Pakistan initiated community based schools for girls by being very specific on the tasks to be performed by the education committees. These tasks included identifying a female teacher from the village, checking on teacher attendance, providing temporary shelter for the school, and guaranteeing that all girls were in school.

*Task continuity* is also important. Some tasks can be completed over a short period of time and are basically one-shot activities. When tasks have to be performed on a recurrent basis for an extended period of time (such as operation and maintenance of drinking water and irrigation systems, community health services, community schools, credit, forest management, range management) an organization needs to be sustained to manage the task. However, the organization needed to undertake activities on a recurrent basis is much more complex than one needed to undertake short-term specific projects (such as building a school, dispensary or water point; labor sharing for house

construction for one day; labor exchanges for harvesting or beer brewing).

*Task coordination* is needed between groups in network systems (roads, sewerage, irrigation, pipe water systems) or when the physical area of action is spread out (range management, forest management, water sheds). For example, the social organization needed to initiate and manage the secondary and tertiary networks of pipe water systems, irrigation canals or sewerage systems requires greater coordination and negotiation than when planning a community specific water system, health clinic, primary school or nutrition center. If the task is simple, community organization and agency support is easier to institute. For example, the Nylon project in Douala city, Cameroon which provides urban infrastructure, started with small spontaneous community self help groups. As the project expanded, the groups took on additional tasks; as more people joined, the entire area was divided into thirteen units, and self help groups federated upward, culminating with each unit having its own *Comité d'Animation*. Since 1971, these committees have been united by a *Commission Central d'Animation*, which is the main group that interacts with external support agencies (Schubeler, 1993).

## 2. Key Features of Successful Community Based Development

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Enabling stakeholders to control decisions requires that new rules and mechanisms be put in place. For agencies, this means creating an enabling environment for thousands of different communities. Emphasizing user involvement at the community level requires going beyond technological factors to understand the social fabric in which the project will be embedded. These human dimensions are particularly important when the goal is to reach the poor.

Successful community based development is determined by a variety of factors. These include the use of appropriate strategies for encouraging participation, the existence of viable community groups, the appropriate fit of technology to the project and community needs, effective agency outreach strategies, client responsive agencies, and enabling policies.

### **Strategies for Encouraging Participation**

Whenever change is introduced, initial resistance is likely. It is important, therefore, to adopt clear strategies to introduce community based development. Achieving success is based on creating the incentives for organizations to interact with each other to achieve desired outcomes in ways that are sustainable financially, environmentally, socially, and politically. While successful experience with large-scale community based projects is limited within the Bank, there are four strategies that task managers have used to generate support for community based approaches and project effectiveness. These are stakeholder involvement,

consultation with different actors, pilot activities, and structured learning.

### ***Stakeholder Involvement***

Many projects now use participatory workshops to bring together government officials, NGOs, universities, and community representatives. The Chad Education Project used the ZOPP (Objectives Oriented Project Planning) methodology for clarifying objectives and strategies; as part of pre-appraisal, the Indonesia Water and Sanitation Program for Low-Income Communities project (WSSPLIC) rural water project used participatory methods in which participants drew their own visions of community management. The workshop used a series of interactive methods to develop consensus about which decision had to be delegated to different government levels to make community management possible. It involved subdistrict, district, provincial, and central government officials together with NGOs and project preparation consultants. Funds for such activities are either part of project preparation or more usually obtained from United Nations and bilateral agencies.

### ***Consultation***

While everyone may not be involved in decisionmaking, projects use a variety of survey methods, beneficiary assessments and consultative meetings with potential clients. These are nearly always managed by local social scientists and facilitators. Women facilitators fluent in the local language are generally found to be essential to ensure consultation with women at the community level.

### **Pilot Activities**

Task managers generally utilize one of two approaches to using pilot projects or activities to start the learning process. Pilot projects can be used to test different approaches and to build capacity alongside project preparation. Funds for preparation have been obtained through the Japanese Grant Fund (\$1.6 million for Nepal Rural Water Supply), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP - Sri Lanka Rural Water Supply) or reimbursed through the project (Indonesia Rural Water Supply and Sanitation). Monitoring and evaluation are very important components of pilot activities. If the links between the project under preparation and the pilot projects are not clear, the pilots have little relevance.

Alternatively, the initial year of a project can be conceptualized as a pilot, with funds flexibly structured to allow trial of different strategies as well as to support training of agency staff. The scale of the project can then be gradually expanded, as will be done in the Matruh Natural Resource Management Project.

### **Structured Learning**

A fourth strategy is to conceive the entire project as a structured learning process. As such, the focus is on learning by doing, trying different models, careful monitoring and evaluation, and refinement of systems with experience.

The Indonesia WSSPLIC project has used a structured learning approach. During project preparation, rather than preparing detailed engineering designs, the focus has been on trying a community based approach responsive to demand in sixty-two "starter" villages. A limited number of engineering designs were prepared for different technology options in different hydrogeological zones and settlement patterns. Poverty levels will be used as a screening device, but once an area is selected, inclusion in the project will depend on the community buying into the project by completing a set of tasks. The initial work has been facilitated by community workers who provide

communities with information about technology options, their cost, and organizational implications. Through this process, approval of community plans has been devolved to lower levels. Procedures have been simplified to facilitate community procurement and monitoring and evaluation; the focus is on community capacity building and organization to sustain management of technology after construction is completed.

### **Characteristics of Successful Community Groups**

Collaboration at the local or community level occurs when the members of a group realize that they cannot carry out certain tasks or achieve their goals individually. This may be because of the nature of the benefits or the task, or because of limits on their own skills, capacity, and resources. When embedded in the existing social organization of a group, commonality of interest provides the basis for trust, loyalty, rules, and reciprocity.

Viable community groups are often key to the success of community based development. No matter what the activity, experience indicates that the following five features characterize well functioning groups:

- the group addresses a felt need and a common interest;
- the benefits to the group of working together outweigh the costs;
- the group is embedded in the existing social organization;
- the group has the capacity, leadership, knowledge and skills to manage the tasks; and
- the group owns and enforces its rules and regulations.

***The group addresses a felt need and a common interest.*** When people can clearly see the

**Box 4**  
**Nepal Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Program**

***The Use of Pilot Projects in Project Design***

In 1993, preparations began for a \$15.8 million Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Program in Nepal (RWSSP). The program is designed to include an autonomous Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Fund (RWSS-Fund) which will support demand driven, community based water and sanitation initiatives. An innovative twenty-month field testing pilot project, managed by the UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation Program, was initiated in March 1993 and will be used to refine the design of the RWSSP.

The RWSS-Fund will be managed by a fully autonomous board with representatives from both the government and the private sector (NGOs). Money will come from the Ministry of Finance through a simplified procedure consisting of the release of block grants once the Fund budgets have been approved.

The primary objectives of the pilot project, financed under a \$1.5 million Bank-executed Japanese grant, are to test and refine a variety of service delivery options, to refine the eligibility criteria for identification and selection of support agencies, and to define the funding mechanism that will manage future Fund resources. Various options are being tested in sixty communities representing 30,000 beneficiaries (Pfohl et al, 1993).

The pilot project is testing:

- Options for Institutional Arrangements - what is the effectiveness of different intermediaries (central-based NGOs, local NGOs, community based organizations, private firms, local government) as service providers of RWSS?
- Community Action Planning (CAP) Processes - to what degree did the contracted NGO engender local participation in the CAP process?
- Building Sustainable Water User Committees -to what degree have the contracted NGOs been successful in building local management capacity?
- Additional Software Service Options - to what degree can the contracted NGO integrate other services, including health and hygiene, education, and functional literacy into the CAP process?
- Cost Recovery Mechanisms - what are the best methods and strategies for cost recovery for capital investments and O&M costs?
- Performance of NGOs and Communities - to what degree can the service providers and communities fulfill the tasks envisioned by the project design?

existence of a problem, they are obviously more likely to mobilize to change the situation than if they are blind to it. Equally important, they are more likely to be interested in working with support agencies to address felt needs. Felt needs and priorities are not static but change with time, hence the need for agency programs to adapt, change, and evolve to maintain a fit with community priorities.

Many programs have assumed that geographic community is synonymous with "community of interest." This is not necessarily the case and is a common source of problems in mobilizing collective action. The community woodlots movement in India, for example, largely failed in its early days because it was assumed that the community was the appropriate unit of "common interest" to manage woodlots

**Box 5**  
**Addressing Felt Needs and Common Interests**

The *Thulu Kulo* irrigation system in Nepal was initiated by local people in 1928 when twenty-seven households contributed to a fund to construct irrigation canals and received water shares proportionate to the amount they invested. In the nearly seventy years since its establishment, the system has expanded several times by selling additional shares (Ostrom, 1993; Martin 1983).

A community based urban upgrading project in a squatter area in Douala, Cameroon which covers one-seventh of the population, began when twenty traditional leaders organized residents into "auto defence" groups to combat banditry. These groups also undertook "travaux d'investissement humain" to improve drainage, footpaths, bridges, and elementary social facilities. As they evolved over the two decades, these groups have begun to address land tenure issues and economic issues. The federation of community self help groups conducts its own needs assessment which it communicates to support agencies (Schubeler, 1993).

In the Central Visayas Regional Project, a natural resource management project in the Philippines, the Project Completion Report finds that one of the fundamental design flaws in the social forestry component has been an assumption that upland farmers were interested in forest management, when in fact the farmers' priorities were agriculture and agroforestry.

(Cernea, 1989). Communities are rarely homogenous entities. In irrigation associations, the interests of those at the tail-end invariably clash with those at the head-end; formal village councils, such as the *Panchayats* of India, may have different interests than the poor in the community.

However, the need to solve urgent priority problems may bring different class and power groups together. In South India, Robert Wade (1994) has documented how the entire village manages community based irrigation systems and has developed a monitoring system to discourage water theft. Among the poor, men may join women's informal credit or collective work undertakings despite pervasive gender segregation marking most interactions. Nonetheless, as groups grow or spread over large areas, the influence of social cohesion begins to break down and it becomes more difficult to control and monitor the behavior of individuals. For this reason, as groups become larger they either formalize regulations and delegate decisionmaking to smaller working groups, or they join in a federated structure which leaves decisionmaking at the local level.

***The benefits to the group of working together outweigh the costs.*** For community action to take place, the perceived benefits must be greater than the perceived costs, otherwise there is no incentive to organize, attend meetings, and make cash and in kind contributions. Calculations of benefits are affected by clarity and security of ownership, tenure or use rights. Renters in poor urban neighborhoods have little incentive to upgrade in-house sanitation facilities; people have little incentive to invest in wood lots or trees, if they have no secure harvesting rights. Benefits may be economic (cash savings, increased production, income, time savings); instrumental (ability to collectively solve problems, increased capacity in terms of knowledge and skills); psychological (sense of belonging, enhanced confidence); or political (greater access to authority, greater authority, reduced conflict). The benefit stream does not remain constant but changes over time. Benefits are not the same for everyone, and the most important benefits to individuals within groups may be different than those conceived by planners. But the bottom line remains constant: if individuals in groups do not see benefits outweighing costs, they will not participate.

**Box 6**  
**The Benefits Must Outweigh the Costs**

In the Philippines, farmers actually negotiated an *increase* in their irrigation fees because they had worked out a formula with the irrigation agency through which they would benefit from imposing and managing the collection of higher fees (NIACONSULT, 1993).

If the group does not undertake new tasks as old ones are accomplished, there is no new benefit flow and the costs begin to outweigh benefits. In Indonesia, water user groups that took on new tasks and provided additional benefits (such as individual household toilets and food security) continued to thrive while others that did not functioned at a low level or not at all (Narayan, 1989).

In Pakistan, 14,000 water users associations (WUAs) were hurriedly created to become active in water course improvements. However, when construction was completed, the WUAs did not move on to broader irrigation management tasks because they saw neither a purpose nor a benefit to continued existence. Instead, they reverted back to the traditional *warabandi* system, which was already well established and hence involved lower transaction costs (Byrnes, 1992).

***The group is embedded in the local social organization.*** Experience demonstrates the importance of nurturing institutions at the local level that have their roots in the local community. The Balochistan Primary Education Project in Pakistan shows how quickly community action spreads when it is embedded in the local social organization, when tasks are clearly defined, and when time is spent in developing the local organization.

The problem with existing social organization is that it is generally invisible and often excludes women and the poor from the most important production and decisionmaking networks and associations. While building on existing organizations does not always work, there is a need to understand them so as to draw on their strengths and make changes based on what is already in place.

In Nepal, for example, when a government policy was promulgated to create farmers associations, assistant overseers found many informal groups of farmers organized around irrigation systems. Rather than creating new organizations, these already existing groups were encouraged to register themselves as official farmers irrigation associations. In a Livestock Development Project in Mauritania,

pastoral associations based partly on traditional organization and partly on new organizations, were created on a pilot basis, using environmental and socioeconomic data. The average association covered fifty villages, 2,500 sq. km and a population of 14,000 people. These groups proved too large to work effectively and were quickly subdivided (Shanmugaratnam et al, 1992).

***The group has the necessary capacity, leadership, knowledge, and skills.*** The capacity of groups to organize themselves to undertake coordinated action is important to their success. Local elites often take leadership roles, and although this is not necessarily bad, care must be taken to prevent any hijacking of resources. For example, in community based rural water projects in Indonesia and Pakistan, success in community organizing was closely linked to the presence of strong leaders interested in changing the water supply situation. However, in Zimbabwe, when local leaders implemented the policy regarding communal grazing schemes, they often grabbed the external resources for themselves, or actively obstructed the formation of grazing groups (Scoones and Matose, 1993).

When collective action is induced from the outside, the focus is often on creating the structure of committees, without matching the task to the capacity, knowledge, or technical skills of groups. Groups have also failed because too much was expected of them too soon without any supportive training in management or specific skills. Getting local groups and organizations to become self managing organizations can extend over several years and does not happen without investment in capacity building.

***The group owns and enforces its rules and regulations.*** All successful groups and associations are characterized by internalized rules and regulations that are known by its members. For this reason, building on existing groups or indigenous principles of organization becomes particularly important. If people do not trust each other and are not equitable in allocating

work, contributions and benefits, conflicts escalate, and the group becomes ineffective.

Participation of group members in decision-making regarding rules and regulations, and having the authority and control to change the rules to fit their needs, is critical in effective group functioning. When rules are imposed from the outside without any discussion, they are not locally owned, nor do people feel compelled to follow them, especially when enforcement mechanisms are weak. Free riding then becomes common. If members do not know the group rules, it is generally a sign of their lack of involvement in the rule formulation or acceptance process.

Analysis of the Zimbabwe's Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) experience shows that co-management of wildlife worked well in

#### **Box 7**

#### **Shared Control and Benefits: CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe**

The incentive for Zimbabwe to protect its wildlife resources is high. Wildlife activities such as safari hunting, game cropping, tourism, and live animal sales contribute over \$250 million annually to Zimbabwe's national economy. Most wildlife, however, is outside parks on tribal or communally owned land. The Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management has recognized that wildlife resources will only be conserved if private and communal landowners derive economic benefit from protection of the resource and are given responsibility for conservation and management. The return of benefits to local communities from wildlife resources is the basis of Zimbabwe's Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE).

Using the CAMPFIRE approach and philosophy, the Chikwarakwara community of approximately 150 households in the remote Beirbridge area of Zimbabwe has taken over proprietorial management authority for wildlife resources from the district council. After a series of negotiations focusing on community membership, household definition and revenue sharing procedures, the council devolved management responsibilities and access to revenues derived from safari hunting activities to the community. The benefits accrued to the community as a result of this responsibility have included a new school, a new grinding mill, and a Z\$200 cash payment to each household. The Council has benefitted through an 11.7 percent levy, and the central government has benefitted through an increase in taxable revenues.

The CAMPFIRE approach has not worked where communities have not been involved in rule formulation or where sharing of benefits with communities is minimal. In Nyaminyami District in the Zambezi Valley, for example, there are inequities in the distribution of benefits and in the management responsibilities between the district council, the ward, and the villages. The basic issue of whether the Nyaminyami Wildlife Trust, which was created by the district council to develop institutional capacity for wildlife management, should be an income-earner at the district level or a grassroots wildlife management program has yet to be resolved (Scoones and Matose, 1993).



those cases where the ground rules were specified, negotiated, and accepted by all parties. Another key to success was providing sufficient incentives so that all parties kept their part of the agreement.

However, in the Zambia Social Recovery Fund, a series of community level meetings and contact with more than 1,000 people established that a lack of transparency and accountability affected 50 percent of community projects. In these cases, a few individuals were dominant and community people often did not know the basic information regarding project funding, purpose, and conditions of partnership. Projects in these communities floundered (Milimo and Njobru, 1993).

### **Organizational Rules**

To function effectively, community groups have set rules which define membership requirements, responsibilities and benefits, accountability, how violations of rules will be punished and how disputes will be resolved. This may be done formally, with written texts, fees, fines, or informally through practice. In all cases, however, rules evolve.

#### ***Entry Rules***

Entry rules define who belongs and who does not, and the obligations of those who are members. Membership can be based on a variety of factors: ownership of land; participation in farmers groups; gender; or age. To limit the benefits to those who do the work, successful groups often impose membership or user fees. In Kenya, those who joined a pipe system at its inception had to pay a lump sum and contribute labor to help construct the system. Stragglers had to pay higher connection fees. As stakes were raised, members became more involved to guard their contributions (Njonjo, 1994).

#### ***Allocational Rules***

Allocational rules define responsibilities, contributions, and benefits. Unless members and managing committees know what their responsibility is and how they will benefit, they

cannot be expected to perform their functions. A 1987 evaluation of the Orissa Social Forestry project in India found that 82 percent of the villagers, all of whom were supposedly members, did not know how the produce from the village woodlot would be distributed. Most did not expect any share from the final output and looked upon the community woodlot as another type of reserve forest (Shepard, 1986). Not surprisingly, they had no interest in contributing to its establishment or maintenance.

#### ***Accountability***

Mechanisms to insure accountability are also important. The fact that group members know that an effective monitoring mechanism is in place can serve as a deterrent to violators and an incentive to others to report violations. Monitoring can focus on payment of tariffs, extraction, and use of resource and performance of group management committees, agency staff, and contractors. In small groups that live in physical proximity, social pressure through peer monitoring is an important low cost and effective technique. Associations that are riddled with potential violators or spread over large fiscal areas may introduce various policing mechanisms. Others institute transparency and open accounting systems. Poorly functioning groups on the other hand cannot even identify offenses or violations.

The Grameen Bank peer monitoring system is an important part of why the group lending system works. If the individual defaults on a loan, the whole group is accountable. This creates incentives among members to monitor and support one another.

#### ***Sanctions***

If sanctions are not imposed on violators, there is little incentive to follow the rules regarding access to a scarce resource. All enduring groups have clear sanctions that are perceived as equitable and appropriate by members.

#### ***Conflict Resolution Mechanisms***

The greater the resolution of disputes at the local level, the less burdened and expensive the

overall system. When conflicts cannot be solved quickly, group based schemes fall apart. In Zimbabwe, many grazing schemes have not been able to resolve basic boundary conflicts or differences in opinion about technical soundness. The presence of physical fences to mark boundaries has made no difference, and fences have been removed, ignored, or not maintained.

### **Ensuring Access by Women and the Poor**

Gender differences in roles, authority, power and access to resources are pervasive. In most societies, there are important differences

between the roles, needs, networks, skills, and knowledge among men and women. It cannot be assumed that even at the community level, what is appropriate for men is appropriate for women. Nor can it be assumed that programs that reach men will reach or empower women. A study of rural water supply projects, for example, showed that only 17 percent of the projects involved women in decisionmaking, although most stated their desire to reach women.

Nor do community based programs necessarily reach the poor. Work with Pastoral Associations revealed that as many as 80 percent of the

#### **Box 8**

#### **The Gambia: Gender Specific Strategies to Reach Women**

While women in The Gambia contribute substantially to the country's economy and to the well-being of their families, they are often not reached by conventional projects. Hence, a five-year, \$7 million Women in Development Project was designed.

The project was designed to improve women's productivity, income earning potential, welfare, and status in 200 villages, representing approximately 25 percent of the total population. The Department of Community Development in the Ministry of Local Government is the main implementing agency with the Department of Nonformal Education of the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture the primary participating agency. As part of an effort to strengthen the capacity of these agencies, staff will be trained in implementation and management techniques. They will also be sensitized to broad based gender issues.

The project comprises six components including increasing women's agricultural productivity, improving and promoting viable and marketable skills of rural women, promoting safe motherhood, and strengthening the capacity of government institutions to address issues which affect women. Indigenous women's groups, called *kafos*, are being used as entry points in various components of the project, most notably the skills development component.

*Kafos* are village level, voluntary women's groups averaging about 100 members. Traditionally concerned with providing mutual support to members, such as sharing labor or making loans to those in need, they have more recently expanded their role to include income generating activities. Members assign officer type roles to leaders and hold them accountable. Based on a community needs assessment, trained community development workers are assisting existing *kafos* and helping to establish new groups. Women are being provided with training in technical skills, business management, improved production methods and technologies, and management of credit.

*Kafos* are also being used as the entry point through which community development workers select women tutors to promote basic numeracy and literacy. One hundred twenty-five tutors will be trained for three months using a concept of learning by doing. This will build confidence among women tutors and provide them with follow-up support. In addition, The Gambia Cooperative Union has recently embarked on a campaign to increase the availability of agricultural loans to women and has targeted women's farmer groups as recipients.

herd in Mali and 40 percent in Niger belong to absentee herd owners. The problem of capture of benefits and resources by the rich and powerful is ever present when the poor are bound to the rich in client/patron relationships and the resource under consideration is scarce or has great economic value (Shanmugaratnam et al, 1992).

Thus, in Pakistan, the village elite play a positive role in the northern provinces in initiating simple drinking water supply schemes, but in the southern provinces, particularly Sind, elites capture irrigation water, often blatantly and disproportionately (Byrnes, 1992). In Kenya, where community leaders are sympathetic to the plight of the poor, communities have instituted a sliding scale of fees for the poor. In Tanzania, sliding fees based on poverty appear universal in community managed systems. In other countries and settings, however, the poor are excluded when communities impose user charges to achieve financial viability.

The poor are most easily reached when program services are specifically targeted to them. Benefits flow to the poor when projects do not attract the rich, either because of the nature of the service or because of the transaction costs involved. Such projects include participation in public works programs, short-term credit, working capital loans, and organizing for housing construction.

In the FUNDASAL project in El Salvador, because the poor participated in each other's house construction, mutual help eliminated the need for a 10 percent down payment. Families were required to work in construction teams for thirty weekends and participate in meetings and training in organizational techniques (Bamberger et al, 1982).

### **Fitting Technology to Community Needs**

The most important criteria determining appropriateness of technology are the local

management capacity and how the introduction of a technology influences social cohesion and benefit flows. Thus, technology needs to be viewed in a holistic way to determine whether it fits into the existing social system and the direction of change that will be set into motion because of its introduction.

In the drinking water sector, poor maintenance led to the search for VLOM (Village Level Operation and Maintenance) technologies including handpumps (Arlosoroff et al, 1990). While cost is important, the least cost option is not necessarily the best. Experience has established that people desire house connections and are often willing to pay more for pipe water than for communally managed handpumps which are less convenient and reliable.

In urban sanitation, technological innovations have enabled new forms of community and agency collaboration to emerge. This includes the shallow sewers in Orangi, Pakistan and the condominium sewerage system in Brazil, in which technological innovation and social organization have gone hand in hand.

In natural resource management and agricultural projects, technological considerations are important when considering what to plant, how to harvest, and how to monitor. Experience shows that community response is greatest when projects adopt approaches that provide a continuous benefit flow, especially where indigenous people or women are dependent on nontimber products, fodder or thatch grass, agricultural intercrops, and seed.

In Nepal, where indigenous farmers organizations manage the majority of irrigated land, agency-led and donor-financed construction of permanent headworks based on efficiency concerns has worked less than satisfactorily (Ostrom, 1993). The Kamala Irrigation Project meant to serve 25,000 hectares has never reached that goal. The system includes a large, permanent, concrete headworks and a fully lined canal. No fees have ever been imposed or collected and agency staff spend most of their

time operating and maintaining the huge concrete headworks and very little time maintaining the rest of the system. No farmer organization was created at construction nor was there any farmer involvement in decision-making. Since the headworks increased the control that nearby farmers had over water, these farmers had little incentive to bargain with the tail-end farmers. As a result, farmers located at a distance from the headworks have broken through the branch canals to obtain water, and armed conflict for water often occurs between the tail-enders and head-enders.

By contrast, in the nearby Pithuwas Irrigation Project, which is not dominated by permanent headworks, the need to pool labor every year for construction of the intakes and maintenance of the canal, results in incentives for head-end farmers to collaborate and negotiate water distribution. In sharp contrast to the Kamala project, in the Pithuwas project, farmers have managed to irrigate 1,300 hectares using a system designed to serve 600 hectares. Although no farmer groups were created at construction, a branch committee was later formed; this model has spread through the entire system (Laitos et al, 1986).

If the tasks to be performed by the community level actors are complex and on a recurrent basis, such as long-term O&M, then the investment needed in capacity building is generally higher, modified by the existing capacity of local organizations.

### **Effective Outreach**

While community based development may arise from the bottom-up, it can also be supported by external agencies. To encourage change at the community level, a system of physical, financial, and organizational outreach must be in place. The challenge to agencies is to create an affordable outreach and incentive system to achieve desired outcomes at the community level, in ways that build upon, rather than predetermine, community demands.

This can be done either by restructuring agencies to add client outreach personnel (NIA in

the Philippines); by contracting out the needed services with NGOs (Kenya Water and Health Organization-KWAHO), the private sector (in agriculture in Malaysia), other government agencies, or other bilateral agencies (UNICEF in low income housing in Guatemala); or by using existing local groups.

Since community level workers are often the first contact through which community people find out about agency programs, they are of critical importance. Unfortunately, the design of community outreach systems is usually not given careful thought, often with disastrous consequences. It does not help that community level workers themselves have little voice within their own agencies. Merely adding more community workers without changing the overall incentive environment to encourage higher level staff to support community level workers makes no difference.

Outreach mechanisms can be broadly classified into two basic approaches, the *extension* approach and the *empowerment* approach. Problems arise when there is a mismatch between the outcomes desired at the community level and the type of community outreach system put in place.

### ***Defining the Purpose of Outreach***

When the purpose of outreach is extension (that is, information dissemination, creation of demand, and use of services inputs), the kind of outreach system is quite different from that employed when community organization, empowerment and capacity building for self management is a goal. In both cases demand needs to be assessed to ensure that inputs and services match the needs of the target group. The empowerment approach is more staff intensive and usually requires greater investment in local capacity building. In Pakistan, where an empowerment approach was needed, a project provided for only twenty days of work per water user association for irrigation canals, resulting in organizers rushing from one group to the next, without even allowing time for groups to assess their needs (Byrnes, 1992). Consequently, the groups collapsed after immediate project goal were

met. In the pastoral projects in the western Sahel, while some projects invested in training of organizers, the organizers were not paid and eventually lost interest. Projects generally did not invest in management training of office bearers, many of whom were illiterate and yet were expected to do bookkeeping.

### ***Nature of the Task***

The extension approach is most appropriate for increasing use of inputs, for tasks that are one-shot and can be completed quickly, and when coordination needed between individuals is minimum. The extension approach is useful in increasing the use of inputs not highly dependent on coordinated action (such as agricultural inputs, seeds, fertilizer, family planning methods, nutrition supplements, and growth monitoring). Efficiency of information dissemination is often increased by organizing groups to be ready to receive information or other inputs on predetermined days. This includes, for example, the training and visit (T&V) system, contact farmer groups, growth monitoring of babies by visiting health teams on fixed days in a month (being done successfully in India and Indonesia), and livestock vaccination from the veterinary department (used in Pakistan). It is also efficient when communities or individuals are only required to perform one-shot tasks such as collecting money, contributing labor for construction over a very short period of time, immunizing children, or eliminating a particular pest.

The empowerment approach is essential when community groups are to be involved in decisionmaking, takes responsibility for monitoring long-term management, or when the tasks involve coordination at different levels.

### ***Role of Field Agents***

In the extension approach, field agents are often "message focused." They serve as channels of information, provide technical expertise, and deliver inputs, seeds, fertilizer, health or nutrition education, and so forth. The extension approach is weak in supporting local institutional development for self management. In the empowerment approach, field agents are first

facilitators, catalysts, and organizers for empowerment. Technical information is provided by specialists or the field agent to help local groups make informed decisions after weighing the costs and benefits of various options.

To manage natural resources, in the Department of Agricultural, Technical and Extension Services (AGRITEX) system of extension in Zimbabwe, the extension worker promotes a fixed and limited technical package through a range of T&V group approaches, demonstration plots, master farmer certificate trainings, and field days. Participation of farmers in decisionmaking is limited by the structure of the extension approach which emphasizes technical instruction (Scoones et al, 1993). In contrast, in Mali the role of agricultural extension agents working in a Natural Resources Management Project has been to enhance the capacity of village groups to manage natural resources. The extension agents support communities in carrying out their own needs analysis, in developing a plan of action, and in liaising with external support agencies.

### ***Identifying Needed Skills and Characteristics of Field Agents***

Extension agents are expected to have technical skills and be information specialists. The most important skills of empowerment agents is their ability to motivate and work with communities to diagnose problems and organize to solve them through coordinated group action.

It is important to achieve a match between the tasks to be performed and the role, skills, and acceptability of the agents. This is essential for performance and to ensure that the system is affordable in the long run.

The difference in the performance and characteristics of irrigation patrollers, the lowest level worker involved in canal operation, in India and Korea provides a graphic illustration (Robert Wade, 1994). The Indian system with its hierarchical organizational system based on centralized control and public works orientation, has rules which minimize identification

between the patroller and the local farmers and maximizes orientation and accountability to the Irrigation Department. Thus in the Indian context, the patroller is a full time employee of the agency, hence is only marginally involved in farming himself; he is selected by the agency engineer, becomes a permanent employee after a period of probation; he is not posted near his own village and must move within six years to another area. The relationship is one of institutionalized mistrust and control by superiors.

The incentives, skills and rules in the Korean system are almost the inverse, and maximize identification of patrollers with the existing social network of other farmers and village chiefs. The patrollers are paid part-time, the rest of the time they are farmers; they are selected by the village chiefs and approved by the irrigation hierarchy; they must be renominated every year by the village chiefs; they must have land and reside in their area of work; and they are not posted from one place to another. In the Korean system, if the irrigation system does not work well the irrigation patroller himself suffers together with other farmers with whom he has an ongoing relationship.

Another important example is from the Tamil Nadu Nutrition project, where the selection process of community level health workers has repeatedly been cited as an important contributor to success. Preference is given to poor, married women from within the village, of scheduled caste with primary level education and two healthy children. They are hired as part time workers. Since the women have deep roots within the community, are poor but have thriving children themselves, they become credible nutrition workers to families with malnourished children. The health workers have a limited number of specific tasks and work with a local women's group to whom they are accountable (Heaver, 1989).

By contrast, in the Integrated Child Development Services Project in India, the *Anganwadi* (child development) workers are without clear priorities and overloaded with a wide range of tasks including feeding pre-school children,

home visits, and attention to pregnant and lactating mothers. Studies have found that almost half of the women are not recruited from the village in which they work and are often of high caste. In the Indian context, it is very unlikely that these women would try and reach needy children from scheduled castes (Subbarao, 1989; Heaver, 1989).

Hiring women, becomes particularly important in reaching women. In Pakistan (Balochistan Primary Education Program) and Yemen (Basic Education Project), female teachers had to be hired before parents were willing to send female children to school. In Nigeria, hiring of female agricultural extension workers led to a tripling of the number of female farmers who were in contact with extension workers.

### ***Defining Who Controls Which Decisions***

In the typical extension approach, control and authority about decisions is retained by the agency, and the field agent is the messenger. In the empowerment approach, the agency sets the parameters or starting conditions of partnership, but the control over management details is left with the community.

In Zimbabwe, locally managed grazing schemes have been promoted by AGRITEX and heavily supported by donors. The planning system, which is centrally developed and applied to the local level, stipulates a particular technical design for grazing schemes, particularly paddocked dryland grazing. The technical option is not debated nor is account taken of existing management patterns which rely on a complex set of social contracts, conventions, and rules between individuals and groups. As a result, there is often tension and conflict with the traditional leaders and others who feel that the traditional system of deferred grazing in the low lying dambo area is the most appropriate.

In water and other natural resource projects using the empowerment approach, field workers offer a menu of options from which

the community chooses those which best fit its needs, and financial and management capacity. The agency defines the rules for partnership (for example, the amount of financial assistance available).

### ***Clarifying the Role of Information***

In the extension approach, where the primary purpose is information dissemination, social marketing and use of mass media in the program is of great importance. In the empowerment approach, the primary activity initially is confidence building through task involvement and tapping into people's knowledge, specialized information is introduced as needed. Local people are involved in producing information and tools for planning, education and monitoring through production of posters, drawings, street theater, puppet plays, and video. In the Gambia, for example, simple pictorial cards helped traditional birth attendants identify, refer, and monitor high risk pregnancies.

In the empowerment approach, mass media is used as a complement to interpersonal approach to publicize the availability of the program and to establish transparency. As local organizations are strengthened, it is used more extensively. In the forestry project in Gujarat, forest officers organized walks in which more than 1,000 volunteers participated from village to village to publicize the new co-management approach and hold community meetings. In Mexico, effective use was made of intensive mass media campaigns to create user readiness to take over irrigation management from government agencies.

### ***Establishing Accountability***

Within the extension approach, field workers typically have their heads turned toward the agency, which rewards, punishes promotes or ignores. In the empowerment approach, agents are accountable to community groups even when they are paid by agencies. To increase accountability some programs require that communities certify that staff have completed work satisfactorily; while in others, agency staff

are replaced by local people who are sometimes also directly paid by communities.

Even in extension approaches, where the primary purpose is to get families to accept the changes being advocated, dramatic changes have been achieved at relatively low cost by making agents accountable to communities. This can be done without burdening agents with community organization activities.

For example, in the Tamil Nadu Nutrition Project, two simple aspects of record keeping became central in public involvement in monitoring performance. First, child growth cards were stored not in registers but on shelves, with a pigeonhole for each grade of malnutrition. Thus it was possible to pull out immediately all records for severely malnourished children and to keep track of grade shifts simply by transferring records from one pigeonhole to another. Second, the monthly performance of each health worker was publicly displayed on a standard chart on the wall. At a glance, everyone could see how the key nutrition indicators for the village were moving and how well the health worker was doing in getting services to the scheduled castes as opposed to the general population.

#### **Box 9**

#### **Design Principles of Outreach Strategies**

- Be clear on objectives of outreach.
- Define outcomes to be achieved at the community level.
- Define tasks to be performed by field agents.
- Identify skills, characteristics, numbers needed.
- Design for accountability to local system balanced with clear and well-publicized job description.
- Build incentives for performance, supportive training and supervision that is affordable.
- Plan for evolutionary system; start with simple tasks.
- Expand only as capacity allows.
- Build in systemic monitoring so that systems do not freeze.

In the Ceara community health worker program in Brazil, accountability was induced through the interview process when 100 applications were received for each community health worker job. The interview process emphasized what would be expected of candidates if they were selected. Everyone is encouraged to become monitors of health agents and to report agents who are not performing well. While the field workers are paid by the state, they receive no contract, no benefits, no tenure, and can be easily replaced. They are provided supportive

supervision and training by nurse supervisors, and often become the pivot for community action in other areas as well (Freedheim, 1988).

In the Colombia Community Childcare and Nutrition Project, parent associations are responsible for hiring the community childcare mother and have decisionmaking authority over the government's investment in child care. In China, in agriculture and increasingly in veterinary services, villages hire agents who receive a bonus linked to increased productiv-

**Table 1**  
**Agency Outreach Mechanisms**  
**Differences Between Extension and Empowerment Approaches**

|  | <i>Extension Approach</i>   | <i>Empowerment Approach</i>  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Purpose</b>                                 | Information dissemination, delivery of inputs, demand creation, advocacy                        | Local capacity building; strengthening existing groups to achieve self-management  |
| <b>Nature of Task</b>                          | Supply of inputs, education   | Coordinated action over a prolonged period of time   |
| <b>Role of Field Agents</b>                    | Channel of information and inputs, liaise with technical agencies                               | Facilitator, catalyst, organizer;  |
| <b>Control over Decisions</b>                  | Control stays with agency   | Parameters established by agency; decisions made and owned by community through process of negotiation                             |
| <b>Role of Information</b>                     | Since information dissemination is a primary function, mass media and social marketing are used | Organization of goal oriented groups takes precedence; technical information introduced as needed                                  |
| <b>Accountability of Field Agent</b>           | To agency   | To clients, community groups   |
| <b>Characteristics, Skills of Field Agents</b> | Technical specialists, information specialists  | Community organizers, facilitors with limited technical know-how   |
| <b>Outcomes</b>                                | Use of inputs, increased demand for services, effectiveness, efficiency                         | Empowered groups managing services they did not manage before, group cohesion, cooperation, empowerment, effectiveness, efficiency |



**Box 10**

**The Philippines: The National Irrigation Administration's  
Capacity Building Approach**

After applying many approaches, the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) of the Philippines moved from an extension based approach toward farmer participation in irrigation schemes to a communally based approach. The primary difference between the two approaches was involving farmers in the decisionmaking prior to construction rather than after irrigation canals were built.

In the communally based approach, before any construction was undertaken, community organizers identified a leader, helped farmers create small groups in a turnout service area, and worked with an engineer to assist farmers in understanding the proposed plans. The groups were awarded small construction contracts to test leadership and develop their skills and organizational capacity. As construction proceeded, farmers were assisted in organizing the small groups into three zone associations covering 1,000 hectares each. Later the associations initiated negotiations with NIA top management and made an agreement on a system of sharing irrigation fees and operations and maintenance responsibilities. This process extended over a two-year period, with the intense organizing and capacity building phase lasting seven to nine months.

In order to implement this approach on a wide scale, NIA recruited a cadre of community organizers and supervising staff who were trained in participatory methods. Engineers were provided training on how to interact with farmer organizations and how to balance farmer needs with technology requirements. By mid-1985, the program had succeeded in turning nine of thirty-seven national systems over to farmer irrigation associations. (NIACONSULT, 1993)

ity as a result of the interventions they recommend. This provides an incentive for agricultural agents to become specialists in local subject matter.

***Defining Performance Outcomes Desired  
at the Community Level***

In the extension approach the agency's desired outcomes are the use of inputs and services delivered, and increased effectiveness and efficiency of programs. In the empowerment approach, the key outcomes are that households or groups at the community level have organized for self management and show increased capacity for coordinated action. In addition, management systems have been put in place so that the desired service flows are maintained and infrastructure, income or environmental changes have occurred.

**Client Responsive Agencies**

Client centered agencies are needed to ensure that demand is met and community self

management is supported by community field workers. To become client centered, agencies must be convinced to change their rules and incentive structures so that the benefits from client responsiveness are more important to the agency than the costs. Experience demonstrates that trying to support community based approaches without fundamentally changing institutional structures, rules and incentives creates problems (Wade, 1994).

***Generating Government Commitment***

There is sufficient experience to establish that government ownership and commitment to institutional reform is critical to bringing about changes in rules and incentives. Experience also shows that unless there is strong political and government support at the highest levels, changing public agencies to become client centered is often a long process. Such support has occurred, for example, with *Programa Integral para el Desarrollo Rural* (PIDER) in Mexico, NIA in the Philippines, public works programs in Indonesia, local government in

Paraguay, the Ministry of Forestry in West Bengal in India, and in Zimbabwe. The performance of the irrigation sector in Mexico is a notable example of rapid and successful institutional reform.

The critical question is how to bring about government commitment to change. Task managers have used two main strategies to

generate interest and commitment. First, they have used pilot projects as instruments to demonstrate alternative strategies. Second, they have used a variety of participatory techniques, including field visits, to generate interest and a commitment to new ideas and action strategies.

### Box 11

#### Group Organization and Empowerment: The Case of the Grameen Bank

Since 1985, membership in the Grameen Bank has grown by 840 percent from 171,622 to over 1.6 million in 1993, covering over 32,529 villages or about half the villages in Bangladesh. Total disbursements over the period 1985-92 expanded nineteen-fold and the repayment rate was consistently greater than 90 percent.

The key strategy underlying the Grameen Bank's success is its focus on empowerment of poor people's groups, especially women's groups. Group lending and savings mobilization, the central features of the approach, is based on collective responsibility for repayment of loans. With the assistance of Grameen Bank outreach workers, five to eight poor people organize themselves into a group to apply for a loan. Credits are issued from the Grameen Bank to two group members initially. Only when these initial loans are paid can other groups members receive loans. Therefore, if each individual member is successful, the group as a whole succeeds. Strict guidelines determine membership in any given group. Members are not allowed to own more than half an acre of land, cannot be members of the same household, and must face similar economic conditions, belong to the same village, and be of the same gender. These conditions of membership create a spatial and social cohesiveness among members of a group which has a positive impact on repayment.

Under the savings mobilization approach, each member is required to contribute one *Taka* weekly to a group fund as individual savings. These savings are refundable when members retire from a group or drop out of the program. In addition, each member is required to pay 5 percent of the principal amount borrowed into a group fund. Group members can borrow against this fund with the approval of other group members and at an interest rate determined by the group, not Grameen Bank. Other Grameen Bank savings schemes include an emergency fund, a children's welfare fund and a special savings fund. Total savings mobilized through these various programs grew nearly 3,000 percent in the period 1985-92.

The Grameen Bank also supports its members in other forms of social development. With the assistance of Grameen Bank staff, group members are encouraged to open nursery schools at its centers, to distribute seeds and seedlings, and to improve general health, nutrition, and productivity. By 1993, Grameen Bank had helped groups open more than 16,000 schools with an enrollment increase in excess of 540 percent. In addition, Grameen Bank organizes training workshops on subjects ranging from nutrition to animal husbandry to family workshops which encourage family support and participation in Grameen Bank programs. The number of participants in this type of workshop has grown by over 655 percent.

While Grameen bank has generated these and other successes, it is important to note that it is highly dependent on subsidies for its financial success. Grants from various donors for central office activities contribute to its profitability and its viability. The gap between the interest rate charged on loans and the break even rate means that Grameen Bank would have to increase its interest rates by approximately 130 percent if all subsidies, especially for social activities, were eliminated (Khandker et al, 1994).

**Box 12**  
**Participatory Strategies Used by Task Managers to Create  
Commitment and Ownership of Policy Reform**

Task managers have used several strategies to lay the foundations for government commitment and ownership in bringing about institutional reform. This has included a willingness to proceed more slowly and focus more on process and stakeholder participation. The participatory process, although sometimes messy and chaotic, when complemented with expert knowledge results in setting up a process of change that does not constantly need to be bolstered from the outside.

The participatory urban sector strategy work for Cote d'Ivoire took two years and resulted in the development of three different documents: one from the Bank; one from the Ministry of Environment; and one from the Central Directorate of Major Public Works. This process, including disagreements over appropriate strategies, has served to benefit the relationship between the government and Bank staff. More trust has been established between all parties and for the first time the need for a sectoral strategy is recognized by the government (Solo, 1995).

In Benin, when government failed to act on a national transport strategy judged by experts to be one of the best in Africa, the Bank switched to a more participatory approach. A national workshop was held, bringing together more than 120 people from government, NGOs, truckers associations, drivers unions, the National Assembly, and public enterprises to debate alternative regulatory provisions. This led to a series of sharply defined consultant studies discussed at a second workshop. Based on these workshop consultations, the government tabled a draft strategy at a donor roundtable attended by members of the National Assembly and consultants. This strategy has remained intact through the Bank review process (Aronson, 1995).

***Linking Objectives, Strategies, and  
Indicators of Success***

Over time, projects in which the linkage between objectives, strategies, and indicators of success are clear and specific are much more likely to remain linked to the community than other projects. For example, an increasing number of projects that depend on well functioning user groups now include the formation and strengthening of viable user organizations as a key objective and an important indicator of success. In the Mexico irrigation sector projects, a major objective and indicator of success was the amount of hectareage being successfully managed by water user groups.

Indicators of success send important signals to staff about program priorities. If community involvement, reaching women or the poor, and numbers of functioning systems are not reflected in indicators of success, there is little incentive for staff to change their way of doing things to reach these goals.

Almost all projects that adjust as they implement, invest in numerous small studies which provide feedback on how different approaches are working. The Women in Development (WID) project in Gambia created a monitoring and evaluation unit during project preparation which honed its skills by carrying out several small studies. The Indonesia rural water project has developed a national system of monitoring key process and output indicators focusing on changes at the community level.

***Agency Autonomy and Accountability***

Agencies must have autonomy to create or change rules, control fund flow, and influence staff performance. When responsibility is fractured and lines of accountability unclear, maintaining the client orientation becomes difficult. Experience with rural water projects in Rwanda, Indonesia, and Nigeria show how difficult it is to maintain a client focus when decisions must be endorsed and actions finely coordinated between several agencies (Boerma,

1993). High visibility and pressure to produce results is important in ensuring that autonomous agencies do not become little fiefdoms unaccountable for performance.

Incentives for performance are easier to institute when agencies are required to be financially viable, have autonomy to manage themselves, and have control over staff hiring and firing.

**Box 13**  
**Supporting Institutional Reform in the Irrigation Sector of Mexico**

Mobilized by financial crises affecting the irrigation sector which resulted in 25 percent of Mexico's irrigated land going out of production because of lack of funding for proper O&M, the government took radical measures in 1989. In sharp contrast to long drawn out processes of institutional reform to devolve control and authority to users, Mexico has achieved remarkable change in less than four years. With support from the highest political levels, a national law was passed which transferred irrigation management to water users in a phased manner. All decisionmaking authority and responsibility for irrigation water management was transferred to users. The government assumed responsibility for training organizers and creating the policy environment to support the efficient working of the devolved irrigation systems.

The results were swift and dramatic. Since 1991, approximately 2.5 million hectares have been transferred to Water Users Organizations. O&M cost recovery rates have increased from 18 to 78 percent. Farmers have raised irrigation fees 400 to 600 percent. Most remarkably, in many areas farmers pay fees at the beginning of the irrigation season in cash which is then deposited in banks or used to buy needed equipment or complete maintenance. As a result, the formally bankrupt Water Users Organizations (WUOs) have become much respected and courted customers of private banks since they collectively raise \$250 million per year.

Each water district creates a WUO of 5,000 to 18,000 hectares which elects its own board with councils to run different parts of the program. The WUO is in effect run like a private utility, with sole authority to hire and fire staff, set and raise tariffs, deposit and borrow money, and set the time schedule for water distribution and the quantity available to individuals. Transparency and accountability to users have led to efficiency gains in many ways. For example, ditch-riders (responsible for water distribution and patrolling) were previously accountable to government, had low salaries and education levels, and were responsible for only 250 hectares. The WUO, by paying higher salaries, using modern equipment such motor cycles and mobile radios, now attract engineers who effectively cover 3,000 to 5,000 hectares.

On the government side, the focus has been four-fold. The first task was to overcome resistance from the chief "losers" of the reform process within, the National Water Authority (CNA), the chief government implementing agency. Measures included firing or transferring managers of irrigation districts who were often as powerful as the governors; gradually letting go of staff (replacing six unskilled staff with one); and investing substantial sums in retraining existing staff to orient them to their new roles. Second, to support this process within the agency and create receptivity among users, a large investment was made in carefully designed and intensive mass media campaigns. A skilled group of Mexican and international social scientists developed the campaign based on social analysis and applied research. Third, the CNA did not try to do everything at once. Focus was initially placed on districts in the best financial condition to breed success and generate confidence. For the same reason, responsibility was first transferred for secondary canals and drains and later for the main canals. Finally, the government focused on legislative issues, clarifying and giving property rights both for water and for land. Without land security, people have little incentive to make major investments in improving infrastructure. Clarifying water rights creates incentives to conserve and save water. This in turn has resulted in the emergence of local "water markets" where people sell water to those whose needs are greater and who are willing to pay (Simas, 1994).

### ***Supporting Local Control and Authority***

Responsive agencies provide a framework of rules which define interaction with different actors. They also negotiate rules of interaction to achieve mutually agreed upon goals.

There is usually a reluctance to hand over control to local groups because the assumption is that they will mishandle or hijack resources, and the resulting chaos will undo the hard work of the technical agencies. There is compelling evidence, however, especially from the irrigation sector, that the benefits of supporting local control and capacity building are high. The changes instituted in agency mandate, structure, staffing, and indicators of success supported by policy reform in the Mexican irrigation and agriculture sector are a case in point.

The most graphic examples of the importance of defining the parameters while supporting the evolution of local rules have emerged from the water and natural resource management

sectors. Projects with standardized participation forms and universal applicability of the same agency formulated rules have not worked and have become agency led rather than user led programs. Programs that have created the overall framework of rules of interaction between user groups and agencies, while also allowing the community to decide how to manage resources, have emerged with numerous variations in local rules that are managed, monitored, and enforced by local people.

Elinor Ostrom highlights this fact in comparing irrigation systems across and within countries (1990). For example, a study of a farmer led Karjahi irrigation system in Nepal found a diversity of rules even within one small self organized system; yet the system functioned well (Hilton, 1994). In contrast, Frances Cleaver (1990) in a national sample survey of more than 400 handpumps in Zimbabwe found that applying microscopic rules (such as how deep the community was required to dig) was a deterrent to community participation, local

#### **Box 14 Strategies to Determine What Works at the Community Level**

A variety of techniques have been used to get an in-depth understanding of why community based initiatives, spontaneous or induced by external agencies (whether government, NGOs, private sector, or donor) have worked or failed in a particular country or sector. When information is lacking about the micro level, decisions about needed institutional arrangements and policies are made on assumptions which may not reflect the local social, political, and economic reality.

Task managers have commissioned studies of existing projects and self managed initiatives by local and international social science researchers and institutional specialists so that they can draw out the implications of findings for project and institutional design. These are then presented at workshops involving government officials and occasionally NGOs to discuss overall strategies and identify areas needing further investigation.

In several water and sanitation projects, field trips have been organized involving city officials and university experts to visit successful community development projects. These visits encourage first hand examination of problems and opportunities associated with existing approaches. Such visits also help in stimulating the emergence of an agenda for reform.

Another strategy that is increasingly used is sending teams of local researchers skilled in participatory data collection to do intensive beneficiary assessments to determine perceptions of what is not working and suggestions about new approaches.

**Table 2  
Reinventing Agencies to Support Community Based Development**

| <i>Lessons from the Community</i>   | <i>Agency Characteristics</i>  | <i>Agency Mechanisms</i>   |
|---|--|--|
| Group must have a felt need for service; there is commonality of interest.                            | Agency is responsive to demand; knows what people want.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Demand assessment;</li> <li>. information campaigns;</li> <li>. craft a self-selection process;</li> <li>. institute outreach mechanisms;</li> <li>. social analysis to identify and understand key actors, their power, interests and needs.</li> </ul>  |
| Group controls and has authority over resources, decisions and rule making.                           | Agency foregoes control over implementation details; spells out framework of rules for interaction and negotiation with communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Define objectives and indicators of success to support achievement of local control;</li> <li>. reorient staff and performance criteria.</li> </ul>   |
| Local group has needed capacity, and skills; can mobilize financial resources for long-term survival. | Agency has local empowerment and capacity building high on its agenda.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Institute capacity building process;</li> <li>. invest time and resources in training;</li> <li>. new funding mechanisms that reach communities quickly;</li> <li>. focus on strategies for groups to achieve financial self-sufficiency;</li> <li>. phase in payment of outreach workers by community groups.</li> </ul> |
| Every group/community is unique.  | Agency plans for diversity and encourages local adaptation.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Use a learning process approach;</li> <li>. short planning horizons;</li> <li>. implementation plans modified by feedback from monitoring and evaluation.</li> </ul>  |
| In many cases, the poor and marginal, including women and indigenous groups, are left out.            | Agency focuses on reaching the poor and marginal.  | Focus on poor and marginal is reflected in objectives, institutional mechanisms, targeting strategies and indicators of success.   |

initiative, and problem solving. Similarly, uniform application of rules in grazing schemes, tree plantations, and woodlot management has proven counterproductive.

***Social Intermediation Mechanisms***

Programs that require co-management understand and develop plans based on existing social organization. The importance of social organization is increasingly recognized and

hence most agencies involve institutional and social science (noneconomic) expertise early in program development. Others have brought in social and institutional experts to provide advice when plans for community action have not gone as expected.

Understanding the social organization involves more than the decision about what sort of committees should be formed. It includes

understanding local leadership and power systems; who has control and access to resources; who are the key social actors; what are the local land ownership, tenure patterns, and use rights; the number, structure and functioning of existing informal and formal groups. In the NIA experience, baseline sociocultural profiles and process documentation played important roles in pointing the direction for institutional change. In Mexico, the National Water Authority has an in-house group of senior social scientists and communication specialists who design the strategy for community outreach, applied research, and communications. This is then subcontracted to the private sector.

The best technical plans can go astray when existing social organization, indigenous knowledge systems, local norms and mores are ignored, the best technical plans can go astray. In Bali, efforts to improve rice production were ineffective until the role of the temple priests and the already existing management system was understood and incorporated into plans.

### **Enabling Policies**

Community based development on a large scale requires enabling policies and political support to protect agencies so they can initiate the reform process and give it time to take root. Although individuals may play key roles in starting or protecting the reform process while it is still in the early stages, change can be sustained only if the rules and regulations at different levels provide incentives to work and organize. Three broad categories of rules are important: legislation, titles and rights; control and use of funds, and local fees; and changing other rules of the game. Also important is gaining political support or patronage in the right quarters.

### **Legislative Issues**

Legislative issues which govern the functioning of agencies and the relationship of agencies with other agencies and communities should be identified during sectoral reviews. This allows

for legislative and institutional reform issues to be discussed early during project identification. Key issues to examine include the mandate of agencies, redefining the role of government agencies as facilitators and regulators, civil service reform, new funding mechanisms, new systems of accountability for performance, legal status of community groups, simplification of legal registration requirements, individual, group or community ownership, and use and tenure rights over assets (particularly water, land and other natural resources).

### **Control and Use of Funds**

Agencies and communities have little incentive to mobilize resources if they do not realize any immediate benefits. At the agency level, when fees collected by agencies revert to central treasuries with no linkage to the agency's subsequent share of resources, there is little incentive to agencies to pay attention to tariff payment or collection. Dramatic improvements can occur when agencies are required to be financially autonomous, and have access to user fees.

It should not be assumed that centralized agency managed user fee collection is always the most effective way to proceed. One of the key problems to be addressed in the Bank supported NIA participatory irrigation projects in the Philippines was poor maintenance of irrigation canals. At the outset, it was assumed that the best way to solve the problem was to impose targeted increases both in the annual funding levels of O&M expenses NIA had to incur and in the total amount of irrigation fees it had to collect annually. However, this to the undermining of farmer managed irrigation, including fee collection, which was more efficient than NIA fee collection. Eventually NIA changed its rules and gave control to farmers. Farmer-managed irrigation schemes worked so well that NIA subsidies were eliminated in two years (NIACONSULT, 1993).

### **Changing Other Rules**

Many rules and regulations may need to be changed, from required qualifications of

**Box 15**

**Questions to Guide Decisionmaking About Community Based Development**

1. What are the benefits to be provided?
2. Can people be excluded from the benefits?
3. What are the changes or outcomes you would like to see at the community level?
  - physical outcomes
  - capacity outcomes
4. What is the community demand or felt need for the good or service?
5. Who are the key actors at the community level?
6. What is the role/function of the community actors in achieving outcomes?
  - financing
  - design
  - planning
  - O&M Construction
  - monitoring
  - corrective action
7. What is the community capacity to undertake these functions?
  - assess functioning of existing groups.
8. What is the agency capacity to support communities?
9. What is the appropriate outreach strategy — extension or empowerment?
10. How big is the gap between:
  - existing community capacity and needed capacity?
  - existing agency capacity and needed capacity?
11. What are the design features and strategies to invest in community capacity building?
12. What are the design features and strategies to:
  - restructure existing agencies to deliver?
  - redefine role of existing agencies?
  - bring in other intermediaries?
  - create new funding mechanisms?
13. What are the structures, incentives, and processes to make agencies client centered?

community workers, teachers, and health educators to procurement rules. In the Balochistan Primary Education Project, the quick spread of community managed schools for girls required several policy changes. Some of the key policy changes to ensure recruitment and support to female teachers from within the

village included lowering the minimum age to fourteen years and raising the maximum age to forty years, legalizing a mobile teacher training program, and "sanctioning" the school and teacher post through the Education Department Community Coordination Unit. Without these changes, no amount of community



participation and organization would have helped spread primary education to girls quickly. In making rule changes, attention must be paid to protecting accountability and performance.

### **Political Support**

When change is initiated on a large scale, there are usually losers and winners. Change is a political process which rearranges power structures and alters people's access to and use of resources. Most of the large scale community based approaches, especially those that have worked through government and have instituted rapid, radical change have had strong political support or patronage.

Judith Tendler (1993) highlights the positive and important roles played by "godfathers." Behind many successful stories of implementation stood a "good governor" or state secretary. The good governors provided protection from the pressure to hire mediocre staff or to fire excellent staff on political grounds; to make technically undesirable choices; and to delay in transferring funds from the central government. They have pressured agencies to produce results, and chosen one or two components of projects as their "signature activities" with which to leave their mark. Thus in Sergipe, the governor fashioned the project around rural water supply; in Piaui, the governor supported the land purchase component; and in Ceara, the small-scale riverine irrigation component won the governor's support. They have also mobilized their own resources, sometimes as much as three times the amount provided in the Bank loan, to support their favorite component within the time period of their tenure in office.

In Nepal, when the government decided in 1987 to promote farmer associations in irriga-

tion management through radical policy changes, the Bank responded with a \$20 million Irrigation Line of Credit (ILC) with technical assistance to support the project through the UNDP. The policy changes devolved power from a large central bureaucracy to lower levels, including farmers. These changes were made possible because of support at the highest levels, including the King, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Water Resources, and the Director General of the Water Directorate. In Mexico, the *solidaridad* program which devolves fiscal power to the municipalities has the blessing of the President.

The Gambia WID project survived the preparation process because of the strong interest of the President. At later stages, when it appeared that the project might not proceed, the President flew to Washington, D.C. to meet with the then-president of the World Bank, Barber Conable, to persuade him of the importance of the project to his country. Since then, the project has been designated one of the Bank's most successful, and strategies developed to reach women in agriculture have been incorporated in mainstream agricultural projects (Schmidt, 1993).

Godmothers play important roles as well. In Indonesia, wives of governors often play important roles in getting service delivery agencies to take on gender issues in a serious way. In Colombia, the community based day care program movement was actively supported by the wife of the President.

Many Bank projects that implement institutional reform, are led by reform minded senior civil servants with access to the country's top political leaders.

# 3. Designing Community Based Development Programs

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## **Defining Objectives: Clarity, Priority, Links to Outputs**

A surprising number of projects do not have clearly stated objectives logically linked to strategies, outputs, indicators of success, and physical or capacity building outcomes. Goal oriented planning tools such as ZOPP and the Logical Framework Analysis are aids in achieving clarity. These help in clarifying and prioritizing objectives and articulating underlying assumptions, activities, and indicators of success. Simple brainstorming meetings and discussions are also useful.

Establishing the priority of objectives is particularly important in community based development because as the pressure to produce tangible results builds, short cuts are taken, resulting in "build first, listen-dialogue-and-organize later." This is most likely to happen when there are no god fathers, when technical agencies are in charge, or when success is based on construction completed and inputs distributed, rather than services functioning, being maintained, and effectively used.

Project experience establishes that women and the poor are not automatically reached through community based projects. If this is a goal, it must be reflected in the objectives, strategies, and indicators of success. In such projects, targeting strategies that have low transaction costs becomes very important. Gender and poverty analysis tools are particularly useful. Early in project preparation, task managers have found it useful to be open minded about overriding objectives. These become increas-

ingly clear as project preparation proceeds. They may change radically, as happened in the Matruh Natural Resource Management Project, where objectives shifted from livestock to natural resource management. To avoid designing complex projects with multiple and competing objectives, a hierarchy of objectives that can change in importance over time can be developed, thus making the project manageable. In the Nepal Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project, the main objective is focused on institutional reform through creation of a fund mechanism.

## **Identifying the Key Actors, their Capacity and Interests**

Identifying the key actors at both the community and agency levels is critical. It should not be assumed that the community is the logical unit of interaction with support agencies. Households or groups within a community, individuals within a household, children, women, or those in particular occupations (such as farmers, informal sector workers, and the landless) may prove more appropriate.

Social assessment is an important tool in identifying key actors and their interests, the social organization which is in operation, and what aspects need to be strengthened or changed. At the community level, data from social analysis are helpful in identifying local laws, rules, and regulations governing interaction and access to resources. At the agency level, social assessment becomes an institutional tool to identify the interest and capacity of various service delivery agencies to support community based development. Based on this

analysis, either other agencies are drawn in or fundamental reform initiated. This may encompass redefining agency functions, restructuring funding mechanisms, or adding a new cadre of staff to the organization.

Task managers find it useful to include national and international expertise in teams. Social scientists, including NGO or community development specialists, have been particularly helpful in identifying and sketching the workings of existing indigenous organization from which much can be learned about what does and does not work in a particular context. A range of participatory and nonparticipatory techniques and tools is now available. Guidelines for social assessment have been developed by the World Bank's Environment Department, Social Policy and Resettlement Division (ENVSP).

### **Assessing Demand**

Demand should not be assumed based on the perceptions of planners. Severe soil erosion, for example, does not necessarily mean that the community will demand a conservation project. Unsanitary conditions may not create a felt need for a sanitation project; unclear water and high morbidity, may not lead to a desire for a drinking water project. There is often a gap between the perception of planners and people's own assessment of their priority needs.

Many problems have arisen because programs have been developed on need assumed by planners rather than felt need or effective demand of communities. The review of 121 rural water supply projects showed that demand, as measured by commitment before construction and substantial financial investment up front in capital cost, was a significant contributor toward both project effectiveness and overall beneficiary participation in decisionmaking.

Assessing demand or felt need can be done using a variety of methodologies: participatory techniques (community self diagnosis, ranking of priority problems); beneficiary assessment or

"listening to the people" techniques (informal interviews, community meetings, participant observation); or contingency valuation techniques which gauge what people are willing to pay for different service levels. In assessing demand, data should be disaggregated by gender, wealth level, and other relevant characteristics.

Contrary to expectation, experience shows that willingness to pay can be greater for higher service levels, even though it may be nonexistent for lower levels of service. Demand is also influenced by the trust or confidence people have in the service provider; it is often low when government is perceived to be the provider. In the drinking water sector, people are often unwilling to pay small amounts for public standposts or community handpumps but are willing to pay high amounts for yard connections. People are not willing to pay if the money has to be handed over to government extension workers, but are willing to contribute large amounts if they manage the finances and retain control over the resources.

### **Crafting a Self Selection Process**

If collective action and some degree of self management are the goal, designing a self selecting process is important. Self selection is not a key strategy if delivery and use of inputs to a targeted group is the prime objective

Projects often identify a set of eligibility criteria for project inclusion. Thus projects that target the poor include poverty criteria such as "landless or less than 0.5 acres" or "only women can apply." These criteria function as a screening device. However, after screening, a process of self-selection must be put in place to maintain a demand orientation. Tasks also may be stipulated that community groups must perform before receiving project assistance. These may include mobilization of local resources and cash, formation of committees, demonstration of consultation with everyone in the community, and submission of a proposal. Some projects require legal registration, an important

factor if laws require legally constituted bodies before governments or banks can transfer assets to the group or involve the groups in decisionmaking.

The single most important self selection strategy is to institute a significant financial contribution up front before any project outputs are delivered. Many projects now require communities to enter contracts and sign documents which detail mutual responsibility. These are useful only to the extent that people understand what they are signing and when there are enforcement mechanisms on both sides (community and agency) to keep the other party accountable.

### **Structuring Subsidies That Do Not Distort Demand**

To ensure inclusion of the poor and to retain a demand orientation, it is important to structure subsidies so that they do not violate the principle of demand. Project experience illustrates that even the poor are willing to contribute substantial amounts through their labor or by accessing credit where available if the project meets a need and the service provider is perceived to be reliable and trustworthy.

Five approaches to structuring subsidies are common:

- the subsidy is indirect and is invested in strengthening community organization or capacity through outreach and training (Grameen Bank outreach systems);
- upper limits are set on the base amount; if higher service levels are desired, the community or user must pay (Indonesia rural water supply project for low income communities);
- where initial investments are high and beyond the capacity of the community, organizational tasks completed by community groups are used to gauge commitment

rather than requiring significant community contribution to capital investment (Sri Lanka rural water systems in areas where hydrogeological systems are difficult; and Senegal livestock centers);

- agencies defer or spread out large capital outlays until the community has proven their management ability and interest in the service (Pakistan Balochistan Primary Education Project; the government constructs a school only after a community has managed a community based girls school for three years; the government trains the teacher, provide school supplies and pays the teacher after the first three months); and
- agencies invest in the "trunk" or main network structures, and communities in secondary and tertiary distribution networks (irrigation; sewerage; pipe water systems).

### **Structuring Fund Releases to Support Demand**

A large-scale project may be perfectly demand driven, but if the flow of funds is not responsive, it is impossible to maintain a demand focus. Depending on the national and sectoral context, projects have used different strategies.

One approach is to decentralize the programming of funds closer to where they will be used. In Indonesia rural water supply, programming of funds has been devolved to different levels. The higher the cost, the further the project has to travel for approval. However authorities cannot tamper with the basic design of the water system. The Mexico National Solidarity Program devolved funds to municipalities which solicit proposals from communities.

Another strategy is to create new funding mechanisms inside or outside the formal government structure. The structure and

management of social funds falls in this category. Some have been established with independent boards (managed with a majority of NGO and private sector representatives) outside a particular ministry; others are semi-autonomous, but with high level protection, often under the wing of the President or Prime Minister. The Nepal rural water project under preparation is creating a fund through an act of Parliament for the rural water sector which bypasses the Public Works Ministry and opens the sector to competition. Another type of fund in this category are "indigenous funds" that support the development of indigenous groups.

Funding may also be channeled through intermediaries, NGOs, banks, and other multilaterals, particularly UNICEF and the International Fund for Agriculture and Devel-

opment (IFAD). The Social Action Program in Pakistan is providing \$10 million in financing to NGOs to organize communities and to support community based development.

### **Plan for Learning and Plurality of Models**

Community based development, especially the end of the continuum which aims for community empowerment, is by definition dependent on hundreds of discreet decisions made by individuals in communities. The review of experiences across sectors reveals that there is no single project form that is successful in all settings; projects have worked in some areas at certain times, and not at others.

#### **Box 16 New Institutional Funding Mechanisms**

Community based development requires that the authority to make decisions, disburse funds, and program needed technical assistance be closer to the community. However, devolution of government authority and resources, or reorienting bureaucracies, has generally been slow and difficult. In this environment, a number of increasingly radical mechanisms are being used, including privatization of assets and their management (from creating private water utilities (Cote d'Ivoire) to privatizing irrigation with strong user involvement (Mexico)) and using new project funding mechanisms to bypass existing structure of public sector agencies.

In Uganda, the Global Environment Facility has created a \$4 million trust fund to support the work of the Mgahinga and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest Conservation Trust. Each year, 40 percent of the trust's income will be used to provide incremental support for park management and related research. The remaining 60 percent will fund grants to help community groups develop alternative means of livelihood to harvesting forest resources. The trust fund is considered a pilot for two years after which it will be evaluated and further rules changes considered within the Ugandan National Parks Authority.

In Pakistan, under the Social Action Program, a \$10 million fund has been created to support community capacity building efforts and channel resources more directly to communities. The fund can be accessed by NGOs, the private sector, research institutes, and universities to support the policy reform package in the social sectors. To varying degrees, this package supports community involvement in resource or service management, primary schools, water, and health care. However, there is some resistance to the planned reform within those ministries that will be most affected by the proposed change.

In the Philippines, a forestry project is channeling money for community based development to a consortium of NGOs. In Nepal, a rural water fund is being created through special legislation for community based rural water systems. Any organization which meets certain eligibility criteria and is interested in working in partnership with communities can apply to the Fund.

Hence, it is important for the basic planning assumption to be one of learning embedded in local knowledge systems. The project must be seen as like to evolve, adjust, and change over time as needs change and as local organizations mature. This in turn means that project objectives and components may change over time in order to maintain a fit with community needs.

It is also important not to search for one universal answer or model for all times and all places, but to plan for multiplicity of implementation models. This is particularly important for projects that require communities to perform complex long-range tasks.

An increasing number of infrastructure (Tanzania, Brazil, Indonesia) and natural resource management (Burkina Faso, Mali, Egypt) projects are adopting structured learning as a specific strategy. These large-scale projects are based on a learning process approach rather than on a blueprint design. The focus is on a framework of principles and processes rather than implementation blueprints. Planning is on a yearly basis, with plans for the subsequent years dependant on previous performance. This allows for the evolution of plans based on experience, and fine tuning with time. Thus procurement of most materials is done on a yearly basis, budgets are indicative and flexible, and the project is conceptualized as a series of

sub-projects that are not implemented in a uniform way.

### **Invest in Outreach Mechanisms and Social Organization**

The level of investment needed in community social organization and intermediation is a function of the tasks expected of communities and the existing strength of community organizations. In general, strengthening indigenous or existing organizations is easier than starting from scratch, although in some cases this may be justified. If existing groups are dominated by the powerful and the elite, women and the poor may or may not be reached by them. groups. Hence, many projects that specifically target women or the poor invest in special strategies to reach them. This may include forming special organizations of the poor such as the Grameen Bank, the Self-Employed Women's Association of India, and women farmer groups in Nigeria and Gambia.

Perhaps the most important lesson that emerges is that there are no short cuts to strengthening local social organization for collective action. All short cuts for speedy implementation that circumvent local involvement in decisionmaking backfire sooner or later.

#### **Box 17**

#### **Steps for Designing Large-Scale Community Based Projects**

1. Clarify, simplify, and prioritize objectives; link them to outputs.
2. Identify the key social actors, capacity, and interests at community and agency levels.
3. Assess demand.
4. Craft a self selection process for subprojects, groups, or communities.
5. Structure subsidies that do not violate demand.
6. Restructure fund release to support demand.
7. Plan for learning and plurality of models.
8. Invest in outreach mechanisms and social organization.
9. Institute participatory monitoring and evaluation and feedback loops.
10. Redefine procurement rules to support community level procurement where appropriate.

## **Use Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation**

The temptation is great to freeze project designs once implementation starts, even though much is written in project staff appraisal reports (SARs) about learning, doing studies, and monitoring and evaluation. Learning is more effective and efficient when feedback is listened to and when changes are put in place. When people's suggestions are listened to, it is empowering and encourages innovation and responsibility. When people see information systems actually being used, it rewards form filling which otherwise can degenerate into meaningless "make work" form filling exercises.

The Gambia project used a very simple method to involve village women in identifying priority indicators for monitoring and evaluation. A consultant was hired to develop a list of indicators. These were taken to the villages and well publicized consultative meetings were held with women's groups who identified the key indicators from their perspective. These were then monitored by the project monitoring and evaluation unit.

## **Redefine Procurement Rules**

Procurement rules can hinder community initiative. When appropriate, these should be modified. International bidding and bulk purchase are hardly appropriate when projects consist of many subprojects, the nature and the timing of which will be determined by community needs and readiness.

Three strategies have been found to be useful. First, setting maximum unit costs, as in the Bolivia Social Fund. As long as the costs of local procurement did not exceed the maximum unit cost, local procurement was allowed with a system put into place for ensuring completion of quality work. Second, setting a cost threshold, below which communities procure goods locally based on market principles and above which procurement follows standard local bidding or international bidding as appropriate. Third, as in India, community projects are clustered to allow for economies of scale and to attract a larger pool of local contractors and NGOs.





# **Annex: Bank-Financed Projects Using Community Based Strategies**

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## **Summary Profiles of Selected Projects:**

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|--|----|
| BURKINA FASO - Environmental Management  | 42 |
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## BURKINA FASO - Environmental Management Project

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Duration: **1991 - 1996**

Cost: **\$25.2 m (IDA - \$16.5 m)**

Population Reached: **100,000 people who will receive full assistance in design and implementation of community land management plans, and 500,000 who will benefit indirectly.**

### **Institutional Framework**

Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAE) at national level.

Provincial *Terroir* Management Units and Forest Management Units, and Provincial *Terroir* Committees at the provincial level.

Agriculture and Livestock extension agents at the zonal level.

*Terroir* Management Committees at the community level.

### **Objectives and Strategy**

Stop and reverse the process of natural resource degradation in Burkina's rural communities.

*L'Approche Terroir*, a community based approach of defining and implementing natural resource management plans, has been pilot tested in approximately 20 communities and will be used to implement *Terroir* Management Plans (TMP) in 120 targeted communities.

Communities will design and implement a *Terroir* Management Plan (TMP) which addresses community natural resource management objectives and needs with the assistance of a multi-disciplinary team of technicians.

*Terroir* Management Committees, selected by the communities, will be formally recognized by authorities as representatives of the community and will be fully responsible for management of the *terroir*.

### **Indicators of Success**

An increase in soil and water resources, soil fertility, vegetative cover, agricultural productivity.

A decrease in soil erosion, bush fires, uncontrolled grazing.

Effective establishment of *Terroir* Management Committees.

Representation of all social groups in the committees.

Better awareness and greater commitment of the committees.

Effectiveness of the committee in solving internal conflicts and in dealing with community partners.

Successfully establishing the limits of the *Terroir*, finalizing the land use plan, redistributing land, negotiating the contract, and mobilizing people for the implementation phase of the management plan.

### **Institutional Reforms/Support for Learning Process**

The project has been designed and appraised based on the results of 20 pilot operations in natural resources management using *L'Approche Terroir* initiated over the last five years.

Territory coverage for extension agents will be reduced from 8 to 4 to enable them to assist in the initiation, implementation and monitoring of TMPs.

Project staff will receive training in group dynamics and communications skills in order to disseminate *terroir* ideas.

Implementation schedule will be adjusted annually in order to be responsive to community demand/ felt needs identified at annual review meetings.

Government services will be decentralized so that they can work more effectively/be more responsive at community level.

One-third of the budget is allocated to *L'Approche Terroir* development activities.

### **Role of Social Science**

An in-depth social and socio-economic study of the communities will be conducted as part of the *Approche Terroir*.

Existing technical staff at provincial level will be strengthened with addition of a sociologist and a socio-economist, among others.

Social scientists played an important role in project preparation and pilot phase in understanding basic land management issues and community reactions to project strategy.

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## ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT - Matruh Resource Management Project

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Duration: **1994-2001 (estimated)**

Cost: **\$29.5 m (IDA - \$22 m)**

Population

Reached: **61,000 Bedouins**

### **Institutional Framework**

Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation/  
Project Coordination Unit.

National Coordination Committee at National  
Level.

Project Coordination Unit at Governate Level.

Community Groups (CGs).

### **Objectives and Strategy**

Implement a program of sustainable natural resource management. Alleviate poverty and improve the quality of life of the local Bedouin population.

Community Action Plans (CAPs) will be designed and executed by Community Groups (CGs) with the help of project staff.

CGs will be small, socially coherent units based on existing tribal structure. They will be representative of all members of the tribe, will function as formal users groups, and will make local resource management decision regarding the CAP.

One female and one male Community Extension Agents (CEAs) will be recruited from each community to work with project staff and CGs to formulate and implement the CAPs.

### **Indicators of Success**

Specific output indicators include:

- number of CGs where work has been initiated;
- number of CGs where initial Community Action Plan has been prepared;
- number of community based resource management activities undertaken and/or completed;
- amount of research results made available to the public;
- number of farmers/households contacted by extension agents;

- number of farmers trained;
- number of trees/shrubs planted as firebreaks or for water conservation;
- number of livestock enterprises established;
- number of activities implemented under credit scheme.

### **Institutional Reforms/Support for Learning Process**

Four CAPs will be initiated in the first project year as a pilot phase to allow staff to learn by doing.

Project staff will be provided with gender training as one of the first project activities. There will be a female extension coordinator at the Project Coordination Unit level.

Major emphasis will be on training extension staff on principles of participatory approaches. Ten to twenty will be trained in year one, 20-30 during year two, 40-60 during year three, and 60-80 during year four.

A pilot credit program providing credit to 14 communities over the first 3 years will be implemented to increase incomes and generate employment.

An annual survey of a sample of approximately 50 households per community will be conducted to determine who has access to project outputs and to adjust project implementation accordingly.

Approximately half of the project budget is for rangeland establishment and management, training, studies, and surveys.

### **Role of Social Science**

An environmental sociologist and an anthropologists took part in the appraisal and pre-appraisal missions.

A Participatory Rural Needs Assessment was done during project preparation. This has involved local people in the decision making process from the beginning of project design.

A beneficiary assessment will be conducted as part of the evaluation methodology.

## INDONESIA - Water Supply and Sanitation for Low Income Communities Project

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Duration: **1994-1999**

Cost: **\$123.3m (IBRD- \$80m)**

Population Reached: **2 million people living in poor communities**

### **Institutional Framework**

Directorate General (DG) Cipta Karya of the Ministry of Public Works responsible for technical assistance and guidance of local governments with regard to physical implementation of Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) schemes.

DG for Communicable Disease Control and Environmental Health of the Ministry of Health responsible for drinking water quality and health/hygiene education.

DGs for Regional Development and for Village Development of the Ministry of Home Affairs responsible for institutional arrangements, community participation, and O&M.

Local Government responsible for project implementation at district level.

NGOs.

Village Development Council and Village Water and Sanitation Committees at community level.

### **Objectives and Strategies**

To provide safe, adequate and easily accessible water supply and sanitation services and to support health/hygiene education for poor communities in rural villages outside Java.

Villages will be identified based on poverty, income levels, incidence of water-borne disease, water scarcity, water quality, infant mortality, and willingness to pay for operations and maintenance (O&M).

Village WSS Committees (VWSC) will be established within the framework of the village development council (LKMD) and will have a choice of technology if they can pay the costs over the government budget ceiling of \$25 per capita.

With the assistance of NGOs and Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSC), communities will prepare village action plans (VAP).

Capacity of communities will be built through technical assistance and training programs to handle

daily operational tasks such as financial management, repairs, and coordination among agencies.

### **Indicators of Success**

Quality of village action plans; amounts and dates of community contributions.

Number of people trained at community and official levels for construction of water and sanitation systems, O&M, financial management.

Population benefiting from improved water services; water availability per capita before and after project.

Reported breakdown rates.

Cost per capita of sanitation facilities.

Reduction in rates of selected health problems.

Economic benefits per household, etc.

### **Institutional Reforms/Support for Learning Process**

A 20-month pilot project working with 62 starter villages has provided lessons that are being incorporated into implementation as project expands.

Project planning in a one-year cycle with project design changes based on a review of a random selection of 10% of the participating villages.

Project preparation decentralized to the provinces.

Staff of government organizations trained in participatory and interactive methods.

20% of budget earmarked for capacity building at agency and community level.

Procurement procedures simplified in order to involve local contractors.

The flow of funds clarified and simplified in order to be responsive to community demand.

### **Role of Social Science**

Sociologists and anthropologists from the UNDP/World Bank Water and Sanitation Program played an active role in project preparation and appraisal, and will play a role in monitoring and evaluation of the project.

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## ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN - Balochistan Primary Education Program

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Duration: **1994 - 1999**

Cost: **\$120 m (IDA - \$106 m)**

Population Reached: **Increased enrollment of 380,000 students**

### **Institutional Framework**

Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) of the Department of Education (DOE) responsible for daily program operation.

Director for Management in DPE at provincial level  
Community Coordination Committee at the community level.

Village Education Committees (VEC) at the village level.

Families with girls who will attend the community school.

### **Objectives and Strategy**

(1) To improve access, equity and efficiency in primary education, particularly for girls, (2) to improve the quality of the learning environment for all schools, and (3) to improve the organizational framework, planning and management of the provincial system.

Community organizers from a local NGO will work with communities to form Village Education Committees (VECs) consisting of parents' whose girls will be enrolled in the community school.

VECs will be responsible for identifying a female teacher, providing land and a temporary building for the school, and for monitoring teacher and pupil performance.

The capacity of VECs will be built through consistent visits by community promoters, training activities and experience with implementing school improvements.

The government will provide training to female teachers, instructional materials, and, after three years of successful operation, will construct a permanent school building.

### **Indicators of Success**

Number of new rural girls schools established.

Increase in enrollment rate of girls in target area.

Number of Village Education Committees established and functioning.

Number of female teachers who have received training through the mobile female teacher training program.

Regularity of teacher and student attendance.

VEC impact at the DOE level.

Sustainability of VECs.

### **Institutional Reforms/Support for Learning Process**

In order to make the DPE more responsive to community needs, staff will be assigned more community liaison responsibilities and a management information system has been developed to provide monitoring information.

The governments financing pattern for primary education will be restructured to emphasis items that are necessary for improved enrollment, retention and supplies.

Community Coordination Units active at the community level will be established to serve as liaisons between beneficiary groups and the DOE.

A USAID-funded pilot project has provided lessons regarding the viability of VECs and community schools.

Further institutional reforms will be made based on pilot project experience.

### **Role of Social Science**

The pilot project was undertaken under the direction of an anthropologist with expertise in community development.

A local NGO with experience in community development in the local area was used in the pilot project to form VECs and continues to be instrumental in the community support process.

## INDIA - West Bengal Forestry Project

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Duration: **1992-1998**

Cost: **\$39 m (IDA - \$34 m)**

### **Institutional Framework**

Social Forestry Wing (SFW) of Forest Department is responsible for project implementation.

Village Panchayats.

Village Forest Protection Committees (VFPCs).

### **Objectives and Strategy**

Enhance forest productivity and conserve biodiversity by transferring responsibilities for forest and plantation management, protection and utilization to local communities.

Local villagers, either through their own initiative or with assistance of state forest department or NGOs, are forming Village Forest Protection Committees (VFPCs).

In exchange for protecting certain public forests, VFPCs receive free usufruct of all non-wood forest products, first preference for employment, and a 25% share in the net cash benefits from sale of certain timber products.

Village forestry micro-plans are being developed through discussion with representatives of different socio-economic classes so that the plan reflects their perceptions and needs.

### **Indicators of Success**

Tons of fuelwood, timber, fodder, poles and pulpwood produced.

Number of person-months of employment generated.

Amount of skilled manpower developed in social forestry development.

Area of forest protected.

Number of functioning VFPCs.

Number of villages involved in forest protection with SFW.

Improvement in attitudes of people toward forest production, environmental rehabilitation and protection.

### **Institutional Reforms/Support for Learning Process**

Government of West Bengal has agreed to share 25% of revenues generated from rehabilitated degraded forests with local populations.

State government has issued a policy directive formally recognizing VFPCs and making them partners of the Forest Department in managing rehabilitated degraded forests.

VFPC leaders are being trained in resource planning, use and conservation, microplanning and group organization.

Forestry staff are becoming people-oriented and developing the skill of involving people in forestry activities.

### **Role of Social Science**

A Social Issues Paper was prepared as part of project preparation.

Social scientists were instrumental in designing institutional arrangements for project delivery.

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## EL SALVADOR - Urban I and II Projects

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Duration: **1974-80**

Cost: **\$40 m (IBRD/IDA \$21.2 m)**

Population Reached: **50,000 poor urban people**

### **Institutional Framework**

Salvadorean Foundation for Development and Low Cost Housing (FUNDASAL) responsible for execution of low-income housing component.

Federation of Credit Cooperatives responsible for credit component.

Institute of Urban Life responsible for pilot upgrading works.

Family groups at neighborhood level.

### **Objectives and Strategy**

To provide low-cost urban housing, demonstrate role of private sector in this process, encourage community development programs, improve access to credit and technical skills for low-income families.

Beneficiaries were targeted based on four criteria - monthly income below C350, not less than two years residence in the area, desire to participate in group work, not owning a house of any type.

Beneficiaries were organized into groups of 20-25 families which constructed houses for all the families in the group over a period of 30-35 week-ends.

Family groups were trained in basic planning and organization skills and generally continued to work together on community issues after housing project was complete.

The mutual help approach substituted participation in house construction with cash down payments thereby increasing access by the poor.

### **Indicators of Success**

Number of housing units constructed.

Number of water and draining systems completed.

Rate of drop out from family groups once house was occupied.

Amount of employment generated.

Level of satisfaction of beneficiaries with new living conditions.

Number of family groups developed.

Rate of cost recovery.

Quality of houses.

Rate of economic return.

### **Institutional Reforms/Support for Learning Process**

30 trained social promoters, one for every 150 families, acted as intermediaries between the communities and FUNDASAL. They were recruited locally, were not civil servants, and lived in the communities.

Additional space for individual families to add on to newly built houses provided lessons for FUNDASAL on beneficiary preferences and needs.

Families received an individual lease/purchase agreement which transferred the property to them on payment of the last installment which had to be made before the end of five years.

Labor of beneficiaries was recognized as counter-part contributions to fulfill Bank financing requirements.

### **Role of Social Science**

A World Bank sociologist set up a social science unit within FUNDASAL to monitor and evaluate the project.

FUNDASAL staff were trained in sociological methods.

Inter-disciplinary World Bank teams supervised and evaluated the project.

## MEXICO - Irrigation and Drainage Sector Project

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Duration: **1992-1995**

Cost: **\$1,245 m (IBRD - \$400 m;  
IDB - \$200 m)**

Population

Reached: **425,000 farmers**

### **Institutional Framework**

*Comision Nacional del Agua* (CNA) responsible for implementation at national level.

Water User Organizations (WUO) responsible for operation and maintenance (O&M) at the community level.

### **Objectives and Strategy**

To decentralize irrigation funding and management, to become self-sufficient in operation and maintenance (O&M), and to strengthen institutional capacity of CNA and WUOs.

A communications program implemented through the mass media is informing farmers about the project and mobilizing them to form WUOs.

A WUO will be formed in each irrigation module of each irrigation district and will develop a Master Plan to address issues including water distribution, and irrigation fees, and WUO administrative and technical abilities.

Mexican Institute of Water Technology (IMTA) will train WUOs in cost recovery, operation and maintenance, financial management, irrigation scheduling.

WUOs will be given responsibility for irrigation systems in two stages - first O&M of lateral canals and minor drains, then for main irrigation and drainage canals as well as machinery.

WUOs will hire professional teams to carry out O&M.

### **Indicators of Success**

Degree of self-sufficiency of O&M.

Level of farmer participation.

Degree to which WUOs see themselves as a utility and a service company.

Progress in the following areas will be monitored and evaluated throughout the project period:

- studies;
- designs;

- environmental impact assessment and mitigative actions;
- civil works;
- procurement;
- repairs;
- operation and maintenance;
- cost recovery;
- transfer of responsibility to WUOs;
- institutional development;
- technical assistance.

### **Institutional Reforms/Support for Learning Process**

Local and regional units will be established within CNA to coordinate and provide training and technical assistance to WUOs.

Annual planning and review workshops will be held to review progress of previous year and identify issues which need to be addressed in coming year.

Approximately 8,000 CNA staff will be retrenched because they will be redundant due to the transfer of responsibility WUOs. CNA will increase its professional, technical staff by approximately 1,300 over the project period.

Modern mass media techniques will be used to explain the project to farmers and to convince them to support the program.

Agrarian and Water Laws provide a framework for concession of water rights to farmers through their WUOs.

A series of workshops will be conducted over the project period for state and regional offices to train staff in transfer of responsibility to WUOs.

### **Role of Social Science**

IMTA has a social science branch which will work with communities to form WUOs and train them in the principles of group dynamics.

The Food and Agriculture Organization provided sociological assistance in designing the communications campaign which was the main instrument of informing and motivating farmers to form WUOs.

Each Irrigation District has a sociological team which is coordinating the communications campaign.



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## INDIA - Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Project

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Duration: **1980-89**

Cost: **\$32m**

Population Reached: **780,000 children under three years of age, 275,000 pregnant and lactating women. Approximately 950,000 families and an additional 1.25 million women and children would benefit from improved quality and reach of health services.**

### **Institutional Framework**

Directorate of Social Welfare.  
 District Collectors.  
 Assistant Director at District Level.  
 Taluk Nutrition Officers at Taluk Level.  
 Instructresses at Block Level.  
 Supervisors at Block Level.  
 Community Nutrition Workers at Village Level.  
 Women and Children.

### **Objectives and Strategy**

Reduce the incidence of (1) protein-energy malnutrition among children under the age of three, (2) infant mortality rate, (3) Vitamin A deficiency among children under the age of five, and (4) nutritional anaemia in pregnant and nursing women.

A new cadre of part-time, female, paraprofessional Community Nutrition Workers (CNW) with assistance from newly created local women's groups provided nutrition education and primary health care, monitored the growth of the children, and provided supplementary feeding and health checks. CNWs were women recruited from the village, with an interest in health and nutrition, who were poorer than average but had healthy children.

CNW's tasks were small in number, manageable and likely to have a high impact on nutrition. Daily and monthly routines were clearly defined.

Training for CNWs was carried out at the block level rather than the regional level.

### **Indicators of Success**

Reduction of (1) severe malnutrition among children 0-36 months by 50%; (2) IMR by 25%; (3) Vitamin A deficiency by 22%; and (4) maternal nutritional anaemia by 35%.

### **Institutional Reforms/Support for Learning Process**

The project was confined to one administrative block for the first year, during which the implementation strategy was tested and refined.

A Project Management Fund was created to fund studies and research at the discretion of the project coordinator. The Fund financed 63 studies which identified issues/problems confronted during implementation.

At the micro level, women's groups, created of approximately 20 women with a particular interest in health and nutrition, were instrumental in explaining the project to the community.

CNW was accountable to the community. Public display of CNW's performance in achieving targets allowed for peer/group monitoring.

Nutrition and health statistics were monitored for each block monthly. Block performance was compared to norms and lagging blocks were singled out for corrective measures.

### **Role of Social Science**

Project design was facilitated by use of a USAID-funded nutritional study conducted by a multi-disciplinary team including behavioral scientists as well as nutritionists, economists and food technologists.

During first year of project implementation, interdisciplinary World Bank teams visited the project 3-4 times per year rather than only twice per year.

A wide range of mass media materials was produced under the communications component, including films, posters, wall paintings, pamphlets, and village theater script.

## SENEGAL - Eastern Livestock Development Project

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Duration: **1976-1986**

Cost: **\$8.9 m (IDA - \$4.2 m)**

Population

Reached: **30,000 livestock owners**

### **Institutional Framework**

Ministry of Rural Development and Hydraulics (MDRH)

*Société Anonyme d'Economie Mixte* (SODEFITEX) (responsible for project implementation).

*Projet de Développement de l'Élevage au Sénégal Oriental* (PEDSO), a project unit under SODEFITEX, (responsible for project management).

State Secretariat for Human Resources, Ministry of Education (responsible for functional literacy).

Pastoral Associations.

Pastoralist families.

### **Objectives and Strategy**

(1) increase beef production for local consumption, (2) improve exploitation of the country's pastoral resources and agricultural by-products, and (3) increase the incomes and living standards of 30,000 livestock owners in Eastern Senegal.

Pastoral Associations (PAs) were built gradually, and were well founded on existing socio-economic arrangements and on prevailing ecological conditions. PAs were created by the Pastoral Service after consultation with pastoralists, local leaders and authorities.

A functional literacy program and a technical training program in animal health and pasture management were instituted to give pastoralists the means to self-manage.

### **Indicators of Success**

Number of pastoral units and pastoral associations created.

Number of grazing management plans created and under implementation.

Number of wells constructed or repaired.

Vaccination coverage.

Number of firebreaks constructed.

Number of participants in the functional literacy program.

### **Institutional Reforms/Support for Learning Process**

A new implementing unit was established within SODEFITEX. Now independent, the unit reports directly to the Directorate of Animal Health and Production.

Additional extension posts (4) and outposts (65) were created in order to work with communities on planning and implementing grazing management schemes.

A post-appraisal mission was conducted specifically to work with the first 2 established PAs to test sociological methods for identifying and creating such units.

The grazing scheme component was implemented gradually, with three pastoral units established in year 1, thirteen in year 2 and 53 by the end of year 4.

Project area was declared a pioneer zone by the central government allowing SODEFITEX to extend 25-year leases over land and its waterholes to PAs.

### **Role of Social Science**

A social scientist was included in the appraisal and post-appraisal missions.

The inclusion of a sociologist in the appraisal mission resulted in a change in project design from a mostly technical project to a social and technical project which focused on organizing pastoral grazing units and building their capacity for rangeland management.

As part of project appraisal, a detailed sociological analysis of the area population, ethnic groups, production and cultural patterns, rural organizations was conducted in order to guide formation of PAs.

Project staff were trained to use sociological methods for establishing PAs.

A sociologist was included in yearly monitoring and evaluation teams.

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## BRAZIL - Water Project for Municipalities and Low-Income Areas

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Duration: **1989-1994**

Cost: **\$190m (IBRD \$80m; \$50m for PROSANEAR and \$30 for Campinas component)**

Population Reached: **Low-income project component will benefit 200,000 people with water services and 700,000 with sewerage. Campinas component will benefit 860,000 living in the city.**

### **Institutional Framework**

*Caixa Economica Federal*, a government owned bank, responsible for overseeing execution at central level of low-income project component.

Community organizations at block level.

### **Objectives and Strategy**

To improve health and environmental conditions of the extreme low-income urban population by providing water, waste water services and in-house sanitary installations, by improving solid waste collection, and by drainage.

Project focuses on the poorest of the poor by requiring that at least 40% of the families to be served should have an income of less than one minimum salary.

Choice of technology is up to the community as long as it is below the per capita construction costs of \$98 for water sub-projects and \$140 for sanitation sub-projects.

Consultants will be hired to organize community, create groups based on blocks and facilitate negotiations on fees and service between the community and the utility.

### **Indicators of Success**

Quantitative and qualitative data on community participation activities.

Engineering data.

Financial data.

### **Institutional Reforms/Support for Learning Process**

Through sustained dialogue with the project management group, utilities gradually accepted the idea of preparing plans with genuine community involvement.

Consultants were hired by the utility to act as liaisons between the community and the utility.

Sub-projects are being implemented in a phased mode to lessons from one project can be input into subsequent sub-projects.

Freedom of choice of community organizing method and technology is providing lessons which will be taken into account for subsequent sub-projects.

### **Role of Social Science**

A baseline socio-economic survey was done for every sub-project prior to implementation.



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