



**Experiences from  
a sustained  
engagement with  
Comprehensive  
Land Development  
Programme**

# DEVELOPING THE FULL POTENTIAL OF ASSIGNED LANDS

**ANDHRA PRADESH**



**WASSAN**

inter  
cooperation  
Natural Resource Management  
Rural Economy  
Local Governance and Civil Society

# **Developing the Full Potential of Assigned lands**

## ***Experiences from a sustained engagement with Comprehensive Land Development Programme***

The use and sharing of information contained in this document is encouraged, with due acknowledgement of the source.

### **Contributors**

Main text by CH. Ravi Kumar with inputs from many individuals, representatives of NGOs and Dalit Organisations

### **Design and Layout**

T. Ravi

### **Photos**

Photographs by CH. Ravi Kumar, Firoz and Srinivas

### **Publisher**

Intercooperation India – Delegation, Hyderabad

### **Printing**

Charitha Graphics, Hyderabad

### **Citation**

IC NGO Programme

*Developing the full potential of Assigned lands: Experiences from Engagement with Comprehensive Land Development Programme*

IC NGO Programme Series 1

Intercooperation Delegation, Hyderabad, India

### **Copies available from:**

Delegation – Intercooperation India  
8-2-351/r/8, Road No.3, Banjara Hills  
Hyderabad 500 034, India  
Telephone: +91 40 2335 5891  
Email: [infor@intercooperation.org.in](mailto:infor@intercooperation.org.in)



## Contents

<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>4</b>		
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>6</b>		
<b>Foreword</b>	<b>7</b>		
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>8</b>		
<b>1. Genesis of the Comprehensive Land Development Programme (CLDP)</b>	<b>10</b>		
1.1 Historical - Political Context	10		
1.2 Programmatic Context: Watershed and RIDF Programs	13		
<b>2. Understanding CLDP as a Programme</b>	<b>15</b>		
2.1 Program Design/ Structure	15		
2.2 Operational aspects	16		
2.3 Mid-course corrections	17		
<b>3. CLDP in Practice</b>	<b>19</b>		
3.1 Preparatory process: Some observations and Issues	20	3.4 Support to Institutions of women and dalits: Process and Experiences	33
3.2 From Theory to Practice: Field findings and reflections	24	<b>4. Making a Difference</b>	<b>37</b>
3.3 Strong Women's institutions – what difference it could make	29	4.1 On their Own	37
		4.2 The role of NGOs	40
		4.3 Lesson we can draw	44
		<b>5. People's Monitoring Process</b>	<b>46</b>
		5.1 Initiative and the objective	46
		5.2 How is it different from 'Social Audit'?	46
		5.3 Efforts made	47
		5.4 The difference it could make	48
		5.5 Lessons from the process	49
		<b>6. Summarising overall issues and concerns - Future directions</b>	<b>51</b>
		Annexure - 1	53
		Annexure - 2	55
		Annexure - 3	56
		References	58

## Acronyms / Glossary

<i>AFPRO</i>	Action for Food Production
<i>AMR-APARD</i>	Alla Madhava Reddy - Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development
<i>APVVU</i>	Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vrittidarula Union, a federation of district agriculture workers unions
<i>BC</i>	Back Ward Caste
<i>CBO</i>	Community Based Organisation
<i>C.C</i>	Community/ Cluster Coordinator, a functionary of Mandal Mahila Samkhyas
<i>CEO</i>	Chief Executive Officer
<i>CIG</i>	Common Interest Group, a group of assignees selected in CLDP
<i>CLDP</i>	Comprehensive Land Development Program
<i>CRD</i>	Commissioner, Rural Development of Andhra Pradesh
<i>CWS</i>	Centre for world Solidarity, Prominent Non Government Organisation and Funding Agency
<i>DBF</i>	Dalit Bahujan Front
<i>DBSU</i>	Dalit Bahujan Shramik Union
<i>DRDA</i>	District Rural Development agency
<i>DWMA</i>	District Water Management Agency
<i>G.O</i>	Government Order
<i>IKP</i>	Indira Kranthi Patham, poverty eradication Program supported by World Bank
<i>ITDA</i>	Integrated Tribal Development Agency
<i>MDT</i>	Multi Disciplinary Team/member, a divisional level officer/team of DWMA, Responsible for watersheds and other related NRM activities in the division
<i>MOU</i>	Memorandum of understanding
<i>MoRD</i>	Ministry of Rural Development
<i>MVF</i>	Mamidipudi Venkata Rangaiah Foundation
<i>MTA</i>	Mandal Technical Assistant, person for providing technical support in implementation of the program
<i>MMS</i>	Mandal Mahila Samakhya, a mandal level Federation of women self help groups
<i>NABARD</i>	National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development
<i>NGO</i>	Non Government Organsiation
<i>NPM</i>	Non Pesticide Management

<i>OC</i>	Other Caste
<i>PAS</i>	Praja Abhudaya Samstha
<i>PD</i>	Project Director, head of District Agencies (DRDA / DWMA)
<i>PEACE</i>	People's Action for Creative Education
<i>PFT</i>	Project Facilitation Team, comprising of officials and functionaries of various Departments at mandal level
<i>PMC</i>	People's Monitoring Committee
<i>PMA</i>	Project Management Agency, District level Agency or any organisation responsible for Implementation of CLDP in some mandals
<i>PSS</i>	Pragathi Seva Samstha
<i>RIDF</i>	Rural Infrastructure Development Fund
<i>SDC-IC</i>	Swiss Development Cooperation – Inter Cooperation
<i>SC</i>	Scheduled Caste
<i>SDEP</i>	Social Discrimination Elimination Project
<i>SERP</i>	Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty, a Society set up to implement Indira Kranthi Patham
<i>SHG</i>	Self Help Group, a thrift and credit collective of 10-15 women
<i>ST</i>	Scheduled Tribes
<i>VNA</i>	Village Network Activists
<i>V.O</i>	Village Organisation, a village level federation of women self help groups
<i>WASSAN</i>	Watershed Support Services and Activities Network
<i>WDT</i>	Watershed Development Team, a multi disciplinary team responsible for Implementation of watershed development programs for around 10-15 watersheds

# Acknowledgements

The entire process of engagement with the Comprehensive Land development Program reflects collective efforts of many organisations, individuals and government officials. Observations and experiences are drawn and analysis is made from the efforts and interactions with all these people.

Interactions with Rural Development officials while engaging in this process helped immensely in understanding the perspective of the program and issues in the process. I sincerely thank Sri. K.Raju, I.A.S, Principal Secretary, Rural Development, Government of A.P, Sri. S. Narasinaga Rao, I.A.S, Sri. K. Tirupatiah, I.F.S, Special Commissioner, Sri. D. Rajesham and others for their insights and support in this process.

I acknowledge the support of District administration Mahabubnagar, particularly Sri. M. Jagadeshwar, I.A.S, then District Collector and Sri. Ravindra Babu, Project Director, DWMA for responding to the issues raised during the process.

A critical engagement with this program itself would not have been possible without the active involvement of all the members of People's Monitoring Committee. I particularly acknowledge the contribution of the working group members for providing leadership to the people's monitoring process and thus contributing towards synthesising the learnings.

I would also like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of the activists of all the people's organisations. They have consistently engaged with the issues in the form of conducting field surveys, organising and orienting community members. Their experiences contributed to the analysis and learnings.

Representatives of Mandal Mahila Samakhya of Kosigi, Doultabad and Bommaraspet have shared their experience in their efforts to improve the program implementation. In particular I thank the individuals for sharing their experiences which are presented as case examples in this document. These have immensely helped in substantiating the observations and analysis.

I also thank the Representatives of all the NGOs in Innovative stream of Project in CLDP for sharing their innovative experiences and constraints in the process.

I acknowledge the guidance of Ravindra and support of M.A. Firoze and other team members of WASSAN in each and every stage of engagement in this process and shaping of this document.

I also acknowledge the valuable feed back and support extended by Rupa Mukerji, Inter cooperation Delegate.

**CH. Ravi Kumar**  
Programme Coordinator

# Foreword

The Comprehensive Land Development Programme or Indira Prabha is a project that has important livelihood and empowerment potentials for dalit communities in Andhra Pradesh. It is based on significant learnings from the NGO programme in Andhra Pradesh supported by SDC and IC. It was therefore important for IC and its partner WASSAN to engage with this programme both in terms of its planning and implementation as also its reach and effectiveness.

These are several lessons from this experience with regard to up scaling successful NGO managed activities to a larger programme implemented by the government. Since the resources for the programme come from NABARD also an SDC partner, we hope this document is of use to both policy makers and grass root level practioners.

**Rupa Mukerji**  
Delegate  
Intercooperation



# Introduction

Comprehensive Land Development Program (CLDP), initiated by Government of Andhra Pradesh in November 2004 is a bold new attempt at investing substantially on the lands assigned to the poor, particularly dalits and other weaker sections. The program is a synthesis of various innovative experiences by SDC/IC partner NGOs, other organisations and different government projects.

WASSAN, an SDC/IC partner has been associated with this program right from the conceptualization stage and has anchored the preparation of the program guidelines,<sup>1</sup> resource material and training of resource persons. Constant engagement with the implementation at the grass roots brought out critical gaps in the operationalisation of the processes envisaged. WASSAN felt that these larger issues could be tackled only through sustained engagement with the programme at all levels by a collective of the civil society organisations.

In line with this thinking, a process of 'Engagement with Comprehensive Land Development Programme' was initiated in collaboration with the Dalit Programme of Centre for World Solidarity and with the support of SDC - IC. In this process WASSAN worked with different unions, and people's organisations like Dalit Bahujan Front, Dalit Bahujan Shramik Union, Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vrittidarula Union, Dalit Samakhya, Mandal Mahila Samakhya, various NGOs and individual activists.

This report gives a brief presentation on the historical context and operational modalities of CLDP followed by an analysis

and critical reflection of the implementation processes through the mirror of a sustained civil society engagement with the program. This report also attempts to capture the key aspects in the process of engagement of civil society organisations with CLDP. A framework for 'Peoples' Monitoring of public investment programs' to make them accountable to the stated objectives also emerged during the course of this initiative. Comparison of this approach with *Social audit* being adopted as part of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was also presented. This approach can be more effective in the wake of Right to Information Act which came into being from October, 2005.

The report is structured into six sections, *Section one* presents the genesis of the program with the historical, political and programmatic contexts of CLDP.

The Second Section presents the Program structure in terms of its objective program implementation structure and the initial experiences.

The Third section presents observations, experiences and issues in grounding and implementation of the program drawing from field surveys, efforts and case examples including the role and limitations of Federation of Women's thrift and credit institutions.

Fourth section of the report captures the successful experiences in the program and various factors responsible for it, including the role of NGOs

In the fifth section experiences of People's monitoring process in CLDP are presented and finally overall issues and experiences are summarised in the last section.

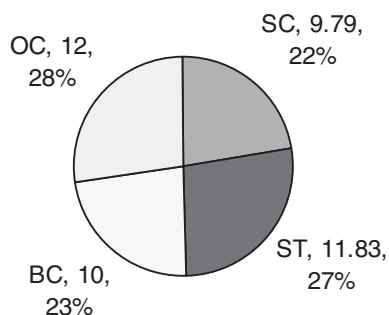
<sup>1</sup> Rural Development Department (2004)

# 1. Genesis of the Comprehensive

## Land Development Programme (CLDP)

### 1.1 Historical - Political Context

In Andhra Pradesh, between 1969 to 2002, 43.6 lakh acres of government land was distributed for agriculture purposes to about 24 lakh landless poor. Of this land 9.79 lakh acres (22.5%) was given to schedule castes, 11.83 acres (27.2%) to schedule tribes, 12 lakh acres to other castes (27.5%) and 10 lakh acres (23%) to backward castes.<sup>2</sup>



Unlike the popular perception, the lowest extent and percentage of land distributed was to the poor belonging to Scheduled Castes (S.C) and the highest extent of land was distributed to the landless poor of other castes. The average land distributed per household was 1.8 acres, which in case of S.Cs was 1.71, S.Ts 1.77, B.Cs, 1.93 and, O.Cs 1.69 acres.

This is exclusive of ceiling surplus and bhoodan lands. This was the state's response to a demand for land distribution from pressure groups like the left parties, agriculture/labour unions, growing unrest and increasing influence of Naxalite groups in various parts of the country. From the field observations it was found that with a few exceptions, the distributed lands have some

common qualities such as

- Degraded and less productive
- Far from the habitations
- Undulated with high slopes
- Uncultivated for many years
- Filled with bushes, stones and rocks without crops
- Used for grazing by livestock rearers.

Owing to these reasons, much of the lands distributed to the poor remained unused by them for agriculture or other productive purposes.

Mandal and village wise data like total assigned lands, extent of distributed land under productive use, extent of lands alienated and lands left fallow, is either absent or not used for designing a perspective plan for the development. There were sporadic efforts by the Schedule Caste Corporation to fund some 'schemes' like community bore wells and Land development but no serious efforts to develop these lands comprehensively.

If land distribution is to achieve the larger objectives of social justice and equality, both the issues of *land distribution* and *land development* need to be addressed simultaneously. It logically follows that all the 43 lakh acres of land distributed or at least most of the land distributed to SC and ST that together constituting more than 20 lakh acres, should be brought under productive use to benefit livelihoods of the

<sup>2</sup> Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (2003)



Assigned land in Ibrahimpatnam mandal, Ranga Reddy District

assignees<sup>3</sup>. (Assignees are the persons/representatives of a household on whose name land title of 'x' extent of government land is issued)

The demand the agriculture labour unions, left parties and others for land distribution has not extended to demanding public investments for development of lands of the poor. The implicit assumption here has been that once land is distributed, it is the prerogative of the assignees to bring the land into cultivation or that support for the same would come automatically through various state-funded schemes.

Transferring the land entitlement is complicated further by the problem of land *alienation*. Land being the key productive asset in rural India, land ownership and landlessness are reflections of the unequal power relations in a highly stratified society. A high percentages of landlessness in particular sections like Scheduled Castes points to this. Given this situation it is not easy for these communities to hold on to

the land assigned to them. The reasons commonly cited for land alienation are,

- Do not have sufficient cash or in come available for meeting the health, education, marriage, housing needs
- Don't have money to invest and bring the land under productive cultivation,
- Don't have access to institutional credit as they can't provide economic or social collateral.
- Cannot afford bullocks or livestock to support the cultivation
- Don't have enough buffers to withstand the recurrent drought and crop failure as their livelihood sources/ options apart from their own labour are limited.
- Don't have money or access to other sources to get irrigation facilities,
- Depend on wage labour

<sup>3</sup> The title right limits to cultivation of the given land, but not sale of the land and government reserves the right to take back the land on certain specified conditions as per the Board Standing Orders (BSO – 15) Governing the assignment of lands.

### Box 1: Land ownership still eludes the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

In India, 77% of SCs and 90% of STs are landless, with very minimal productive assets and sustainable employment opportunities (*Ninth Five-Year Plan Draft 1997-2002, Planning Commission*). Around 87% of the landholders of SCs and 65% of STs in the country belong to the category of small and marginal farmers (*Agricultural Census 1990-91*). 68.3% of SCs and 36% of ST main workers are agricultural laborers as against 39.6% of total population. (*Census of India, 1991*)

#### Status of Land Holdings of Scheduled castes

	1961 Census	2001 Census
SC Population	49,73,000	1,23,39,496
People able to work	30,62,000	62,33,518
Land owners/ cultivators able	7,59,000 (23% of the able)	6,06,761 (9.7% of the workers)
Agricultural laborers	17,56,908 (57% of the S.C able workers)	42,58,259 (68.3% of the S.C able workers) 31% of total agri labourers

Source: *Census of India for the years 1961, 2001- Population and Working population tables*

#### In the years between 1961 to 2001

- About One and half lakh people belonging to the Scheduled Castes lost landownership.
- Of the people who are able to work, only 9.7% are land owners. . It has decreased from 23% in 1961.
- The percentage of agricultural laborers has increased from 57% in 1961 to 68.3% in 2001.
- 50% of the holdings of the SCs do not have any irrigation facility.

#### Decrease in Average holdings

Period	Average holding of the SCs	Average holding of the STs
1975-76	1.19 hectare	2.33 hectare
1995-96	0.83 hectare	1.44 hectare

Source: *Agricultural Census of 1995-96*

#### In the AP context

- The scheduled castes, 16 per cent of the state's population, control only 7.5 per cent of the operational area in Andhra Pradesh as per 2001 census. Compared to 1980-81, in 1990-91 the increase is less than 0.5 per cent.
- Out of the 43.21 lakh acres of Govt. land distributed during 1961-2002, 9.79 lakh acres were distributed to the 5.71-lakh S.C households. i.e. 22% of the total land distributed (as per document of SERP, Land 'g' (2006))
- It is interesting to compare the S.C holdings figure of 6.06 lakhs with the assigned land families, i.e. 5.71 lakh. If the unit of holdings in both the cases is similar, then it shows that more than 90% of S.C holdings are through government land distribution.

- Have to fight for getting identity as 'farmer' in the village and withstand the resistance of dominant sections

So, enabling landless people to become landed farmers and achieve food security through their land essentially involves addressing the above needs of the poor in addition to distribution of land. Unfortunately this did not happen on a large enough scale. This naturally leads to:

- land alienation either through selling in distress;
- encroachment by others when left fallow;
- encroachment by force by dominant sections; or
- lands left fallow.

Transfer of assigned lands also occurred on large scale in spite of the powerful Andhra Pradesh Assigned Lands Act (Prevention of Transfer -1977).

According to estimates, only about 5.00 lakh acres are held by the SCs now though about 10.00 lakh acres were distributed to the SCs between 1969 and 2000.

A Programme like CLDP, that aims at the development of lands, particularly government assigned lands held by the poor in the State, should be seen in this context of ensuring entitlements of the poor in a dynamic struggle for space and power in the society.

## 1.2 Programmatic Context: Watershed and RIDF Programs

The last 10 years of experience in participatory watershed development reveals that when the whole village (around 500 Ha.) is treated as watershed area, lands of poor, particularly assigned lands with multitude problems are either left out or sub-critical investments are made to bring these lands into productive use. Mere soil conservation would not bring these lands to productive use. Given the physical and social context of these lands, the needs of assignees are

different and the level of participation in decision-making is poor given their low social and economic status.

Though WASSAN and other civil society organizations, many of them SDC – IC NGO partners, started making a case for a special sub-plan for assigned lands within the watershed program, it was soon realized that development of these lands need a different and specialized approach in terms of defining the area, unit costs, type of activities etc. These aspects could not be accommodated in the watershed program as it is implemented at present.

Innovative approaches to watershed development for treating the lands of the poor were demonstrated by some NGOs like the Deccan Development Society working in Zaheerabad region of Medak district, Praja Abhyudaya Samstha in Chitoor, Rayalaseema Watershed Development Program among others. These experiences also generated a framework for designing a special program with separate budgets, guidelines and procedures for specifically addressing the issues related to the assigned lands in the State. CLDP as a programme emerged in response to this need. Funds were sourced from the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

### *Experience of earlier RIDF programs*

The Rural Infrastructure fund is a pool of money available with NABARD created from the balances from the priority sector lending targets of all nationalized banks. NABARD extends this to the State governments in the form of a loan to create infrastructure in rural areas like roads, reservoirs, water harvesting structures etc. State Governments accessed the RIDF –VII & VIII for creating water harvesting structures like check dams, percolation tanks etc. in the Common lands or Panchayat lands. This was termed RIDF-watershed program and had a one year timeframe. It was oriented mainly towards the construction of check dams and other structures. It had a notional

## Box 2: Figures and facts of the program

The finances for CLDP were mobilized from Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) of NABARD as loan in two batches, i.e. RIDF-IX and RIDF-X to the tune of about Rs 500 crores for all the districts in AP. . The activities under RIDF-IX started in November 2004 and the activities under RIDF -X started in May 2005. As the funds were limited and available in phases, all the assigned lands could not be covered. Only 5-6 blocks of land in about as many villages in a mandal were covered in the programme. A total of 3,27,266 acres belonging to 2,80,205 households are covered in the programme, as against 20 lakh acres assigned only to SC and STs. Even in its design this massive effort would not cover even 10% of the lands assigned to S.C sand S.Ts. The implementation experiences pose further challenges regarding the approach and policy towards empowerment of marginalized communities through a land based activity.

'user group' to execute the works and there was no financial provision for planning, community organisation etc.

These 'RIDF-watersheds' were implemented on ground on a contract basis by the 'user group' leaders and executed mostly by the government functionaries. There are exceptional cases of some NGOs implementing the program as an additional responsibility in the areas they are working. As most of the works identified are on common lands, the entitlement in the program was group based and not individual based.

When the Comprehensive Land Development Project was conceptualized, RIDF -IX and X funds were readily accessible. The program was given a new shape with the objectives of achieving household food security, strengthening livelihoods, comprehensive investments on development of land, etc. Also, the investments in the program are provided to identified households with specific survey number rather than to the whole village. This gives more scope for participation of the selected households in the implementation of the program.



## 2. Understanding CLDP as a Programme

As against this backdrop the Comprehensive Land Development Program was launched with the following objectives, end-results and core principles,

### **Box 3: The context as per the Government Order M.S No. 212**

“Government has assigned large extent of government lands and ceiling surplus lands to the weaker sections in the state. Development of these lands has been taken up through various schemes in the past. But due to lack of adequate investments all the available lands could not be taken up for development. The initiatives in the past have provided sustainable livelihood opportunities to the poor, wherever an integrated and comprehensive approach for their development was adopted. There were instances where the results have not been commensurate with the investments made. Based on the successful initiatives and also taking into consideration the failures it is found necessary to take up an integrated approach for comprehensive development of land belonging to the poor, particularly the assigned and surplus lands.”

### **Objectives**

The main objectives of Comprehensive Land Development Project as mentioned in the process guidelines are to:

- Enhance and diversify livelihoods options of the poor centered on comprehensive development of compact blocks of assigned lands
- Enhance the food, fodder and fuel security of the poor families by improving the productivity of compact blocks of assigned lands

### **Expected end results**

- The lands covered under the project are completely treated with good vegetative cover and all measures to enhance productive capacity of the lands are undertaken.
- The lands covered under the project are fully brought into a diversified farming system including livestock rearing – providing for subsistence part of the food, fodder, fuel needs of the households.

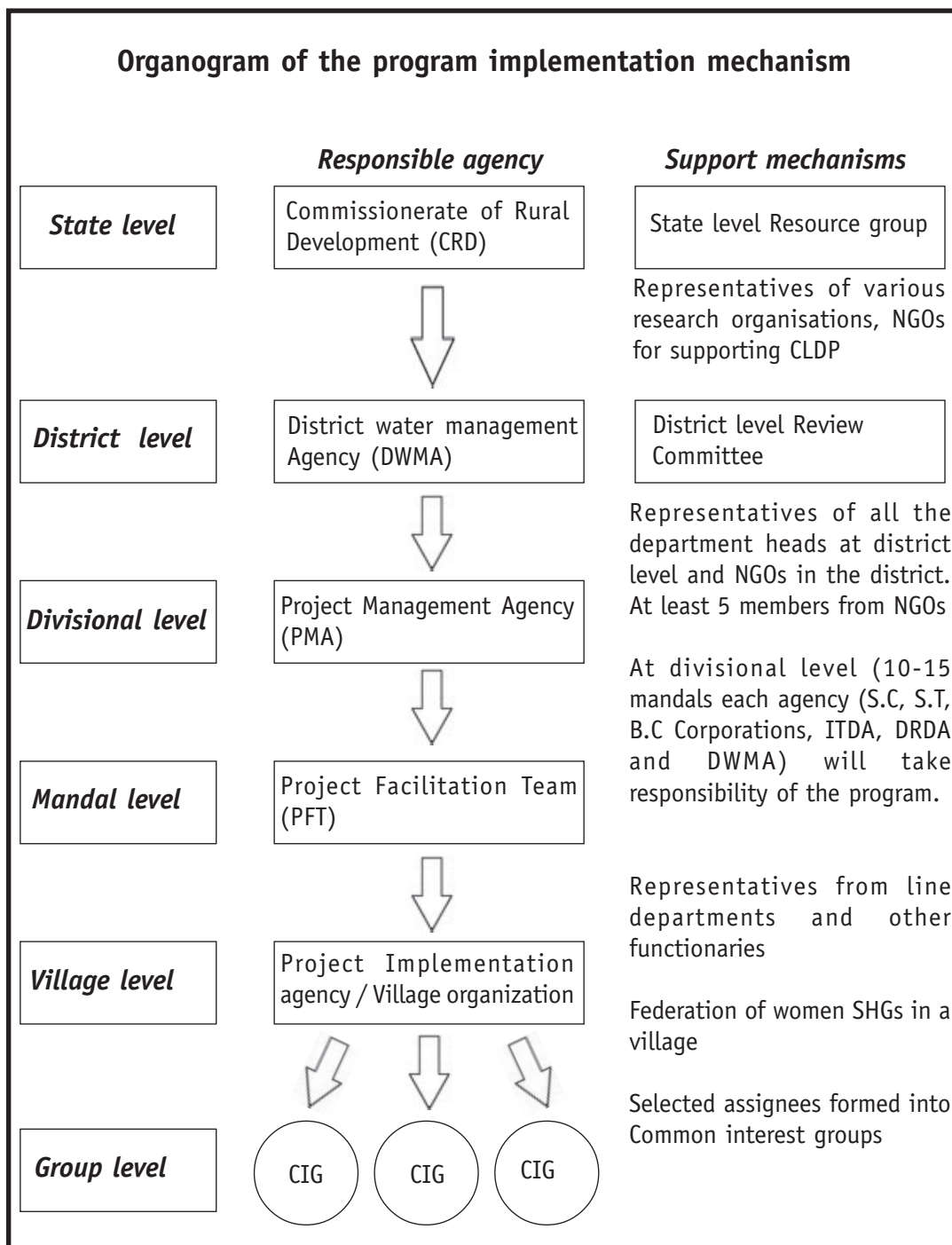
### **Core principles/processes**

- Ensuring Food Security and Gender Considerations
- Sequential, Progressive and Diverse Activities
- Family as a unit of planning
- Region/ local specific activities
- Flexibility in investments and costs

This section details the programme design and the Programme implementation structure. This would enable one to understand the program and the difficulties in translating the program concepts into action, especially through the existing large state machinery.

### **2.1 Program Design/ Structure**

The Government Order - G.O Ms. No. 212 and subsequent circulars from Rural Development Department lay down the basic framework of the program. (*Documents available at the website, [www.wassan.org/cldp](http://www.wassan.org/cldp)*). Salient features and details given in *annexure -1*.



## 2.2 Operational aspects

For the help of all the stake holders involved in the implementation, Process Guidelines for the program were developed in consultation with various NGOs, dalit activists, organisations and department officials. The experiences of the pilot initiatives were also taken into consideration in the process along with the system requirements and limitations imposed by the government program and funding source.

WASSAN anchored this consultative and documentation process for Commissioner, Rural Development. There were differences of opinion on some of the issues, like role of Village organization in the implementation of the program. In such cases it was tried to give space for all those concerns and in that sense the document provides flexibility in choosing options according to different field situations.

From the organogram presented here it can be noticed that the focal points for

mobilising proposals and program implementation are the Program Facilitation Teams (PFTs) at mandal level drawn from various line departments and co-opted members from NGOs and others. Also the overall program management is divided between many actors/line departments at the district/divisional level. Various committees at district and state levels are to provide a feed-back as part of the monitoring and review support. In both cases, the government department agencies have a central role. For lack of serious facilitation, the committees envisaged also did not function as required; in some contexts they are notional without a mandate.

### 2.3 Mid-course corrections

Involvement of the line departments was envisaged to mobilise greater support for the program. Another reason is, there was no separate administrative cost provided in RIDF for considering additional human resources. But these line departments are already either burdened with their regular tasks and it was rather a very difficult task to

coordinate the collective efforts between them. This program was not their primary focus amongst the many responsibilities they have.

Front-ending such hard-to-implement systems and procedures compromised several initial processes that would have led to proper grounding of the program processes. Further this set-up is not fully equipped to operationalise the farming system and participatory approach envisaged

To add to that the *seven key factors for success that were identified at the design stage were also not operationalised (see box 4)*.

Based on these experiences it was realised that there is need to clearly designate functionaries either at village or mandal level to anchor the program rather than teams.

To fill the gap, the Government came up with G.O.No.66 clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of various functionaries at all levels, particularly District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) and the *Indira Kranthi*

What was designed earlier	Modified form
At Mandal level, Project Facilitation team comprising representatives from various departments headed by MDO will be responsible for the program	In addition to PFT, Mandal Mahila Samakhya (MMS) will be the responsible agency with their staff sharing the responsibilities <i>Cluster Coordinators (CCs)</i> who support the women SHGs and Village organisations in the cluster of villages will be responsible for promoting and strengthening of CIGs, functioning of Para workers and also in achieving convergence with village organisation <i>Mandal Technical Assistant (MTA)</i> will be responsible for supporting the assignees in planning and execution of works
At Divisional level PMA and Multi Disciplinary Team members of DWMA will be responsible	Divisional staff of DRDA-IKP will support and monitor the functioning of the MMS, C.Cs and M.T.As. Multi Disciplinary team members of DWMA will provide support to MTAs and take responsibility for the fund release and quality control
DWMA at district level	Indira Kranthi Patham and DWMA work in coordination, sharing the roles, DWMA as a nodal agency for fund releases, technical support and progress reporting to CRD. DRDA/IKP is responsible for effective community mobilisation and facilitation of the program at the village level

*Patham (IKP)*, a World Bank supported poverty eradication programme bringing in more clarity and effective operationalisation. Though the agencies like PMA, PFT are not negated, this is to address the problem of 'absence of field facilitation inputs'

As DRDA is the support agency for the MMS, it was envisaged that it would support and monitor the program, while DWMA funded it. Again, this is based on assumption that at district level two agencies, DWMA and DRDA-IKP work in coordination.

#### **Box 4: Success Factors for the project as stated in *Circular No CLDP.1***

*The 7 factors* that would guarantee sustainable benefits to the target group

1. Clear understanding among the members of the district level committee- where, what, how, why, when etc
  - Evaluate district specific experiences
  - Study successes and failures
  - Identify the critical gaps and processes
  - Identify technical support needed and be clear how to access
  - Recognition that a comprehensive package is to be delivered to the target group, the components of which flows, not from one, but from various line agencies
2. Constitution and capacity building of the 'Project Facilitation Teams'
  - Visit the land
  - Hold series of dialogues with the land owners
  - Discuss the possible options for development
  - Develop comprehensive proposals
  - Discuss the implementation arrangements and fund flow
  - Identify the activists for each block of land
3. Formulation of a comprehensive package
4. The capacity of the village organization to act as Project Implementation Agency
5. Building a cadre of activists and developing mechanisms for regular interactions with the activists
6. Designate one field functionary responsible for providing guidance and linkages to the common Interest group
7. Designate one district level agency for overall supervision and process monitoring

The realization of benefits through CLDP should be multiples of investments. Therefore, proper implementation and good monitoring system are the key elements for success of this project. The project should be meticulously planned and thoroughly implemented for long term sustainability.

*Source: Circular No. CLDP - 1 issued by Commissioner, Rural Development dated, 31-08-2004*

### 3. CLDP in Practice

In implementation of this large scale programme we are faced with some interesting challenges which would apply to any successful pilot project that seeks to upscale itself through a government programme. These were:

- Multitude of officials involved at different levels with different levels of commitment and incentives (including perverse incentives)
- Variations in the ground realities
- Political compulsions or existing highly politically charged environment
- Target driven mode of mobilization
- The depth of the disadvantaged social position of the intended entitlement holders in the society and their highly curtailed capacities in terms of knowledge, power and space in decision making.

The field experiences from different stages of implementation are captured below. This analysis draws from the experiences of WASSAN's engagement with the program and also from various other organisations. These

are drawn from *Observations on Preparatory process, Survey findings in 100 blocks in 10 districts and various field case studies and Situation in the selected three mandals in Mahabubnagar District*

The period of analysis for this report is 2004 November to May, 2006. As CLDP started in November, 2004, only one kharif season passed and the second one is in the offing. The expenditure up to June 2005 is not even 10% and the program could only be initiated in less than 50% of the blocks by that time.

The analysis here is focused at reviewing the implementation process only, an impact analysis would be premature as be done at this point of time. However, the extent and mode of people's involvement in planning, executing and managing the program determines to a great extent the impacts of the program like land newly brought under cultivation, increase in productivity, of land use change and level of food security achieved. The main purpose is to draw out lessons for future in engaging with a government program.

#### Box 5: Engaging with a Government Program: The Process

Ensuring that felt needs are addressed through a government program needs a multi-pronged strategy. The process is often challenging and requires a creative, sustained engagement at various level. One should be prepared for 'process waste' and limited success for improvement in the quality of delivery system. There are no easy answers and quick results. The process followed regarding development of assigned lands is.

- |                                                                   |                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Identifying the problem/need</b>                               | - through studies and research of existing watershed programs and highlighting the problems                           |
| <b>Creating a policy space</b>                                    | - in terms of conceptualising, effective communication for the need and building the space through process guidelines |
| <b>Providing support in operationalisation of the policy</b>      | - through resource material, training, conceptualisation etc.,                                                        |
| <b>Creating mechanisms for constant feed back and improvement</b> | - Innovative stream of NGOs, Field engagement, People's Monitoring Committee etc.,                                    |

### 3.1 Preparatory process: Some observations and Issues

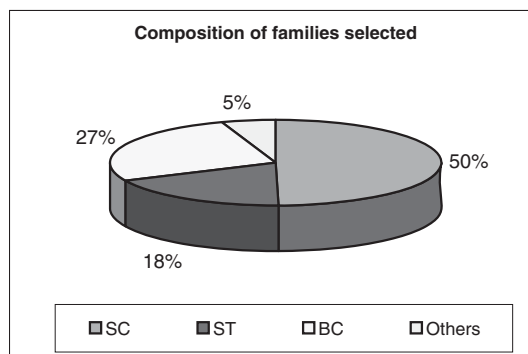
#### 3.1.1 Identification of Blocks of lands: Some Key Issues

The norms suggested in the circulars/guidelines in identifying the blocks of lands are:

- A minimum of 50% of physical and financial allocations should go to SCs, 10% of physical and financial allocations should go to STs.
- It is advised that 3-4 blocks of lands may be identified in each mandal instead of thinly spreading the project among many blocks in a mandal.
- Along with the assigned and surplus lands, the government lands having potential to provide sustainable livelihood to the poor can also be taken up
- The criteria could be the lands located in most backward areas, upland mandals, and agency areas, dry and degraded lands, the lands exclusively owned by SCs, STs, BCs etc.
- Proper possession and enjoyment of the land by the beneficiaries should be verified. Alienated lands should not be taken up under this project.

The mobilization drive for proposals succeeded in getting 'eligible' lands on board. Complaints regarding selection of ineligible lands are very few. The main issues in this process are as follows:

- The selection was made according to preference or pressures of local influential people, who mostly belong to dominating castes.
- The list was forwarded to DWMA by the MRO without verification of actual status of alienation on the ground, i.e it was reduced to a paper exercise
- In significant cases, lands were selected without the knowledge of the assignees or they were informed later.
- Out of total assignees selected, S.Cs



constitutes 50%. There is no data available to show that they constitute 50% of either total land selected or total sanctioned project cost.

#### 3.1.2 'Mobilising' proposals

It is important to understand some of the statements in the circulars regarding mobilization of proposals (*also see box 6*).

*"CLDP envisages process approach and total participation of community and community driven approach to the project. This pre-supposes intensive training of Project Facilitation Teams at 1 per block of land of about 100 acres and Para Workers at 2 per block of land. Obviously, for each block of land the Project Facilitation Team is expected to spend considerable time to develop the proposals. Development of proposals for the district covering all the blocks of lands may require at least 3 months from now (beginning from September 2004). But it is found desirable to first secure sanction from NABARD for each district before investing time and energies in the processes"* (Circular No. CLDP-3, dated 08-09-2004 of Rural Development Department)

These *time and energies* were never invested in most of the districts thus undermining the process approach envisaged.

#### Observations

- The proposals were mobilized in a very short time with clear target driven deadlines and with certain assumptions regarding participation of line departments in the process.
- It was often observed that participation of the people is limited

to places where there is a campaign approach by the line department. This is not designed according to the convenience of the people and at their pace but at the pace of the system's requirements.

- The whole process of ground work in this programme was expected to be completed in just 15-20 days time that too with the involvement and collaboration of many departments. In most cases, mandal level officials did not find time or interest to visit the villages and even when such visits were made, people might not be there.

### **3.1.3 Sanction and Approval from NABARD**

There were some procedural difficulties regarding sanction of this project under RIDF. By the time CLDP was conceptualised, NABARD had already sanctioned the earlier proposals submitted under RIDF –IX. Those proposals contain land development and water harvesting works in the common lands as a part of the earlier project. As they were not grounded, Government revised those proposals to suit the newly conceptualised program, but with certain limitations. The amount available for the district and mandals were already fixed. The number of blocks and type of activities were decided accordingly. There was also a limitation on the type of activities that could be taken up like irrigation facilities through wells and bore wells etc. Most of the works were limited to soil and moisture conservation and water harvesting.

Proposals for RIDF – X were prepared after the CLDP program was conceptualized.

Therefore many activities that were left out in RIDF – IX were included. So within the program there are variations in the activities allowed for different blocks of land selected.

For the assigned lands to be brought to productive use, it is important that the critical constraints of bullocks, implements, and complementary assets like livestock and

### **Box 6: Envisaged strategy for mobilising proposals**

In order to obtain sanction from NABARD following strategy is suggested:

- a) The District Collectors will first identify 3-5 blocks in each mandal to be covered under CLDP.
- b) The members of the District Level Team will visit the identified blocks and prepare detailed proposals and furnish the information in the format given.
- c) The Project Facilitation Teams will then be deployed to conduct preliminary feasibility study of the selected blocks and identify the possible range of activities that can be taken up for each block. The information for each block shall be collected in the same format given. It may be noted that the basic purpose of the feasibility study is to simply short list the range of possible interventions and to arrive at rough estimated cost for development of each block for the purpose of preparing proposals for submission to NABARD.
- d) A project proposal will then be prepared for the entire district giving chapter-wise information as indicated and to be submitted to CRD by the end of September,04
- e) The NABARD will then get the proposals appraised by their experts and recommend to their head office for sanction by the Project Sanctioning Committee.

livelihood diversification opportunities are in place. CLDP envisages facilitating these opportunities for development of lands, diversification of the farming system and off-farm livelihoods of the household. However, the 'infrastructure' is interpreted very narrowly in the RIDF as mere soil and water conservation works and any other physical infrastructure like buildings!

As guidelines of RIDF seemingly do not

allow funding activities like credit support for bullocks, livestock etc., it was decided to mobilize required funds for these activities from other sources like Indira Kranthi Patham, S.C corporation and other line department programs (see box 7).

Another administrative constraint imposed by RIDF is not allowing any facilitation or administrative expenditure under RIDF. NABARD did not even allow the 5% it used to give earlier for training and capacity building in RIDF-watersheds; the stated reason being that RIDF is a loan extended to state governments to provide rural infrastructure with the existing machinery. It is rather ironical that NABARD's own watershed development programs under WDF allow for 20% facilitation costs. In a sense, the choice of funding source also imposed limitations like:

- Restriction on kind of works to be implemented in the program
- Fund releases in the form of reimbursement causing irregular fund flow in cases where district administration did not have surplus funds to advance or willingness to advance
- No provision of budgets for administrative component and low

percentages for capacity building.

The State government could have overcome these limitations by providing additional budgets for the program, which did not happen. This raises concerns about the real importance given to this potentially transformative process but where short term political considerations can often undermine the need for long term and focused interventions.

All these factors imposed serious constraints and did not help the CLDP take roots as a program with clear budgets, facilitation systems and functionaries. It remained an 'add-on' agenda to the mainstream programs. Also, the integrity of the conceptual frame of CLDP is compromised as there is no 'revolving fund' available for necessary investments such as the purchase of bullocks. Thus, CLDP did not take roots as an integral program with its own funds, functionaries and operational framework.

### ***3.1.4 Capacity building and preparation of resource material***

Several resource materials were prepared in Telugu to backstop the communication and capacity building efforts and to disseminate the concept of the program. The following

#### ***Box 7: Dilemmas in Defining 'Infrastructure'***

There was an interesting discussion on the kind of permissible infrastructure items in the proposal. It is learnt that from the government's negotiation with NABARD that the RIDF guidelines do not allow vegetative *bunding* to be considered as infrastructure, instead stone *bunding* was suggested as an alternative! The officials of NABARD also expressed no objection if the department wanted to include infrastructure in the form of building veterinary service centres and farmer service centres!!

The RIDF program purported to make the 'last mile investments' on infrastructure (to make it productive/ usable), does not have a clear perspective on infrastructure requirements for land/ agriculture development. That investment on assigned lands without complimentary investments on bullocks and the basic farm tools would not be productive is a historical lesson. Its also a well capitalized lesson that without facilitation support it is impossible to sort out the myriad problems (from land rights to development needs) plaguing development of assigned lands.

Neither the government nor NABARD tied up any other sources for complimentary investments to ensure the integrity of the program. They also did not take responsibility for mobilizing the resources for dedicated facilitation and capacity building.

material was prepared by WASSAN at the instance of the Commissioner, Rural Development:

1. Compilation of experiences of working on land rights and development
2. Process guidelines for the program implementation
3. Step by Step planning process guide
4. A technical manual

All the above are published by the Rural Development department except the Technical manual, which could not be finalised. These resource materials were produced in consultation with and by pooling experiences of different NGOs, activists and unions.

WASSAN also trained the district resource persons of all the districts. As part of this process, WASSAN prepared model modules for training of Project Facilitation team members, Community Coordinators, Para workers and Mandal Technical assistants on CLDP concept, guidelines, planning steps and community organization

***Some of our experiences from the process are:***

- Though material was produced, adequate copies were not circulated to the districts

and reaching out to the key persons implementing the program up to mandal level remained a daunting task.

- RIDF only funds the detailed physical and financial plans submitted by the government unlike watershed program where planning is a phase within the program. To meet this requirement planning was done on a campaign mode and by the time the material reached the districts, plans were already prepared and works initiated in most of the IX batch blocks.
- Though 5-6 resource persons were trained in each district, only in some districts they could stay in the program and provide inputs to the implementation functionaries in the district.
- Though orientation and training programs were conducted by DWMAs in respective districts, in most of the cases they remained just as events, not as a fulfilling part of a comprehensive capacity building strategy.
- In a nutshell it can be said that preparation of resource material, modules and training of resource persons could have been more effective, if they were done:
  - As a part of concrete capacity building plan with clear implementation and follow up mechanisms

***Box 8: The Political Dimensions***

Inauguration of the program on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2004 simultaneously in all the districts by the local Members of Legislative Assembly was a significant political step. The new government elected by a popular mandate might have seen a strategic advantage in inaugurating this program with its strong focus on the poor, particularly dalits. However, the Chief Minister chose to spend much of the time in his inaugural speech on 'irrigation' which was interpreted as a 'weak political mandate' for the program.

In several places, the CLDP gave an opportunity for the party cadre at the village and mandal levels to claim 'ownership' of the program, which paved the way for contractual interests to come in. These local influential political leaders, in a way decided what, when, where and who would participate in the programme. It again re-established the patron-client relationship alienating the actual assignees from taking control over the program. While the program document reflects a sense of political commitment towards lands of dalits and other weaker sections, its operationalisation seems focused towards establishing cliental politics.

- Before initiation of the program and
- With functionaries for implementation at all levels, i.e Para workers, Community coordinators, Mandal Technical Assistants, District level responsible persons
- Not just by one agency but contribution by many other state level organisations, which is actually the mandate of the State level resource group.

### **3.1.5 Summary of preparatory process**

Very short-preparatory time, lack of any focused facilitation investments for developing proposals, high dependence on line departments, non-engagement of primary stakeholders and a lack of dedicated teams who have time, are the main short-comings in the process of mobilizing proposals. These factors are much more important owing to the complexities of assigned lands for the primary stakeholders to have a control on the program.

Selection of lands and preparation of plans were mostly top down, without much involvement of the actual assignees and this in a sense laid the seeds for alienation of assignees from the program.

The main lessons drawn from these experiences are:

- Sufficient time frame should be given for the concept and message to percolate among all the stakeholders at state, district, mandal and village levels. The planning process and mobilization of proposals need to come after this, rather than as a starting point, where people even don't know what the program is about.
- The workload, the possibility of involvement of the local officials, their ability to give quality time for the purpose and their capacity to engage the community need to be assessed realistically

- Design of the program needs to be according to demand generation from the people, based on the environment created through the communication process (Similar to Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme), but not as per the limitations of the funding agency.
- The program implementation machinery at various levels need to be defined clearly and their continuity with the program to be assured for a sufficient period of time to make the Capacity building efforts and inputs useful for the success of the program.

## **3.2 From Theory to Practice: Field finding and reflections**

### **3.2.1 Findings from the survey and case studies:**

A survey was done through a checklist of questions related to the implementation of the program after almost one year of implementation. Activists and functionaries of various unions, dalit organizations and NGOs as part of 'People's monitoring' process visited the villages, interacted with the assignees and filled in the responses. The responses in 103 villages were presented in a compiled form with the analysis below, which are also shared in the People's Monitoring Committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2005 attended by various leaders of political parties. The survey findings are complemented with interesting case studies to understand the situation better.

**People' Monitoring Committee (PMC)** is a collective initiative of agriculture labour unions, dalit organizations, NGOs and media representatives for strengthening development programs on land and labour related livelihoods with a focus on Dalits and adivasis. Strengthening the Comprehensive Land Development Programme (CLDP) of Government of Andhra Pradesh is its first initiative

### **Box 9: 'Owning' up the program – informally**

VEDIKA, an organisation based in Kurnool mandal visited the CLDP-villages as part of the people's monitoring committee. They observed that no records including cheque book, passbooks were available with assignees and learnt that the books are with a person acting as Mandal technical assistant. When the organisation approached the district officials with this issue, they said they do not know who the person is and he is not the official Mandal Technical Assistant. Further, they assured of action only if the organization gives a written complaint.

When the organisation further enquired, it was found that the person acting as Mandal Technical Assistant is the person put up by the local Political party representative (a non – dalit) for overseeing the program and the actual M.T.A is one Mr. Srinivas Reddy. When NGO tried to contact the person, he was not available several times. Only when the organization indicated that they will book a case against him under S.C/S.T atrocities act, he called on the representative of VEDIKA. He said that he is withdrawing from the program and then onwards he will not have any connection with the program.

But later it was found that one Mr. Babu Rao is operating all the procedures and all the records are with him. When enquired it was found that he was appointed by the earlier person. The actual MTA comes to MMS and collects the salary once in three months, but does not do anything! This issue was brought to the notice of district and state officials for necessary action.

#### **1. Orientation and support to the assignees in the program:**

- In about 40% of the blocks CIG members said they were given some kind of orientation, but when it comes to adequate support and information from the functionaries in implementation only 34% of the blocks responded positively.

#### **2. Knowledge levels of CIGs and transparency in finances:**

- In 32% of the selected blocks the assignees don't even know the extent of land selected in their group/block under this program.
- Even worse, in only around 26% of the blocks assignees know the amount sanctioned and released for their blocks and the CIG members of only 22% of blocks know how much was actually spent for the development of their lands

#### **3. Issue of land alienation/ demarcation:**

- In around 29% of blocks, problems

### **Box 10: Issues of land holdings and rights**

In Talari village of Lakkavarapukota mandal of Vizianagram district the land with survey number 106/4 was assigned to P. Venkenna in 1970s as per the records and now selected in CLDP. But actual position of land was not shown to him. Venkenna died without even able to identify the land assigned to him. Now his son applied to MRO to change the land on his name and show the position of land, so that he can utilize the investments provided in the program for developing the land and bring it into cultivation

In the same mandal in Ganivada village, there is an issue of difference in land position shown in records and actual situation on ground. Moyyi Ramu is presently cultivating the land but in records the land is on the name of M. Marayya. Similarly M. Satyam is in the possession of land whereas in the records S. Pairayya is the assignee. Similar cases were found in many villages.

Also there were issues of transfer of land by sale in many villages which is not allowed under the Assigned land (prevention of transfer) Act, 1977.

related to land alienation or demarcation were identified.

#### 4. Involvement of CIG members in planning:

- Only in 29% of the blocks they actually know that plans were prepared for the development of their lands, and in only 6% of the blocks the plans were with CIGs.
- These also are not farmer wise or assignee wise plans but only list of works with estimated quantity and amount for the total extent of land.
- In 24% of the blocks the group members said they have themselves decided the works needed for the development of their lands.

#### 5. Functioning of the Common Interest Groups:

- Out of 103 blocks, in only 34 blocks i.e 33% the group meetings are being conducted at least once in a month and
- In only 22 blocks (21%) some sort of basic records like minutes books etc. are being maintained.

#### 6. Implementation of Works:

- In 41% of the blocks under study, the CIG members said they were participating in execution of works as labour and are implementing the works by themselves.
- In 44% of the blocks it was clearly said that works were being implemented by middlemen/contractors who are not members of the group.

#### 7. Participation of women in the Program:

- In around 37% of the blocks there are some lands on the name of women
- In only 24% of the blocks, CIG members said that women were involved/ participated in decision-making and implementation.
- And in around 29% of the blocks

#### **Box 11: Work for 'their' machinery**

In Gudivanipalli and Chiliveru blocks in Midjil mandal of Mahabubnagar, following issues were observed during a visit by the Project Director, DWMA, Joint Commissioner, Rural Development along with People's Monitoring Committee members:

- No Common Interest Group was formed with the assignees in both the villages.
- Instead of CIG members, WDT is acting as account holder along with VO representative in CLDP account
- No trainings/awareness programs were organised on CLDP for assignees
- Without the knowledge and consent of the assignees, WDT engaged JCB (hydraulic excavator) for land development activities in both the villages, where the works can be done manually.
- WDT paid Rs. 40,000 /- towards JCB works in two acres for just two days, against actual budget of Rs. 2000/-per acre. By design, the land development works in CLDP are to provide continuous employment for the assignees for at least one year to cushion the gap in realizing the benefits of shifting to agriculture.
- Several instances of misutilisation of funds were also observed
- Proper records were not maintained by the technical assistant and the records were not with the assignees
- Para workers were not identified in both the villages.

*The machine being used in these two blocks belongs to a relative of local Member of Legislative Assembly (again a non-dalit). The WDT was later suspended based on the findings during the visit.*

women were participating in CIG meetings.

being paid some honorarium and is functional

#### 8. Para workers:

- In 54% of the blocks, Para worker was identified
- And in only 35% of the blocks under study the actual assignees identified and selected the Para worker.
- In only 18% of blocks Para worker was

#### 9. Involvement of Village Organisation:

- In only 28% of the blocks, the progress of CLDP was being discussed in VO meetings
- In only 21% of the blocks, VO was supervising the implementation of the works and also the program.

### **Box 12: The District administration's Wisdom Prevails!-centralized decisions**

- a. In Anantapur district, DWMA believed in having strong 'concrete' pillars for the program; not in terms of building people's institutions, their awareness and capacities but in real 'concrete' terms.

DWMA has issued orders for construction of demarcating cement pillars around the four corners of every selected block in the CLDP. Assuming the cost for each block at around Rs. 20,000 the total for the 500 blocks would be substantial. The justification provided was to clearly identify the CLDP-Block boundaries with the basic information posted on it.

The expenditure for the construction of pillars was deducted from the amount sanctioned for development of the lands. This is a uniform type-design program and the opinion of the assignees and the actual necessity was not considered. As this work was centrally decided and outsourced mostly to the outsiders of the blocks there was no involvement and choice for the assignees and the wisdom of the district officials prevails! What was a simple demarcation work at block level became a centralized project at district level with substantial investment!

- b. In districts like Visakhapatnam, West Godavari and Nellore some of the works were contracted out to the government agencies like A.P Agro Services, Paper mills and plantation companies. These works include bush clearance, land leveling and supply of plantation material. These are centralized decisions and the agencies execute these works mostly using machines.

The role of the assignees in collectively deciding the works and execution is nominal. This is easier for the nodal agencies like DWMA as the process can be centrally controlled, easy to expedite the expenditure without spending much time in the process of supporting and promoting local decision making process. They can even avoid local contractual interests and the scope for misutilisation is less.

But, often assignees don't have much say on whether they want to do it manually, unit rate for the work, and period of execution of work. The unit rates were decided at district level and the agencies execute the works according to their convenience. Even the presence of assignees on the site may not be required as the agency executes the work; it even happens without their knowledge and consent.

In most of the cases this is not an informed choice and though it reduces the burden of the implementing agency, it may not necessarily contribute to the people centered process.

**Box 13: Elite Capture**

In Vittalapuram village of Maldakal mandal in Mahabubnagar district Rs. 7,75,000 were sanctioned for CLDP. Local landlord belonging to dominant caste has overpowered the VO in opening a joint account by his benamies. When the Village organisation leaders Ms. Estheramma, Ms. Mariamma and Ms Kistamma who belong to Scheduled Castes questioned the person, he abused and physically pushed them out of the room. Taking cognizance of this misbehavior the Dalit Samakhya filed a case on him on 14/07/05. However, no action by the police has been initiated yet. Though the money was sanctioned for the program no works were initiated due to this by the assignees.

**3.2.2 Emerging issues from the findings of this survey:**

28

From the survey findings and the case examples, the general situation of the implementation status of CLDP can be summarized as follows:

1. Assignees are unorganized and do not have details of farmer wise plans with them. They are not aware of opportunities in the program and form of money releases. This makes the program less transparent and gives scope for large scale corruption and wastage of resources.
2. Low levels of involvement of assignees in planning and implementation, contrary to the processes envisaged, and reduced the program to mere soil and moisture conservation activities.
3. The institutions envisaged at village level like Common Interest Groups of assignees, trained Para workers supporting the assignees, enabling role of V.O etc. are not properly in place. There is difference of opinion on the effectiveness and enabling nature of Village Organisation (V.O). But the study shows that V.O also couldn't play an effective role as envisaged.
4. The V.Os are comprised of a diverse group of village women reflecting the diversity with the SHGs, while the CLDP benefits a specific sub-set within them. The V.Os does not therefore have a high stake or interest in the programme. The leaders sign the cheques when asked and in fact face the risk of co-optation into a corrupt system led by the male contractors who hijack the CLDP, often putting at risk the entire credibility of the V.Os themselves.
5. There seems no one person/agency at village, mandal or district who owns the responsibility for coordination of the program. The responsibilities mentioned in G.O.Ms.No. 66 to address this gap are not operationalised. This leads to either slow or faulty progress in the implementation.
6. Given the status of the program at ground level, it seems that adequate capacity building of all the stakeholders in the program has not been done.
7. The management of the program was not able to reach even the first stage of taking the program to the actual intended beneficiaries. The second stage of achieving the balance between conflicting and differing aspirations of the group members on one hand and the sustainability options on the other are still far away.
8. It is also clear from the findings that the present form of programme implementation is far from addressing any gender issues in the process of development of land and livelihoods of the selected households.

### 3.3 Strong Women's institutions- what difference they could make

One of the early changes brought out in the implementation arrangements of the program is through G.O.No. 66 where Mandal Mahila Samakhyas and related functionaries and agencies like DRDA-IKP are vested with certain responsibilities. This is with the understanding that these institutions which have strong base of community organisation at village, mandal and district levels, particularly of women will be able to bring in qualitative improvement in the program.

WASSAN is working intensely with Mandal Mahila Samakhyas (MMS) of Kosigi, Doulatabad and Bommaraspeta mandals in Mahabubnagar in promoting the role of CBOs in Natural Resource Management. It involves promoting practices like Non Pesticide management, fisheries in village tanks, working with Small ruminant rearer's groups, etc. As part of its engagement in these three mandals, following status of implementation was observed during the period of July 2005 to April 2006. These experiences throw light on the extent to which MMS could perform its role envisaged in G.O No. 66 as a Project Management Agency at mandal level.

#### 3.3.1 Situation in the selected mandals

The situation in these mandals presents a contrast in terms of women 'empowerment' and caste and class domination existing in the same mandals. These mandals have a high level of institutional base for women self help groups in the form of Village organisations and Mandal level Federations working for more than 7-8 years. Several programmes, apart from thrift and credit, like child labour schools, land development, silt application, collective marketing of red gram, Non pesticide management etc., are implemented through these community based organisations..

The Dalit population in these three mandals is also significant. 'Brokerism' of the village level political party representatives, who mostly double up as local influential dominant caste persons is also high. The first claim on any government program is of the

local representatives of the party in power. Though this is not very different from other parts of the state, in this region it is fairly high. The following experiences shared by the representatives of the MMS and some case examples (presented in boxes 14, 15, 16) illustrate the situation.

The office-bearers of Mandal Mahila Samakhyas of Kosigi, Daultabad and Kodangal shared their experience regarding implementation of CLDP. They clearly mentioned that unlike other programmes being managed by them, they don't have much control on this program in spite of:

- funds being released directly to the account held by one of the V.O office bearers at village level and
- their role clearly stated in the programme documents.

They said that local political party leaders, particularly of dominant castes are threatening them not to interfere in the program. The representatives of the MMS also categorically stated that they are not getting support from government officials either from mandal or from the district to withstand the pressure, when certain issues were brought to their notice.

Instead, even the officials advised the MMS representatives to just ignore and not to get involved in the program. They expressed apprehension that they have to live in the village and have to deal with these persons on daily basis. Given this attitude of the officials they cannot take the risk of confrontation. In this scenario, the roles envisaged for the MMS is hard to realize. i.e.

- a) Providing leadership and a platform for review, monitoring and management of the program at mandal level, and
- b) Supporting the assignees through Village organisation

Also MMS office bearers had to face pressures from local political representatives in the selection of Mandal Technical assistants. Some case examples are presented here to understand the nature of the pressures and the situation.

### **Box 14: Whose Program is it?**

In the village Chellapur of Doulatabad Mandal, 86 acres of 106 assignees (S.C -35, S.T- 3, B.C-64, and O.C-3) was selected for the program. Following are the findings from interaction with the assignees,

- The account was opened with two VO representatives who are not assignees and one Watershed Development Team member, without the knowledge and
- Involvement of the assignees. This is the only account for receiving the money from the district and no other account was opened.
- Bank account was opened in May 2005 and only one entry of deposit was made in the passbook. In one year there was no single update of the passbook in spite of several withdrawals.
- Only one work, i.e. silt application was done. The owners of the tractors(also non dalits) took on themselves the responsibility of developing the lands of assignees and also did all the tasks on their behalf like
  - Opening of account, deciding what kind of works to be implemented first
  - How many trips to be made for each acre
  - Deciding on cost of each load of tractor
  - Withdrawing money and paying to themselves
  - Paying even contributions of the assignees, by not paying the wages to them for spreading the silt in their fields and depositing the contribution amount of the assignees in the bank (which could not be verified as there is no entry in the passbook)
  - And also deciding what kind of work to be taken up next.
- The assignees don't know how much amount was sanctioned to them and kind of works listed for them
- Silt application was started without any bush clearance, bunding or stone clearance since the powerful people in the village owned tractors and this provided them an easy pool of money with low supervision and accountability.
- The person who worked as Para worker died after the implementation of works. The lone work of silt application was completed in less than one-month period, i.e. May 2005. After that VNA<sup>1</sup> is acting as Para worker, but without much work. He hasn't attended to any training on CLDP.
- During the work, date wise and farmer wise number of trips were recorded in a register and the total trips recorded are 512. At the rate of Rs.250 /trip it comes to Rs. 1,28,000. But as per the recordings in the cheque the amount withdrawn is Rs.1, 52,000 while the total deposit is 1, 78,500.
- The actual expenditure is not known, as the passbook is not updated.
- A total of Rs.1, 70,000 has been spent till date. This went directly to the persons who owned tractors and this programme primarily created a business for them and only as a by product, silt was also applied to the fields of assignees.

**Box 15: On their name**

In 'Nacharam' village of Kosigi mandal, two blocks of land were selected with 30 acres of 14 S.Cs, 2 B.Cs and one O.C assignee. The total project cost is 2.67 lakhs of which 52,000 was shown as expenditure by December 2005. Assignees from this block alleged in a People's Monitoring Committee meeting conducted in April, that

- Selection of representatives of the assignees for opening of account was not done with the participation of assignees.
- Assignees don't have any records of expenditure with them and they have doubts over works done and the expenditure made.
- Para worker is not functioning properly and was not selected by assignees. Though most of the assignees are dalits the Para worker belongs to other castes.
- It was also alleged that, local influential persons of dominating castes told the VO representative that she got house under Indira Avas Yojana (IAY) scheme and for that she need to open an account and should sign. In this manner they obtained her signature and opened the bank account for CLDP with her as one of the signatory without the knowledge of assignees in the village

This enthusiasm of the local leaders in opening the account for receiving funds of CLDP is a good reflection of their intentions. Assignees themselves complained in a public meeting about the possibility of corruption as they applied only 6-7 loads of silt to each acre as against the claim of around 13 trips per acre, for which money was withdrawn. The local vested interests are putting pressure on the VO representative to sign the cheques for withdrawal of the money.

**3.3.2 Summary of the situation in the three mandals**

With the above case examples, it can be summarized that in these three mandals,

- The project is very vulnerable to elite capture, reflected in ways of opening of accounts, deciding on the representatives and para-workers and political patronage to contractual interests
- The level of awareness of the assignees over their entitlements in the program is very low, and program is not in the hands of the actual assignees to a large extent.
- The village and mandal functionaries are unable to function effectively and provide support to the assignees in terms of organizing them, enabling them to select a para-worker to support them in planning the works based on their land and livelihood needs etc.,
- Though MMS could manage several other programs, it is unable to withstand the pressure in case of CLDP. It may be because; other funds or programs are,
  - Routed directly through MMS and VO and they have a control over the investments,
  - Utilized only for the members.
  - Loan based, i.e. the funds can be traced back at any point of time and there will be a liability on part of facilitating organization and even receiver.
- But CLDP is a grant-based program extending also to non-members
- As the pattern of expenditure involves measurement and recording in Measurement book etc., a dependency is created on Watershed engineer or other mandal level technical person. It leads to keeping records in his or her control, which is not the case with

### **Box 16: Conflict for Control – Thunkimetla**

In Thunkimetla village of Bommaraspet mandal there are two blocks identified for the development under RIDF - X. Total extent put together is 100 acres of 105 assignees (S.C – 14, S.T- 33, B.C – 53, O.C – 5) with a project outlay of 12.6 lakhs. The situation in this village is as follows

Bank account for the receipt of funds was opened with one of the assignees and treasurer of the village organization. This was done without discussions, resolution and even knowledge of the Village organization (VO) members and president of V.O.

V.O members alleged that a local political leader belonging to Reddy community (a dominant caste) did this to have control over the program implementation and expenditure. Further, works like silt application was taken up without the knowledge of most of the assignees and silt was applied to the lands other than the selected assigned lands. No discussion and planning of works took place among the assignees, and no records were available to the assignees.

When the activists of Dalit Samakhya (a federation of dalit sanghas formed as part of Social Discrimination Elimination Project, supported by Action Aid and Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty) conducted meeting and orientation about the process, the V.O president then conducted a meeting of all the V.O members and through resolution elected other account holders.

The dominance of local political leaders and the manner in which earlier account was opened and funds were mis-utilised. This was brought to the notice of Project Director, Collector and even to police station by the VO. In retaliation the persons behind opening of the first account, tried to mobilize people against the V.O president and pressed for re-election of president of the V.O. Both sides engaged in a show of strength.

This matter was taken to the district Collector, who ordered conduct of a meeting with all the SHG members and elect a VO president acceptable to majority. Officials tried to conduct the meeting in the village but couldn't do as most of the members didn't turn up. In April during the public review meeting it was suggested to open the accounts with representatives from assignees themselves as the problem within the VO remained unsolved.

- the thrift and credit records, which essentially remain with the group or at least in the village with the book keeper.
- Lack of required level of capacities to understand the expenditure process, preparation of estimates, taking measurements; maintain records and managing personnel also resulted in MMS unable to establish full control over the program.
- Given this setting, women self help groups and its village and mandal federations are not fully equipped to handle a grant based program amidst the pressures from local vested interests. These factors indicate the need for innovations in the institutional forms within SHG-CIG-VO-MMS and outside of this stream to handle poverty related grant programs more effectively.
- If the capacities of local groups or assignees are built, or program is designed in such a way that these elements form part of the capacity building of the assignees and the CBOs, there is a greater chance of program being in the hands of the assignees. Grounding the program in haste without proper preparation, orientation and inadequate

facilitating investments contribute to this situation.

- The resistance to the women's institutions like SHG, VO and MMS in taking up their envisaged role in the program management also reflects the need to address the issue from a gender perspective. Do elite-men entrenched into the political structure allow women to operate public grant based investments??

### 3.4 Support to Institutions of women and dalits: Process and Experiences

WASSAN attempted to address the above issues as part of its engagement with CLDP in these mandals. A project named Social Discrimination Elimination Project as part of 'Indira Kranthi Patham' is also in place for promoting Dalit Samakhya at village, mandal and district level in seven mandals in Mahabubnagar district. WASSAN tried the approach of complementing the strength of women's collective with the strength of dalit collectives in achieving the change in the favour of assignees. As part of this initiative following activities were taken up in these three Mandals between August, 2005 to May, 2006.

#### 3.4.1 Activities taken up

- Orientation of SDEP activists and MMS office bearers on CLDP and the entitlements of assignees to engage with the program in their respective villages
- Communication campaign in selected villages of three mandals by preparing 'kalajatha script' and street play for communicating the objectives of the program, entitlements of the assignees and the present situation
- Mandal level orientation and sharing meetings with representatives of V.O and assignees of CLDP villages to understand the status and issues in the program implementation and plan initiatives to address those issues
- Ensuring opening of bank accounts,

A cultural group in action in Kosigi



selection of Para workers with a priority to dalit assignees

- Orientation and follow up with the Para workers
- Providing technical training to Para workers and Mandal technical assistants
- Exposure visit to selected Para workers, Mandal Technical Assistants, VO leaders and assignees to motivate them and create confidence on participatory processes
- Conducting review meetings with the functionaries in three mandals and Multi Disciplinary Team leaders (of the district administration).
- Building base line data, preparation of assignee wise plans and initiation of works in three villages to demonstrate the processes
- Village visits to assess the implementation process
- Conducting a people's review process with assignees from three mandals and DWMA
- Building an agenda for follow up for the local activists, assignees and others with the officials and local functionaries.
- Continuously pressurizing on the identified issues at the district level for change in the program management at that level



### **Box 17: Providing a platform for people to review**

After several months of ground work in orienting the assignees and building the skills of the para workers, there were many problems in the blocks in terms of the mandal functionaries not being accountable to the assignees and the interference of village level vested interests. To build the confidence of the assignees and also to make the mandal and district functionaries accountable, a *People's Review Meeting* was conducted on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2006 at Kosigi.



In this meeting around 200 people including the assignees, village level para workers, Village organization representatives and activists of Dalit Samakhya and union participated. Project Director of DWMA, which is the nodal agency for CLDP and its divisional and mandal level functionaries were also present.

In this meeting assignees from each block put their issues/problems in the implementation process before the project director who gave necessary directions to the respective mandal functionaries for addressing these issues. Project Director promised the assignees that he will take necessary steps to ensure that the programme is properly implemented and also asked the assignees to actively participate in the program and bring any issues to his notice.

One of the issues raised by assignees in the meeting and the response of the Project Director along with the follow up action is given here.

#### ***Bhogaram, Kosigi***

##### **Issue**

The assignees from Bhogaram village alleged that they were not taken into confidence while selecting the representative and opening of bank account. Both the VO leader and CIG representative belong to B.C. They also complained that the CIG leader is demanding Rs. 5,000 as bribe for signing the cheque and also the wage rates being paid are very low in spite of hard work they did. In this block there are 88 assignees (32 S.Cs, 7 S.T.s and 49 B.Cs)

##### **Project Director's response**

P.D directed Multi Disciplinary team coordinator to visit the village, take measurements in the presence of all the assignees and accordingly correct the gaps in payments. He also directed to facilitate the selection of new CIG representative in the presence of all the assignees and enquire about the charge of demanding bribe

##### **Follow up action**

Within that month mandal technical assistant visited the village, took proper measurements in the presence of the assignees and made arrangements for payment to the assignees accordingly.

This process created a sense of confidence and general awareness among the assignees and also a sense of responsibility among the mandal level functionaries. Like in the case of Chellapur mentioned above, (see box 14) a visit was made by MDT along with representatives of Dalit Samakhya and the issue of mis-utilisation of the money was discussed with the assignees. After that a process was initiated to open bank account with the assignees and to enter the details of works done earlier in the records for further releases. The assignees are now in a position of not allowing the vested interests to take the program in their hands.



### 3.4.2 Achievements

The following are the achievements of the above processes:

- Awareness about the program and the opportunities available has increased among the assignees in these three mandals
- Skills and knowledge levels of para workers and Mandal Technical Assistants in these three mandals has increased and are able to provide support to the assignees effectively
- A platform for the assignees to bring the issues to the notice of district officials and others for resolve is provided and a process of people's review was demonstrated
- In three blocks in the three mandals assignees could plan by themselves the works required in their lands and farmer wise plans were prepared and presented to the district administration as a model for following it up in other blocks.
- Addressing specific block wise issues like issue of not opening account with the assignees, misutilisation of funds etc., bringing a sense of confidence among the assignees.
- And most importantly the issues in implementation are being constantly exposed and put to discussion

Through this process an environment was created in the three mandals, which can be taken forward by representatives of local unions, dalit activists and Samkhyas through a process of People's monitoring. However, there are also some limitations/challenges in this process.

### 3.4.3 Limitations/Challenges

- In this form of enabling assignees to organize themselves or removing hurdles in the implementation process, there should be either individuals or organisation or a collective that continuously interacts

with assignees, identify issues, enable them to resolve these issues by taking up with village, mandal and district functionaries, also providing required leadership.

- Mandal Mahila Samakhya office bearers and the staff were constrained in taking up these issues as it involves potential conflict with local political representatives and most importantly lack of support from the DRDA-IKP
- Social Discrimination Elimination Project could not engage with the program to its full potential owing to its own priorities and other project imposed commitments
- The effectiveness of the CBOs depends on leadership, and it was found that the samakhyas are highly dependant on the supporting staff and their effectiveness is limited to the capacities of the staff. The vision of office bearers of either Mahila Samakhya or Dalit Samakhya providing vibrant leadership to the organisation on these complicated issues is still to be nurtured.
- Above all, some of the issues at field level are linked to the processes at district level, like non involvement of Community Coordinators of MMS, selection and training of Para workers and Mandal technical assistants, allowing process of assignee wise planning to take place, addressing any irregularities found at village level etc. It took lot of energies and time to persuade these processes at district level to happen. There needs to be sub divisional, district and state level platforms for addressing these issues(see box 18).

This experience re-emphasised that the problem is not just managerial, i.e of building capacities of MMS or VO members in better management of the program, but also political. This process of engagement will be successful only if it is able to produce 'resourceful and questioning' persons at village level among entitlement holders. This provides a continuous pressure

### **Box 18: Running from pillar to post**

Experience of following up with district administration

- Through its engagement in three mandals in Mahabubnagar district, WASSAN found that the involvement of functionaries related to DRDA in CLDP as per G.O. 66 is lacking. This issue was brought to the notice of District Collector, PDs of DWMA and DRDA several times. Joint meetings were organized; certain directions and commitments were made in these meetings but could not translate into practice. The Project Director, DRDA at one point said that, their staff cannot be part of this program as the nodal agency at state level is Commissionerate of Rural Development, but not Society of Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), which is a nodal agency at state level for DRDAs and Indira Kranthi Patham. This issue was also taken to CEO of SERP which resulted in little success.

It takes months in this process of identifying the issues at each level, trying to address it at every level and in each step going to higher level when it fails at the previous level

- It was also identified that Community Coordinators (C.Cs) and Assistant Project Managers of DRDAs need orientation on CLDP and their roles and responsibilities. A training proposal was sent to district administration to orient all the DRDA staff in the district in a two day training programme in batches. Later it was reduced to a one day program to be conducted in 5 batches. DRDA could not find even that time and Collector requested to complete training for all the 200 functionaries in one day, and it ultimately boiled down to a 2 hour interaction with all the C.Cs and APM(around 100) at one place !!

District officials also wondered why passing of a 'message' to the DRDA functionaries need one or two days and that too in small batches of 40 members. This shows their understanding and attitude towards 'training'.

*Every department or agency has different programs with limited human resources and it becomes difficult to devote sufficient time and energies on a single program. In this situation it becomes more difficult if more than one agency is involved for fulfilling the tasks in a program. Convergence and coordination is the most difficult thing to achieve between the government departments at mandal, district or state level.*

on vested interests and the responsible functionaries to stick to rules and deliver. This obviously needs a long term engagement with the people and particularly of entitlement holders who are politically weak.

There are limitations for an organisation like MMS, which is a collective of women of various castes, and predominantly of B.Cs formed with the objective of thrift and credit and supported by the government. It applies to even Dalit Samkhya as it is also again supported by a government affiliated

project. There are lines drawn to the extent they can be active to challenge the existing power structures in the villages and their reflections in the implementation of a government program.

## 4. Making a Difference

The above experiences provide an overall picture of the program implementation and the limitations Community based organisations face. However, there are also some positive experiences where assignees could access their entitlements effectively, develop their lands with the investments provided and brought the land into cultivation. These positive experiences were possible under different conditions,

- Self motivation of the assignees coupled with absence of any barriers alienating them
- Assignees in a position to assert and properly manage the program by themselves
- Enabling support by NGO/other external agency,
- Sincere efforts of the program functionaries in particular cases

### 4.1 On their Own

Some of the case examples where assignees by themselves could access and utilise the program investments effectively are presented here.

#### *Being a farmer matters:*

In Rangapur village of Parigi mandal 200 acres of 126 members was selected under CLDP. VIKASAM, an organization working in the mandal is facilitating the implementation of the program. One assignee



Bheemiah belonging to Backward Caste has two acres of assigned land in that block. Land is already under cultivation before the initiation of the program.

When Bheemiah came to know about the program and the opportunities in it through NGO functionary he proposed activities to be taken up for further development of his land and increasing productivity. He had taken up bunding, plantation on bunding, plantation of bio-diesel plants, one compost pit in the field, one small farm pond and also vermi compost unit at his house in the village. He could plan and articulate his needs clearly and also ensured that these works were taken up in his land.

He along with his family members executed all the works and also got wages. He has put jowar, dry land paddy, cotton and red gram in these two acres. He could not go for the bore well as it was not feasible in that location. Overall investment in these two acres lands was around Rs. 8,000.

As NGO is facilitating the implementation, he could easily approach the functionary, put his needs and accordingly took up works in the land and got paid without any hassles. The quality of the works is far superior than any other farmer and he did not need any guidance or quality control suggestions from the functionaries. He is strongly linked and dependant on the land and agriculture and tries to seize any opportunity that comes for improving the land.

In Sakalipally village of Kulkacherla mandal 157 acres of 60 assignees was selected under the program. Here most of the assignees are having more than 3 acres of assigned land. The lands are partially under cultivation. They left some of the land fallow because of the investment needs. As part of the program mostly the lands that were left fallow were taken for development.



In one case an assignee named Ramulu of S.T community is having 4 acres of land and 2 acres was taken up in CLDP. NGO representatives facilitating the program informed him about the opportunities available in the program and the possible works that can be taken up. Based on that

without much involvement and even knowledge of the functionaries, assignee on his own did the bush clearance, deep ploughing, pitting for plantations, small farm pond and a vermi compost unit, which overall contributed to increasing the productivity of the land. The functionaries had to caution him to go slow and keep them informed before he takes up the work as they have to make sure of measurements, unit rates and also overall budget limit for him

From these experiences it can be seen that assignees who already had the control over their land and where the titles are clear, could utilize the program effectively. From the earlier experiences, wherever the assignees

### **Box 19: Where the poor asset their rights**

#### ***Basic information:***

In Mudireddypalli village of Kosigi mandal in Mahabubnagar district, 28 acres of land of 14 assignees (SC-10, ST-1 and BC-3) was selected under CLDP (RIDF -IX batch) with an estimated project cost of 2.3 lakhs. Out of it as Rs. 98,000 was released and totally spent by March, 06.

The assignees learnt about the program from Village President (Sarpanch- who is also a dalit) and later on the DWMA team explained about the program and its implementation process.

#### ***Implementation process:***

All the assignees (male) came together as a group, elected one representative and opened a joint account in a local bank with this representative and the VO president (women) as signatories. They have selected one para-worker from within their group and also planned the works. All the assignees participated in the implementation of works and para-worker has taken the work-attendance. Technical assistant measured the works and the group representatives withdrew the money and distributed the same to each assignee as per their work and allocation in a meeting.

Entire land selected under the program was uncultivated from last 15 years and is infested with scrubs/bushes. The assignees identified the following works to bring the land into cultivation

- Bush clearance , Stone clearance, Bunding /soil conservation, Silt application, Small percolation tanks etc.,

Bush clearance, stone picking and silt application works were completed. They have planned to cultivate these lands in the kharif of 2006. The plots (land) were not demarcated individually. The assignees decided to develop the total land collectively and then make individual demarcations on mutual agreement.

The interesting thing in this village is that some procedures were not followed like,

- Scheduled meetings, Proper maintenance of records at assignees level, Assignees



An assignee family at work in their land

### ***Numbers and Space in the institutions also matters:***

Another important factor is the ability to assert the rights and entitlements through collective strength and political space. The successful experiences like Mudireddy palli (see box 19) and the challenging experiences in Kurnool and Vittalapuram (see boxes 9 and 13) show the importance of this factor. Support in the form of an organized platform like unions or groups to the assignees may help them to assert their rights.

Some more positive experiences are presented in the next section where there is an element of engagement or supportive role by the NGOs.

were dependant only on wage labor couldn't access the program that easily. It also indicates the social and psychological significance of status of 'farmer' than the status of 'laboure'r and the present status of dependence on land.

able to exactly tell the total amount sanctioned and withdrawn, Availability of plans in telugu with the assignees ,

- Also effective involvement of women is not visible

But still the program is in the hands of assignees in the sense that they could decide on:

- opening of account and account holders, selection of Para worker, works to be done and also payment procedures, form of demarcation and settling the boundary issues

#### ***The difference:***

No mis-utilisation of money and contractor are found here as all the assignees participated in the implementation of works. The decision of assignees to first complete basic works in total 28 acres and then decide among themselves on demarcation shows their involvement and ownership of the program and also their collective will.

All this was possible as

- The number of assignees is small (15) and they could come together as a group and manage among themselves
- They saw this program as opportunity to develop their lands.
- Majority are S.Cs, who are politically powerful and Sarpanch also belongs to the same caste
- The information and knowledge about the program reached all of them as they could access the information channels through the Sarpanch and realized that this is their entitlement and demanded information and accountability from mandal functionaries.

The last two factors are important than the first two factors. In many villages though the assignees saw the program as an opportunity, they were not in a situation to take decisions and play active role in the implementation of the program. This shows that though certain procedures are not followed in a picture perfect way, the usefulness of the investments lies in allowing the assignees to take control of the program.

## 4.2 The role of NGOs

### **Why NGOs:**

The Process Guidelines of CLDP have a provision for special stream of innovative projects, which could be the experimental ground for further learning and improvising the program processes. This needs intense facilitation on ground which NGOs working at village level only can do to a great extent. WASSAN facilitated discussion among the experienced NGO resource organisations and the government, as a result under A.P Rural Livelihoods Program 16 NGO Resource Organizations from Ranga Reddy, Nalgonda, Warangal, Kadapa, Chittoor, Ananthapur and Visakhapatnam districts were selected. The list of these NGO Resource Organizations is enclosed in the Annexure Y.

As part of this arrangement the resource organizations took the responsibility of facilitating and implementing Comprehensive land development programme in selected villages/blocks of land. It was agreed that 10% of the total project cost will be given to the NGOs towards administration and field level training expenses.

The specific objectives of this agreement are,

- Creating a stream of innovative projects under Comprehensive Land Development Project (CLDP) and develop them into a demonstration and model projects.
- To ensure the productivity enhancement and livelihoods diversification of the families in the selected CLDP blocks, as a result of developing the assigned lands.
- To provide feed back to the concerned officers at district and state levels based on the field experiences, for improving the over all quality of the project.

A common MOU was signed by all the stake holders involved i.e, individual NGOs,

respective District Project Directors, Commissioner Rural Development, Commissioner, A.P Academy of Rural Development (AMR-APARD) and WASSAN. WASSAN played the coordinating role, by taking up the emerging issues from time to time in the implementation process and playing an active role in resolving those issues. It also supported the capacity building needs of these organizations along with Centre for Natural Resource managements, APARD.

### **Achievements:**

Involvement of NGOs in the selected blocks under this process started in September, 2005. These 15 NGOs are covering 175 blocks with about 12,000 acres in seven districts. In almost one year of their involvement they could bring difference in the implementation of the program in several elements compared to other blocks in the state.

Important of them are, *(for specific experiences, see box 20 and 21)*

- Higher awareness levels among the assignees about the program
- Organization of assignees in small groups and increasing their involvement in the program
- Preparation of assignee wise plans with the involvement of the assignees and building baseline data of all the assignees
- Identifying land rights issues and trying to address these issues



Training on net planning in Parigi

- Enabling the assignees to do the works by themselves for development of their lands
  - Better transparent practices in opening of accounts, maintenance of records, measurements and payments
  - Avoiding local contractual interests from hijacking the program
  - Promoting group irrigation practices
  - Initiation of productivity enhancement activities and the interventions like Non Pesticide Management etc.,
- Determining factors:**
- The degree of achievement of the above successful experiences varies among organisations and districts depending on some of the factors like, (*For specific examples, see box 22*)
- Understanding and cooperation of the divisional and district level administration
  - Availability of funds at block level
  - Release of administrative expenditure to the NGOs and capacity of NGOs to meet the costs in case of delay
  - Time and energies devoted by the key members of the organisation and capacities of the staff of the organization
  - Different persons (staff) engaged in the program reporting to different

### **Box 20: Where the involvement of facilitating agencies matter**

#### ***PILUPU, Nalgonda***

In Dattaipally village of Turkapally mandal 73 acres of 51 assignees was selected under this program. PILUPU an NGO working in that area from long involved in the program right from the selection of assignees. It formed the assignees into small groups based on contiguity. It evolved individual household plans through net planning process and thorough discussions with the assignees. Without limiting to only land development activities, it also facilitated the process of identifying and addressing constraints in cultivating land. One among them was draught animals for ploughing. By discussing with the assignees, it facilitated a process of purchase of three pairs of buffaloes (multipurpose – for milk and ploughing) from CLDP money provided to the assignees. This money will be repaid by the assignees in instalments.

Through this process in the first year 35 acres of land was brought under cultivation and by 2006, 51 acres was brought under cultivation which was fallow before the program. In this block around 20 acres of land is not suitable for cultivation of crops in which assignees are planning for fodder and plantations. Non pesticide management was adopted instead of chemical pesticides in 5 acres as a demonstrative process. This year in all the 51 acres NPM is being practiced.

#### ***MVF, Ranga Reddy district***

In Mudu Chinthalapally village of Shamirpet mandal MVF is facilitating the program. In this block of 97 acres belonging to 78 assignees, 20 acres of 10 assignees was alienated. With the help of the MRO this land was brought back to the assignees. With the support of this program assignees themselves worked in their lands and 75 acres of land was brought into cultivation by 2006. Improved varieties of seeds of Maize, Castor and Red gram were provided. Also 20 farmers are preparing vermi compost for their lands using cement rings. Some of the assignees showed interest in fodder cultivation for which NGO is facilitating the necessary linkages. In this block assignees were formed into 8 small groups for effective involvement in the implementation of the program.

## Box 21: Where the involvement of facilitating agencies matter

### *PAS, Chittoor*

In Bandarlapalli village of Ramakuppam mandal, after the program was initiated with the efforts of the NGO, 25 assignees came back from Bangalore, where they have migrated earlier for work. In this block there were no individual demarcations for the lands and with the help of private surveyor, the NGO arranged for land demarcation for 44 assignees. New records were prepared on the name of women and are ready for distribution.



Basic works like bush clearance and bunding were taken up are being done in these lands for bringing them into cultivation. 30 acres of land was newly brought under cultivation in this block in 2006.

NGO is also planning to provide bank linkage for dairy development and purchase of sheep as these are the prominent needs that came out in livelihood planning.

Training on Non Pesticides Management was also given to 20 assignees

In this block assignees were organized into small groups and for all the groups women are the leaders.

### *PEACE, Nalgonda*

In Naginenipally village of Bommalramaram mandal, 60 acres of 56 assignees (all belong to S.C) was selected under the program. NGO facilitated the implementation of the program. This land was totally fallow before the program. With timely deep ploughing 40 acres of land was brought under cultivation. Castor was sown in kharif 2005 itself. Soil and moisture conservation practices like bunding and stylo hamata grass on the bunds were done. During kharif 2006 farmers ploughed the fields by themselves. Now 10 families are identified for milch animals and 2 bore well points identified with help of AFPRO. Assignees chose not to go for horticulture because of problems with monkeys and instead decided to go for crops like castor.

### *PSS, WARANGAL*

In Madipally village of Thorrur mandal, 47 acres of 41 assignees was selected under CLDP. In this block 10 acres of assigned land was left out during selection. Later NGO facilitated the inclusion of these 10 acres into the program. In this block one group was formed totally with women assignees. Also in this block S.C assignees sold 10 acres to B.Cs long ago. Through NGO facilitation they took back by paying Rs. 40,000 for 10 acres. In these 10 acres assignees have completed land development work collectively and are also cultivating the land collectively.

organisations (for example MTA to MMS/ MDT, etc...)

- Area specific problems or challenges

Further, being an NGO doesn't by itself make a difference. The positive change depends on ensuring the support systems including monitoring and accountability that enables NGO to perform its role effectively. Following case example illustrates the above point,

In Ranga Reddy district, some of the NGOs were involved in the implementation of CLDP right from the beginning in terms of mobilization of proposals and implementation of works. One of them is VIKASAM which is working in Parigi mandal. But there was no formal agreement between the organization and DWMA. P.D, DMWA assured that they will be given 2% facilitation cost. But they didn't get any administrative support and the organization maintained one full time person for the program without any budgetary support.

In that form VIKASAM involved in implementation of 3 blocks in the IX batch. A social audit was conducted in Rangapur, one of the IX batch villages in January, 2006 and the works and process in the previous year were evaluated. The findings were,

- Assignees do not have much orientation and understanding about the project.
- Assignees don't have proper knowledge on the amount sanctioned and spent
- Quantity of works is not strictly as recorded
- The process like group meetings, transparent payments and maintenance of records at village level are not in place.

In summary it was found that there was not much difference in the implementation between the regular government structure and through NGO, The reasons cited by the NGO were,



Social audit in Rangapur

- There was lot of pressure from DWMA to spend and show the progress within a short time
- There was no facilitation cost paid to the staff of the organization and it didn't allow the chief functionary to concentrate and also much control on the staff.
- There was no written MOU which clearly states the norms for NGOs to follow

It shows that an organization which had experience in facilitating participatory processes in natural resource management programs also could not negotiate with the DWMA and ensure processes at village level in the absence of proper systems.

Though the above process cannot be generalized for all the NGOs and it varies according to the commitment, capacities and resources available for each organization, in general there are limitations for NGOs and the frame work in which they are operating as a not equal partner in the power relations with the government agency.

From October, 2005 VIKASAM became part of the Innovative Stream of projects wherein there is an MOU between CRD and DWMA, and also a provision of 10% of project cost for facilitation. Interestingly after the MOU, VIKASAM could able to fill most of the gaps in terms of organizing the assignees, preparation of participatory plans, implementation of works with the participation of assignee groups and streamline the systems of regular meetings, maintaining records, transparent transactions etc. This was possible as the agreement not only provides it scope for negotiating with the department but also puts accountability on NGO itself.

## Box 22: Challenges faced

### ***A Puzzle:***

In Nalgonda, PILUPU is working in 5 CLDP blocks in Turkapally and Rajapet mandals. They have organized assignees into groups, oriented about the program, facilitated land and livelihood development plans along with the assignees. But when it came to executing the works like bunding, bush clearance, small percolation tanks etc., it became difficult for the organisation to motivate the assignees to work manually. This was particularly in Ibrahimpur and Dattaipally blocks, which are in the urban fringe (about 40 km from the urban areas of Hyderabad).

Almost all the assignees are dalits and are mainly dependant on agriculture labour. When the organisation persuaded they say that they will start work, but very few turn up. After one day of work they complained of low wages as per Standard Scheduled rate. The organization assured them that it can be reviewed after a week's work and if the rates needed can be revised. Still they were not interested to work. Further, they unanimously made a resolution to use machines for executing the works.

Some of the assignees participated in Rural employment guarantee scheme as wage laborers. But they were not coming together to do work in their own lands. NGO is in a dilemma whether taking the people's opinion in to view; it should use machinery and complete the works so that they can cultivate their lands.

If people's choices are to be given priority then the organisation has to use machinery in executing the works. This experience and similar ones in some of the districts really put questions on the issues of labour – wage demand –work availability – manual work and wages, which needs to be studied in detail.

### ***Back to Square one, but after many rounds:***

In Visakhapatnam, VIKASA was allotted three CLDP blocks under innovative stream by the district administration (DWMA) after two months of persuasion. When the staff of the

### **4.3 Lesson we can draw**

As seen from the experiences above, the involvement of NGOs as facilitating agencies in the program definitely helps in achieving the set objectives and following the enabling processes. NGOs having experience in natural resource management programs bring in intensive facilitation, stakeholder engagement and innovations. Above all, their presence ensured the control of assignees over their entitlements provided by the program, though there will be some dependence on NGO functionaries. But in contrast to the dependence on middlemen or contractors, this dependence is more of an enabling nature.

Drawing from this form of engagement,

Projects like CLDP should be seen as Social Projects than 'construction' projects, which overtly recognize the need for proper and complete investments on institutions, community preparation, time and human resources and administrative flexibility. Unfortunately funding arrangements like RIDF do not allow proper institutional arrangements and investments on building capacities of the assignees to take control of their program.

Allowing space for NGOs enables this process, but the challenge is to incorporate the characteristics of NGO functioning into the mainstream through the demonstrative effect as the involvement of NGOs can only cover minute percentage of the area. It is also difficult to find competent NGOs for all the villages and again the costs will be

organization visited the blocks, they found that in two blocks there was no land available in the village as mentioned in the proceedings. It took the matter to DWMA, which directed the organization to select another two blocks within the mandal and submit the proposals. Accordingly VIKASA selected two new blocks completed planning and submitted the proposals.

DWMA approved it and transferred the sanction proceedings and money to Integrated Tribal Development Authority (ITDA), as the area comes under the ITDA jurisdiction. This whole process took almost 6 months and the actual work has not yet started. When they are about to start the process, Project Officer of ITDA said they cannot allow them to work in these blocks as the ITDA don't have confidence over the NGO. The functionaries of VIKASA tried to convince the P.O that this is a special stream in CLDP, DWMA has allotted those blocks and there is an MOU at state level. Nothing affected the ITDA and the situation is now back to square one.

### ***Not able to understand the 'Understanding':***

In the Memorandum of Understanding it was clearly stated that facilitation of the program in the selected blocks involves total responsibility of ensuring processes envisaged in the guidelines at the block level. And it was signed by all the project directors of the respective districts. But in one of the district P.D, DWMA in the letter of allotting the blocks made it specific that NGO facilitation means organizing the beneficiaries and training. Taking a cue, Mandal technical assistants or WDT under the guidance of Multi Disciplinary Team members are doing planning of works, execution of works etc., independently without consulting the facilitating NGO.

In Anantapur district, one of the member organizations, Timbaktu Collective is struggling till date to take responsibility of all the blocks in the selected mandals. The local functionaries including MDT and MTA members are non-cooperative and are not giving any information and are creating obstacles in the program facilitation. In spite of taking the issue to the Project Director several times, the situation hasn't changed much.

relatively higher. More importantly the overall objective should not be taking over the 'delivery' role but to make the government 'deliver'.

There are also other limitations with this mode of collaborative approach,

- The dependency of NGOs on the government for meeting the costs of facilitation brings power equations into play and there will always be danger of co-option.
- The delays in administrative processes and release of money affect the progress of the program and create pressure on the NGOs. These procedures sometimes off-sets the strengths of the NGO

- It takes away lots of time and energies of the organizations in pursuing the government machinery in expediting administrative processes

- The organisations have to withstand pressures from contractual interests.

Being partner of the government and able to function independently and effectively is not a general phenomenon. It depends on the high level of commitment, capacities and alternative resources available to the organisation and or individuals in the organization. It also depends on *strategizing the partnership through building collective forums* in engaging with the government.

## 5. People's Monitoring Process

### 5.1 Initiative and the objective

The process of engagement with CLDP in a collective and sustained form was initiated by WASSAN together with Centre for World Solidarity (CWS) - Dalit Programme, Dalit Bahujan Front (DBF), and Centre for Dalit Studies(CDS), Dalit Bahujan Shramik Union (DBSU), Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vrittidarula Union (APVVU) and other representatives of dalit organizations, agriculture labour unions and NGOs concerned over the effective implementation of the program. This collective initiative started in September, 2005 and which later took shape of People's Monitoring Committee(PMC) is based on the realization that an *empowered, creative and result oriented engagement* of people with the state and its programs, is necessary for realizing the stated objectives of the development programs. This is more particular to the Development programs and enactments aimed at dalits, tribals, women and other marginalized sections, given their status in the Indian social structure.

The objective of PMC is to contribute to the process of promoting people's platforms for constructive engagement with the implementing agencies of various development programs to demand and

ensure accountability for the objectives, processes and end results stated in the project documents. Strengthening the Comprehensive Land Development Programme (CLDP) of Government of Andhra Pradesh was its first initiative. It intends to expand to other programs on dalits, land, wages and related livelihoods.

### 5.2 How is it different from 'Social Audit'?

Social Audit in the present form of usage as an event is being organised by Rural Development Department itself as part of NREGA. In the districts like Anantapur, it was done in a campaign mode with the involvement of local NGOs. Department even constituted a special 'Social Audit' wing for promoting this process. Though the principle is ensuring the availability of all the work related records at all times to the people for scrutiny and promote the process of accessing those records by the actual wage labourers or entitlement holders of the program. Further, Gram sabha or the actual community of entitlement holders should be enabling to do this rather than the government department.

People's monitoring process instead takes the program guidelines and principles as the

<b>Social Audit</b>	<b>People's Monitoring process</b>
Practiced as an event	Long term engagement at village level and with the program in a continuous process
Focus is on financial transactions and transparency	Focus is on all the processes envisaged in the program like their participation levels, inclusion of their needs and choices in the program, performance of roles by various functionaries including transparency in financial transactions
Centre of Action is 'Village'	Purview of action is broader, i.e. processes at village level, procedures at district level and policies at state level
Facilitators are trained outside activists	Enabling the local activists and activists from the community itself for taking up the process

bench mark. The activists and organisations at village level take up the tasks of orienting people about the program, enable them to actively participate and take control over the program implementation. It is a continuous process and the focus is not just accountability of financial transactions but accountability to the whole set of processes to be followed in a people centred development program. This process also intends to use Social Audit and the Right to information Acts as the tools for promoting People's monitoring process.

In a government program the problems are not just at village level, but in the whole set of 'delivery chain' right from conceptualising the processes, allocating resources, release of money, regular follow up and monitoring and taking corrective measures etc., The persons and agencies responsible for these tasks like the Commissionerate, District Agencies etc., also to be hold accountable. People's monitoring Committee followed this process of 'cyclical' engagement from processes on ground to policies at state level.

### 5.3 Efforts made

Following are the efforts made by the People's monitoring Committee up to July, 06

#### ***Understanding and presenting the implementation status:***

- Prepared an initial draft status report on CLDP with critical analysis of programme guidelines, implementation mechanisms and with field level experiences



Mandal level review meeting in Krishna District

Assignees action - demanding for release of budgets



- Conducted a state level workshop sharing the draft status report with representations of various unions, dalit organisations, NGOs and government officials
- Coordinated a state level campaign covering 15 districts, where in respective unions and organisations conducted district level meetings with assignees of selected lands, district officials and representatives of district level unions and organisations.
- Compiled the survey findings done from 100 blocks of lands from 10 districts selected under CLDP and brought a People's report on the status of the programme
- Conducted a state level workshop on CLDP on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2005 and presented the people's report to the Members of Legislative Assembly, Government officials and representatives of unions and organisations.

#### ***Evolving mechanisms to address the issues:***

- Evolved broad future plan of action through consultations with the representatives from various districts and drafted a Strategy of action for PMC
- Nominated members of representative committee constituted by the government at state and district level for interface with respective government agencies.
- Following up with Rural Development Department through State level



Regional level meeting in Vijayawada

Monitoring Committee meetings and regular interactions on the issues identified from ground.

- Conducted regional meetings with the village and mandal level representatives of various unions, dalit organizations to enable them to engage with the program in their respective work areas
- Enabled the member unions/ organisations to engage with the program in selected blocks (around 500 all over the state) and strive for change in the implementation process and status.
- Actively promoting similar collective process in the districts and follow up with respective District Agencies through district monitoring committees.
- Participated in Project Director's Conference and made suggestions for strengthening the program

As part of this engagement various unions, organizations and individual activists in most the districts conducted

- Mandal, divisional level orientation meetings with the assignees
- Regular visits to the villages to assess the implementation situation, identify the issues and even organizing assignees
- Interface meetings with the government functionaries and assignees
- Field visits to the villages where mis-utilisation of money is reported and even forced the government to suspend some of the functionaries (like

WDTs in Midjil, Talkondapally of Mahabubnagar District and Parigi mandal of Anantapur district)

- Ensured coverage of issues in local media

### 5.4 The difference it could make

Through this whole process the People's monitoring committee succeeded in bringing the focus on CLDP at all levels and was successful in building visibility of engagement. This process created a network that is actively following up the processes being adopted in the programme at all levels and the participation levels of the actual intended entitlement holders. Above all, the constant engagement of PMC with CLDP has kept the agenda of developing dalit's/ assigned land alive even in the wake of programs like AP Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

Most importantly, in this process PMC was also able to build a positive association with the Rural Development Department without being co-opted. Seeing the merit in the process and the efforts, the officials in the Department also extended their cooperation by constituting state level monitoring committee and later District monitoring committees with the members suggested by PMC and conducting joint visits with PMC representatives. Further, the department made changes in the implementation arrangements taking from the suggestions of PMC in the form of a Circular (No.16)

At the district level, the monitoring committees are following up with the district administration for operationalisation of this circular and on other measures for



Release of People's Report on CLDP by People's Representatives

effective implementation of the program in the respective districts.

In a nutshell this process created a cyclical form of engagement with village level processes, district level procedures and state level policies feeding and strengthening each other.

This form of engagement through people's organizations needs to be continuous to lead to effective mobilization of people at various levels. Then it will have a scope to create forums and leadership from the people for constantly demanding transparency and accountability in the implementation of the government programmes. It has a potential to gradually shift the control from the vested interests to the actual entitlement holders. Positive impact of this kind of continuous escorting of people is demonstrated by the engagement of Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vrittidarula Union in Visakhapatnam district (see box 23).

### 5.5 Lessons from the process

For the people to **access and utilize the resources in any development program**,

- Mobilization of people is necessary which can be in many forms depending on the local situation. It can be based on program defined constituency or identity based or through unionization based on the occupation etc., but the primary

focus is on accessing the resources and taking control over the specific program meant for them

- They should be supported to assert their rights and entitlements and withstand the pressures in the village from the dominant sections
- A conducive environment and various platforms need to be created at various levels where the entitlement holders and their representatives can participate and engage with the government and related departments for ensuring their entitlements
- This process need to be of long term to be effective

This is the first and basic level of achievement.

The second level would be not just utilization but *effective utilization* and be able to sustain the benefits accrued through this kind of interventions. It involves in creasing the knowledge and skill levels of the people, building on their traditional wisdom and increasing their capacities to comprehend and withstand the changes brought by the liberalization and privatisation policies on their livelihood options and asset base. There is a significant role for NGOs having experience in participatory natural resource management to demonstrate these processes and influence the mainstream practices and policies.



State level review meeting at Press Club, Hyderabad

### Box 23: Experiences of effective mobilization of assignees

The implementation status of CLDP in the selected villages of Ravikamatham and Rolugunta mandals in Visakhapatnam highlights the role of Unions/ People's Organisations and the extent to which they can restore control of assignees on the program.

The common features found in Jogupet, Kunjarti, Kalyanapu Lova, Kothapatnam of Ravi kamatham mandal and Kontalam, Y.B. Patnam, Koruprolu of Rolugunta mandals are:

- Assignees are aware of the program and the opportunities available
- Land titles and holdings are clear and there are no problems of land alienation
- Assignees are organized into groups
- Selection of representatives, opening of account and selection of Para workers from among their community were done with the knowledge and resolution of the assignees
- Works were decided by the assignees and they themselves are executing the works
- Assignees regularly meet, discuss and decide on the action plan
- Withdrawal of money and payments are done with the knowledge of assignees and basic records are with them
- Most of the Land was also brought back into use with plantations (Sarugu and Cashew) and intercropping of food grains.
- Participation of women in the meetings, works and decision making is also fairly well.

These efforts enhanced involvement of the assignees that helped in bringing their lands into cultivation and increasing productivity.

This could be possible because of presence and involvement of Agriculture workers union in those villages from many years. Most of the assignees are the members of the union; most of them obtained land pattas and control over the land through struggles as part of the union. From the initiation of CLDP, union activists involved in orienting the assignees about the program and enabled the assignees to be in control of the processes in the program. They also helped the assignees in dealing with the functionaries like Mandal Technical assistant, Mandal Development Officer, Community Coordinator etc.,

In the case of these villages, there are some gaps like:

- Though they decided the works to be done, they don't have written plans with them
- Choice of interventions and land use was limited(bush clearance, land leveling, plantations of Sarugu and Cashew with intercropping) without exploring more options
- Other off-farm activities or interventions like livestock, etc., are not tied up though provision of milch cattle was identified as major need.
- There is still dependency on the local government functionaries to an extent in terms of choosing options for land development, agriculture practices etc.

## 6. Summarising overall issues and concerns - Future directions

Put in a very simplistic way, Comprehensive Land development Project is a scheme which provides primarily a pool of resources to the selected assignees to bring their land into cultivation or to increase its productivity if it is already under cultivation. The works to be done for the above purpose should be decided and executed by the assignees with the help of the project functionaries.

Land development is a routine activity of medium or large farmers, who periodically invest in their lands for improvement of soil fertility or productivity. The problem is that assignees of government land are not in a position to invest that money on their own and are bound by several other social, economic and historical factors like caste, landlessness, dependence on daily wage income for survival etc. This makes it difficult for them to settle on the lands assigned.

The task indeed is simple if the assignees have the required money. When it is packaged into a government program or say public funded program, it becomes complex and the number of tasks increases multifold - timely and precise *Information flow*, , *Orientation and training*, *transparent selection process that is subject to social audits*, *financial management systems*, *organization of the stakeholders*, , *leadership development*, , *systems for transparency within the group*, , *Trainings to all the actors involved*, *criteria development and selection process for the works identified*, *fixing of wages and rates* , *Estimation*, *Measurements*, *Payments* , *regular review*, *recording*, *implementation*, etc. .

These are all to be done in a context of existing political, social and bureaucratic setup and their nexus with contractual interests. This introduces many more subjective factors in the process, which can be seen in the case examples provided in the

report (Section - 3).

On the other hand, it can also be seen that given all these complex processes, in some cases assignees could utilize the program for bringing their land into cultivation or increasing the productivity. This was possible because either the assignees are already on land as farmers or their level of assertiveness is high because of their social and political organization/status (as seen in the experiences provided in section 4). These kinds of examples are only exceptions given the general social, economic and political status of the assignees, particularly dalits and other weaker sections. The other factor is involvement of an NGO in offsetting the disadvantaged position of the assignees.

Taking both the challenging and positive experiences of the project implementation and also experience of various forms of engagement with the project the overall issue can be presented in two broad categories,

1. The limitations imposed by the design of the project in accommodating the needs of the targeted section of people
2. The limitations imposed by socio-political situation of the targeted section in taking control of the program and accessing the entitlements provided

Given this background and based on the experiences from People's monitoring process following operational strategy is proposed:

1. Influence the policy decisions in formulating a new program design that is centric to the needs and the present situation of the targeted communities.

For example, Support from the field functionaries in accessing the

investments of the program is one of the important needs of the poor, particularly dalits, as otherwise they have to depend on the dominant caste sections and get exploited as seen from the experiences presented above. In this background investment on institutions and human resources becomes much more important for a program targeting dalits and other weaker sections.

Experiences from People's monitoring process do demonstrate the scope for influencing the policy decisions to incorporate the needs of the community.

However, the challenge is to build alliances with the people's organisations that have strong roots in the communities for taking up this process.

2. Strengthening the process of enabling the poor particularly dalits and adivasis to overcome their limitations in terms of non representation in the power structure and dependence on dominant castes. This involves support to people's organisations like agriculture unions, dalit and adivasi organisations etc., in terms of

- effectively mobilising the poor and building visibility for the poor through providing platforms and forums for them to articulate their demands

- Promoting cadre of 'barefoot activists' from among the people's organisations who can enable poor to organize, articulate their needs and assert their rights
- Promoting the process of sensitizing these organizations in terms of caste, class and gender aspects

This also involves research and documentation support of the related issues like land rights, landlessness, wage labour opportunities, changing scenarios etc. and promoting extensive use of Right to Information Act by the community members and activists

This form of 'civil society' engagement with the government development programs have a scope to promote the emergence of a vibrant 'political society'<sup>4</sup> from among the oppressed sections of dalits, adivasis and other weaker sections, wherein the representatives/ activists from these communities can directly engage with the issues by being part of political and program structures at all levels<sup>5</sup>.

Such processes engagement need to be adopted by various actors like Unions, Dalit and tribal organizations, NGOs of various kinds including the donor agencies, political fronts or groupings which intend to contribute to the process of eliminating discrimination and injustice in various forms. Each can contribute according to their placing, nature of their organization and capacities.



<sup>4</sup> Chatterji.P(1997)

<sup>5</sup> Radha Govinda(2005)

## **Annexure -1**

Salient features of the G.O and circulars pertaining to coverage and approach are,

1. The project is expected to cover the lands belonging to the poor particularly the poorest. There is no objection if in any particular district; the project is dedicated to develop assigned/surplus lands only
2. The project will adopt Farming System approach instead of taking up interventions in isolation. The Farming System envisages integrated and comprehensive approach covering agriculture, livestock and allied activities through which the agro eco-system is managed for sustainable livelihoods.”
3. Care should be taken that the lands identified for development are not alienated to others by the assignees. Proper possession and enjoyment of the land by the assignees should be verified. Alienated lands should not be taken up under this project.
4. The success of project largely depends on the capacity of *Village Organization (VO)* to design, implement and monitor the project and hence the need to build capacity of the Village Organizations (federations of SHGs at village level).

Circular No.CLDP-1, dated 31-08-2004 of Commissioner, Rural Development (CRD), further provides milestones for the project and the time line. Excerpts from the same,

### ***A) Important milestones in the project cycle***

- Identification
- First dialogue with the assignees
- Umbrella agreement with the assignees
- Release of Capacity building money to the assignees formed in Common interest Group(CIG)
- Second dialogue with the assignees
- Project formulation
- Appraisal and sanction of the project by the district committee
- Submission of proposals as 1<sup>st</sup> batch to CRD
- Release of money by Project Director, District Water Management Agency (DWMA) to the Village Organisations(VOs) – federation of women self help groups
- Capacity Building
- Implementation and monitoring

### ***Timeline of activities/ targets***

- 1) In terms of time line, it is clarified that no deadlines will be fixed at the state level to reach the milestones. The Collectors are advised to develop the time line duly giving adequate time for various processes, which are very important.
- 2) The District Collectors are free to decide their targets. While adopting the targets, care should be taken that the process of implementation and the quality of the programme should not be compromised.

***Functions of CIG as envisaged in the guidelines***

- Meet regularly to review the progress of work
- Maintain required records
- Helping VO in identifying the para-workers
- Planning with the help of para-workers
- Establish collective group norms and enforcement mechanisms in protection from grazing, sharing of resources, regulated resource use and maintenance of infrastructure created
- Share responsibilities in implementation of plan at individual and collective level
- Ensure collection of contribution
- Recommend specific loan proposals for livelihoods to the VO
- Maintain the infrastructure created
- Contribute to the grazing protection mechanisms
- Organize finances and other inputs
- Take the support of Village Organization to keep records and books of account if they are into savings and credit
- Coordinate with Village Organization and other government departments
- Supervise the works of Para Workers

**Annexure – 2****Working Committee members of People's Monitoring Committee**

<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contact No &amp; E-mail</b>
1	Mr. Vinay Kumar	Dalit Bahujan Front (DBF)	9397600624
2	Mr. J.Babji	Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vritthidarula Union (APVVU)	9885430620
3	Mr.G.Sudhakar/ Mr. Ramalingam	Dalit Bahujan Sramik Union (DBSU)	9849551762
4	Mr.M.Lakshmaiah	Centre for Dalit Studies (CDS)	9866050926 cds_hyd@rediffmail.com
5	Mr.B.D.A.Satya Babu Bose	Centre for Rural Studies and Development (CRSD)	9849003126
6	Mr.D.Ram Mohan	Social Discrimination Elimination Project (SDEP)/ Dalit Samakhya	9440493707
7	Mr.K.Sreenivas	SEVA, Visakhapatnam	9346396985
8	Mr.Ch Ravi Kumar	WASSAN	9440421965 wassan@eth.net
9	Mr.R.Ravi Kumar	Dalit program, Centre for World Solidarity (CWS)	9440539121 thedalith@rediffmai.com
10	Ms.L.Jaya	Vedika, Kurnool	9393825029
11	Mr. Nerendra	Tribal program, Centre for World Solidarity (CWS)	9849140498

**Annexure – 3****Details of Organisations in Innovative Stream of Projects in CLDP**

No	Organisation	Chief functionary	Contact address	Phone and Email
1.	Accion FraternaRDT Ecology Centre	Sri. Y.V. Malla Reddy Director - Ecology and HRD	Upparapalle Road Bangalore Highway Ananthapur - 515 002	Tel. No. (08584) 244222 / 246884 Res. No. (08584) 223000 Mobile:9849056555 actionf@sancharnet.in
2.	CHRDCentre for Human Resource Development (CHRD)	Mr. P. Siva Reddy President	2/287, Balaji Nagar Chemmuniyapet Kadapa - 516 003	Tel. No. (08562) 258346 259246 Res. No. (08562) 27867630 Mobile:440093413 centhrd@rediffmail.com
3	MARIModern Architects for Rural India (MARI)	Mr. R. Murali Secretary	# 1-8-499, Behind Ekashila Park Balasamudram Hanamkonda - 506 001	Tel. Nos. (0870) 2571208/2552928 Mobile:9849649051 marimail@rediff mail.com, mariwgl@gmail.com
4.	Praja Abhydaya Samsta (PAS)	Mr. M. Balavardhi Raju	90, Bandarupalli Cross Main Road Ramakuppam Chittoor-517 401	Tel. No. (08587) 279328 / 259328 Res. No. (08153) 361296 Mobile:09448180319 praja_as@yahoo.com
5.	People's Action for Creative Education (PEACE)	Mr. K. Nimmaiah Executive Director	H.No. 1-5-12/2 Near S.L.N.S.Degree College Bhongir - 508 116	Tel. Nos. (08685) 242042 / 243646 Mobile:09848135479 peace_16@sify.com
6	Pragathi Seva Samithi (PSS)	Mr. G. John and Mr. M. Anjaneyulu	KLN Reddy Colony Subedari Hanamkonda Town - 506 001 Warangal District	Tel. No. (0870) 2550659 / 2540979 Fax. No. (0870) 2540979 Mobile:09390125112 pragathiss@yahoo.com
7	Jana Jaagriti (Ananthapur)	Mr. D.P. Balaram Executive Director	Near Weekly Market Post Tanakal Ananthapur District - 515 571	Tel. No. (08498) 232373 / (08556)234986 Res.No.(08498) 23121 Mobile:09440224274 09440830063 (Sreenivasa) jjkdr@rediffmail.com janajaagriti_kdr@ rediffmail.com
8.	PILUPU	Mr. M. Janardhan Executive Director	H.No.1-3-426/6 Opp: Krushi I.T.I. Bhongiri - 508 116 Nalgonda District	Tel. No. (08685) 233371 Res. No. (08685) 244951 Mobile:09866010092 chandu_iru@yahoo.co.in

9.	Rural and Environment Development Society (REDS)	Ms. Cheruvu Bhanuja, President	# 1-1160-1E, M.P. Ramachandra Reddy Building MP Street Kadiri - 515 591 Ananthapur District	Tel. Nos. (08494) 257532 / 257531 Res. No. (08494) 223622 Mobile:9440017188 bhanureds@yahoo.com
10.	Rural Integrated Development Society (RIDS)	Mr. V. Kristappa President	Garladinna (Village and Post) Ananthapur District	Tel. No. (08551) 286473 / (08554)277258 Mobile:09440528626 ridsgrl@yahoo.com
11.	VIKASA	Shri. P. Viswanadh Executive Director	VUDA Layout Near Bank Colony Bheemunipatnam Visakhapatnam district	Tel. No. (08933) 229614 / 245206 / 27028 Res. No. (0891) 2552411 Mobile:09849512172 vikasa_india@yahoo.com vikasabml@sancharnet.in
12.	Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MVF)	Mrs. Esther Subhashini Coordinator	201, Narayan Apartments Marredpally (West) Secunderabad - 500 026	Tel. No. (040) 27801320 Res. No. (040) 24201479 Mobile:9848049247 mvfindia@hotmail.com
13.	VIKASAM	Mr. Gopi David Executive Director	Opp. Munsif Court Pargi - 501 501 Ranga Reddy district	Tel. No. (08412) 223246 Res. No. (08685) 242677 Mobile:09866075380
14.	Timbaktu Collective	Mr. Akkappa	Chenne Kottapalli mandal Anantapur District	Ph: 08559 240335/ 240149
15.	WASSAN	Mr. A Ravindra Babu	12-13-452, Street No.1,Tarnaka Secunderabad - 17	Ph/Fax: 040-27015295/96, 27018581 wassan@eth.net website: www.wassan.org

### **References**

Commissioner, Rural Development (2004), *Circular No. 06/CLDP/2004 dated 11-11-2004*, Hyderabad

Government of Andhra Pradesh (2004), *G.O M.S No. 212*. Hyderabad

Government of Andhra Pradesh (2004), *G.O.M.S No. 66*. Hyderabad

Govinda. R (2006) *The politics of the marginalised: Dalits and women's activism in India, Gender & Development*, Volume (14:2): 181-190

Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (2003) *Land*. Hyderabad

People's Monitoring Committee (2005) *Indira Prabha Amalu Teeru pai Praja Nivedika(People's Report on CLDP implementation)*. Hyderabad

Chatterji.P(1997) *Beyond the nation ? or within? , EPW*, page -32

### Contributors

Contributions in the form of case examples and sharing of experiences

1. Ms. L. Jaya, VEDIKA, Kurnool.
2. Ms. Bhanuja, REDS, Ananthapurs
3. Mr. J. Bapuji, APVVU, West Godavari
4. Mr. Rammohan, SDEP, Mahabubnagar
5. Mr. Vishwam, VIKASA, Visakhapatnam
6. Mr. Janardhan, PILUPU, Nalgonda
7. Mr. Srinivas, MVF, Ranga Reddy
8. Mr. Balavardhi Raju, PAS, Chittoor
9. Mr. Swamy, PEACE, Nalgonda
10. Mr. Srinivas, PSS, Warangal
11. Mr. Akkulappa, Timbaktu Collective, Ananthapur
12. Mr. Ramana, APVVU, Visakhapatnam
13. Office bearers of Mandal Mahila Samakhyas of Kosigi, Doulatabad and Bommaraspet mandals in Mahabubnagar District
14. Assignee representatives of Nacharam, Chellapur, Tunkimetla, Bommaraspet, Gudivanipalli, Chiliveru, Bhogaram villages of Mahabubnagar district
15. Assignee representatives of Chakalapalli, Rangapur of Ranga Reddy district

Contributions in the form of discussions and interactions,

16. All the working committee members of People's Monitoring Committee and district level representatives of Dalit organisations, Unions and NGOs
17. All the village level activists, assignees and various organisations interacted during this process

Contributions in the form of inputs to the text and analysis

18. Mr A. Ravindra, WASSAN
19. Mr. K. Suresh, WASSAN
20. Ms. Usha Seetha Lakshmi
21. Ms. Rupa Mukerji

Intercooperation is a leading Swiss non profit organisation engaged in development and international cooperation. We are registered as a foundation and are governed by 21 organisations representing the development community, civil society and the private sector. Intercooperation is a resource and knowledge organisation, combining a professional approach with social commitment.

Intercooperation supports partner organisations in more than twenty developing and transition countries on mandates from the Swiss government and other donors. In South Asia, Intercooperation is present in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal.

Intercooperation has been working in India since 1982, as a project management and implementation partner of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, SDC. Our early experience focused on the livestock and dairy sector, providing technical expertise through a series of bilateral projects with state government in Kerala, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Sikkim. Intercooperation now works with governments, technical and research organisations, NGOs and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) on initiatives in natural resource management for sustainable livelihoods. Our working domains in India comprise:

- Livestock and livelihoods – particularly small ruminants in semi-arid India
- Participatory watershed development with a focus on equity
- Participatory agricultural extension
- Farming systems approach to sustainable agriculture
- Human and institutional development
- Policy formulation and development of decision support systems
- Decentralisation and local governance.

In all our work we seek to support gender balanced, equitable development, focusing on the empowerment of the poor and the marginalised.



SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT  
AND COOPERATION **SDC**

inter  
cooperation  
Natural Resource Management  
Rural Economy  
Local Governance and Civil Society