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# **Focused Impact Assessment 2003**

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Sri Lanka - German Development Cooperation

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## Abstract

Development agencies and partner institutions have increasingly become aware of the importance to assess the impacts that their interventions have on potential beneficiaries and clients. The basic idea is to give evidence and confirm the extent to which investment of public money is generating benefits. It is essential to systematically analyse lessons learnt and to identify good practices for improving interventions into development. Knowledge management is one of the important elements of professional development management.

The Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee (IFSP) has, since its inception in mid 1998 established a number of initiatives in monitoring its activities and in evaluating its programme as a whole. This impact assessment is in line with the earlier activities and provides a focused view on selected IFSP interventions, viz. infrastructure, small-scale business and income generation and attitudinal changes of communities.

The assessment complements the findings of the 'lessons learnt – best practices' mission of February 2003 (Schall et al. 2003, IFSP working paper 53) and provides a more detailed analysis of the impacts achieved by IFSP in the last four years of implementation. This 'focused impact assessment' was recommended by the 'lessons learnt – best practices' mission and was carried out by IFSP from April to June 2003. It looks in greater detail at the impacts of selected areas highlighted in the 'lessons learnt – best practices' report.

The impact assessment followed a qualitative approach carried out by a team of IFSP staff and external consultants, supported by the Centre for Poverty Alleviation (CEPA). The aim was to review the perceptions of the three main stakeholders with whom IFSP cooperates, viz. the rural communities, partner organisations (government and non-government) and IFSP. The survey provides a basis for adjusting IFSP's approach towards community development in transition.

The impact assessment consisted of focused group discussions with village communities, a beneficiary survey (household interview), a CBO assessment (structured questionnaire) and interviews with partner institutions and organisations. Among the large number of impacts documented in the report and its annexes, the most important areas are those that have a focus on bridging the gap between two types of intervention carried out by IFSP, viz. i) the more specific short-term projects with the aim on asset's creation and ii) the longer-term interventions aiming at community mobilisation.

The analysis of the impacts of asset-specific project interventions revealed the following trends:

- Common benefits as well as individual benefits with high investment cost are highly appreciated by villagers.
- The lower and higher impacts of infrastructure rehabilitation, especially from roads, are high and go beyond the sheer physical achievement.
- Individual projects arising from small-scale business and small-scale development, to some extent also infrastructure projects; require a proper targeting, extensive mobilisation and fine-tuned planning skills.
- Interventions based on regional roots with an independent, autarkic focus (mobile trading, banana cultivation, and paddy cultivation) are more sustainable than interventions, which are based on relatively high external support and advisory input (poultry keeping, goat rearing).

The assessment of the effects of the community mobilisation approach highlighted the following key features:

- Villagers and all involved institutional structures highly appreciated the active involvement in the process of planning implementation.
- Overall, structures on the village level such as community-based organisations show a strengthened performance.
- Newly formed CBOs demand high mobilisation.
- An integrated village approach with a strong participatory focus loses importance as soon as many development organisations are involved in a single village development.
- The combination of implementation on one side and awareness creation on the other was highly valued by villagers and partner structures.

Overall, the feedback from local implementing partners and service providers was much more positive and encouraging than expected at the outset of the survey. The experiences and lessons learnt from this impact assessment – both promising and ambivalent features – shall support IFSP to refine in its transition phase, provide usable knowledge for consideration in the preparation for a new IFSP (proposed by the Sri Lankan government and to be appraised in August/September 2003) and for other development agencies.

## Abbreviations

ACF	Action Contre la Faim
AI	Agricultural Instructor
BMZ	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung
CATAD	Centre of Advanced Training in Agricultural and Rural Development (Seminar für Landwirtschaftliche Entwicklung der Humboldt Universität Berlin)
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CM	Community Mobilisation
CEFE	Competency-Based Economics through Formation of Entrepreneurs
CEPA	Centre for Poverty Analysis
DAPH	Department of Animal Production & Health
DOAD	Department of Agrarian Development
DO	Divisional Officer
DOHS	Department of Health Services
DS	Divisional Secretariat
EHED	Eastern Human Economic Development
FFW	Food for Work
FFA	Food for Assets
FO	Farmer Organisation
GIS	Geographical Information System
GN	Grama Niladari
GO	Government Organisation
GS	Grama Sewaka (GS Division is the smallest administrative unit, Grama Sewaka is an officially appointed village head person)
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, GmbH
IFSP	Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
MoRe	Monitoring and Reporting
NECORD	North Eastern Community Restoration & Development Project
NEP	North Eastern Province
NEPC	North Eastern Provincial Council
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
PHI	Public Health Inspector
PPM	Project Planning Matrix
PPS	Provincial Planning Secretariat
PNA	Participatory Needs Assessment
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RDO	Rural Development Officer
RDS	Rural Development Society
Samurdhi	Government Poverty Alleviation Programme
SEDOT	Social Economic Development Organisation
SLF	Sewa Lanka Foundation
SS	Social Service
SSB	Small Scale Business
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
TZ	Technische Zusammenarbeit
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
VHV	Village Health Volunteer
WFP	World Food Programme

## 1 Introduction

In recent years, development agencies and partner institutions have become increasingly aware of the importance to assess the impacts that their interventions have on potential beneficiaries and clients. The basic idea behind this new trend is to justify the investment of public money, to systematically analyse lessons learnt and to identify good practices in order to improve future development interventions. This has to be seen in view of limited achievements of past development interventions. Knowledge management has therefore come to the forefront of professional development management.

The Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee (IFSP) has, since its inception, started several steps in monitoring its activities and in evaluating its programme as a whole. This impact assessment survey is in line with these earlier activities and provides a focused impact assessment of selected IFSP interventions (infrastructure, small-scale business and income generation). The report complements the report of the 'lessons learnt – best practices' mission (Schall et al. 2003, IFSP working paper 53) and provides more detailed analysis of the impacts achieved by IFSP in the last four years of implementation.

In addition to this survey, IFSP has conducted an in-depth evaluation of its minor tank rehabilitation programme. The Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with IFSP, is currently carrying out an assessment of seed paddy cultivation and the impacts of related departmental activities. These three studies aim at supporting IFSP and its partner institutions to streamline their interventions and activities according to the good practices identified and to make these available and known to other agencies working in related areas of intervention.

## 2 Concept of Food Security

The Integrated Food Security Programme Trincomalee (IFSP) aims at supporting people at food risk and affected by the conflict to diversify and intensify their food and income sources and improve their diet and health care (objective). This should contribute to sustainable improvement in the basic need situation, especially with a view to nutrition and food security amongst the poor population affected by the conflict in Trincomalee district as a precondition for peaceful co-existence and co-operation of the various ethnic groups in the district (goal). IFSP started in August 1998 with two phases until end 2003 (08/1998-12/2000 and 01/2001-12/2003). IFSP is at present in its final stage.

The concept of integrated food and nutrition security (FNS) promoted by German Development Cooperation distinguishes three dimensions of food security (BMZ 1997, 1998):

- (i) Availability of food at all times (is sufficient food locally produced or imported to be available at local markets?).
- (ii) Access to food at all times (do households have the purchasing power or other entitlements to buy food?).
- (iii) Use and utilisation of food according to sufficient dietary standards (do people prepare nutritious food and is their state of health able to absorb it?).

All IFSP interventions and activities are expected to support stability, which in turn constitutes the fourth dimension of nutrition and food security:

- (iv) Stability in an environment of conflict and crisis (does IFSP have the capacity to work in and on conflict?).

To overcome at least some of the constraints of the conflict, IFSP emphasises community mobilisation, people's participation and institutional as well as human capacity building. This should in the short- and medium-run encourage the use of local resources, enhance the demand for better services and at the same time increase the contribution towards rehabilitation and reconstruction. The focus on the dimensions of the ethnic conflict requires interventions, which reflect basic needs and priorities of war-affected people.

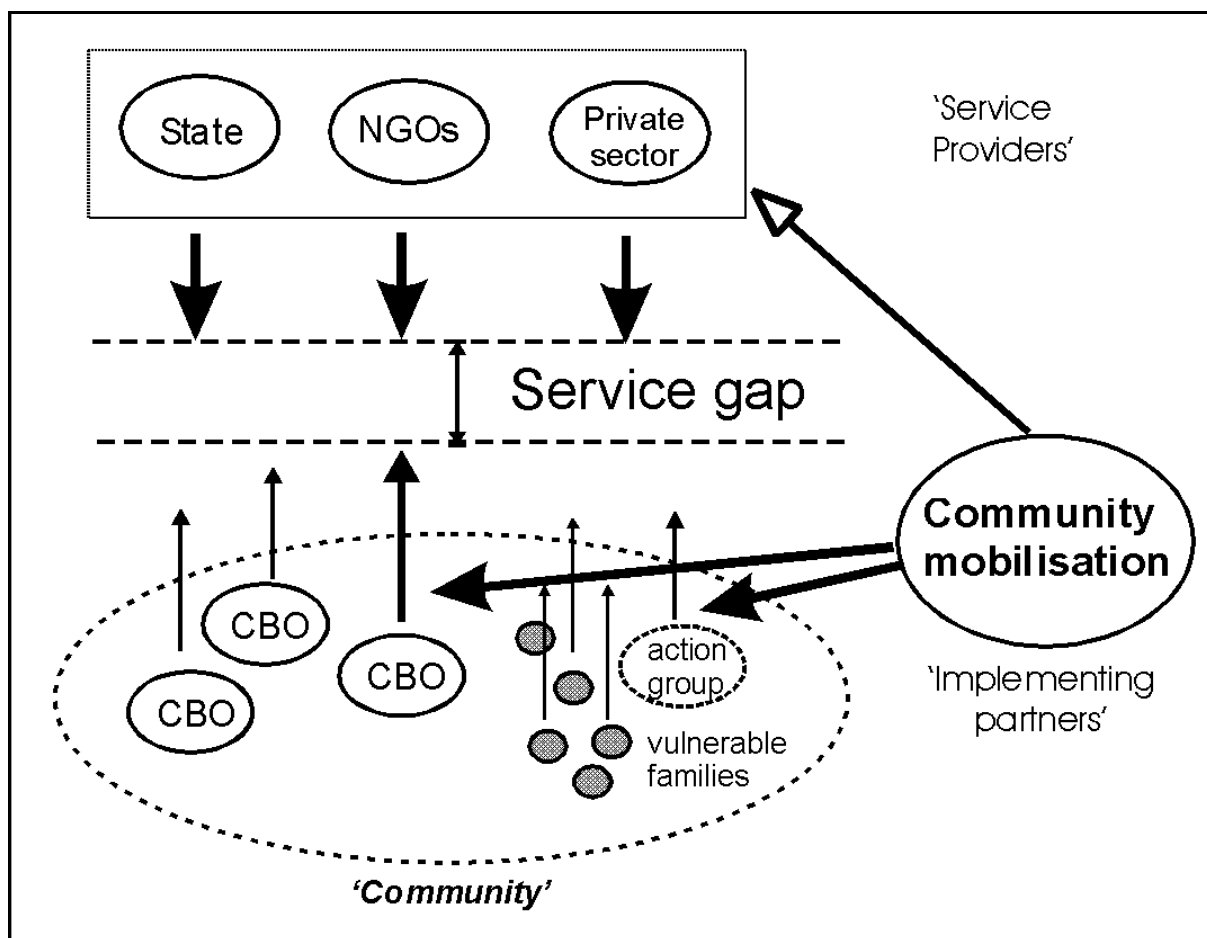


Figure 1: Entry points of community mobilisation

The interventions of IFSP are facilitated by community mobilisation that provides support on two levels: it encourages and facilitates local partners at the community level to take responsibility in planning and implementing their own projects. At the same time, it supports service providers, i.e. partners of IFSP at the institutional level, to provide better and more adequate services to local implementing partners.

### 3 Context of Utilisation: M & E for Impact Orientation

Monitoring is an integral part within the IFSP and takes place on many occasions, such as monthly, quarterly and annual reporting, regular PNA and project review meetings and field visits. The impact assessment complements the existing monitoring system of IFSP and partner institutions. The existing monitoring system mainly focuses on the activity and output level, whereas data on the lower and higher impact level (use of assets created, operation and maintenance) are largely missing, as outlined in the 'lesson learnt – best practices' report (Schall et al., 2003, Schenk in Schall et al., 2003; Schall et al, 2000).

Another point of view also mentioned by Trentmann, 2001 and Bigdon, 2002 is the qualitative dimension, which is not included in the present M & E system of IFSP. Therefore, in line with the lessons learnt mission it was agreed to assess the lower level impacts through an assessment, which focuses on the following aspects:

- specific assets created, e.g. rural roads for better access to markets and services, utility buildings, seed paddy outgrowing and agri-business, and
- assessment of how far CBOs are now in a position to tackle development issues themselves without further outside support.

The impact assessment would cover the **lower level impacts**, viz. change in attitude and practices like sustainable use and maintenance of infrastructure and economic facilities and to some extent also **higher level impacts**, viz. additional production and income opportunities, which are related to results 1 (promotion of production and social infrastructure), 3 (facilitation of services) and 4 (capacity building). The exercise would not cover impacts related to result 2 (health and nutrition) because the lower impact related to health and nutrition are covered – at least to some extent – in the regular monitoring system of the Department of Health Services.

Another important objective of the survey was **capacity building of the IFSP staff members**. Two key areas were included:

- Sensitisation towards tasks of IFSP in transition: one important part was the CBO assessment, which will be continued under the guidance of the IFSP monitoring section.
- Training in qualitative assessment methods: practising communication and dialogue by interviewing key informants, village communities and community based organisations.

Beyond the scope of the focused impact assessment are the following aspects:

- **Impacts on conflict mitigation:** the impact assessment complements the existing monitoring system and does not look at the impacts of the ethnic conflict on IFSP and the impacts of IFSP on the ethnic conflict (in the sense of a Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment, PCIA). However, self-help capacities of local CBOs towards conflict mitigation (of internal disputes) have been considered as important aspect in the study.
- **Anchoring M & E as integral part in partner institutions:** The team of the IFSP agreed with the follow-up mission that anchoring the M & E system within the partner set-up is an essential task and has taken place, to some extent in the department of health. Taking time constraints into consideration, it was recognised as unmanageable in the short remaining time of the project.

## 4 Approach and Methodology of the Focused Impact Assessment

In this section, the frame conditions of the qualitative and partly quantitative approach, its conceptual line, applied tools, sample selections, team composition and constraints are described.

### 4.1 Appreciative Inquiry

The qualitative assessment complements the monitoring system within IFSP, which is predominantly quantitative bases, while focusing mainly on qualitative aspects and, where feasible, also on quantitative aspects. Taking time constraints into account (IFSP phases out 12/2003), the impact monitoring follows a short-term assessment and focuses on the recommendations of the 'lessons learnt – best practices' mission.



The participatory assessment was undertaken in the framework of an **appreciative inquiry** and asked for the perceptions of three main stakeholder groups:

- **Community level:** villages, community-based organisations (CBOs) and households.
- **Partner organisations:** key informants and field officers in particular, working at the level of the DS Divisions.
- **IFSP staff:** community mobilisers and engineers, management staff and monitoring unit.

Views and opinions of these three main stakeholder groups have been incorporated in a **process of triangulation** (Figure 2).

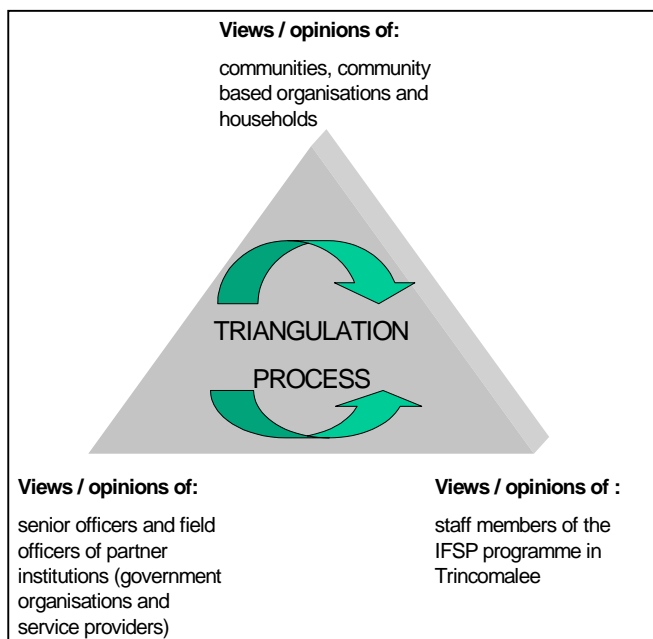


Figure 2: Triangulation of different views and opinions (mod., Schall et al., 2003)

## 4.2 Milestones of the Focused Impact Assessment

The impact assessment comprised four major phases, which are described below:

### ***Needs Assessment of M & E System (January to March 2003)***

In the beginning the M & E system of IFSP was thoroughly analysed and recommendation for adjustments were incorporated into the existing system. Lower level impacts had been partly covered. To include the qualitative dimension a proposal was elaborated and further fine-tuned in cooperation with the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) and the 'lessons learnt – best practices' mission of February 2003.

### ***Conceptualisation Phase (April 2003)***

The coordinator of the impact assessment developed a framework of analysis starting from the context of utilisation, defining the conceptual line and its main research topics. The coordinator developed semi-structured interview guidelines for focused group discussions and for interviews with key informants. This included the elaboration of research questions, structured interview guideline for the beneficiary survey and a refinement of the CBO assessment. Subsequently two workshops were conducted with IFSP staff to refine the interview guideline and the CBO assessment. Feedback from external advisers was incorporated in the design. The IFSP management agreed upon a team composition which included external consultants and two IFSP programme officers, who are not working in the villages where the assessment was to be done.

### **Empirical Phase (April to May 2003)**

The empirical phase aimed to cover two aspects: Knowledge gathering along the research framework and training of IFSP staff members in moderation and qualitative assessment techniques.

### **Dissemination Phase (July 2003)**

IFSP staff members and external support team cross-analysed the main findings in a workshop. The coordinator took over the refinement of analysis and further documentation of the results of the analysis in first draft report. Mr S. Srimanobhavan, staff member of the monitoring unit, worked on the analytical framework of the analysis and documentation of results of the CBO assessment. The results were presented to two main stakeholder groups:

- Partner institutions, international and national non-governmental organisations as well as donor funded projects in Trincomalee district and IFSP staff.
- Development practitioners, academics and scientist from various backgrounds that participated in an Open Forum conducted by the Centre for Poverty Analysis, CEPA, at the German Cultural Institute, Goethe Institut in Colombo. The feedback of the two sessions has been incorporated in the final report.

## **4.3 Conceptual Line**

The qualitative approach starts with very broad entry points to gather general impacts perceived by villagers and partners. In a second step, the inquiry deals with the working procedures undertaken and assets created by IFSP and partner. The third part of the assessment focuses on more specific parts, in particular an assessment of CBOs and their self-reliability, since most of IFSP's activities aim at strengthening the functional capacities of local partners.

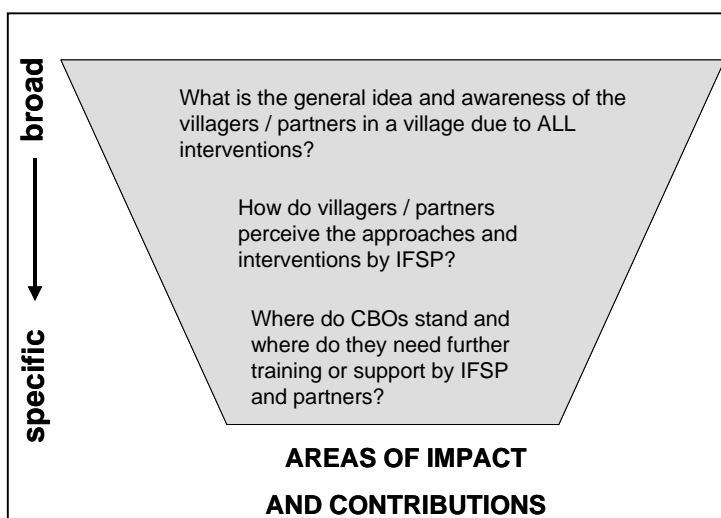


Figure 3 looks at the leading question for the assessment starting from broad to specific areas of interest with the aim to derive areas of impact and what has contributed to these impacts.

The impact areas and contributions are based on perceptions. This means that sometimes impacts and / or contributions might not be assumed beforehand. Other areas of impacts and contributions might not be mentioned, but have been based on the assumptions of e.g. the project planning team.

Figure 3: Steps of research towards impacts and contributions to the impacts

## **4.4 Qualitative Field Research Methods**

For data collection, the research team applied the following qualitative research methods:

- Focused group discussions along a semi-structured interview guideline in the villages provided the core of the collected data.
- Semi-structured interviews were carried out with key informants at the level of partner institutions and household.

- Beneficiary survey.
- Structured questionnaire collected the pattern of the CBO assessment.
- Selected Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) tools (institutional analysis and village assessment graph) supported the focused group discussion to stimulate communication in an alternative manner.

## 4.5 Field Phase and Analysis

### Crucial Points

Village communities and CBOs that have cooperated with IFSP in the past might try to answer in a way as to please the IFSP in order to qualify for future support. To reduce the incentives for such strategic answers, the following points played an important role during the field phase:

- To avoid that villagers try to please the IFSP, those programme officers in the survey team who work in another division and have not entered the village previously as visible IFSP member, were in charge of facilitating the focused group discussion, household interviews and interviews with key informants.
- The whole survey team did not wear IFSP T-shirts purposely to avoid associations of the answers with the IFSP.
- After each field day an evening feedback session was conducted to gather all field impressions and to triangulate the findings with internal perceptions from the staff members.

### Focused Group Discussions

Core part of the focused impact assessment was the focused group discussion that was shaped by a semi-structured interview guideline, to be applied in a very flexible manner. The team started the discussion with some key research topics that were seen as entry point for the group discussion. For instance, in the villages of Srinivasapuram in Muthur DS Division and Vallaiyoottu in Kuchchaveli DS Division the discussion started with impressions on the different organisations working in the village. To stimulate the discussion selected RRA tools were applied such as institutional analysis and ranking of the benefits and village assessment by drawing perceived development into a graph along a timeline and perceived turning points.

### Interview with Partner Institutions

Impressions from partner institutions on the divisional and field level were gathered along a semi-structured interview guideline, which had been handled in a flexible manner. Two important steps were derived: On one side, the interviews with partner staff revealed impressions towards the phasing out of the present IFSP and lessons learnt for future adjustments to be considered in the forthcoming IFSP. On the other side, interviews with the partner institutions built the crucial element for the process of triangulation, since it provided the perceptions of the institutional partners of the IFSP.

### Beneficiary Survey

For the small-scale business and employment projects (SSB) and other small-scale development projects, mainly rural infrastructure focused, a separate survey using a structured interview guideline was carried out with selected households (beneficiary survey). The questions asked aimed at information along the following criteria:

- Targeting of beneficiaries and interventions received by beneficiaries
- Number of SSB that are still functioning (success rate)
- Degree of independence of beneficiaries from outside support

- Advantages and constraints of the SSB carried out by the respective household
- Contribution of SSB to household income
- Suggestions for alternative SSB activities
- Marketing aspects.

### **CBO Assessment**

In late 2000, the IFSP team under the guidance of the project director Mrs Rohini Singarayer had elaborated a CBO assessment sheet during an impact monitoring workshop conducted by CEPA. The assessment sheet included fields of CBO' activities such as organising meetings, approaching outsiders for support etc. and in how far CBOs are able to manage these activities by themselves, i.e. without external support.

The CBO assessment sheet was later revived, improved, discussed in half-day workshop and tested in the field as preparatory activity of the impact assessment. Mr S. Srimanobhavan, staff member of the monitoring unit, coordinated the CBO assessment in close cooperation with the IFSP programme officers, and carried out the analysis and documentation of results. He will be also in charge for the follow-up.

### **Structured Interview Guideline**

All the interviewed CBOs were encouraged to discuss their functional capacities and to state for each of the different categories whether or not they require assistance for these activities from IFSP and partners, and if yes to what degree ('do alone'). The questionnaire was prepared keeping in mind that it should sensitise CBOs about their functionality as well as to provide a base for recommendation for the transition of IFSP.

<b>Self – evaluation by the CBO</b>	<b>Quantification</b>
CBO is self-reliable, "can do alone"	■ equivalent to 3 points
CBO could partly do alone with less assistance from IFSP / partner institutions	● equivalent to 2 points
CBO could partly do alone, however, would require much assistance from IFSP / partner institutions	▲ equivalent to 1 point
CBO can't do alone, requires high support from outside	✕ equivalent to 0 point

Table 1: Categories of self-reliability and method of quantification

A point system was introduced to analyse the CBO performance level. Four types of answers could be given to explain and qualify the indicators in each category (see also Table 1).

### **Analysis of the CBO Assessment**

Table 2 summarises the assessment criteria for levels of capacity to achieve the categories of independence by the respective CBO, viz. initiation, implementation and management and operation.

Level of Capacity	Category of Independence		
	Initiation	Implementation	Management
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Write letters/ request</li> <li>- Lobby for support</li> <li>- Access to institution</li> <li>- Networking with other CBO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Criteria formation</li> <li>- Beneficiaries selection</li> <li>- Overcome conflict during implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planning and identifying problems and solutions</li> <li>- Maintenance plan</li> <li>- Decision making ability/capacity</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start to implement decision made in meetings</li> <li>- Meet relevant people to go ahead in projects</li> <li>- Bring resource person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure contribution from villagers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain and display accounts</li> <li>- Negotiate and agree with villagers and amongst CBO members</li> <li>- Utilisation of available resources</li> <li>- Division of labour</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organise and conduct meeting</li> <li>- Inform villagers about meetings</li> <li>- Ensure villagers participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organise people to come for work</li> <li>- Organise material for work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meeting minutes and records maintained</li> <li>- Update project book</li> <li>- Conduct election regularly</li> <li>- Prepare agenda</li> </ul>

Table 2: Working areas of CBOs and level of comprehensiveness

For the analysis of the CBO, working areas were defined such as **initiation, implementation and management and operation**. Each of these working areas was divided in level 1,2,3 according to the comprehensiveness of the activity. Level one of all three categories were relatively easy to achieve whereas that of level two needs moderate efforts and level three requires more comprehensive organisational arrangement including a skilful communication with service providers and development agencies. The activities are listed according to the working areas.

During the CBO assessment, the functional capacities of the CBOs were rated according to the point scores achieved and each CBO was ranked according to three categories according to their self-reliability and performance: **i) self-reliable, ii) potential, iii) degree of independence**. The general trend of the CBO assessment is summarised in the report, while the details of the CBO assessment are documented in the Annex.

#### 4.6 Conclusions from the Pre-test

A pre-test was conducted in the two villages of Ethabandiwewa, Gomarankadawala DS Division and Kumpurupitty, Kuchchaveli DS Division.

The pre-test served to test the appropriateness and sensitivity of the questionnaires and survey design. The pre-test led to a re-consideration of village selection and a refinement of the survey design.

- **Better avoid villages with high organisational involvement:** According to the experience in Gomarankadawela DS Division where villagers complained about the number of meetings they had to hold for the different agencies working in the village (“you are the seventh organisation having a meeting in this week”). The survey team

decided to drop those villages that are 'over-aided' (a large number of agencies working in these) and therefore did not conduct the survey in villages in Gomarankadawela DS Division, but moved to Padavisiripura DS Division instead.

- **No involvement in communal conflict zones in Muthur (Muslim – Tamil):** During the field phase, the survey was in danger as such, because the ground conditions were unfavourable in Muthur DS Division due to communal violence which also restricted mobility. The IFSP management and the survey team took the decision to avoid villages affected by communal violence in Muthur. Therefore, Vallaiyoottu, an ethnically mixed village (T-M) in the Kuchchaveli DS Division and thus outside of the areas under tension was included in the survey.

#### 4.7 Selection of Samples

The survey team selected the sample villages according to specific criteria.

	Division	Villages and Entrance of IFSP and Partners	COMMUNITY PROJECTS, ESP. ROADS	Poverty Projects under Assessment
PNA	Muthur	Nalloor (2000)	√	
		64 <sup>th</sup> Milepost (2001)	√	Ba, Br, Seed
	Kuchchaveli	Periyakulam (1999)	√	G, Sew, P, Car, Mo
		Vallaiyoottu (1999)	√	G, P, Sew
	Padavisiripura	Seevalipura (1999)	√	G
		Vehergoda/Kalapura 2000)	√	G
non-PNA	Eachchilampattai	Punnaiyady	√	
	Muthur	Srinivasapuram	√	
	Gomarankadawela	Gomarankadawela town	√	

Key: Br = Brick making (interviewed, but not included in sample), Ba = Water Pump for Banana Cultivation, Car = Carpentry tools (interviewed but not included in sample), Sew = sewing machines, Mo = Mobile trading, P = poultry keeping, G = Goat rearing

Table 3: Sample villages and selected criteria

The criteria are i) PNA/ non-PNA village, ii) regional diversity, iii) entrance of IFSP and partners, iv) selected community and poverty projects implemented, v) different status of CBOs.

The status of the CBO (No. v) is based on a rough evaluation of the programme officers. The aim was to encounter a variety of CBOs with different levels of functional capacities. IFSP is working in more than 160 villages. Out of these, IFSP conducted PNA in 38 villages. Purposively six PNA and three non-PNA villages were selected for analysis according to different divisions (areas) and different types of community and poverty projects.

#### PNA villages

Six villages. Only larger villages were selected where IFSP has worked on a variety of community and poverty projects in order to allow a comprehensive analysis of different project types. PNA villages were selected from different GN Divisions.

#### Non-PNA villages

Non-PNA villages were selected according to the most widespread micro-projects supported by IFSP in order to sufficiently cover the most important areas of intervention. Those villages were also selected from different GN Divisions.

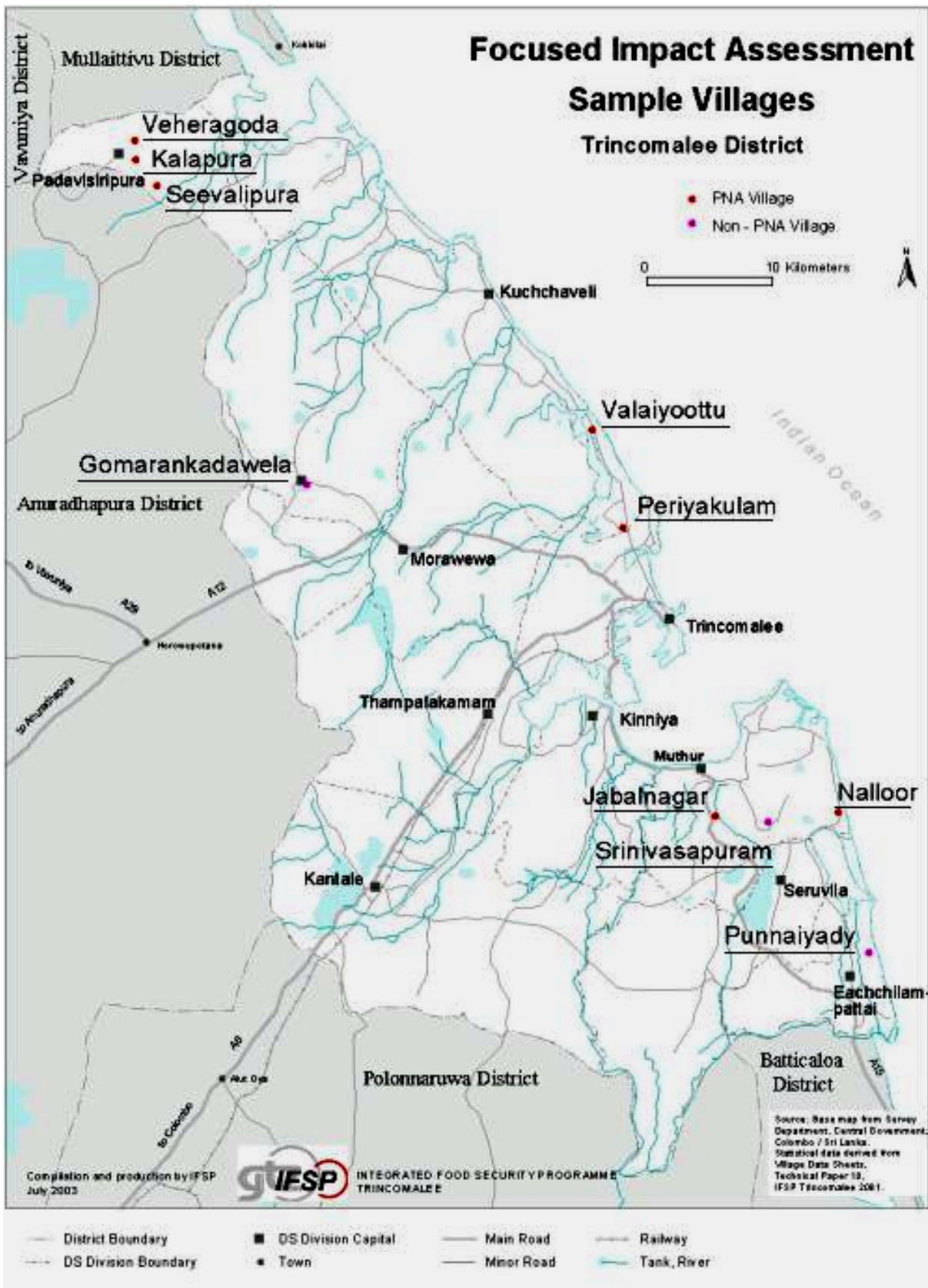


Figure 4: Sample villages of the focused impact assessment (underlined)

## 4.8 Team Composition

Two survey teams conducted the impact assessment. The internal support team (IFSP staff) was guided and supported by an external support team.

**Internal support team:** Eight programme officers (earlier called community mobilisers) and one Sinhala speaking secretary formed the core of the internal survey team, which was split into two field teams. For every field day one external support team member and two programme officers, who were new to the sample village, and either the monitoring officer or the coordinator of the IFSP community mobilisers joined the field visit. All in all, the two field teams conducted surveys in altogether nine villages. The coordinator of the community mobilisation unit at IFSP, assisted by one programme officer and the monitoring unit supported the conceptualisation phase of the survey.

**External support team:** Three external persons supported the focused impact assessment. Neranjana Gunitilleke, from the Centre for Poverty Analysis, CEPA, provided backstopping and joined some of the field visits. Shanti A. Sachithanandam and Suji Upasena, Arrow Consult, Kandy, both freelance consultants, guided the two field teams, moderated the evening discussions after the field visit, took over the documentation of the field visits and supported the analysis.

At each survey site, the respective IFSP programme officer in charge of the sample village, arranged the meetings in cooperation with the coordinator, however, did not take an active part in the field survey as such.

## 4.9 Traps and Pitfalls

### Beneficiary Survey

While conducting the interviews with the beneficiaries and afterwards during the analysis of the results, the survey team faced the following constraints:

- **Amount of income and contribution of SSB can hardly be captured**  
Many beneficiaries tended to hide their exact amount of income. Beneficiaries often refused to give a statement on the percentage of their contribution to the project. The survey team made the observation that in some cases, beneficiaries made false statement because they feared that they would have to repay the received benefits.
- **Invalid answers regarding the status quo of SSB**  
In some cases (e.g. poultry keeping in Vallaiyoottu) the statements of beneficiaries were cross-checked with the responsible programme officer. In some cases, the statements made in the beneficiary survey contradicted the impressions of the programme officers.
- **Limited size of samples and coverage of interventions**  
The size of the samples has been enlarged (60%) to make the results more representative. The number of small-scale business interventions shows a high variety (18 types of intervention). Therefore not all interventions could be covered. However, the impression of partners contributes to a more complementary picture.
- **Discussion with villagers and partners**  
In the discussion in villages as well as with members from partner institutions the survey team obtained the following impressions:
- **Precaution in verbal expression**  
In all discussion, a mixed team composition was present. Although the responsible IFSP programme officers did not participate in the survey conducted in their working places,



the survey team observed in some cases that villagers were careful in expressing all views and opinions.

- **To avoid pleasing IFSP**

External members added that villagers participating in the focused group discussions in Tamil villages rather tend to give a very positive or even too positive feedback to the survey team.

## 5 Analysis of Findings<sup>1</sup>

Among the large number of impacts documented in the report, the most important areas are those that focus on the idea of bridging the gap between two types of intervention carried out by IFSP, viz.: i) the more specific short-term projects with a focus on asset creation and ii) the longer-term interventions focusing on community mobilisation. This section summarises the key findings along the following lines:

- Cross-cutting perceptions
- Impacts of assets created by IFSP and partners with regard to rehabilitation of infrastructure, and employment promotion and integration into regional markets by small-scale business and small-scale development
- Perceptions on and impacts of community mobilisation.

For almost each of these points, more detailed information is covered in the annexes to this report.

### 5.1 Crosscutting Perceptions

**Trends**            *Common benefits as well as individual benefits with high investment costs are highly appreciated by villagers.*

*Women can benefit by specific interventions; however, specific integration into the working approach on the ground is a precondition to target gender with most success.*

*Impacts of the ongoing peace process are not perceived as major steps in initiating further development.*

#### 5.1.1 Perceptions of Development Interventions

In the first section of the impact assessment the general development of the villages was addressed. Village communities as well as service providers pointed out that all development assistance improved their livelihoods and initiated major steps towards development. The overall trend encountered in most of the sample villages showed a fundamental change in the situation of villagers during the last four to five years. In most cases, except Vallaiyottu in the Kuchchaveli DS Division, villagers perceived an improvement of their individual as well as the common situation as a result of cooperating with IFSP.

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<sup>1</sup> The following key for the villages names will be applied:

See = Seevalipura, V / K = Veheragoda / Kalapura, both Padavisiripura DS Division;

P = Periyakulam, V = Vallaiyottu, both Kuchchaveli DS Division;

64<sup>th</sup> = 64<sup>th</sup> Milepost, Sri = Srinivasapuram, N = Nallor, all Muthur DS Division;

Pu = Punnaiyadi, Eachchilampattai DS Division, Go = Gomarankadawela town, Gomarankadawela DS Division.

The most important **benefits** derived from development assistance through IFSP are the following.

- i) Rehabilitation and development of **rural roads** and transport facilities (canoe ferry service).
- ii) Establishment of **community centres or pre-schools** with a dual function.
- iii) Rehabilitation and development of **minor irrigation schemes** (minor tanks).
- iv) Establishments of **water supply and sanitation schemes**.
- v) Introducing **saving schemes**.
- vi) Provision of and **advice on small-scale business and employment** activities.

Though the prioritisation is not exact, because the samples do not comprise the same activities, it indicates a general line of perception.

The perceptions on benefits were discussed as village communities were asked to evaluate and rank the type of interventions along their perceived importance. The overall impression confirms that villagers appreciate community level interventions such as road construction, community centres etc., which are supposed to provide benefits for the whole community.

In terms of household level interventions high investment for e.g. toilets and wells were highly demanded and appreciated. The attraction of such kind of investment is very high and the competition to become eligible for it is tough. In case different organisations implement similar programmes, village communities evaluate the different offers. In the case of toilets in Vallaiyoottu for example, villagers evaluated the way of implementation by IFSP as ideal because the material, the way of construction etc. was assumed best among all other organisations supporting this village. Villagers were well aware about the different cost, types of construction and the way of implementation.

### 5.1.2 Gender

#### Objective <sup>2</sup>

In this section the focus is on the targeting achieved by different interventions. Within the set-up of IFSP, gender is anchored predominantly in result 2, health and nutrition and in result 3, support for small-scale business and employment for women headed households.

#### Impacts

The following interventions were perceived in the listed villages to explicitly target women:

- Toilets (Pu, Sri, V)
- Wells (Sri)
- Community Centre / Pre-school (V/K, V)
- Small Scale Business (P)
- Mobilisation of women (Pu)

#### Less workload and more facilities for social exchange

- **Better access to water facilities (Sri)**  
Regular bathing and free access to potable water was perceived as benefits. The improved access to wells reduces walking time and makes e.g. washing easier and facilitates the household organisation which by and large is the task of the women.
- **Pre-schools and community centres as multifunctional place (V / K)**

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<sup>2</sup> The impacts on gender roles and sensitivity concerning gender played in the survey a minor role. Impacts deriving from result 2, health and nutrition, were excluded from the assessment due to different reasons, e.g. impacts are to a certain extent recorded through the IFSP-DOHS village health teams at the Department of Health Services. During the discussion panel in Colombo this was especially questioned and some conclusions can be drawn even its was not explicitly in the focus of the study.

Pre-schools and community centres have different functions: they can either serve as meeting place or care taking place for small children.

## Combating social and physical vulnerability of women

- **Reduced harassment through access to toilets at the house compound (V, Pu)**  
The construction of toilets at the house compound of individual families reduces the exposure of women and hence, to become victims of local harassment. With an own toilet family members do not have to go to the nearby forests anymore.

## Conclusion

### Specific mobilisation of women contributes to strengthening their self-assurance

As shown in the example of Punnaiyadi (a non-PNA village in the 'uncleared area' of Eachchilampattai DS Division), a gender sensitive approach could provide quite astonishing results. Women expressed that due to the specific mobilisation (Box 1) they feel strengthened in many social aspects.

Considering that the support in small-scale business was only mentioned in Periyakulam, Kuchchaveli DS Division, it could be assumed that small-scale business and employment promotion was not perceived a specific woman supporting intervention. During the interviews, people rather discussed the problems associated with different support interventions than the specific benefit for more vulnerable target groups or women in particular.

#### Box 1:

#### Strengthening of women in Punnaiyadi by Virutcham, a Trincomalee based village NGO:

"Women now feel confident in literacy and speaking skills. They feel enabled to express their needs. They participate actively in public functions and know by now how to deal with outside organisations."

The experience of the NGO Virutcham (Box 1) indicates that a specific targeting of women could lead to success. One reason, as raised during the discussion, might be a gender balanced staff recruitment, which appears to better address cultural barriers between women and men. The male field officers have less access to women than female field officers do. In the case of the IFSP a gender-balanced staff was on the top agenda, though it was difficult to recruit qualified and motivated women.

## 5.1.3 Impacts of Conflict and Peace Process

### Objective

Though most villagers perceived a general improvement of the overall situation, the outcome of the cease-fire agreement of February 2002 (MoU) or / and an improvement of the overall economic and social situation played a rather minor role. In selected villages with close exposure to conflict (border villages or "hot spots"), the peace talks were noticed with a positive and negative connotation.

### Impacts

- **Positive impact in Gomarankadawela town, Gomarankadawela DS Division:**  
The MoU had a positive impact on the live of village communities, because the security situation is less tense and mobility easier than before.
- **Negative impact in Vallaiyoottu, Kuchchaveli DS Division:**  
Participants in the discussion in Vallaiyoottu stated that due to an increased influx of families for resettlement from the Wannu region, employment opportunities for local residents are in decline, because the labour supply has increased substantially. Secondly, the market demand for onions, the main cultivation product, is decreasing, because the produce from Wannu and Jaffna, previously cut off from the national market, now appears to recapture its rather dominating role due to higher quality.

## 5.2 Development of Infrastructure

The impact assessment focused on two specific and most important sections, the rehabilitation and development of roads and minor irrigation schemes (minor tanks). The following overall trend was encountered:

**Trends**            **The lower and higher level impacts of infrastructure rehabilitation and development, especially from the rural road net, are high and go beyond the pure physical achievements.**

**The revaluation of the sites had a significant impact on the economic and social situation in the sample villages.**

### 5.2.1 Rehabilitation of Roads

#### Objective

The rehabilitation of roads for better access to paddy fields and dry land, more direct and faster access to markets and services is one of the major areas of intervention of IFSP. Up to present, 237 km of roads were rehabilitated and / or developed. Identified during the PNA process or directly requested by the local communities, CBOs are responsible for the project implementation. CBOs are implementing partners of IFSP.

Projects are facilitated through Food-for-Work (FFW) and Food-for-Assets (FFA) respectively during the time of rehabilitation and development. FFW/FFA encourage local contributions in the form of labour input or material. IFSP effected a balanced food basket and, according to the local condition an additional cash payment, which reflect the local shadow wage rate.

One of the most important objectives of the impact assessment was to look on the lower level impacts of roads. Higher level impacts could be assumed. The IFSP monitoring system covers the number of kilometres and costs for earth works, culverts and structures; however, the perceived impacts were not yet gathered either from target groups or by conducting specific ground checks or surveys.

#### Impacts

The impacts are so diverse and significant that it is hard to put them in a nutshell. In general the rehabilitation of roads was perceived as a major step forward in village development and has led to social and economic revaluation of the villages. The main impact areas and further related impacts are listed below.

#### Integration into the regional road network

- **Increased mobility (64<sup>th</sup>, See, Sri, V / K, N)**

The most important sign for the upgrading of the villages is a noted increase of mobility. Participants in the discussion pointed out that an increased number of bypassing movements could be noted. In Nalloor, a very remote village in the 'uncleared area' of Muthur DS Division, people stated that the mobility has increased tremendously. Earlier, it was observed that up to five persons per day were passing by, nowadays up to 50 people are counted coming not only from nearby villages but also from neighbouring DS and GS Divisions. Similar statements were gathered from other villages, which are part of the regional road network supported by IFSP (64<sup>th</sup>, S/P, Pu, Sri, V / K, N). In addition travel time is reduced significantly (Sri, N).

More opportunities for income generation and diversification

- **Increased business and trade (N, V / K, Sri, See / P)**  
The number of shops selling food items, short eats; tea etc. has increased significantly. Traders have a better access to the villages.
- **Reduced potential for exploitation (S / P)**  
Due to the fact that more traders come to the village, the bargaining power of traders is weaker and farmers are less vulnerable to exploitation. This is especially relevant for the marketing of paddy.
- **Diversified income sources (See, V / K)**  
The access to the paddy fields has improved (See), (V / K). As a consequence farmers increase their family employment and can offer more farming jobs to wage labourers. In addition, at 64<sup>th</sup> Milepost, villagers stated that the conditions for mobile trading have improved and employment opportunities such as marketing of rubble, brick making have opened up.

### **Facilitated social set-up and improved living conditions**

- **Strengthening of social networks (See, P, 64<sup>th</sup>)**  
Villagers expressed that social contact with family members and friends have increased, because they can easier visit each other. Neighbourhood help has increased because villagers are able to rush to each other to help in times of medical emergencies. Villagers also told the survey team that the roads increased the social status of the village. This could be observed through higher respect from outsiders, indicated in e.g. new marriage alliances.
- **Improved security (N, Sri, neighbouring divisions, P)**  
The security has improved in two ways. Easier and more secure movements are now possible in Nalloor and Srinivasapuram. Even bypassing people from Eachchilampattai DS Division and Batticaloa district are benefiting. Recently, they had more options to avoid trouble spots during the wake of the communal riots of April and May 2003 due to the improved road network. Secondly, villagers in Periyakulam feel more secure from wild animals.

### **Better accessibility of services and facilities**

- **Improved access to health care (V / K, P, See)**  
A further related impact is better access to medical services even during night times.
- **Improved access to schools (See, 64<sup>th</sup>, Go, N, V / K)**  
An important aspect for villagers is the increased mobility for school children. Villagers feel safer if their children can walk on the street rather than on small overgrown footpaths.

### **Conclusion**

#### **Maintenance**

The most important aspect to sustain this range of impacts is the maintenance of the road network. In some villages (N, Sri, See) villagers stated that maintenance should be taken over by community work, Shramadana, (N, Sri) or that the CBO (See) is in charge to organise smaller repairs. For bigger repairs, other agencies or service providers have to be approached. Partners of IFSP pointed to the need of road maintenance in poorly populated areas, where Shramadana can hardly be organised.

The survey indicates that awareness creation with regard to maintenance of roads still needs some efforts, because in some other villages (64<sup>th</sup>, Go, V / K, P) the maintenance of roads was not perceived as a forthcoming task to sustain village development. There is some

evidence to believe that the accumulated involvement of different organisations in village development sustains the dependency syndrome that has originally been created by the strong government presence in the villages.

### **5.2.2 Rehabilitation of Minor Irrigation Systems (P, Sri, Go)**

#### **Objective**

Another major area of intervention is the rehabilitation of minor irrigation systems for paddy cultivation. Up to present 50 minor tanks were rehabilitated and developed. The impact assessment included the following villages with regard to tank rehabilitation:

- Periyakulam, DS Division Kuchchaveli
- Srinivasapuram, DS Division Muthur
- Gomarankadawela town, DS Division Gomarankadawela.

A selected case study has been carried out in Paranamadawachiya, Padavisiripura DS Division. Since IFSP has conducted an in-depth evaluation of the minor tank rehabilitation programme the impact assessment of minor irrigation systems plays a minor role in this study.

#### **Impacts**

##### **Higher income security (cash and kind)**

- **More cultivable area (P, Sri, Go)**  
Farmer representatives as well as villagers from the respective villages stated that the cultivable area has increased and thereby a higher income can be secured. Some field officers even estimated that the production has increased by 50% compared to the situation prior to the rehabilitation.
- **Less cultivation risk (P, Sri, Go)**  
In all villages, farmers now cultivate two seasons of paddy. Earlier, farmers partly depended on rain fed cultivation, which carries a far higher risk.

##### **Creating more opportunities for income generation and diversified nutrition pattern**

- **Wage labour opportunities increased (P)**  
Villagers who are not benefiting as farmers (landowners, tenants) can also benefit by increased opportunities for wage labour. The additional number of job opportunities might be an interesting point to analyse who is actually benefiting from rehabilitation of minor irrigation system and to what extent.
- **Fishing increased (P)**  
As additional income source, villagers in Periyakulam pointed out that tank fishing now plays a bigger role.
- **Water grown flower as additional food intake and business opportunity (Sri, P)**  
Olu and lotus leaves, which are water-grown flowers, are used in two ways. People started to collect the water grown flowers in the tanks. The flowers are either sold, which provides an additional income source or used for consumption, which diversifies the household food intake.

#### **Conclusion**

##### **Land ownership is a precondition for the rehabilitation of the minor irrigation system**

In one case of the rehabilitation of a minor irrigation system (Periyakulam), it was found that beneficiaries of land cultivation and beneficiaries of rehabilitation are not the same. As a consequence arising requests for land ownership have to be assured. Otherwise

maintenance of the benefits might be endangered; because those who finally benefit from the assets created have either not contributed or do not get involved in maintenance and operation.

### **Maintenance seems to be recognised as important task**

In most villages, the maintenance of the minor irrigation system was considered a regular task, which is coordinated by the farmers' organisation. Field officers of service providers confirmed that the information flow through service providers and the monitoring of progress is also taking place. However, maintenance tasks have often not been taken over by local farmers in the past since the perception that this would be mandate of the state prevails to a large extent. The in-depth evaluation of the minor tank rehabilitation programme provides a more detailed discussion of this and other related issues.

## **5.3 Small-scale Business and Income Generating Activities**

Findings regarding small-scale business and income generating activities were mainly derived from the beneficiary survey and interview with partners. A summarised version of the beneficiary survey is included in the Annex of the report. More detailed information is available in the original questionnaires available on request at IFSP.

**Trends**            *Individual projects arising from small-scale business and small-scale development require a proper targeting, extensive mobilisation and fine-tuned planning skills.*

*Interventions based on regional roots with an independent, self-reliable focus (mobile trading, banana cultivation, and paddy cultivation) are more sustainable than interventions, which are based on relatively high external support and advisory input (poultry keeping, goat rearing).*

### **Selected interventions and their status-quo**

- **Sewing machines (V, P)**

All persons, mainly women, who received sewing machines, are continuing their business. The advantages mentioned vary (experience, customer etc.). A supplementary income can be achieved, and there is a certain potential to expand the business. In some cases, sewing has been established as permanent income source. However, the most import constraint mentioned was the aspect of marketing and the need of being integrated in a network of customers. Beneficiaries expressed that outside support is required to support them for establishing a customer network.

- **Seed paddy cultivation (64<sup>th</sup>)**

Seed paddy cultivation (seed paddy outgrowing to secure certified seeds from local production) can be seen as regionally rooted and well-established income source. Among the selected cases, all beneficiaries are continuing this activity. However, having a closer look on the interventions, some factors are mediating such as a stable conflict situation, marketing, stocking facilities, cultivable land and adequate weather conditions. If access to credit is assured, beneficiaries feel able to sustain the activity. The profit varies and can be as high as Rs. 2.500 monthly.

Based on the discussion with the team from an ongoing, more detailed survey it could be concluded that many efforts e.g. the increase of cultivable land are needed to make seed paddy cultivation a permanent income source. However, farmers seem to be quite content with the seed paddy-outgrowing programme. Mixed cultivation would be an

alternative that many farmers have chosen. It seems to be recommendable to balance the risk factors. More details are to be obtained from the ongoing survey on seed paddy cultivation and establishing a seed paddy farmer's company.

- **Banana cultivation (64<sup>th</sup>)**

Banana cultivation is also an income source, which offers the possibility to be carried out permanently or as a part time activity. High input costs (water pump is issued at Rs. 20.000 by IFSP on loan base, Rs. 10.000 is the contribution from farmers) are required. High profit up to Rs. 2.500 per month can be achieved. However, the success rate of businesses that have started with IFSP support (66 %) gives the impression that certain experience and skills are essential to make the income source profitable. Mediating factors are also assistance from service providers, a stable political situation and access to marketing. Overall, the interviewed farm families felt capable to sustain their business.

- **Mobile trading (P)**

One of the most successful interventions is the provision of a pushbike for mobile trading. Investment costs are low; local circumstances, e.g. security and trading items are not a limiting factor, assuming that product for marketing are available such as fish or vegetables. A permanent income could be secured. Most of the people who received pushbikes continue their business. A word of caution: Mobile trading, though a quite successful small-scale business, covers by and large household subsistence and has limited potential for effective market integration and growth. However, since mobile trading is essential in serving remote villages, which prior to the MoU were cut off from village markets, this business is at present high in demand and serves its purpose reasonably well.

- **Poultry keeping (V, P)**

A rather difficult picture can be obtained from families who received farm chicken (15 birds per family) for backyard poultry rearing. People stated that this business could be carried out as part time job. The constraints such as high input cost for feeding, high dependency on outside support such as veterinary services, limited access to chicken feeds, limited management skills etc. indicate that poultry keeping is quite a demanding task and has its limits as full fledged small-scale business.

The success rate of poultry keeping initiated by IFSP confirms this argument (0 – 20 %). An alternate option could be to support the breeding of country chicken. This could at least contribute to diversify the food consumption pattern of rural households.

Nevertheless, some success stories could also be observed. In one case in Kalyanapura, a woman with good managerial skills has established a profitable small-scale poultry business with a high number of birds, which provides quite a remarkable income.

- **Goat rearing (V / K, See, P, V)**

The survey on goat rearing offers mixed results. The success rate in the interviewed samples (five villages) varies. In four cases it is in the range of 60 – 80%, in one village it is very low (28 %). The income derived from goat rearing materialises after some considerable time span, since the first kidding is expected after eight months only. Up to date, in some villages, the contribution from goat rearing to household income is negligible. In other cases the contribution to the monthly income varies from Rs. 1.500 to Rs. 3.000 depending on the marketing price, which is lower in rural than urban areas, the kidding rate and proper rearing conditions.

Overall limiting factors, such as in the case of poultry keeping, are the comparatively high requirements for advisory inputs such as veterinary services, special feeding required for higher breeds, which would, however, result in a higher potential profit. In addition, goats are quite destructive animals. In case they are roaming around, neighbours might be



affected. Problems between neighbours through the practice of letting cattle and goats unattended, which is a wide spread practice are quite common (V, V / K, P).

## Impacts

### **Increase of income to a limited extent - general increase of standard of living can be observed**

- **Supplementing income sources**

Different activities yield substantially different outcomes and thus, a rather diverse picture prevails. Most of the interventions (poultry keeping, goat rearing, seed paddy cultivation) are supplementing the already existing family income sources. The contribution to the family income is variable. Seed paddy cultivation seems to yield approx. Rs. 2.500 per acre and month on an average. In the case of goat rearing, the monthly contribution to income is between Rs. 1.500 up to 3.000 depending on a range of mediating factors (see above). It could become a primary source of household income if carried out successfully. In some cases, it could be assumed that the questions were not answered correctly (e.g. poultry keeping, fear of repayment of initial investment).

- **Potential substituting income sources**

The potential to become the primary income source and thus to substitute previous major income sources can be seen in the fields of seed paddy cultivation, banana cultivation and mobile trading. However, in the case of seed paddy outgrowing, some crucial mediating factors such as a stable conflict situation, extension services, marketing, stocking facilities, formation of seed paddy cultivators, cultivable land and adequate weather conditions have to be assured to achieve a more significant and sustainable impact.

### **Different income sources for different choices and skills of beneficiaries are needed**

- **Supporting small entrepreneurship**

As observed by partners and confirmed by single interviews with small entrepreneurs, particular success stories like extended poultry keeping, carpentry, pottery, brick making etc. depend on individual entrepreneurial skills.

- **The higher the influence of mediating factors the more skills and external support are required**

The numbers of mediating factors, which have to be considered, prepare the ground for the skill profile of the beneficiaries. In the case of paddy cultivation, quite a lot of conditions have to be assured such as marketing and the cultivation of the most profitable seeds. In the case of banana cultivation agricultural extension is required. For poultry keeping and goat rearing high advisory input has to be assured. These conclusions correspond with the observation that comparatively high financial input and knowledge can only be assured by well-trained beneficiaries.

## Conclusion

### **High mobilisation is required to reach the poorest of the poor in remote and war-affected areas**

It seems quite laborious to keep track of beneficiaries and to improve their skills, considering that a number of mediating factors affect the success rate of small-scale business projects and that a selection of beneficiaries, in fact, potential small-scale entrepreneurs, needs to be done in a careful manner. The questions to be addressed are: How do you know in advance that a person will be a successful entrepreneur? What would be required to enhance low-level entrepreneurial skills through e.g. CEFE?. Many of the poorest of the poor exactly lack the spirit of entrepreneurship and agencies should be cautious to urge them into small-scale business activities against their perceived will and capacities.

In the case of poultry keeping and goat rearing, partners urged for proper training and awareness raising to ensure the implementation and materialisation of income. However, some partners also questioned whether goat rearing and poultry keeping is an adequate intervention for the poorest of the poor who need immediate cash income instead. Here mobile trading looks more successful. Particular managerial skills are not required and the immediate cash income can be obtained. However, the market potential that allows people to do mobile trading in a specific area is limited. This keeps the number of people engaging in such business comparatively low.

### **Focusing on regionally rooted activities**

Taking the mediating factors into consideration, it seems to be recommendable to focus on regionally rooted activities. Beneficiaries who are farmers rather tend to diversify their activities than to start something new. This is also true for activities, which are culturally not rooted, such as poultry keeping or goat rearing.

## **5.4 Community Mobilisation**

The following overall trends have been encountered in interviews with partners and villagers:

- Trends**
- Villagers and all involved institutional structures highly appreciated the active involvement in the process of implementation.***
  - Community-based organisations show a strengthened performance.***
  - Newly formed or earlier dormant CBOs demand high mobilisation inputs.***
  - An integrated village approach with a strong participatory focus looses importance as soon as many development organisations are involved in a single village.***
  - The combination of implementation on one side and awareness creation on the other side was highly valued by villagers and partner structures.***

### **Objective**

The following key questions were the core part for the analysis:

- In how far is community mobilisation successful, less successful, and not successful?
- What is the impact of community mobilisation on the village level (CBO and communities)?
- What is the role of service providers in IFSP supported projects in planning and implementation? In which fields has cooperation been successful, in which field has it not been successful?
- How do villagers perceive the key elements of community mobilisation?

The CBO assessment was carried out as a complementary activity in the villages where impact assessment was conducted. The results of the impact assessment highlight how the CBO fares in its capacity. The CBO assessment would look at the detailed approach with which the CBOs are functioning. Emphasis was given to three major categories and levels of an institutional intermediate managerial set-up and its functionality, viz. i) initiation, ii) implementation and iii) management and operation. These three categories were the focused objectives to be judged by the CBO interviewed and to be assessed by the survey teams

with the aim to determine the degree of independence and integration of the respective CBO and village (see table 4: Working areas of CBOs and level of comprehensiveness, page).

### **General impressions<sup>3</sup>**

#### **Community mobilisation**

Village communities (See, V / K, N, 64<sup>th</sup>) as well as partners and CBO members agreed that the community mobilisation approach introduced by IFSP and practised in closest cooperation with partners and CBOs is a positive approach since it is people centred. The participatory concept, which was facilitated by IFSP was felt an indispensable core part in the community mobilisation process. The combination of awareness creation on one side and intervention comprising also contribution is considered a sustainable concept in the longer run. However, some aspects in the implementation, such as the use of FFW/ FFA and the selection of beneficiaries have to be considered carefully. Formations of criteria and internal conflict resolution were still perceived by the interviewed CBOs as the most challenging task. Most of the partners felt integrated into the process, however, more efforts could optimise the integration and therefore assure a higher degree of sustainability.

#### **Eachchilampattai DS Division**

This division is located in the 'uncleared area' south of Muthur and Seruvila with no permanent RDO at the divisional head office to support the CBOs. The field officers appointed to this area could not visit their duty station for many years due to security reasons. The CBOs had to function with restricted mobility and communication. These limitations were particularly applicable during the pre-MoU period.

The CBO assessment was conducted in three PNA villages: Illankaithurai, Illankaithurai Mugathuvaram and Verugal Mugathuvaram. CBOs, which worked with IFSP for the past three years were selected for assessment. RDSs from three PNA villages were included in the assessment.

- **RDS Illankaithurai (potential)**

The responses received from the members of the RDS Illankaithurai show that it could accomplish initiation and implementation at level 1 by itself due to the approach and early information from agencies and the earlier experience of the RDS. To achieve level 1, the RDS required some assistance to improve its management capacity. This support was obtained from elderly citizen, GS and RDO of the age. For initiation, implementation and management, level 2 and 3, the RDS needs moderate additional assistance to function better. The RDS Illankaithurai seems to be comfortable in the level 1 of each category whereas for the other levels of each category the RDS requires moderate help. Ad-hoc training sessions especially for networking capabilities were requested.

- **RDS Illankaithurai Mugathuvaram (potential)**

The public in this village cooperates with the RDS in a positive way that activities on level 1 of initiation can be achieved in a way that required little efforts. However, levels 2 and 3, implementation and management, call for moderate support. The financial status of the RDS requires service providers to equip its store with tools and to provide training. Public auditing, negotiation, utilisation of resources and division of labour are still in its infancy. Implementation and management (levels 2 and 3) need relatively strong backing, i.e. introductory sessions are essential for the officers from government departments as well as for the RDS to absorb services. The RDS Illankaithurai Mugathuvaram awaits relatively strong support from service providers to upgrade its capacity in order to provide services to the village.

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<sup>3</sup> Mr Srimanobhavan prepared the following section that covers the CBO village profiles.

- **RDS Verugal Mugathuvaram (self-reliable)**  
The RDS answered the questionnaire in a confident manner. They are able to practice the indicators mentioned in the level 1 of each category resulting from the experience gained from PNA and working with IFSP. The GS or other service providers recommend rendering limited support to push the RDS forward for a satisfactory performance in implementation and management (levels 2 and 3). It can be summarised that the RDS could accomplish self-reliance in due course, however, needs support for further strengthening its activities such as division of labour and utilisation of resources.
- **Conclusion for Eachchilampattai DS Division**  
The RDSs, which were interviewed in this DS Division, were performing reasonably well at level 1 of initiation, implementation and management. Except for initiation at level 2, all other levels of categories are in need of stronger services and support from government and other supporting agencies.

### **Muthur DS Division**

The CBO assessment was conducted in the four PNA villages of 64<sup>th</sup> Mile Post, Vaddam, Kumarapuram and Nalloor. These four villages are located in the southern area of Trincomalee district, nearly 100 km away from Trincomalee town by road. CBOs, which worked with IFSP for the past three years, were selected for the assessment.

- **RDS 64<sup>th</sup> Mile Post (self-reliable)**  
In this village the Muslim and Tamil communities live together and one single RDS represents the village. The RDS disclosed that level 1 of each category could be handled smoothly since the public has built-up trusts and cooperation vis-à-vis their efforts. The public and the village as a whole benefited from the decisions made during the planning and preparatory discussions and the implemented projects. Levels 2 and 3 of each category require moderate assistance from service providers particularly with respect to facilitate disputes or calamities. People feel that the RDS does genuinely work with a high degree of transparent accounts. However, people also feel that it is biased towards the Tamil community. The RDS at 64<sup>th</sup> Milepost could be proclaimed to be moderately self-functional and interventions of service providers would have to address the resolution of local disputes.
- **RDS Vaddam (self-reliable)**  
When IFSP started to work in Vaddam, the RDS Vaddam was representing two villages namely Thaqwa Nagar and Vaddam. Later new RDSs were formed in Thaqwa Nagar. The RDS responded that it could manage level 1 of each category because of the previous experience and training received from IFSP. As for the levels 2 and 3 they require little help to further develop their operations. Though the previous experience counts for the initiation, implementation and management, it is essential to involve service providers and / or agencies to help the RDS to move forward. The RDS at Vaddam could be proclaimed to be moderately self-functional and interventions of any service providers would have to focus on the resolution of unmanageable local disputes.
- **RDS Kumarapuram (limited degree of independence)**  
Kumarapuram is one of the ferociously affected villages during the peak conflict time. The RDS is still longing for members whose educational qualification is secondary level. Though the RDS has some past experience in representing the village for implementing development activities through IFSP and other organisations, it needs to be sensitised regarding its potential and scope of further growth. When IFSP commenced supporting development activities, the RDS had shown its readiness to learn more and practice some aspects in its function. It has great potential to grow. Capacity building would require quite some support e. g. planning, implementation and maintenance of projects, networking in general, account's keeping and public auditing.

- **RDS Nalloor (potential)**  
There was no CBO present when IFSP started to address this village. The village is located in a very remote area ('uncleared') and was hardly accessible due to the very poor infrastructure. In addition, the village was isolated from other villages because of its introvert society and the occupation of the people, reflecting aspects of caste and social disintegration. IFSP initiated and facilitated the registration of the RDS Nalloor with the Rural Development Department. During the year 2000 no government field officers visited Nalloor. The RDS was recently reformed. The office bearers require knowing how to lead and manage development activities. The GS plays an active to dominate role in the village and in the RDS. All categories excluding level 1 of initiation and implementation are in need of limited to more continuous support such as networking in general, beneficiary selection, account's keeping and public auditing, utilisation of resources, division of labour, identification of problems and decision making ability. If the RDS should function unsupported all the categories need to be addressed quite intensively.
- **Conclusion for Muthur DS Division**  
60% of the RDSs in the IFSP villages are functioning more or less well. The cooperation of the RDSs with IFSP is quite encouraging. When IFSP phases out these RDS still require support with a focus to strengthen the process of mobilisation of their members.

### **Kuchchaveli DS Division**

The CBO assessment was conducted in two PNA villages, viz. Periyakulam and Valaiyoottu North and South. These two villages are located about 40km north of Trincomalee town. CBOs, which worked with IFSP for the past three years were selected for the assessment.

- **RDS Valaiyoottu North (limited degree of independence)**  
This RDS was newly established. The former officer bearers are no longer in the administration of the new RDS. The experience of the former members is somehow shared with the new RDS. It is felt that this RDS lacks guidance. Though the member said that it could do the level 1 of all categories alone it remains to be seen whether this will happen. As the RDS was reformed four months before the assessment it has still not implemented projects supported by service providers and agencies. Other levels of categories require quite some efforts such as networking in general, beneficiary selection, account's keeping and public auditing, utilisation of resources, division of labour, identification of problems and decision making ability and organising maintenance. However, we could summarise that the RDS has the potential for growth.
- **RDS Valaiyoottu South (potential)**  
This RDS is also newly established. The active members of the former RDS are the office bearers. They still play an active role in the RDS, which ensures to apply their earlier experience. The RDS needs only a certain backing-up to achieve level 3 of implementation and the management especially criteria formation, conflict management as well as maintenance and problem solution capabilities. However, people are of the opinion that the RDS does not meet regularly and that they have lesser cooperation. This RDS has sufficient experience and it can function well with little support from government and other organisations. It could do networking with the Valaiyoottu North RDS.
- **Periyakulam RDS (potential)**  
The RDS could function well in the level 1 of all categories whereas other categories require moderate support from IFSP or other organisations. The members prefer to have training especially on accounting and report writing. They should be sensitised about their own managerial capacity. The RDS needs to practice human resource management. The division of labour does not seem to be adequate in the administrative set-up of RDS. The village community in Periyakulam feels that there is no public audit and there is fear that

the RDS could be manipulating the accounts. It could be concluded that this RDS could implement projects successfully with little help from service providers.

- **Conclusion for Kuchchaveli DS Division**

All three RDSs are functioning adequately so as to support village development. The RDSs have the potential to develop the village and their own capacity. However, a crucial aspect is that the RDSs depend on IFSP or other supporting organisations in their decision making process. Once these RDSs realise that the purpose of capacity building is better management, transparency and integration of villagers it would be easy to guide them towards self-reliance.

### **Padavisiripura DS Division**

The CBO assessment was conducted in the three PNA villages of Kalapura, Seevalipura and Veharagoda. These villages are located about 130 km north of Trincomalee town. CBOs, which worked with IFSP for the past three years, were selected for the assessment (RDS and WRDS).

- **WRDS Seevalipura (self-reliable)**

This woman RDS is capable of performing level 1 of all categories on its own. It requires only a small push from the service providers to enable them to cover other levels of categories. The WRDS was quite defensive while answering the questionnaire as the members mentioned that they could address almost all indicators under the assumption that no larger efforts were expected from them. The WRDS meets on fixed dates. Decision-making occurs during discussions. In case of different opinions a referendum is organised to resolve the issue in question. People are hesitant towards the FFV concept. The account supervisor who is also a member of the WRDS checks the accounts. This WRDS could play a vital role in developing the village. More awareness creation on the division of labour and utilisation of materials could optimise the promising performance.

- **RDS Veharagoda (self-reliable)**

This RDS requires little support on the level 3 of implementation and management. By and large it could perform the indicated tasks on its own since it worked with IFSP. This RDS could be proclaimed to be moderately self-functional. As in mentioned in the example of Seevalipura more awareness creation on the division of labour and the utilisation of material could lead to very good results.

- **RDS Kalapura (potential)**

The RDS has vast experienced in implementing, initiating and management. It needs limited support in the level three of implementation and management. When the public was contacted for their view on the CBO they emphasised that the CBO is transparent. Most of the members are aware of the account details. They trust and cooperate with the RDS leaders. This RDS has been well developed with the IFSP interventions. Nevertheless, the CBO needs to strengthen its networking capabilities and managerial skills such as utilisation of resources and division of labour.

#### **Box 2:**

#### **Statements on the Community Mobilisation Approach**

**Nalloor:** PNA seen, as forum for active involvement in planning should be introduced as compulsory procedure for newly involved organisations.

**64<sup>th</sup> Milepost:** Combination of sectors is useful (education, health, employment)

**Punnayadi:** "Before women and men did not talk to each other. Now participants are enabled and it has eased the problems a lot. If women think of a plan it is possible to get the help of men for that."

**Seevalipura:** "During the PNA the IFSP team spoke to us and used our ideas to make decisions. The meeting was very long, but it was worth as something useful came out of it. It was interesting, we felt like attending all the sessions. Most didn't participate, as they didn't think it would be useful. It took about a year to implement. The rest of the villagers accepted the priority needs of the participants."

**Veharagoda / Kalapura:** Participants stated that PNA helped them to think systematically. "We are now working together towards our own development. We can plan out projects but we need funds to implement fast."

- **Conclusion for Padavisiripura DS Division**  
All three RDSs are well functioning. The RDSs should further improve their capacities for management and maintenance of the village development activities.

#### 5.4.1 Participatory Approach

##### Impacts

***A participatory approach comprising contribution, integration into the planning process as well as awareness raising is increasing ownership***

- **Contribution and integration into the planning process (Pu)**

In Punnaiyadi (non-PNA village in Eachchilampattai DS Division) the contribution is recognised as part of the process and is recognised as empowering factor (toilet construction). The integration into the planning process increased the feeling of ownership.

Villagers want to be asked what is going to happen. FFW / CFW is recognised as better approach “than unknown contractors coming in and doing the implementation” (focused group discussion in Gomarankadawela).

- **Empowerment of women (See, Go, Pu)**  
In Seevalipura, Gomarankadawela and Punnaiyadi the contribution of women was related to the empowerment for women. However, the aspect whether the additional work also increased their daily workload could not be confirmed.
- **Awareness and contribution is a precondition for ownership**  
Most of the participants appreciated the combination of awareness creation and implementation, which includes the contribution of villagers in cash and / or kind. Some senior officers pointed out that the best way to achieve this is to talk, create awareness that GO / NGO can provide only limited assistance and finally, integrate the idea that contribution is required into the dialogue. In some focused group discussion (Nalloor, Seevalipura) villagers perceived the support by IFSP and partners as whole package whereas contribution by people is not perceived as compulsory. Field officers’ statements have confirmed that more mobilisation efforts are still needed to win people for contribution.

- **PNA is a entry point to avoid duplication of work**  
Some senior officials pointed out that PNA included an extensive planning process, so that further duplication of work as well as the selection of the same beneficiaries over and over again by different organisations and for different projects can be avoided.

**Box 3:  
Impressions from NON-PNA  
villages on the approach**

**Gomarankadawela**

"Didn't like external people coming in without the villager's knowledge, i.e. an unknown project brought in bull dozers and renovated Kirimatiyawa tank. However, it wasn't done properly and now the tank is worse than what it was and nobody in the village feels any sense of responsibility for it. " The villagers saw this as an opportunity for contractors to earn profits.

Respondents liked the IFSP approach of informing and involving villagers via the FFW method. They felt they had a say in their development and that the money was coming into their own hands rather than going to 'corrupt' contractors (their perception).

**Srinivasapuram**

"IFSP first had discussion with the people on the needs of the area. They asked how many acres would be irrigated with the tank. Then had discussions with the farmers' federation too on the limitations of raising the bund. Then brought the engineer who inspected and submitted his report. Afterwards brought a contractor to work on the site. The road projects were also discussed with the people. These are replicable methods. "

***PNA has increased skills in initiation, management and networking on the level of CBOs***

- **Structure, justification, calculations have changed in the new proposals**  
Partners have stated that the form and the way they receive proposals from the CBOs have changed. Proposals are more practical, include a prioritisation of needs and projects and most deserved projects are included. In some cases even the mixture of required materials is elaborated and additional arrangements are mentioned. In addition, the selection of beneficiaries is easier than before.
- **Perceived difference to NON-PNA villages**  
Some senior partners and field staff from partner stated that there is a difference in dealing with PNA and non-PNA villages. PNA villages are easier to work with.
- **Identification of marginalised groups is important**  
One of the core elements is the selection of the beneficiaries. Senior officers as well as field officers expressed their approval. However, to optimise the process, one senior official recommended, to separate dominating voices by consulting as many people as possible, not only the leaders.

***Proper invitation to all villagers and explanation on PNA is precondition for a successful process***

- **Assure high number of participants**  
As expressed by partners and villagers, a high number of participants is the best starting point for a broad participatory planning process. Therefore, a good invitation and a proper explanation about the objectives of PNA and the planning process are necessary. The higher the number of participants the higher the approval of decisions by those villagers who have not participated. This procedure avoids conflicts. Local schedules such as harvesting time have to be considered to assure frame conditions.
- **Integrating newcomers**  
Villagers as well as partners perceived that integration in the ongoing mobilisation process is needed. As soon as re-settlers have arrived or a change of the office bearers has occurred, newcomers need to be integrated into the process.

#### **5.4.2 Aspects of Process and Implementation**

##### **Impacts**

***Selection of particular beneficiary for cost intensive interventions (toilets and wells) could contribute to internal conflicts***

- **Depends highly on the involvement and integration of partner structures (64<sup>th</sup>, See, V / K)**  
The so called “toilet dilemma” has initiated internal problems in some villages (64<sup>th</sup>, See, V / K). In some cases (See), it has been observed that the exclusion of CBO members as beneficiaries gave them the feeling of being sidelined. However, in the mentioned villages, problems have been overcome by the high involvement of the capability of the CBO, integration of the DS, GS, SDO, and RDO.

In Veheregoda / Kalapura villagers agreed upon a higher contribution to assure one toilet per household. The survey team could still observe some discussion on the “toilet dilemma”. Some senior officers stated that they wished more involvement in the selection process. In Vallaiyoottu, the IFSP supported toilet programme was considered best because the highest portion of materials was provided compared to other organisations supporting this village.



- **Hidden or felt restrictions concerning common assets on private land**  
As soon as the assets are related to a common usage, beneficiaries hesitate to use and to maintain the assets e.g. common wells or toilets. Some of the reasons were: different responsibilities, maintenance of common usage on private land, restriction by the landowners etc.

***Newly formed CBOs such as action groups or dormant CBOs demand high mobilisation***

- **Vulnerable beneficiaries and remote areas require a high level of mobilisation**  
Actions groups for small-scale business did hardly work out. According to side impressions from the CBO assessment it can be assumed that very vulnerable groups, particularly with a lower educational background, require a higher support for initiation, management and networking. In addition, one field officer stated that in some cases there was a long time lapse between initiation and beneficiary selection. In the case of remote areas (such as Nalloor and Kumarapuram) similar indications have come up in the CBO assessment. The more developed levels of self-help capacities are still in its infancy and CBOs can only perform simple tasks in initiation and implementation (level 1 activities).
- **Personal benefits might be an incentive for action groups**  
In the case of toilets the newly formed action group worked out well (high individual benefits). The impact assessment assumes that high personal benefits encourage higher initiative.

***Cash for Work versus wage labour***

- **Wage labour is more profitable**  
In some locations, such as Seevalipura, the concept of Cash for-Work has been misperceived. Villagers did not find it reasonable to work for less than the daily wage (Rs. 190 instead of 300). Shramadana is not perceived as additional work whereas the food basket was convincing. A senior officer confirmed this impression. A more detailed discussion is included in box 4.

**Box 4:  
Side impressions from  
Paranamadavachchiya, Padavisiripura –  
Alternative of labour based methods  
and machine based methods:**

Labour based method: positive aspects – provides continuous wage labour (food and / or cash) to villagers for the duration of the project. Negative – Took approximately two years to complete.

Machine based method: Positive aspects – the tank can be deepened more, and would have been completed in three or four months which would have enabled two extra seasons and greater acreage to be cultivated. Negative – lack of continuous wage labour.

Whether the tank actually could have been deepened more by machines was debated as it was felt that ultimately the same amount of earth is required for the bund irrespective of the method used.

Given that the rains failed the previous year, thereby preventing the tank from getting filled even if it was completed sooner, it was felt that the labour based method was in this case more successful. It was also agreed that using machinery would very definitely necessitate greater external financial input as the villagers could only contribute labour.

### 5.4.3 Role of Partners and Coordination

#### *Partners feel a need to be more integrated*

- **The participatory approach is highly valued, but a higher integration of field officers is needed**

Without exception, office bearers from partner organisations appreciated the good relationship with the IFSP programme officers. Some described it as cordial. Others stated that the programme officers practice continuous sharing of information, joint discussion and decision-making. Furthermore, the assistance of the IFSP management was mentioned as very helpful.

The participatory approach was also highly valued by partners. Community mobilisation is seen as key for development. Field officers who have received training in project implementation still feel not confident enough to implement the approach in practice. Several office bearers of partner institutions pointed out that a higher integration into the working procedures is needed. Some officers remarked that the grass root level, such as SDO officers, have requested more training in the fields of writing project proposals and English knowledge.

#### *Access to partner institutions has been established*

- **Mobilisation motivates villagers and office bearers (N, V / K)**

In remote areas (N) and / or not covered villagers (see, V / K) villagers pointed out that they now feel more confident to approach office bearers. Vice versa, in selected cases (see, V / K) they feel more attended by services than before (post, AI). Villagers also noticed that officers now know them by name.

#### *CBOs feel a strong bond to a participatory village development approach*

- **CBO gained more skills**

All interviewed RDSs up to present believe that the RDS can realise the concept of participatory village development after working with IFSP. There is noticeable development in the functional capacities of the CBO when compared to before IFSP stepped in. The CBOs themselves could manage level 1 of categories. It is easier for the RDO now to have an effective approach to mobilise RDS towards effective development, after mobilisation has taken place.

- **Peace process enables more networking**

The signing of the MoU has had an immense impact for the general public and the CBOs of the villages. Now, CBOs can enjoy ties with other CBOs. The mobility improved tremendously. Considering these factors in the assessment, CBOs could still grow with the continuous focus on capacity building, strengthening, mobilisation and networking. However, further support would be essential for higher impacts and sustainability.

### Conclusion

#### *Institutionalisation of Community Mobilisation*

- **Participatory approach confirmed by partners**

Both, CBOs and service providers have confirmed the usefulness and importance of the participatory approach and the concept of community mobilisation for their own work in village development. They therefore demand a stronger integration and a further capacitating in those skills that are required to implement such an approach.

- **Attitudinal change is essential**

One divisional secretary argued like this: If attitudes of villagers can be changed you can

get the best out of people. To achieve this, leadership is essential: Village leaders as well as officers should act as a role model. This is important to motivate the villagers.

***Less involvement and / or more coordination of organisations can maintain effects of ownership***

- **Real mobilisation requires cautious involvement**  
People appear to expect continuous assistance. **Real mobilisation is not possible as long as there are external projects and institutions who provide assistance that is not embedded in a process of dialogue and negotiation.** Self-actualisation is delayed when external support is available. Receiving funds is not always the key problem. The challenge is changing the attitudes of people.
- **In over aided villages, ownership is difficult to achieve**  
The pre-test of this impact survey revealed that in “over-aided” villages, such as Athabandiwewa and Kumpurupitty, where a large number of agencies is involved in village development and often works with different, contradicting concepts, ownership is difficult to achieve.
- **Stronger coordination on the ground level is needed**  
Without a proper coordination of the fieldwork, duplication of work of different NGOs and agencies will occur. This could contribute to confusion and frustration.

***Partners in the divisional set-up need further strengthening to take over***

- **Institutional presence is the comparative strength of government**  
Since the governmental set-up will continue to be present in the village (whereas NGOs come and go), it is essential to enable the officers to perform their tasks in a participatory manner. As one field officer mentioned in the long run, only the SDO will continue working in the village.
- **Divisional secretariat can take up new roles in CM**  
Selected senior officials have identified a new role for them and their officers. New roles emerged from the successful community mobilisation process: i) monthly meetings with CBO leaders would be very useful for new initiatives from the community mobilisation process and, ii) in case of anticipated local conflicts DS officers could assist in solutions for conflict resolution.

One senior officer argued that the responsibility for community mobilisation is in the hands of the government. However, the required skills level of handling community mobilisation is still not rooted in government services. In the case of Morawewa, the field officer was confident that with the training received by IFSP a resource person could be made available to CBOs.

## 6 Recommendations

Overall, the feedback from local implementing partners and service providers was much more positive and encouraging than expected at the outset of the survey. The experiences and lessons learnt from this impact assessment, both promising and ambivalent features, shall support IFSP to refine its activities during the remaining time of the transition phase (6.1), provide usable knowledge for consideration in the preparation of the proposed new IFSP and to be applied by other development agencies (6.2).

### 6.1 Next Steps

The focused impact assessment was one complementary step in a broader process of monitoring and evaluation activities of IFSP. Most of the immediate steps discussed here are already in the process of being implemented.

- **Continue CBO assessment in Gomarankadawela and Morawewa**

Due to logistic constraints, the CBO assessment has not yet been conducted in the Gomarankadawela and Morawewa DS Divisions. To provide IFSP and partners with a comprehensive set of data on the CBO performance, it is recommended to replicate the CBO assessment in these areas.

- **Establish monitoring system for small-scale business**

The ambivalent experiences with small-scale businesses show that this area of intervention needs more care by IFSP and partners. One instrument to increase the support to beneficiaries is to establish a monitoring system for small-scale businesses.

- **Continue anchoring maintenance of infrastructure**

Maintenance of infrastructure assets remains a big challenge ahead, since past experiences of development projects has not been promising in this regard. IFSP and partners should therefore increase their focus on encouraging local partners and service providers to demonstrate their commitment to maintenance. Awareness raising, joint development of maintenance plans and further skills training as well as lobbying at the institutional level are some of the required steps to be taken.

- **Continue strengthening CBOs**

The CBO assessment has revealed the continuing need for strengthening the functional capacities of CBOs. The following specific factors are essential for IFSP and partners to during the transition phase:

Encourage local ownership: In some cases, local ownership is not yet sufficiently rooted and needs further encouragement.

Capacity strengthening on the job: Participatory planning skills, e.g. develop maintenance plans (see above). The CBO assessment documents the areas of support felt by local implementing partners.

### 6.2 In Future ...

The recommendations discussed in this section may not only be relevant for IFSP itself, since it is phasing out at the end of 2003, but even more important, they should be considered by other development agencies and the future IFSP, presently in its preparation stage.

- The survey results clearly show that the improved rural road network has provided significant benefits to the communities in the areas of Muthur and Eachchilampattai that were highly war affected and suffered from very poor access to markets and services. Thus, **improving transport facilities and road networks seems to be an area of intervention with high potential for development**. This would, however, require a broader planning framework in order to derive priorities for interventions. Up to now, the activities of different NGOs and agencies in road rehabilitation are not yet sufficiently coordinated. Another remaining challenge is to assure road maintenance under the mandate of established institutions, however, with people's contribution in particular in those loosely populated areas where collective action and Shramadana is not feasible to organise.
- Collaboration with local implementing partners can take many forms as practised by IFSP and other organisations. The more local implementing partners show their own strengths in handling their affairs; they should be assigned more responsibilities. Recently, IFSP has started to provide local implementing partners (CBOs) that have proven their functional capacities, with a village development fund for initiating local projects. Similarly, community work could be carried out in an extended and commercially oriented contract system with the community.
- The ambivalent results of the impacts of small-scale business promotion have highlighted a dilemma: These poverty group projects primarily aim at supporting vulnerable groups to complement their household income and thus improve access to food. However, poor people are often poor exactly because they lack skills or do not want to be entrepreneurs. In the future, **agencies should focus more on promoting entrepreneurship on a medium scale that creates job opportunities**, which may benefit poorer segments of the community. If such interventions can support the re-awakening of the regional economy in the North and East, this may be more successful in providing income to poorer households than a number of small projects with ambivalent outcomes.

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