

0312. 7th Progress Report on the Consortium Programme (Sep 1998)

This Report gives data and details on Community Organisation (Membership & Coverage, Meetings, Issues, Struggles & Discussions, and Government Benefits), Coolie Women, CCFs, Sangha Funds and DLDP.

1. COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

1.1. Membership & Coverage

Membership & Coverage as on 30 September 1998

	Last Report		This Report	
1st 3 year Formation phase	73		60	
2nd 3 year Formalisation phase	326		335	
3rd 3 year Consolidation phase	26		25	
Independent CSUs	82		77	
Normal Member Families	14,590		14,523	
Women Memberships	3,211	(22%)	3,340	(23%)
Coverage of Village Population	38%		38%	

- There are 14,523 active Member families in 497 functioning CSUs in the 4 Extension taluks.
- 13 CSUs which were in the 1st 3 year Formation phase have, in the meantime, progressed to the 2nd 3 year phase of Coolie Sangha Formalisation.
- 4 CSUs which were in the Formalisation phase, 1 in the Consolidation phase, and 5 Independent CSUs have stopped functioning, for reasons of internal rectification like false declaration of annual income, CCF overdue, etc. We are confident of these 10 CSUs returning to the fold.
- But membership has decreased by only 67 families because of increases in the functioning CSUs.
- In spite of the drop of 10 villages and 67 memberships, population coverage has remained unchanged at 38%.
- There has been a 1% increase in the composition of women memberships, suggesting that more men have dropped out.

Ethnic Composition of the Membership

Member Families	Percent in CSUs	Caste Group	Total Families		Ethnic Coverage
9,014	62%	Scheduled Castes/Tribes	18,779	49%	48%
2,810	19%	Middle Castes	7,656	20%	37%
2,699	19%	Forward Castes	12,274	31%	23%
14,523	100%		38,729	100%	38%

There is a far more serious problem that the figures do not reveal. 23 young CSUs from Mittemari in the erstwhile NOVIB Area of southern Bagepalli taluk got swayed by some staff

members who left the organisation after many years.¹ They were coaxed not to repay CCF loans, not attend the weekly meetings, and generally revolt against the Coolie Sangha. Furthermore, we have found evidence of many corrupt practices by village and Cluster functionaries while getting government benefits sanctioned, managing the decentralised budgets, etc. These 23 villages have been kept in a limbo without actually cancelling Members and declaring their CSUs to be dropped out. It is probable that Coolie Sangha building efforts fizzle out from Mittermari, but equally possible that Member Coolie families revolt against the detractors and stage a come back. Only time can tell.

CSUs in adjacent Julapalya Area, which was looked after by the same team of renegade Field Assistant, Area Field Worker and Executive Field Worker, remained unaffected.

1.2. Issues & Struggles

A deep maturing has taken place in the rest of the CSUs these past 6 months. Perhaps it is because of a markedly increased participation by Coolie women. Or maybe because they have pondered so seriously on the economic agenda. Or even maybe because they are able to cash in on the spectacular electoral victory they had in the beginning of the year. Whatever be the reasons, the Coolies have obtained a felt presence in village society at large. Today, the neutral population look up to the village units of the Coolie Sangha to address problems that they know others cannot solve. The CSUs are trusted to uphold cherished principles like communal harmony, gender justice and fiscal honesty.

For the sake of brevity, we have prepared a taluk-wise list of issues and struggles to highlight some of the contributions made by Coolies to society at large, as a separate Annex (available on request). Apart from providing immediate solutions, the tackling of issues has had the following benefits:

- Increased Coolie capacitation, self-confidence, ability to develop linkages across CSUs and project a taluk level identity.
- Demonstrated a willingness to take up issues of public concern that effect not only CSU Members, and gave protection to victims of oppression when conventional redress failed.
- Exhibited a perseverance to doggedly stick on to an issue till concrete results were obtained.
- Exhibited a commitment to fight communal forces and not get swayed by newly emerging fascist sentiments.
- Refused to look upon ADATS promoted economic activities as “projects”, in isolation of their socio-cultural and political moorings.
- Unafraid to criticise themselves and adopt tough correctional actions.

¹ The other unfortunate fallout of this incident is that we had to stop taking support from NOVIB, a long standing funding partner of ADATS and the Coolie Sangha.

1.3. Government Benefits

Government Benefits obtained in Chickballapur Taluk

	Erstwhile Icco Area	Erstwhile NOVIB Area
Houses under various schemes	38	112
House sites	10	19
Mini water supplies	1	14
Pitching works	9 Clusters (1,025 metres)	11 Clusters (1,860 metres)
<i>Bhagyajothi</i> electric connection	38	26
Street Lights	41	29
Primary Schools	3	7
Borewells	3	8
Tools for Artisans	–	8

Government Benefits obtained in Chintamani Taluk

	Icco Area	NOVIB Area	EZE Area
Houses under different schemes	54 houses	55 houses	98 houses
House sites	–	22	10
IRDP Loans	13	16	53
<i>Bhagyajothi</i> electric connection	48 houses	69 houses	74 houses
Pitching works	3 villages (210 metres)	–	6 villages (280 metres)
Free borewells	6		
Pensions	10	12	30
Mini Water Supply	2 villages	4 villages	4 villages
School buildings (DPEP)	1 village	1 village	–

Government Benefits obtained in Siddalaghatta Taluk

	Icco Area	NOVIB Area	Sadali Area
Houses under different schemes	19 houses	20 houses	26 houses
<i>Saguvadi Chittis</i> (free title deeds)	–	–	7
IRDP loans	15	16	4
Pitching works	2 villages	3 villages	6 villages (1,800 metres)
<i>Bhagyajothi</i> electric connection	20	12	19
Primary Schools	–	2 villages	3 villages
Pensions	35	33	4
Mini Water Supply	1 village	2 villages	1 village
Horticulture Plants	–	–	33 coconuts

1.4. Regularity of Cluster Meets

The regularity of weekly meetings of CSU Representatives in the central villages continued to remain at 69% – i.e. 18 of the 26 meetings were held with proper quorum at each Cluster, 3-4 were either held late or without a proper quorum, and another 3-4 were not held at all.

Area	Clusters	Total	Regular	Irregular	Cancelled
Chickballapur	24	620 (100%)	433 (70%)	85 (14%)	102 (16%)
Chintamani	37	912 (100%)	648 (71%)	136 (15%)	126 (14%)
Siddalaghatta	21	546 (100%)	360 (66%)	160 (29%)	26 (5%)
Total	82	2,078 (100%)	1,441 (69%)	381 (18%)	254 (13%)

1.5. Taluk Coolie Sangha Meetings

All the monthly taluk Coolie Sangha Meetings were held during this reporting period, except for one at Chintamani and another at Siddalaghatta. The seriousness of this forum has markedly improved at Siddalaghatta due to concerted efforts made during the past 1 year. Some important discussions:

- Critical appraisal of what was gained by the Coolies' participation in the general elections and how this drained them of their personal finances, causing inordinate delays in paying Sangha Tax.
 - Discussions on the need to effect a formal separation between the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA and ADATS. The outcome of these discussions were:
 - Selected a new Permanent Trustee (L. Nanjundappa) who was appointed as Treasurer in place of Pradeep Esteves, who resigned and left the organisation.
 - Adopted the amended BCS Trust Deed which expanded the Board from 3 to 12, gave total autonomy to the CSUs, and removed arbitrary powers hitherto vested with the Board of Trustees.
 - Selected 2 more Permanent Trustees (Rasheed Sab & Venkatanarasappa) to replace Ram Esteves, who stepped aside and ceased to have a formal position in the BCS.
 - Held elections for 8 Elected Trustees – 1 woman and 1 man from each of the 4 Taluks.
 - A critical review of last year's experiment with feminising elections to Cluster Secretaries and Taluk Secretaries resulted in deciding to continue the practice of choosing consensus candidates rather than emulating mainstream electoral practices.
 - Developing strategies to win as many Gram Panchayat seats as possible in December 1998 by projecting cherished values/principles and best practices as something unique that only the Coolie Sangha has to offer to the neutral population.
- Inter alia* recognising that recent staff turbulence at ADATS had eroded credibility and compromised the high moral ground that the Coolie Sangha had hitherto occupied, decided that extra efforts have to be made in the CSUs to root out opportunism and not be overly dependent on the "goodness" of individual staff and functionaries.
- Reviewed CCF performance and monitored village level measures being taken to remedy the situation of high Overdue and low Repayment Rate.
 - Recognised that village CCFs were developing as islands of isolation. It was felt that Coolie families were not quite serious about developing fiscal linkages with the Banks and co-operative movement. In spite of negative shifts in the Banks' policies regarding priority lending and anti-poverty programmes, these could be reversed with effective bottom-up pressure.

The logical fallout of this line of discussion was the realisation that concerted

efforts have to be made to capture the Agricultural Producers Co-operative Societies (VSSNs) at the village level and, through them, the District Central Co-operative (DCC) Bank.

- Final selection of villages to responsibly participate in the 2nd Pilot Project of the dry land horticulture programme.
- Discussions on how Women's Committee Members were faring and whether they were moving towards the goal of becoming on par with elected Cluster Secretaries.
- Monitored larger gender objectives being achieved by the Women's Fund project in Chickballapur taluk.
- Besides, the Taluk Coolie Sangha Meetings took up several village and Cluster issues that couldn't be solved at a local level by demonstrating *en mass* in front of taluk offices and police stations, etc. Many simple and inter-caste marriages were also conducted in these monthly assemblies.

1.6. Executive Committee Meetings

Executive Committee Meetings were held every fortnight at each taluk with all the elected Cluster Secretaries and Women's Committee Members attending. Highlights of follow-up action taken on Taluk Coolie Sangha decisions:

- Formed teams to visit sites of communal disturbances and bring back a spirit of confidence and inter-caste unity in the population.
- Organised a successful boycott of an all-party state level convention of backward and scheduled castes designed to project ethnic leaders. Actively campaigned against parochial stunts of political leaders.
- In view of the forthcoming Gram Panchayat elections, publicised the socio-cultural and political contributions made by the CSUs. Made booth-wise Working Lists and helped individual villages select tentative CSU candidates.
- Formed teams to visit villages with serious CCF Overdue and/or low Sangha Tax payment.
- Partook in a pre-stocktaking exercise to collect data on CCF performance at the family level.
- Re-surveyed land holdings of all the Member Coolie families and recorded permanent improvements made through the DLDP.
- Ensured that updated OnLine Reports were available to all the village CSUs and that this wealth of analysed data was used to take good decisions.
- Encouraged each and every village CSU to discuss why there was a paucity of funds at the Centre and asked them to come up with concrete plans to increase taluk level Sangha Funds.
- Examined why the rich human infrastructure of ex-VLWs was not being fully utilised in many Clusters.
- Explored the possibility of taking up a central government sponsored tank desilting project.
- Participated in an ISI/Misereor study on direct funding and unequivocally rejected the new possibilities supposedly thrown up by the paradigm shift. Decided that partnership with Northern NGOs and development workers situated

in the North had to be preserved, in spite of our bad experiences with one particular funding partner.

1.7. Training Sessions

1.7.1. CHICKBALLAPUR

- Each Mahila Meeting reviewed progress and this massive exercise was culminated in a 5 days session, from 14 to 18 April 1998, on empowering women and the feminisation of poverty.
- A 2 days session was conducted for Women's Committee Members on the Women's Fund.
- All 156 beneficiaries of the Women's Fund underwent 3 days of residential training, through 4 batches, on how they would utilise the instrument to improve their economic position and simultaneously enhance their standing in village society.
- All 40 participants of the 2nd Pilot Project of the horticulture programme underwent a 2 days training on sapling protection.
- 10 Member Coolie families per CSU were given Cluster level training on Coolie Sangha Consolidation in the erstwhile NOVIB Areas.

1.7.2. CHINTAMANI

- VHWs and women CSU Representatives from the erstwhile EZE Area were given a second round of training on utilising their decentralised health and children's budgets.
- All 260 participants of the 2nd Pilot Project of the horticulture programme underwent a 2 days training on sapling protection. Selected Coolies were brought to Bagepalli to study the 1st Pilot Project.

1.7.3. SIDDALAGHATTA

- All the VHWs, women CSU Representatives and 5 Coolie women from each CSU were brought in for reflections on gender and the feminisation of poverty, in batches of 25-30.
- Newly appointed Balakendra Teachers were trained in conducting tuition for school going children and in writing the sensitive and in-camera minutes of Mahila Meetings.

2. COOLIE WOMEN

2.1. Issues and Struggle

Apart from managing the decentralised budgets, exercising a veto power over CCF decisions and deciding on Sangha Fund expenditures, Coolie women also took up a whole lot of issues to redress sexual harassment and protect the rights of Coolie women. Once again for the sake of brevity, these are available on request.

2.2. Children's Programme

13,647 Coolie children were supported by their Mahila Meetings to attend government schools. 39% of them are in primary classes, 40% in middle and 21% in high school. 45% of the supported children were girls and 55% boys. Following the established practice, each Mahila Meeting decided on the scholarship support needed by each child for books, fees, clothes, tuition and bus fares.

This activity was introduced in villages from Sadali and the erstwhile EZE Area for the very first time.

Actual disbursements were made in the last week of August/early September, 2 months after schools reopened.

Class-wise break-up Children in the 4 Extensions (as on 30 September 1998)

	Primary School		Middle School		High School		Total	
Chickballapur	1,037	30%	1,524	45%	861	25%	3,427	100%
Chintamani	2,512	42%	2,213	37%	1,218	20%	5,949	100%
Siddalaghatta	978	38%	835	42%	530	20%	2,596	100%
Julapalya & Mittermari	642	45%	1,087	37%	264	18%	1,143	100%
Total Children	5,169	39%	5,358	40%	2,873	21%	13,647	100%

Boys and Girls

	Girls		Boys		Total	
Chickballapur	1,572	46%	1,855	54%	3,247	100%
Chintamani	2,653	45%	3,296	55%	5,949	100%
Siddalaghatta	1,159	45%	1,437	55%	2,596	100%
Julapalya & Mittermari	648	45%	795	55%	1,143	100%
Total Children	6,032	45%	7,383	55%	13,647	100%

2.3. Decentralised Health

Due to a delay in the 2nd Consortium Programme being sanctioned and consequent paucity of funds, there was a delay in giving out the decentralised health budget. These moneys were transferred by ADATS only on 17 August 1998 – 4½ months later than planned. The Mahila Meetings had to manage with balances left over in their Clusters from the previous financial year, but they bore the inconvenience without a single murmur.

In the erstwhile ICCO Areas there was some confusion when Coolie women realised that there would be no more grants from ADATS for paying the VHWs and meeting referral health expenses. As there was also a delay in Sangha Tax being paid, a close-to-panic situation was created. But things settled down by about August 1998 when Sangha Funds increased and they could manage.

Sadali and the erstwhile EZE Area got their decentralised grants from ADATS for the very first time. But sufficient training and preparation had been made.

2.4. Women's Fund

Chickballapur taluk was taken up to implement the SCFNZ supported special programme for landless women headed households. 2 special Mahila Trainers (a woman and a man) were appointed to help the Mahila Meetings select beneficiaries, prepare case histories, place them before the fortnightly Women's Committee meetings, arrange for training, assist in implementation, etc.

A total of 156 Coolie women have been assisted to repair/build houses, start shops, buy live-stock, fight divorce/maintenance cases in Courts, etc. Each benefiting woman has received assistance ranging from Rs 15,000 to Rs 25,000. As per our agreement with SCFNZ and the

New Zealand government, 40% of this assistance for each Coolie woman has been in the form of a grant and 60% loan to be repaid in 2-3 years.

Since we will be preparing a detailed report on this activity, we will not elaborate any further in this Progress Report, except to say that a positive mood in favour of Coolie women has been created in the Extensions.

3. COOLIE CREDIT FUNDS

3.1. Status of the CCFS

- Overdue dropped to a very manageable 9% (from an unacceptable high of 13% on 31 March 1998).
- Only 36% of the CCF Capital remained as unutilised bank balances (down from 72% on 31 March 1998).

Status of the CCFs in the 4 Extensions (as on 30 September 1998)

Total CCF Capital		35,459,248	100%
Total of Good Loans		19,421,845²	55%
Total of Overdue		3,136,143	9%
1 to 6 Months Late	381,099		1%
7 to 12 Months Late	1,564,250		4%
Over 1 Year Late	1,190,794		3%
Bank Balances		12,888,960	36%

3.2. CCF Utilisation

5,764 fresh loans were given out, amounting to Rs 16,185,242. Average lending during the past 6 months shot up to Rs 2,808 compared to the cumulative aggregate of Rs 2,068. Lending during this 6 month period has been as under:

- 1,345 crop loans valued at Rs 2,707,990, 146 agriculture loans totalling to Rs 469,570, 2,981 cattle loans worth Rs 3,776,900, and 8 consumption loans amounting to Rs 27,950.
- The figures of 3,051 loans and Rs 9,202,832 under trade and entrepreneurship is misleading since 38% of this amount has been borrowed by the Coolies to pre-finance their DLDP works.

CCF Utilisation Pattern (as on 30 September 1998)

Purpose	Amount Borrowed		No of Loans	
Crop Loans	9,948,435	24%	7,520	38%
Agriculture	2,202,873	5%	858	4%
Cattle	15,595,703	38%	5,753	29%
Trade & Entrepreneurship	12,681,270	31%	5,169	26%
Consumption & others	241,790		361	1%
Total	40,670,071	100%	19,661	100%

² This figure includes Rs 3,536,467 which has been used by the CSUs to pay their DLDP wages. Due to the delay in receiving remittances from EZE and the European Union, some of it has already come as Overdue. We are, however, treating the entire amount as Good Loans.

3.3. CCF Performance

- There was a 114.7% rotation of CCF Capital (69.5% on 31 March 1998).
- Repayment Rates went up to a record of 92.29% (80.83% on 31 March 1998).
- Capital at Risk dropped down to 8.84% (13.33% on 31 March 1998).

CCF Performance (as on 30 September 1998)

CCF Capital	Rs 35,459,248
Cumulative loans given	Rs 40,670,071
Rotation of Capital	114.7%
Number of Loans	19,661
Average Borrowing	Rs 2,069
Repayment Rate	92.29%
Capital at Risk	8.84%

A tremendous improvement has been made in the CCFs during the past 6 months. After taking stock of the situation, the Coolies decided upon some hard measures to educate the borrowers and inculcate fiscal discipline.

- The Taluk Coolie Sanghas refused to accept Sangha Tax and renew membership till CCF dues were cleared. The right to stand as candidates in organisational elections was denied, DLDP works (ironically without any wage payments from ADATS) were held back, and child benefits and referral health assistance were refused to those with overdue. Fresh crop loans were denied even to those who had genuine reasons for defaulting. Ironically these strictures had no teeth for the first 5 months of this Reporting period since we were severely cash strapped. It was the unequivocal curse and abuse contained in the threats that shook up all the defaulters.
- The entire Cluster was held responsible for the overdue of individual CSUs.
- It was threatened that CCF bank balances of villages who could not cope with the simple rule of returning as much as they had borrowed would be returned post haste to the donors.
- Team work by all the Field Staff (Area as well as Executive) together visiting the villages and convincing defaulters to repay yielded good results.
- Coolies who had fallen victim to usurious Ryot arrangements, money lending and Chit Funds were asked to relate their stories in graphic detail.

Once performance figures improved and Lender/Borrower Confidence increased, they lifted their self-imposed moratorium on fresh loans. Utilisation improved dramatically.

If this same mood of serious fiscal discipline is maintained for the next 3-4 months till crop loans come in and fresh disbursements are made, the Coolies can certainly claim that their CCFs have turned the corner.

Furthermore, there is the forthcoming economic stocktaking³ that everyone looks forward to with a lot of expectation. Lessons learnt during this 2 month exercise will further improve Borrower Confidence and utilisation capacity.

A parallel study is ongoing at ADATS with the CCF Staff fully participating – a Survey of the Credit and Financial Environment in the Region. Rich details are pouring in every single day, compelling us to reflect on micro-economics and explore new concepts. This exercise is being conducted as a prelude to articulating our Credit & Economic Policy.

There is, however, a dark cloud hanging over 23 CSUs in Mittermari. Coolie families have been coaxed to not repay their CCF loans and actually disband their Sanghas. The BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA is yet to come up with an astute socio-political strategy to solve the problem. Only time can tell whether sound counsel will prevail.

4. SANGHA FUNDS

4.1. For the 4 Extension Areas

- From a figure of Rs 10.20 million recorded in the 6th Progress Report, Sangha Funds further grew to Rs 11.89 million. This is an increase of 16.5%.

Sangha Funds for the 4 Extensions (as on 30 September 1998)

	<i>Last Report</i>		30 September 1998	
Village Fixed Deposits	7,268,238.00		7,268,238	
Village SB Accounts	1,721,609.65		3,311,194	
Taluk Main Fixed Deposits	1,204,464.00		1,204,464	
Taluk Main SB Accounts	10,658.95	Rs 10,204,970.60	102,474	Rs 11,886,371

4.2. For the entire Area of Operation

- In spite of low income declarations and Sangha Tax payments, there was a growth of 15.8% in all 4 taluks (Bagepalli taluk included).
- Actual collections in Bagepalli taluk were much higher, but the CSUs/Mahila Meetings used a substantial part of their Sangha Funds (Village SB Accounts) to support school going children, run their referral health activities, and for the horticulture project which has still not obtained AIJ funding from the Climate Change Convention.

Sangha Funds for all 4 Taluks (as on 30 September 1998)

	<i>Last Report</i>		30 September 1998	
Village Fixed Deposits	13,130,494.00		13,130,494	
Village SB Accounts	2,087,909.10		4,431,571	
Taluk Main Fixed Deposits	1,492,079.00		1,492,079	
Taluk Main SB Accounts	53,401.25	16,763,883.35	355,231	19,409,376

³ A joint exercise that is going to be taken up by ADATS, the Coolie Sangha, our Donor Partners and 2 external Consultants – an economist and a sociologist.

4.3. Sangha Tax

This is a heading that should not be found in a September Progress Report since Sangha Tax is normally paid between January and March every year. However, due to a bad drought in 1997, Member Coolie families in the erstwhile ICCO Areas faced severe cash flow problems and tax collections were delayed.

Though there were regional variances from taluk to taluk, we will continue to report on Sangha Tax in a consolidated manner.

- As predicted in the last Progress Report, the number of families who declared their income surpassed the previous year and there was an increase of 10%.
- But the average income declared in 1997 has only been 81% of the previous year's – the lowest in the past 4 years.
- Once again, we were exact in our predictions made in the previous Progress Report.
80% of those who declared their 1997 annual incomes have paid Sangha Tax as on 30 September 1998. The 10% increase in income declaration got neutralised and last year's membership figures have been maintained.
- The average Sangha Tax paid has dropped by Rs 67 when compared to the previous year and actual tax paid works out to only 5% against the Taluk Coolie Sangha decisions to part with 8%.
- Though compliance improved when compared to the previous Progress Report, collection was only 72% of the previous year's Sangha Tax income.

Analysis of Sangha Tax paid in all 4 Taluks (as on 30 September 1998)

INCOME DECLARED	1994	1995	1996	1997
Number of Families who Declared their Annual Incomes	2,877	4,603	5,351	5,905
<i>Increase/Decrease over previous year</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	160%	116%	110%
Total Income Declared	Rs 12,370,011	Rs 18,471,088	Rs 23,336,726	Rs 20,905,017
<i>Increase/Decrease over previous year</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	149%	126%	90%
Average Income Declared	Rs 4,300	Rs 4,013	Rs 4,361	Rs 3,540
<i>Increase/Decrease over previous year</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	93%	109%	81%
TAX PAID	1995	1996	1997	1998
Number of Families who paid Sangha Tax	2,308	4,344	4,755	4,745
<i>Increase/Decrease over previous year</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	188%	109%	100%
<i>Declared/Paid (Compliance Rate)</i>	80%	94%	89%	80%
Total Sangha Tax paid	Rs 510,680	Rs 1,008,467	Rs 1,159,404	Rs 840,374
<i>Increase/Decrease over previous year</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	197%	115%	72%
Average Sangha Tax paid	Rs 221	Rs 232	Rs 244	Rs 177
<i>Increase/Decrease over previous year</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	105%	105%	73%
Actual Tax Paid / Income	5.15%	5.79%	5.59%	5.00%
<i>Supposed to Pay (as per BCS Decision)</i>	6%	6%	8%	8%

Another new development is that Coolie families in the erstwhile NOVIB Areas (Formalisation and Consolidation phases) have started declaring their annual incomes in order to monitor economic development at a family level. However, they have not started paying Sangha Tax and so their numbers DO NOT appear in the above mentioned figures.

5. DRY LAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

5.1. DLDP Works

As reported in the last Progress Report, DLDP works were taken up in 171 villages (against the planned target of 192 villages). Impressive works were carried out on 11,787 acres of Coolie owned lands during the 4 summer months of February to May 1998. These included 4,606 acres of pebble and boulder clearance, 3,761 metres of ravine and gully check, 107,838 metres of bunding and 9,754 metres of retention walls. 407 acres of virgin lands were cleared to increase the holdings of adjacent land owners.

Regular DLDP Works undertaken in 1998

Area	Acreage	Pebble & Boulder Clearance (acres)	Ravine & Gully Check (metres)	Bunding (metres)	Retention Walls (metres)	New Land Cleared (acres)
Bagepalli						
Old Areas	1,581.37	481.20	61	6,093	1,944	75.27
Julapalya	245.16	122.20	–	1,449	102	25.02
Mittemari	823.30	263.00	721	13,693	1,623	50.21
Chickballapur						
Icco	665.20	220.20	34	6,773	80	5.00
NOVIB	1,453.34	553.00	45	17,884	47	6.00
Chintamani						
Icco	1,922.20	727.00	413	12,854	1,527	36.30
NOVIB	1,822.06	358.26	1,185	15,681	4,040	82.34
Siddalaghatta						
Icco	1,079.14	644.00	141	10,440	151	36.28
NOVIB	2,181.18	1,236.00	1,161	22,971	240	89.00
Total	11,787.25	4,606.04	3,761	107,838	9,754	407.22

In addition to these regular DLDP works, some special works were taken up in Chintamani and Mittemari.

Additional DLDP Works undertaken in 1998

Chintamani	Bund Restoration – 877 metres
	Deepening of Open Wells – 8
Mittemari	Diversion Channels – 100 metres
	Farm Pond measuring 2 metres x 2 metres – 1
	Check Dam – 1

5.2. DLDP Wages & Plan Utilisation

As mentioned earlier, there was an inordinate delay in the 2nd Consortium Programme getting sanctioned and there were no funds for the first 4½ months. But it had been decided in the 1997 Consortium Meeting that DLDP works would start in February itself. The Coolies decided to go ahead and work on their fields, without any wage payments from ADATS!

But will power alone was not enough to sustain their determination. After a few months they literally began to fall down.⁴ It became impossible for them to continue working on hungry stomachs. We suggested that each land owner takes a CCF loan and pays wages. To this day, ADATS has not reimbursed them their DLDP wages...⁵

The overall utilisation of DLDP Plans was only 58.35% in 1998. But quite a few Areas, depending on their withstanding capacity, crossed this average. Once again, it was only Mittemari which was way below the average utilisation – i.e. they did not pitch in to work on their lands with the same fervour that other Coolies exhibited. The erstwhile NOVIB Area at Chintamani fell below 50% utilisation due to other problems of caste tensions and Ryot intimidation.

Taluk	Area	Plan Allocation	Actual Spent	Utilisation
Bagepalli	Old Area	227,420	167,355	77.45%
	Julapalya	178,080	88,585	62.64%
	Mittemari	551,595	206,257	35.38%
Chickballapur	ICCO	375,585	224,315	59.72%
	NOVIB	893,250	566,955	63.47%
Chintamani	ICCO	782,925	598,575	76.20%
	NOVIB	1,660,380	774,090	46.62%
Siddalaghatta	ICCO	502,275	322,950	64.30%
	NOVIB	888,780	587,385	66.09%
Total		Rs 6,060,290	Rs 3,536,467	58.35%

This lower-than-planned utilisation, especially in the erstwhile ICCO Areas which have now become Independent, means that everyone has to work harder and longer than planned in 1999 if they want to complete soil and water conservation works on their holdings.

5.3. Dry Land Horticulture

5.3.1. THE 1997 PILOT PROJECT (IN BAGEPALLI TALUK)

We are very disappointed with the pilot project taken up in 1997. Everything went well till 6 months back and then the bottom dropped out. Survival rate is only 32% (a drop from 74% on 31 March 1998). There were many reasons for this and we had long months of reflections in the 7 CSUs of Bagepalli where it was taken up.

- Failure of rains in 1997
Though the plants were regularly watered throughout the 1997 summer months, they had taken a lot of strain. Water table dropped low and most of the borewells dried up by about April 1998. A further reduction in watering completely wiped out many saplings. This problem effected all 7 villages to different degrees.
- Problems with bullocks
At Chinnaganipalli and Nakkalapalli, the bullocks developed serious health problems and there wasn't enough Sangha Funds to immediately replace them.

⁴ This has been the most pathetic and touching exhibition of solidarity and fraternity that we have ever witnessed in the Extensions.

⁵ As mentioned earlier (Footnote # 3), these CCF Overdue figures have been taken as Good Loans for the purpose of calculating Repayment Rates and Capital at Risk.

- **Attack by Ryots**
At Devaramakalapalli, Ryots chopped off many healthy saplings when most CSU Members were arrested on a false charge and sent to sub jail.
- **Irresponsible behaviour by a CSU**
At Palyakere HC, the reason was sheer irresponsibility. For some inexplicable reason all 22 families took a lackadaisical view of something given free. This problem has not yet been solved.
- **Internal squabbles in a CSU**
At M.K. Thanda a silly/serious inter-Coolie division took place when the VHW ran off with a CSU Representative. Everyone just refused to get pacified and settle down, and no amount of negotiation by the rest of the Cluster helped. Moreover, there was a problem regarding the ownership of the borewell that the tribals were using to irrigate the orchards. It actually belonged to a Church, but since the tribals had not demonstrated their faith, there were objections to using the water. There wasn't sufficient resolve in the CSU to once again attend Sunday prayer meetings and solve the problem...

ADATS suggested that we abandon the entire project. But 6 of the 7 CSUs themselves decided on a fine of Rs 100 for every dead plant (year-old saplings cost only Rs 26 each) and 2,418 fresh saplings were re-planted in 1998. Similarly both the bullocks were also replaced.

Status of the Dry Land Horticulture 1997 Pilot Project (as on 30 September 1998)

Village CSU	Families	Acres	Planted in 1997	Dead	Alive	Survival Rate	Re-planted in 1998
035 Palyakere HC	22	24	960	870	90	9%	—
036 Mandyampalli	22	22	880	328	432	57%	159
040 Kothurupalli	20	25	1,000	566	434	43%	443
044 M.K. Thanda	20	21	840	766	34	4%	766
070 Chinnaganapalli	16	21	840	539	301	36%	230
074 Devaramakalapalli	19	24	960	783	177	18%	645
015 Nakkalapalli	16	20	800	332	468	59%	175
7 Villages	135	157	6,280	4,164	1,936	32%	2,418

5.3.2. THE 1998 PILOT PROJECT (IN 3 EXTENSION TALUKS)

An additional 31 villages were taken up under the Dry Land Horticulture Programme in 3 Extension taluks (9 in Siddalaghatta, 19 in Chintamani and 3 in Chickballapur). Though many more CSUs came forward, the pilot project could not be taken up where there was no existing water source.⁶ Due to paucity of funds, we could not even pay for pitting, and hauling red earth, sand and manures. All that ADATS could do was supply year-old saplings, assist in the building of Field Tanks, and provide watering units.

We also explained to the Coolies that experiences at Bagepalli (with the 1997 pilot project) were not all that encouraging – that a whole lot unexpected problems like drought, sick animals, etc. could come up. Yet in spite of this bare-bones offer, 423 Coolie families came forward to put aside 54% of their holdings to grow mango and tamarind trees. They were prepared to invest their personal labour to dig the pits and haul red earth, sand and manures.

⁶ Though common borewells have been planned in the proposal, we were forced to economise since AIJ funds have not yet been received.

They were also prepared to give up traditional cropping on more than half their holdings and wait for better returns after 5-7 years!

Just as in Bagepalli taluk, mangoes were more popular and only 8% of the participants planted tamarind trees. A total of 728 Field Tanks were built on Coolie lands and 35,046 year-old saplings were distributed. 38 watering units (a pair of bullocks each, and a cart fitted with water drums) were fabricated and distributed to the 31 villages.

Recognising that mere technical interventions were not enough to change cropping patterns, and that a high degree of socio-political maturity was needed for Coolie families to enter into this advanced stage of sustainable land use, each village CSU was assigned to an Area Field Worker/Mahila Trainer.

Now we have to wait with fingers crossed and hope for the rains to not fail, that the bullocks stay healthy, that silly/serious squabbles do not adversely effect the Coolies' functional unity, that the saplings actually grow and begin to yield...

The 1998 Pilot Project in Siddalaghatta Taluk

Village CSU	Fami- lies	Holding (acres)	Mango (acres)	Tamarind (acres)	Total (acres)	Planted (saplings)	Field Tanks	Watering Units
838 Varahunasenahalli A	17	54	24	7	31	1,365	22	1
831 Kadirinayakanahalli	15	43	37	2	39	1,659	27	2
832 Pindibapanahalli	15	45	32	—	32	1,323	24	1
753 Chinna Tekuhalli	14	52	—	17	17	660	16	1
877 Sadrolapalli	13	36	—	21	21	840	21	1
768 Kanappanahalli	10	36	13	6	19	798	18	1
770 Saddahalli	14	72	20	—	20	840	20	1
544 Peddabandaraghatta	10	30	16	4	20	840	20	1
545 Chinnabandaraghatta	15	30	20	—	20	840	20	1
Total	123	400	162	57	219	9,165	188	10

The 1998 Pilot Project in Chintamani Taluk

Village CSU	Fami- lies	Holding (acres)	Mango (acres)	Tamarind (acres)	Total (acres)	Planted (saplings)	Field Tanks	Watering Units
503 Gajilavaripalli	19	69	29	—	29	1,227	29	1
505 K. Devaganahalli	13	79	20	—	20	840	18	1
521 Nandanahosahalli	17	71	24	—	24	1,008	23	1
524 Dodda Katigenahalli HC	9	34	21	2	23	953	17	1
526 Peddagutlahalli	13	46	28	3	31	1,297	25	1
527 Mittehalli	11	33	20	—	20	840	18	1

529 Apsanahalli	15	42	21	—	21	867	18	1
537 Marabahalli	20	113	56	—	56	2,352	56	3
626 Gajjiganahalli	13	35	18	—	18	756	14	1
620 Dodda Gutlahalli	12	28	24	—	24	985	19	1
670 Korakanahalli	16	59	41	—	41	1,764	33	2
619 Bommaikal HC	13	39	23	—	23	966	18	1
667 Gownicherlapalli	6	28	23	—	23	966	19	1
657 Deshawarapalli	11	61	40	4	44	1,816	44	2
633 Gangireddipalya	20	57	33	2	35	1,446	34	1
666 Muddalapalli	31	125	69	—	69	2,877	64	4
654 Chikkakurubarahalli	15	62	36	—	36	1,512	30	2
627 Dodda Kondrahalli	2	7	6	—	6	252	—	—
618 Bommaikal MV	4	4	7	—	7	294	—	—
Total:	260	1,000	539	11	550	23,018	479	25

The 1998 Pilot Project in Chickballapur Taluk

Village CSU	Fami- lies	Holding (acres)	Mango (acres)	Tamarind (acres)	Total (acres)	Planted (saplings)	Field Tanks	Watering Units
381 Nemiligurki	13	62	26	—	26	1,102	24	1
421 Haristhala	11	35	22	—	22	934	20	1
470 Kuduvathi	16	37	20	—	20	827	17	1
Total:	40	134	68	—	68	2,863	61	3