

**Evaluation of co-financing operations with European
non-governmental development organisations (NGOs)
Budget line B7-6000**

Report of the India Country Study

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The authors accept sole responsibility for this report, drawn up on behalf of
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Table of contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	5
1. INTRODUCTION	6
1.1. BACKGROUND, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	6
1.2. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY	7
1.3. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT	10
2. COUNTRY CONTEXT	11
2.1. INTRODUCTION	11
2.2. ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXTS	11
2.2.1. Legislative, Executive and Judiciary System	11
2.2.2. Economic and Development Indicators.....	12
2.2.3. Major Issues	13
2.3. OVERVIEW OF GOVERNMENT AND DONOR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES.....	18
2.4. THE NGO-SECTOR IN INDIA.....	19
2.5. EUROPEAN UNION NGO CO-FINANCING	21
3. BASIC DETAILS ON EACH OF THE PROJECTS.....	23
3.1. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROJECTS STUDIED.....	23
3.2. IN-1 : COOLIE SANGHA BUILDING IN NORTH KOLAR DISTRICT (NGO/PVD/1995/646/CSR).....	28
3.3. IN-2: SUPPORT FOR PARIVARTHANA'S ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, ACTION AND WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, HUNSUR, KARNATAKA, INDIA (NGO/PVD/BG/1996/132/UK/11).....	33
3.4. IN-3: COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF 35 VILLAGES IN YERPEDU MANDAL OF CHITTOOR DISTRICT THROUGH ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS (NGO/PVD/1997/131/FR).....	35
3.5. IN-4: SEARCH EXTENSION PROGRAMME 1998 – 2001 (NGO/PVD/1999/377/NL).....	39
3.6. IN-5: RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN TAMIL NADU 1994 – 1996 (NGO/PVD/1994/232/DE)	43
3.7. IN-6: SHELTER, PROTECTION, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT FOR YOUTH (NGO/PVD/1999/1103/UK)	46
3.8. IN-7: BASIC HEALTH, EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN VILLAGES OF TAMIL NADU AND ORISSA, INDIA (NGO/PVD/1997/364/FRG).....	50
3.9. IN-8: IRRIGATION AND INCOME GENERATING PROJECT (ONG/PVD/BG/1996/40/FRG/11).....	53
4. PRESENTATION OF THE CONSOLIDATED FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE PROJECTS STUDIED IN RELATION TO THE KEY VARIABLES AND OTHER MAJOR ISSUES STUDIED.....	57
4.1. RELEVANCE.....	57

4.2. EFFICIENCY	59
4.3. EFFECTIVENESS	60
4.4. IMPACT	63
4.5. SUSTAINABILITY	64
4.6. DEMOCRATISATION AND STRENGTHENING OF CIVIL SOCIETY	67
4.7. GENDER	69
4.8. POVERTY	73
4.9. ENGO-INGO PARTNERSHIPS.....	75
5. FINAL ANALYSIS	77
5.1. STAKEHOLDERS' VIEWS ON B7-6000	77
5.2. ROLE OF THE EC-ADMINISTRATION IN THE PROJECT CYCLE	78
5.3. ADDED VALUE OF B7-6000 IN THE PAST AND THE FUTURE	78

List of annexes

1. Terms of Reference
2. Approach and Methodology of Phase Tw
3. List of persons met
4. Map with the location of the projects visited

List of Table

- Overview of Stakeholder Representatives Contacted	9
- Overview of the Population living below the poverty Line	14
- Some Selected Health Indicators	14
- Primary and Middle School Enrolment	15
- Ex ante evaluation of information related to key variables in project documentation	23
6. Overview of the Basic Characteristics of the Projects	27

List of Boxes

1. Caste classification	24
2. The administrative divisions as per Panchayat Raj Constitution	28
3. The Public Distribution System – One form of increasing accessibility to food for the poor	41
4. A burdened street boy	48
5. Gulliver sends Note to Lilliputians	58
6. Python gets electricity	59
7. The Foreign Contribution Regulation Act 1976	61
8. The integrated Rural Development Program	62
9. Sangha Tax	65
10. Panchayat Raj	68
11. My neighbour's village name is my husband's name	70
12. Illicit Liquor	71
13. Mahalir Thittam (Women's program)	72

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Thank you.

Solomon Chelladurai
Dirk Van Esbroeck

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADATS	Agricultural Development and Training Society
AEA	Aide et Action
BC	Backward Caste
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CCF	Coolie Credit Fund
CSU	Coolie Sangha Unit
DESWOS	German Development Assistance Association for Social Housing
DLDP	Dry Land Development Programme
EC	European Commission
ENGO	European Non-Governmental Organisation
EU	European Union
EZE	Evangelische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe
FCRA	Foreign Contribution Regulation Act
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
HIVOS	Humanistic Institute for Co-operation with Development Countries
ICCO	Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation
ICT	International Childcare Trust
ICTI	International Childcare Trust - India
INGO	Indian Non-Governmental Organisation
IRD	Integrated Rural Development Programme
MBC	Most Backward Caste
NEP	New Economic Policy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NOVIB	Netherlands Organisation for International Development Co-operation
PDS	Public Distribution System
RASS	Rashtriya Seva Samithi
REAL	Rural Education and Action for Liberation
Rs.	Indian Rupee (1 € = 40.5 Rs. By July 2000)
RTU	Reaching The Unreached
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SC	Scheduled Caste
SDMI	Society of Daughters of Mary Immaculate
SEP	Search Extension Programme
SGSY	Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana – Programme for Village Self-reliance
SHG	Self Help Group
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TOR	Terms of Reference
VEDC	Village Education and Development Committee

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This is the report of the India Country Study of 8 projects that were (or are still) funded by the European Union (EU) via B7-6000, one of its major budgetlines for co-funding of Non-Government Organisations (NGO). This study is part of a much broader evaluation exercise that started in early 2000 and is essentially divided into **three phases**. The first phase consisted mainly of a detailed review and analysis of the framework and mechanisms of the B7-6000 budgetline and was completed in Belgium. The second phase has involved a number of limited field studies of some 40 development projects co-financed by the EU in six countries: India, Kenya, Senegal, Brazil, Bolivia and Cuba. The third phase was the exercise of consolidating the findings of the overall study.

It would appear that there were a number of considerations that the EU took into account when commissioning this study. In the first instance, the place and role of NGOs in development co-operation has become increasingly critical in recent decades. Development NGOs are now recognized as important development actors in most of the EU member States. The EU also believes that strengthening its relationship with NGOs will help both parties to achieve their mutual goals. NGOs, therefore, are increasingly included in EU external co-operation programmes, both via specific mechanisms designed for NGO involvement such as budgetline B7-6000, and also by contracting NGOs to provide particular services within the framework of other EU programmes. The B7-6000 budgetline has itself grown considerably over time: in 1998 ECU 200 million was earmarked for co-financing, 80 times greater than the first allocation in 1976. This growth implies that responsibility to account for the use of the funds and to adapt procedures and mechanisms to changing circumstances has also increased. Hence the evaluation of B7-6000 has become a critical issue. This is particularly the case since the evaluation comes at an important time: the present Council Regulations governing the budgetline will be revised in 2001 and its General Conditions have been recently redefined.

As stated in the Terms of Reference of this study (Annex 1), the major **objective** was to provide the evidence for a significant revision and improvement of the mechanisms, practices and procedures of budgetline B7-6000. This will be done against a background of periodic severe human resource limitations at the level of both the Commission and the NGOs. The scope of the evaluation of B7-6000 has included:

- **an overall assessment of co-financing operations** under budgetline B7-6000 that relate to development projects – but *not* public awareness or information operations – financed during the period 1994-99

- an assessment of the **relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability** of the budgetline and its implementation. Furthermore the evaluation will focus on improving mechanisms and ultimately the quality of the co-financed activities, rather than producing new insights on impact.

The first phase of the evaluation of B7-6000 was undertaken between February – May 2000 and a draft report submitted in June. The second phase began in July and was completed in mid-September when a draft report was also submitted. An **Overview Report**, a policy orientated **Synthesis Report** and six **Country Reports** (Bolivia, Brazil, Cuba, India, Kenya and Senegal) were submitted in October 2000.

1.2. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The approach and methodology of phase two of the study/evaluation are fully described in Annex 2. The approach and methodology were discussed during a workshop on May, 18th 2000 with the major European stakeholders: EC staff of DG DEV A/4, SCR C/5 and the SCR Evaluation Unit; representatives of ENGOs and the Northern and Southern consultants involved in the study.

As can be seen in Annex 2, 40 projects in six countries were chosen as *illustrative* of the kinds of programmes/projects co-financed by B7-6000. The selection of the programme/projects was undertaken on the basis of a number of **criteria**: type of programme/project, size, duration, geographical location, degree of innovation and the representation of European NGOs from each of the EU member States. For each country a specific **sector** was chosen: in the case of India, eight development projects in the sector “multi-sectoral development” were selected.

Both European and local NGO’s had been contacted before the study began in order that they could make the necessary preparations. In the field, where possible, representatives of the EC-Delegation were interviewed and participated in workshops held in the beginning and/or at the end of the field visit.

India has been selected as one of these six countries where projects would be analysed during phase 2 of the evaluation. A major reason for selecting India has been the relative importance of the country as a beneficiary of budgetline B7-6000. During the period under study, 169 projects have been co-funded for an amount of more than 42.5 million €, representing 5.66 % of the total spending. As such, India ranks as the second beneficiary country of the budgetline, after Brazil.

The study/evaluation team consisted of Solomon Chelladurai and Dirk Van Esbroeck. Both participated in a workshop that was held in May 2000 in Belgium to prepare the second phase of the evaluation. Abstraction made of the in-depth preparation by the local consultant, the actual fieldwork was conducted in the period between July 11 and August 4 (time for international travel not included). Both consultants prepared the mission by the collection of

relevant documents both at the level of the EC, the European NGOs (ENGOS) and their Indian partners. Contacts with the latter allowed obtaining a basic knowledge on the particularities of the programme, possible logistical problems, etc. A limited number of interviews were held with desk officers of ENGOS.

On July 12 an introductory one-day workshop was organised, which was attended by fifteen representatives of Indian NGOs (INGOs) who represented all eight projects selected. The meeting was further attended by two representatives of the Indian chapter of the French NGO Aide et Action and the two consultants. After a short introduction, the consultants briefed the participants extensively on the background of the study, its major objectives and some selected findings of the first phase. Further, general discussions were held on the role and effectiveness of INGOs and INGO supported development projects in South India and on the influence (positive and negative) of Northern partner NGOs and Northern donors on the performance of Indian NGOs. The presentation of the methodology, approach and planning for the project visits was the last major topic being discussed.

The atmosphere during this workshop was that of a critical openness and readiness to engage in the study. All INGOs had been adequately informed by their northern counterparts who in most cases had even sent the TOR. They accepted this Europe initiated study as a consequence of their agreement to accept EC-funding but at the same time stressed their interest in the exercise and the need to ensure that it would produce results that were also valuable for them. The open but positive-critical attitude the evaluators experienced during this meeting would actually characterise the entire study.

The consultants spent on average two days of effective work with each INGO. Mostly, a start-up meeting was held with the project holder and staff; in two cases (IN-3 and IN-6), they were assisted by one or more representatives from the ENGO. At the end of the start-up meeting, a tentative work-plan was defined. Usually, an important part of the visit was spent on contacts with the target group of a different nature (meetings with some women groups and/or their federations) and to visit physical realisations funded by the project (training centre, irrigation tank, bore-wells, etc.). Additional data on project outputs were often collected. At the end of the visit, a self-assessment exercise focusing on the project's performance related to five key variables (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact sustainability, see annex 2) was conducted. The results of this exercise were immediately confronted with the consultants' view and discussions were held to come to a shared assessment. In all but one case (IN-8) the consultants could present their preliminary assessment on the basis of a written document which was left with the INGO for further study and reference. This discussion, which lasted from 2 to 5 hours, constituted in most cases the end of the visit.

The following table summarises some data with regard to the number of stakeholder representatives contacted during the different activities undertaken.

Table 1: Overview of Stakeholder Representatives Contacted

Type of meeting	INGO/project					Beneficiaries		
	Board	Senior staff		Field staff (*)		Groups	Men	Women
		Men	Women	Men	Women			
Meetings with board and staff members	17	20	23	54	94	0	0	6
Meetings at village level						38	296	856
Meetings with apex bodies						47	20	101
Beneficiaries' assessment						12	73	194
Self-assessment and de-briefing meetings	17	16	27	33	52			

(*) *In many projects, part of the field staff consists of village leaders who live in the villagers and work part-time for the project; often they are paid a stipend only.*

The consultants and project staff managed to reach satisfactory results within the inevitable constraints imposed by the particular set-up of this study/evaluation. The following elements are worth to be mentioned in this regard:

- In all cases, the study team did not feel any restriction to undertake whatever action they considered as useful; only in one or maximum two cases, they think having felt explicit efforts to “guide” the course of the visit in a particular direction.
- Notwithstanding the geographical concentration of the projects (five projects in Tamil Nadu, two in Karnataka but in areas bordering Tamil Nadu and one in Andhra Pradesh, also close to the Tamil Nadu border), three local languages had to be used: Tamil, Telugu and Kanada. The local consultant understands these three languages and is able to speak two of them. Discussions with INGO staff were conducted both in English and the local language.
- The atmosphere of co-operation was always good. Only in one to two cases local staff seemed too preoccupied and under stress. The team has always tried to act in such a way that the study/evaluation was seen as a joint learning process. The fact that the consultants shared their preliminary findings with the project team at the end of their visit was particularly appreciated.
- A major limitation was the consultants' inability to contact independent key informants. The lack of time was a major explanation for this, but in some cases project leadership also showed some hesitation in this regard.
- Many of the projects/programmes visited were complex undertakings because of the long period of activity (often more than 10 years), their multi-sectoral character and, in a few cases, their considerable size. This forced the consultants to focus on and limit their assessment to the major

programme components. It also obliged them to rely on the - mainly output related - data provided by the project without being able to counter-check. The consultants can, hence, not fully guarantee that their results are complete and entirely correct. They are however confident that they constitute a fair reflection of the local situation.

- In nearly all projects (exception IN-6), the EC co-funded project supported a local initiative that was started well before the start of the project. As such, it has been impossible to isolate the assessment of the project from that of the INGO's entire programme. Hence, the study team has in most cases focused on the entire programme period and made their assessment correspondingly. The fact that the EC funding is part of a much broader effort has other important consequences which will be dealt with at several places in this report (among others point 3.1. and chapter 5.).
- A draft version of this country report has been sent to the ENGOs and INGOs concerned for reactions and comments before being finalised and presented to the EC.

1.3. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The structure of the report is as follows. The next chapter will present a short description of the context of the projects studied. It contains some basic data on India and focuses to a certain extent on the particular situation in the Southern States of the country. Chapter three starts with a general overview on the projects studied and then provides some basic details on each of the eight projects. For each project a concise assessment is presented. The data presented in chapters two and three provide the material for the presentation, in chapter four, of the major findings of the study. These findings relate to the key variables and a few other selected issues that are of particular relevance in view of this study/evaluation. Chapter five presents some concluding comments and tries to establish some linkages with the findings of the desk phase report and the broader scope and objectives of this evaluation. The TOR and Methodology of Phase Two of this evaluation are presented in annex 1 and 2 respectively. Annex 3 contains a list of the most important people met during the study.

2. COUNTRY CONTEXT

2.1. INTRODUCTION

India is a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic country governed by the Constitution of India, which came into force on January 26, 1950. The total land and water area is 3,287,590 km² (*land*: 2,973,190 km² + *water*: 314,400 km²). India consists of 25 States and 7 Union Territories with a population of 1,000,848,550 (July 1999 estimate by Indian Statistical Department). According to the Government of India estimation, the population growth rate for 1999 is 1.68%. The sex ratio of the total population is estimated to be 1.07 male to 1 female. The religious faith among the population is as follows: Hindu 80%, Muslim 14%, Christian 2.4%, Sikh 2%, Buddhist 0.7%, Jains 0.5%, other 0.4%.

Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu are geographically in the Southern parts of India and are commonly known as the Southern States. The Indian NGO projects selected for this evaluation are situated in three of these states (not in Kerala) that for a total population of 186.03 million. The major issues and development indicators remain more or less similar for all three States. Kerala stands exception in some aspects - higher ratio of women to men, high literacy level (male 93.62 percent and female 86.17 percent), less infant mortality rate (16 per thousand in Kerala compared to 66 in A.Pradesh, 58 in Karnataka and 53 in Tamil Nadu) and high level of political consciousness. While all the four southern States have their own language, script, distinct culture, regional political parties, etc. there is commonalty in some aspects such as the historical dynasty and kingdom rule, the roots of their languages and festivals.

2.2. ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXTS

2.2.1. Legislative, Executive and Judiciary System

The Indian Union/Centre system has three branches – *Legislative, Executive and Judiciary*. The parliament is the law-making (*legislative*) organ. The President ¹ (Chief of the Country), the Lok Sabha ² (Assembly of the People)

¹ The Chief of the States/Country/Union Government is the President. An Electoral College consisting of elected members of both houses of Parliament and the legislatures of the States elects the president for a five-year term.

² The Lok Sabha is called the House/Assembly of the People or the Lower House. The Constitution provides that the Lok Sabha shall consist of not more than 552 members. Of these 550 are directly elected from the Indian States and Union Territories by the people for five-year terms. The President may nominate two members from the Anglo-Indian community. The Prime Minister heads the House with the Council of Ministers. Speaker is the Presiding Officer of House elected by its members. Money bills can originate only in Lok Sabha. Lok Sabha alone can vote a ministry out of office.

and the Rajya Sabha ³ (Council of States) constitute Parliament of India. The body that executes or implements these laws is called the *executive*, which consists of the President, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. Those who decide disputes in accordance with these laws constitute the *judiciary*. These three branches are at each State level as well or secondary level (*State Legislature, State Executive and State Judiciary*). The Panchayat Raj acts as the governance at the District or third level.

At the Central Level: The head of Government of India is the Prime Minister assisted with a Cabinet. The Cabinet consists of Council of Ministers appointed by the president on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

At the State Level: The second tier of governance, after the Central Parliament, is at the State level through *legislative, executive and judiciary branches*. Every State has a Governor of the State appointed by the President of India. The head of the legislative assembly of each State is the Chief Minister assisted with Council of Ministers in the *executive branch*. Each State is responsible for the respective State's public order, administration of justice, prisons, forests, infrastructure development etc. The States raise own income through tax etc. besides the annual budget allocation from the Central Government.

At the Third Level (Panchayat Raj – Local Self-Governance): The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment passed in 1992 provides a third tier governance to the rural and urban citizens of India. The Panchayat Raj system is a three-tier system; *Zilla Panchayat* at district level, *Taluk Panchayat* at taluk level and *Grama Panchayat* at village level. This local self-governance system also provides space for all adults (above 18 years) in the village to participate in the planning of village development through *Grama Sabha*. Provision for a similar status is made within the Panchayat Raj system (74th Amendment) for towns and cities (municipal bodies, district and metropolitan planning committees).

2.2.2. Economic and Development Indicators

- *India's economy* encompasses traditional village farming, modern agriculture, handicrafts, a wide range of modern industries, and a multitude of support services. 67% of India's labour force work in agriculture, which contributes 25% of the country's GDP. Production, trade and investment reforms have been made since 1991 through New Economic Policy (NEP) and Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). These economic measures were introduced as a consequence of balance

³ Rajya Sabha is the Upper House of Parliament. It is also called the Council of States. The seats for the Rajya Sabha are fixed and cannot exceed 250 of which the State Legislative Assemblies elect 238 and the President nominates 12. The term of office of the members is 6 year. 1/3rd of its members retires every two years. It cannot be dissolved. The Vice-President is the ex-officio Chairman. It is a Permanent House and performs the functions of Lok Sabha as well when the latter is dissolved. Rajya Sabha alone can declare a subject on the State List of national importance and to be legislated upon by the Union Parliament.

of payment and domestic financial crises⁴. This meant short-term measures demanded by the stabilisation program – devaluation of rupee, control of the growth of imports, promotion of exports, privatisation of public enterprises and reduction of government spending (including the reduction of subsidies for basic amenities for the poor). And the long-term measures meant structural adjustment that was formulated around the economic principles of liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation. All these short and long term measures aimed to correct the macro economic imbalances of the economy and to put the economy on a healthy path in order to protect the welfare of the Indian citizens.

- Some Economic Development Indicators: Almost a decade has passed now since the introduction of these short and long-term economic measures of NEP and SAP and the 'Indicators of Development' from the World Development Report (1998-99)⁵ reveal continuing disparities in India.
 - Of the total 133 countries under comparison by the world development report, India ranks 92nd with a per capita GNP of 1,650 US \$ measured on purchasing power parity as compared to US \$ 29,000 of Singapore (rank 1) and US \$ 510 of Sierra Leone (last rank).
 - 52 per cent of the population in the country sustains at a poverty level⁶ of US \$ 1 a day whereas, 88% below US \$ 2 a day. (The Economic Survey of India's official estimate of India's population below the poverty line was 36%, i.e. 320 million in 1993-94).
 - Adult illiteracy rate is still at 62% among women whereas the same among men is at 35%.
 - Of 100,000 live births, 437 cases⁷ fell prey to maternal mortality in 1996, whereas the country expenditure on public health⁸ is a meagre 0.7% of the GDP.

2.2.3. Major Issues

⁴ Foreign exchange reserves were exhausted, and since the international credit rating of India was very low, it was not possible to borrow abroad. The foreign debt of the country was very high, deficits were Rs. 100 Billion or more, resulting in high inflation (13-14 per cent per year). This had implications for the value of the Rupee, which intensified the external crisis further. These crises called for immediate action. ("Social Worker, The New Economic Policy"- 1995; by Desmond A.D'Abreo).

⁵ The World Bank, World Development Report; Knowledge for Development, Oxford University Press, New York 1988 – ref. Page 10-11 of Annual Report of HIVOS, India Regional Office.

⁶ Population below \$1 a day and \$2 a day, are percentages of the population living at those levels of consumption or income at 1985 prices, adjusted for Purchasing Power Parity.

⁷ Indirect estimate based on a sample survey, World Development Report 1998-99.

⁸ Public expenditure on health consists of recurrent and capital spending from Government budgets, external borrowings and grants (including donations from international agencies and NGOs) and social health insurance funds.

(a) Poverty. The State (selective)-Wise Population below Poverty Line of 1993-94 is indicated in the following table. At all India level there is marginal reduction in the poverty ratio compared to the earlier period: 36 percentage in 1993-94 whereas the poverty ratio was 38.9 percentage in 1987-88. However, it is still alarming to note that an overall figure of 320 million people were below the poverty line in 1993-94.

Table 2: Overview of the population living below the poverty line

State	Population (in million as on 1998 figures)	Total		Of which: Rural	
		Number (million)	% Share	Number (million)	% Share
All India	970.93	320.0	36.0	244.0	37.3
Andhra Pradesh	74.17	15.4	22.2	7.9	15.9
Karnataka	50.98	15.6	33.2	9.6	29.9
Tamil Nadu	60.88	20.2	35.0	12.2	32.5

Source: Economic Survey, 1998-1999.

(b) Infant Mortality, Accessibility to Health Care and Illiteracy. The *Social Development Indicators* at all India level and for selected States are indicated below in a tabular form. While life expectancy of the total country population was 63.4 (male: 62.54 years and female: 64.29 years) the infant mortality is found to be high according to the 1998 estimate.

Table 3: Some Selected Health Indicators

State	Life expectancy at birth (1991-95)	1998 (Per Thousand)		
		Infant Mortality	Death Rate	Birth Rate
All India	60.3	72	9.0	26.4
Andhra Pradesh	61.8	66	8.8	22.3
Karnataka	62.5	58	7.9	22.0
Tamil Nadu	63.3	53	8.4	18.9

Source: Economic Survey, 1999-2000.

In addition, the Human Development Report 1999 indicates that at all India level the under-five mortality (per 1000 live birth) rate is 108. HDSA Tables, World Bank 1998, indicate that at all India level 15% of people are without access to health care, 19% are without access to safe drinking water, 71% are without access to sanitation facility and 14% children are without access to immunisation.

- Another major social development indicator related to primary and middle school enrolment is tabulated below. The table below indicates the Gross Enrolment Ratio (in %) in Classes I-V (primary) and VI-VIII (upper primary). It may be important to note here the all India figure of the literacy rate, which is 52% for the total of the population. The literacy⁹ rates for men and women are respectively 65.5% and 37.7% (1995 estimates).

⁹ *Definition: age 15 and over can read and write.*

The Human Development Report 1999 indicates that in India 41% of the children do not reach 5th Grade in education.

Table 4: Primary and Middle School Enrolment

State	Primary (I-V)		Upper Primary (IV-VIII)	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
All India	100.86	82.85	64.19	48.64
Andhra Pradesh	99.20	94.50	50.86	40.93
Karnataka	111.35	104.38	70.94	61.06
Tamil Nadu	125.52	107.10	89.18	85.30

Source: *Economic Survey, 1999-2000*

(c) Political Instability. The political situation in India continues to display dramatic fluidity. The previous eleventh, twelfth and the present (thirteenth) general parliamentary elections resulted in hung parliaments with no party gaining single majority. 274 parliament seats are necessary for a clear majority for forming government. The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) party could get only 182 seats. But with the support and alliance of a number of small regional parties BJP formed the government and the Congress (I), the only other national party, is in opposition with some regional allies. The Congress (I) could win only 114 seats.

India has had three parliamentary elections and changes in the government in a brief space of four years. The political parties are often the most irresponsible actors leading to an unstable government. Some of them speak for the Hindus, like the BJP; some others are vitriolic in their support of Muslims, Christians, etc. They only see them as vote-banks to be wooed at the time of elections. The instability in the government often makes it inevitable to compromise on economic and other policies favoring the minority elite population. The values of both individual politicians and political parties seem to be standing for pure vested interests, and are least concerned about the 320 millions of people who are struggling even for the required calorie intake for healthy living.

(d) Growing Religious Fundamentalism. The religious and caste fundamentalism in India continues to pose threat to the secular fabric of the country. The fundamentalism has led to the polarisation of people on the basis of religion and caste. The demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodya, the recent killings of Christian missionaries and destruction of churches and frequent Hindu-Muslim violence stand as witness to the growing religious fundamentalism. The hard core Hindu fundamentalists within the ruling party (BJP) and its pressure groups (*Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh*) for whom the re-creation of India as a Hindu country constantly challenges the Constitution of India and its secular standing.

(e) Casteism. The caste system and caste hierarchy were created and promoted by the Aryans¹⁰ (people of Aryan origin) through the *Varnas*. The Dravidian origin was relegated to a position of 'sudras' / menial workers in the caste system¹¹. They remain even now the 'untouchables' and are denoted with different names – *Harijans (children of God)*, *Pariahs (social outcaste)*, *Scheduled Castes (government classification)* and *Dalits (oppressed or broken)*. As per the 1991 Census of India the Scheduled Castes (SCs) constitute 138.2 million (16.3%) of the total population in India – the SC populations in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are estimated to be 10 million (16.2%), 7.4 million (16.4%) and 10.7 million (19.2%) respectively.

Though the Scheduled Tribals (government classification of the hill and plain land tribes) do not strictly fall into the caste hierarchy, they are significant in number and are vulnerable to socio-economic and political exploitation. At all India level the STs are 68 million in number i.e. 8% of the total population, of which Andhra Pradesh has 5 million (6.4%), Karnataka 1.9 million (4.3%) and Tamil Nadu 0.6 million (1%).

The literacy rates among SCs and STs are 37.4% and 29.6% respectively in comparison to 'Others' (government classification of 'Backward Castes') of 57.4%. The livelihood source of these sections is very poor. As many as 45.6% of the SCs were agricultural labourers and only 23.6% of them were cultivators, while as few as 20.1% of the 'Other Workers' were agricultural labourers and as many as 40.5% cultivators. The SCs' and STs' share in government employment, especially in better positions, is very far from being proportional to their population.

The recorded atrocities against SCs and STs are increasing and they range from murder, arson, grievous injuries, rape and other crimes. The National Commission for SCs and STs found an 8% increase in the atrocities being committed against the SCs. These atrocities were often related to political, economical and caste issues regarding land, wages, debts, restricted entry into temple/streets/village restaurants, etc. The SCs must contend with social ostracism to this day. According to an estimate of National Human Rights Commission in 1996 an average of 15,000 cases of atrocities annually committed.

¹⁰ The Aryans, are fair skinned people, historically known as a race of people who lived beyond the Himalayas, whereas the Dravidians, dark skinned people, had their homes in the fertile plains south of the Himalayas and along the flow of the Ganga river. In the course of the history the Aryans are known to have subdued the Dravidians and drove them down south of India. The Aryans in their thirst to become supreme controllers evolved and made a division of society into four occupational classes known as *Varnas* that gave rise to the Caste System (*Brahmins-religious teachers/priests, Kshatriyas-soldiers/warriors, Vaisyas-traders and Sudras-menial workers/untouchables*). *Varnas* in Sanskrit means colour and the caste system was probably used to distinguish the fair coloured Aryans from the dark-coloured natives. The people of higher castes (the first three categories) were largely Aryans (extract from ICSC History Textbook).

¹¹ Please also refer the box 1 for more information.

(f) Women and Gender based Discrimination. As indicated earlier the sex ratio is 1.07 male to 1 female. The literacy rate among female is 37.7% in comparison to 65.5% literacy rate among male (1995 estimate of Economic Survey of India). The women's population is routinely subject to torture, starvation, terrorism, humiliation, mutilation, and even murder. Despite a clear record of deaths and demonstrable abuses, women's rights are not commonly classified as Human Rights. The mortality rate among women and girls is very high compared to men. Girls are more often found to suffer from malnutrition than infant boys. In fact, in most families, the birth of a girl is unwelcome. Consequently there are today increasing cases of female foeticide and infanticide. All this has adversely affected the sex ratio.

The discrimination against women can be seen at different places: *On the street*: eve teasing, molestation, and rape. *Work Place*: sexual harassment and lower wages. *Home*: beating, wife burning, dowry deaths¹², 'no property rights', psychological torture, incest, female foeticide and infanticide. *Society*: rape, flesh trade and forced prostitution, kidnapping, abduction. An estimate indicates that about 2 million female fetuses were aborted in the country every year but activists from the Indian Medical Association feel that the figure was about five million (Deccan Herald, Nov. 10, 1999). In Karnataka 96 per cent of the reported rape cases are thrown out before they reach trial stage (Justice Michael Saldanha, in a talk on Amendment to Rape Law, quoted in Asian Age, Sept. 7, 1999). In 1998, as many as 15,000 cases of domestic violence had been registered in the country, which is an average of 42 per day. About 7000 dowry death cases had been registered that year (Times of India, Jan. 10, 2000).

(g) Child Labour. A Survey of the International Labour Organisation has come out with a figure of 23.17 million child workers (12.67 million full timers + 10.50 million marginal) as opposed to the figure of 11.29 million according to the census of India 1991. The concentration of child laborers is reported in Andhra Pradesh (with 14.73%), Karnataka (with 8.65%) and Tamil Nadu (with 5.13%). There are three major categories under 'child labor'¹³. The issues of the child laborers in general are more hours of work, less salary, emotional and often physical abuse, damage to their health before they are even 14 years old, limited access to basic

¹² *Dowry* is a traditional practice and is prevalent in almost all the caste communities with an exception to some of the sub-ST categories. The practice is that by marriage girls/brides leave their parents to live with the family of the bridegrooms. During the marriage the girls/girls parents are obligated to offer the bride-groom/parents in-laws cash and jewels. The extent of cash and jewels normally depend on the income-earning capacity and wealth of the bridegroom. The dowry obligation is a heavy burden, especially for poor families who often become seriously indebted to fulfil their social obligations. Moreover, newly married girls often are subject to harassment and violence by their in-laws when these think their family has not met satisfactorily the dowry obligation.

¹³ 'Child labourers' who are from the economically depressed families/who commute to work from home; 'bonded child labourers' who are forced to work for the money borrowed in advance/who are often forced to stay in the work place; 'street children' who have made the street as home as a place of earning, eating and sleeping.

necessities (education, food, water and shelter), loss of childhood and premature adulthood and penury.

2.3. OVERVIEW OF GOVERNMENT AND DONOR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

The Five-Year Plans of India are considered as guidelines for overall development and annual budget outlays and the country is presently in the middle of the Ninth Five-Year Plan. 'Growth with Social Justice' and 'Alleviation of Poverty' have largely been the objectives of the National Plans. These objectives have been approached through higher economic growth (measures of NEP and SAP) in order to improve the standard of living of all including the poor, poverty alleviation/employment schemes¹⁴ and higher annual budget allocation for social (education, health, housing etc) sectors¹⁵. In addition, there are laws, regulations and policies in India that are brought in to protect the rights of all people in general and the specific rights¹⁶ of special groups – women, children, out-caste communities and economically poor.

The introduction of *Panchayat Raj* system through constitutional amendments in 1992 is another initiative of the Government to decentralise and involve the grassroots in the planning and implementation of development programs. The development indicators mentioned under Sections 2.2.2. and 2.2.3. of this Report amply prove the sad state of affairs in the 'overall economic growth' and 'social development' sector. Further, the issues of 'casteism', 'religious fundamentalism', 'violence on women / minorities / children' etc. are creating unhealthy situations in society. "Crime and violence and the links between criminals, politicians and important people in society, has become almost an unholy alliance" observed the anguished President in his address to the nation on the eve of the 53rd Independence Day (August 15, 2000). The legal, policy and program provisions are hardly enforced to protect the rights and to develop the marginalised people, and the failure is often due to limited

¹⁴ Self-employment and Income Generation Programs, Public Works and Wage Employment Program (Jawahar Rozgar Youjana, Indira Awaas Youjana and Million Wells Scheme). All these schemes are grouped under SGSY. The Women's Program of Tamil Nadu (Mahilar Thittam), Institutional Finance – National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Financing SHGs through NGOs, Rural Entrepreneurship Development Programs, Training-cum-Production Centres etc.), Social Security Programs (Widow Pensions, Pensions to Landless Agricultural Workers, Economic Rehabilitation of the Handicapped, Financial Assistance to Unemployed Handicapped etc.) are the other major development programmes. Ref.: "Local Development Programs and NGOs" – Volume 2 / 1997 – Development Support Initiative (DSI), Bangalore.

¹⁵ Rural Housing, Water and Education Programs (Indira Awaas Youjana), Rural Housing Scheme, Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation, Rural Health Care and Primary and Non-formal Education).

¹⁶ Civil and Political Rights: Protection of Civil Rights Act 1978, The Untouchability (Offences) Act 1975. Rights of Children: Child Marriage Restraint Act 1956, Juvenile Justice Act 1986, Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1992, Prenatal Diagnostic Technique (Regulation, Prevention and Misuse) Act 1992, etc. Women's Rights: Maternity Benefits Act 1991, Equal Remuneration Act 1976, Dowry Prohibition Act and National Commission for Women Act 1990. (Local Dev.....", DSI, Bangalore). Caste Discrimination and rights of *Dalits*: Protection of Civil Rights Act 1978 and SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989.

fund allocation in proportion to the need and corrupt/inefficient government delivering mechanisms. The repeated failure of the State/Government machinery to implement the development and protective provisions, have made that the civil societies, especially the NGOs, found their role relevant in development actions often contributing and supplementing to the development programs of the Government.

The majority of the development funding for India is through bilateral aid and the areas identified for development/support have been in line with the existing priorities of the Government and supplement and complement Government programs. The NGOs' development programs and initiatives in India, especially from 1970s, are supported directly by international NGOs. The character of the NGO programs and initiatives are described in the following section.

2.4. THE NGO-SECTOR IN INDIA

The roots of NGOs in India go back to the pre-independence period (1930s and '40s). This period witnessed 'civil volunteer groups' that took up activities within the national movement for independence. After the independence in 1947, these groups belonging to Hindu revivalist associations (like Ramakrishna Mission), Marxists or leftist groups and Christian groups who were largely motivated by the All India Catholic University Federation (AICUF) got involved in helping the people in the villages with literacy, health care, building latrines, etc. While this continued in the 1950s, the Government came with the Community Development Program, initiated in October, 1952, on an experimental basis with 55 community projects covering three development blocks of 300 villages. It was assessed as a failure. "The whole concept of the Community Development Program and of the subsequent development programs ... assume(d) that the village has many common interests and accepts implicitly the state as impartial."¹⁷ The deep inegalitarian social and economic structure was a great obstacle in making the programme reach the deserving section of the rural population. It is this period (1950s) that saw the emergence of "qualified" social work with university degrees. At the international level, with the foundation of the United Nations Organisation, the need was felt to help the two-thirds of humanity that was living in sub-human conditions. This realisation led to the inflow of development aid into India.

The Sixties were called the First Development Decade and the development trust was in the line of 'transfer of capital and technical know-how' from outside. This decade also saw a certain degree of questioning and reflection among many people and preferred "integrated development" to the "welfare-oriented" approach. While this continued in the Seventies, the 'Emergency' declaration in India in June 1975 made many people to realise the danger of loosing their fundamental rights. This triggered the emergence of several more Christian, Gandhian, Hindu and leftist groups and they started concentrating on non-formal education (Paulo Freire's method) and

¹⁷ "NGOs in the Nineties" – 1992, by Desmond A.D"Abreo.

awareness education on the causes of economic poverty and other social and cultural discriminations. While the awareness education continued into the next decade, the 1980s witnessed the NGOs giving importance to the formation of grassroots peoples' organisations (CBOs), federations of CBOs and NGOs and issue-based networks. During this decade the international donors' collaboration with the NGOs intensified and the funding partnerships ranged from charitable activities to building and strengthening peoples' organisations. It is in this decade (1985-86) the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), 1976, made a rule for NGOs to register under this Act for receipt of any foreign contribution (see also box 7).

The Nineties brought the different development components - awareness raising, formation of peoples' organisations (sanghas¹⁸) and networking on issues of women, dalits, fisherfolks, tribals, children etc., special attention with community health with indigenous medicines, employment-income generation activities etc. - into a 'multiple development approach'. Most of the NGOs, which emerged in the 1970s and '80s, had geographical area and programme extensions. The volume of funds also increased from a few hundred thousands of rupees in late 1970s/early '80s to a few millions from multiple/consortia of international donors that necessitated proper co-ordination, management and accountability. Highly and professionally qualified personnel from reputed Indian institutions like the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Institute of Rural Management and Administration (IRMA) found a place in the NGO sector. This decade also saw the recognition of NGOs by the United Nation organisations as effective implementers of development programmes and having closer access to the grassroots people. This paved way for recognising the NGOs' participation in World Summits on Women, Social Summit and so on. The development perspective of "rights and justice" of social action groups is now gradually being taken over by the perspective of "human rights". Driven by this recognition and often being a basic requirement for the implementation of many bilateral development projects, co-operation with NGOs got intensified. This also paved way for the emergence of vested NGOs (proxy to local politicians, political parties and government brokers) to tap the government resources/schemes allocated to be implemented through NGOs.

The re-introduction of Panchayat Raj (the third tier governance) in 1992 through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments provided good democratic space for the NGOs to activate the grassroots people in the political and democratisation process. The Government's invitation for collaboration in training the elected members of the Panchayat in the first term of the governance strengthened the involvement of NGOs in Panchayat Raj.

¹⁸ *Sangha* means a group of village men or women or youth who come together on a common platform for the purpose or objective of fulfilling the individual or village development collectively. The Sangha concept has become very popular since the eighties and most NGOs now use "sanghas" in their development approach. However, the actual characteristics of sanghas have become as varied as the NGOs promoting them. Some sanghas are village institutions in the fullest sense of the word, taking up independently a broad range of issues, whereas others are merely functional entities created and controlled by the NGO to mainly facilitate its tasks.

At present, in the new millennium year, the various approaches from the first primitive one of "Charity Approach" (charity, relief, welfare and rehabilitation) to "Awareness Building and Peoples Organisations", "Peoples Movements (grassroots networking) and Politicisation" and the direct "Human Rights" oriented actions are co-existing in India. The Government and NGOs have demonstrated effective collaboration especially in programs of economic development related to women like the Mahalir Thittam (women's programme) in Tamil Nadu, Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), etc. However, the Government and NGOs are yet to come to terms with each other when it comes to critical collaboration on development programs.

The recent actions of the Government on NGOs could be interpreted as if it is trying to intimidate and curtail the autonomy of the NGO sector (by seeking more information on assets held by the NGOs, scrutiny of accounts and registers of NGOs, mandatory recommendation letter from local State authority even for applying registration under FCRA, etc). The aid agencies and actors in civil society continue to debate on the issues of accountability, self-reliance, trends in the NGO sector and the roles of State and markets in issues of human development. It seems, at present, that while the press gives more attention to the financial accountability of the NGO-sector, it underplays the latter's sincere efforts across the country to actually work for neglected constituencies.

2.5. EUROPEAN UNION NGO CO-FINANCING

As is the case in many other countries, the co-operation between the EU and the NGO sector has developed rapidly over the last two decades. INGOs have rapidly become professional, which has led many donors, the EC included, to establish direct collaboration with them. Besides that, more traditional ways of funding the NGO-sector, such as via the budgetline under study here, have continued to persist. In the case of India, only a minority (around 10 %) of the ENGOs funded by the Commission have a local office.

In the past, donors have undertaken efforts to establish co-ordination and reduce the risk of overlapping. These have however largely failed, because of the complexity of the task (large number of NGOs with different backgrounds, size of the country). As far as the EC is concerned, an external review was conducted, in 1997, to study the development co-operation with NGOs. This review identified major issues (structural lack of personnel, large number of funding mechanisms, centralised decision making) that have also come up in other similar studies. It concluded, among others, that the Commission has no comparative advantage over other donors in the NGO sector. It came up with a series of recommendations which, for different reasons, could only very partially be implemented.

The lack of resources and the frequent changes in the personnel responsible for NGOs have been a major constraint for an effective management of the NGO portfolio. During the major part of the period under study, there was only one staff to deal with NGOs (note that budgetline B7-6000 alone has around 120 on-going projects). In such a situation, the Delegation could do nothing more than a superficial follow-up. Broader but justified (considering the size of EC-support) ambitions to increase the level of co-ordination among donors, to define a global EC strategy for the NGO-sector, etc. could not be materialised.

3. BASIC DETAILS ON EACH OF THE PROJECTS

This chapter starts with the description of some general characteristics of the projects studied. Then follow the details of the eight projects visited.

3.1. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROJECTS STUDIED

As mentioned above, this study includes eight programmes/projects of a multi-sectoral nature. Many factors that we describe hereafter, explain that the projects studied are to be considered as an interesting but certainly not representative sample of NGO-work in South India.

Our study started with a documentary analysis on the basis of the documentation available at the EC headquarters in Brussels. For about half of the projects, additional documentation was provided by the ENGO and, in one case, by the INGO. On the basis of this documentation, the consultants made an initial content analysis in terms of the key variables of this study. The following table summarises the quality of the information available for that analysis.

Table 5: Ex-ante evaluation of information related to key variables in project documentation

Project No.	Relevance	Efficiency	Effectiveness	Impact	Sustainability
IN-1	3	1.5	3	1.5	2.5
IN-2	1.5	2	2.5	1	2
IN-3	2	1	1.5	0	1.5
IN-4	3	1	2.5	1	1.5
IN-5	1.5	2	2	1	1
IN-6	2	1	1.5	1	1
IN-7	1	1	1	0	0
IN-8	1	1	2	0	0.5

- 3 Good Information/ Analysis
- 2 Some Information/ Analysis
- 1 Some Reference Only
- 0 No Reference in Documentation

The table above indicates that the quality of information is generally lacking with regard to some of the key variables such as efficiency and impact. Information on effectiveness often relates to the immediate outputs of the project. The results of this analysis do not differ from similar exercises of project based co-financing systems.

All projects studied are of a multi-sectoral nature. Discussions with the project leadership have revealed that the choice for such an approach is often linked with their vision on the development needs of the weaker groups in society and the role and function of INGOs in this process. In most cases, they have opted for a long-term co-operation with the poor, mostly belonging to the so-called scheduled castes and scheduled tribes (see box 1), and characterised

by an open-ended process that often starts with socio-political emancipation through the organisation of the poor in so-called sanghas. Later on, other activities are added leading to the “multi-sectoral” character of the project. Most-projects work predominantly or even exclusively with women who are attracted by this perspective and demonstrate, much more than their male counterparts, the commitment and perseverance to sustain the process.

Globally spoken, the approach followed by most INGOs can be described as follows¹⁹. All INGOs spend a relatively long period on getting acquainted with

the local context, thereby making use of extensive surveys, and PRA techniques. This phase ends usually with the identification of the target groups (the poor, which are relatively easy to identify in the Indian context, see box 1) and of some major issues of concern of the local poor, women and/or children in first instance. Activities in

Box 1

Caste classification. *Some background on the issue of casteism has already been provided under point 2.2.3. above. The government classification includes the Forward Castes (FCs), Backward Castes (BCs), Most Backward Castes (MBCs), Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). The existence of this classification makes it easy for NGOs to target their action on specific caste groups, often SCs and STs. Moreover, there exist many government programmes that target a specific caste. This makes it for NGOs possible to work along caste lines if they prefer to do so.*

the field of functional literacy linked with awareness raising on socio-political rights (access to public amenities, fight against local injustice) often constitute the entry point. In parallel, much attention is devoted to the formation of local organisations, called sanghas. Increasing self-confidence allows the groups to gradually take up bigger issues and to take up economic activities (savings and credit). The formation of second-level institutions (federation of women’s groups, women’s bank), the development of independence towards the facilitating INGO and increasing the outreach of the movement are the major issues coming up in a later stage.

In view of this, one can easily understand that ENGOS need to place themselves in a medium or long-term perspective if they decide to support this type of processes. This has been clearly the case in four of the projects evaluated and to a major extent in three others. It implies as well a high degree of confidence in the INGO that often will not be able to show convincing and tangible results during the first years of the programme. As such, it is understandable as well that ENGOS only decided to apply for EC funds at a moment the local process was already in an expansion or even consolidation phase and producing convincing results. In other words, it can be stated that a double selection process has taken place prior to EC-funding: only programmes fitting in longstanding partnerships have been introduced which, on top, have produced clear successes at the grassroots level. For some ENGOS (ICCO/EZE and AEA), the INGO’s (perceived) capacities in

¹⁹ The description hereafter applies to all projects except IN-5, which has followed a more charity oriented approach but is now reconsidering its strategy, and IN-6, which is focusing on a particular target group (street and working children) but basically following the same type of approach. IN-3 now follows a similar approach but uses less than the other projects the caste classification for identifying its target groups.

implementation, monitoring and reporting were and important additional criterion.

All this implies that the EC co-funded “*project*” is part of a much longer (and often much broader) “*development process*”. In all cases except one (IN-4), the EC has only supported the programme during a limited period on time (three years in general). EC funds came in at the moment the major risks had already been taken and approaches and management mechanisms established that had been extensively field-tested. This is also reflected in quite detailed project proposals and in project implementation that corresponds to a major extent with the initial plans. As such, it can be stated that the budgetline has “benefited” from the often arduous and ungrateful work during a considerable period of time. Moreover, a closer look at the EC co-funded “*projects*” seems to suggest that in many cases the major reason to resort to EC co-funding relates to the fact that extra funds were needed to finance extra expenses in the process of institutional strengthening of the INGO, the sanghas supported or the apex structures created. These expenses seemed in most cases appropriate and have often produced significant leverage effects as they were part of solid broader development processes.

Some other important characteristics worth to be mentioned, are presented hereafter.

- All NGOs are situated in the southern peninsula of India. It has been a deliberate choice to restrict the case studies to this part of the country and this both for pragmatic (limited time spent on travelling; few language barriers) and methodological (similar context) reasons. A map showing the location of the projects is presented in annex 4.
- The size of the INGOs varied considerably. RASS is the biggest INGO involved with more than 3,000 staff. At the other end of the spectrum is REAL that has around 20 staff, most of them part timers ²⁰.
- Most INGOs are characterised by a strong leadership, that is already involved in the NGO for quite a long time (at least 8 years, some already for more than 20 years). Six of the INGOs visited have leaders with Christian roots, but following a purely secular approach in their work. The Christian inspiration makes however the choice for socially and economically marginalised target groups obvious.
- All INGOS except one are genuine Indian organisations in the sense that their set up and development has been entirely the work of Indian citizens. All NGOs belong to the so-called intermediary NGOs, be it that in most cases, the formation of people’s structures has been strongly supported.
- All INGOs are registered under the Societies or Trust Act ²¹ and got a FCRA number (see box 7).

²⁰ Note that often the EC co-funded project did not cover the entire programme of the INGO.

The table on the following page summarises a few key characteristics of the EC co-funded projects.

²¹ *Societies Act / Trusts Act:* The legal entity of most of the INGOs (non-membership) in India is embedded in these State Acts called Societies Registration Act, 1860, or the Indian Trusts Act, 1882. In general, the Societies Act or the Trusts Act are enacted to regulate the procedures and business undertaken under these Acts through prescribed norms for General and Executive Board Members, Accounting and Tax Procedures, Submission of Annual Returns and General Rules and Regulations of the Society.

1 Table 6: Overview of the Basic Characteristics of the Projects

2

Code	Project Name	EC project code	Contracting NGO	Implementing INGO	Year of start of project	Year of end of project	Total project cost (in €)	EC- contribution (%)
IN-1	Coolie Sangha Building in North Kolar District	NGO/PVD/1995/646/CSR	ICCO (NI) (*)	ADATS	1995	1998	2,186,612	40
IN-2	Support for Parivarthana's environmental education, action and women's development project, Hunsur, Karnataka, India	NGO/PVD/BG/1996/132/UK/11	Christian Aid (UK)	Parivarthana	1996	1997	36,550	36
IN-3	Comprehensive development of 35 villages in Yerpedu Mandal of Chittoor District through economic and educational interventions	NGO/PVD/1997/131/FR	Aide et Action (FR)	RASS	1997	2000	534,718	49
IN-4	SEARCH Extension Programme 1998-2001	NGO/PVD/1999/377/NL	ICCO (NL)	SEARCH	1998	On-going	539,140	50
IN-5	Rural Development in Tamil Nadu	NGO/PVD/1994/232/DE	DCF 1962 (DK)	RTU	1994	1997	363,286 (°)	47
IN-6	Shelter, Protection, Education and Development for Youth	NGO/PVD/1999/1103/UK	ICT (UK)	ICT-I	2000	On-going	438,470	50
IN-7	Basic health, education and community development programme in villages of Tamil Nadu and Orissa, India	NGO/PVD/1997/364/FRG	Kindermissionswerk (FRG)	SDMI	1996	On-going	993,132 (°°)	50
IN-8	Irrigation and income generating project	ONG/PVD/BG/1996/40/FRG/11	DESWOS (FRG)	REAL	1996	1997	13,072	75

3

4 (*) As lead agency of a consortium with EZE (and initially NOVIB as well).

5 (°) After reimbursement, by DCF, of an unspent balance of 18,459 €.

6 (°°) This amount relates to the entire project; the budget of the component studied here is 319,404 €

3.2. IN-1 : COOLIE SANGHA BUILDING IN NORTH KOLAR DISTRICT (NGO/PVD/1995/646/CSR)

Project Context

The project was implemented in 507 villages in the Northern part of Kolar district in Karnataka state (see box 2 for more details on the administrative divisions in India). It is a drought prone undulating area.

The most fertile lands in the lower parts are owned by landlords, whereas the marginal and less fertile plots located uphill, often far from the village settlements, are cultivated by coolies. Traditionally, there existed a feudal relationship between landlords (many of them former

tenant peasants who became landholders after the post-war land reform) and coolies. The latter have a low and very irregular income and strongly depend on wage labour and seasonal migration to ensure a bare level of livelihood. Their exploitation is further accentuated by the prevailing caste system; an important minority of the population belong to the lower castes. As in many places in rural

Box 2

The administrative divisions as per the Panchayat Raj Constitution. Within each State there are three major administrative and revenue divisions – Village, Taluk and District. These revenue administrative divisions generally coincide with the Panchayat Raj constitution - Grama Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat and Zilla Panchayat. Grama Panchayat means a village or group of villages having a population of not less than five thousand and not more than seven thousand. Taluk Panchayat covers a population of not exceeding 100,000. It is also considered a revenue sub-district. Zilla Panchayat means having a population of more than 100,000 and the population limit for the district coincides with the revenue division of a district. The administrative and panchayat raj constitution may slightly vary from one State to the other.

India, a nexus has come into existence between the caste, feudal and political powers perpetuating the mechanisms of exploitation and preventing government and other programmes of effectively reaching the poor.

The Agricultural Development and Training Society (ADATS) has been established in 1978 by a group of young social activists who are still leading the organisation. From its inception, it aims at improving the position of the coolies, defined as people who do not employ other people. Over the years, ADATS has been able to learn systematically from its experience and gradually develop and fine-tune its approach. Presently it follows a phased strategy consisting of four phases - formation, formalisation, consolidation and withdrawal – through which so-called coolie sangha units (CSU – groups of coolies at the village level) are supported till they become independent from ADATS. The first three phases extend each over a period of about 3 years; the fourth phase is not time-bound. In this last phase, CSU and ADATS continue to co-operate. CSUs are federated in structures at cluster and taluk level and in a formal apex body²², the Bagepalli Coolie Sangha.

In 1995, ADATS and its long standing partners ICCO, NOVIB and EZE decided to form a consortium to harmonise their efforts²³. The EC-funding supplements their support to ADATS. It concerns CSUs that are in each of the four phases described above. As such, the project cannot really be isolated from the entire ADATS programme and approach.

Project Purpose and Objectives

The project fits in ADATS' programme approach and objectives. It aims at increasing the self reliance of the coolie sangha, thereby following a multi-sectoral approach addressing a broad range of issues related to gender, environment, health and education and socio-political discrimination.

The short term objectives of this particular project are: increase of the countervailing power of the coolies by organising them in groups at village, cluster and taluk level, the promotion of adult literacy and the increase of coolie children to government schools, the improvement of the health situation, increased access to credit by promoting so-called Coolie Credit Funds (CCF), the strengthening of the position of women by forming special women groups linked to the CSU that have a veto power on key decisions on CSU- and cluster level, and the increase of the production and yields of coolie land through soil and water conservation measures.

Inputs and main Outputs

Close to 1,000 people are working in the programme, of whom around 100 are full time ADATS staff. The remaining part are Village Level Workers, Village

²² An *Apex Body* is a common platform for village sanghas or village associations with a common purpose or objective of people's and area development.

²³ NOVIB withdrew from the consortium in 1998.

Health Workers and Cluster Secretaries who belong to the local communities and receive a small stipend per month (paid by ADATS in the early stages of the process and by the CSUs later on). ADATS disposes over the necessary material equipment for the implementation of this programme. Most of it has been built up over time; some new equipment was provided via this project. Major donor inputs include: funds for CSUs in the formulation phase to implement health and education programmes and built up the CCF; funds for the implementation of the Dry Land Development Programme (DLDP) in CSUs in the consolidation and withdrawal phase.

From the first phase onwards, the external inputs supplement the considerable inputs by the target groups themselves. Apart from contributions in labour, kind and time (started in the consolidation phase), the coolies contribute 10 % of their income to a so-called Sangha (group) Fund which is used for meeting organisation costs, funding health and education activities, setting up a safety net, etc.

In the three year period covered by the project, around 14.600 families ²⁴were covered via 507 active CSU's (initial target: 590), covering around 38 % of the local population. They belong predominantly to the lowest and other backward classes. 82 of the CSU's have entered the withdrawal phase in this period. Other indicators of increased self-reliance are the impressive Coolie Sangha successes in struggles with the local elite and in mobilising government funds for local development and the built up of the Sangha Funds with the coolie's own resources to Rs. 10.2 million. The high level of organisation attained is shown by the regularity of meetings and the stabilised membership (after a temporary decrease caused by the introduction of the Sangha Tax) and the increased capacities of the village membership. The women groups at village level successfully managed the health budgets and ensured that more than 9,600 children went to school and got good quality teaching. CCF loans were mostly reimbursed on time ²⁵. The DLDP was yearly implemented in 190 CSUs on average (all being in the consolidation and withdrawal stage). Yearly, on average 3,800 families were included in this programme. Over three years, 27,000 acres were improved, 553 km of stone bounds constructed and 1,380 acres of virgin land prepared for a first cultivation.

²⁴ *Family and Household.* For common understanding of this evaluation report, 'family' means one set of parents (father and mother) and their off-springs. An average family size observed during the study is five (father, mother and three children). 'Household' means here that in a house there may be joint family set up – elder parents with their married sons and their children

²⁵ During the last project year, over-dues have increased to 19 %, due to the failure of rains; ADATS' experience shows however that nearly all over-dues are cleared later on. By 31 March 1998, around 13 % of the CCF capital (note: this is not equal to the amount of outstanding loans, which is lower) is overdue, of which 20 % were considered at risk (more than 1 year overdue).

Project Performance in relation to five key variables

Important note: As the project constitutes an integral part of a long-term development programme and cannot be isolated from it, the performance assessment hereafter concerns the programme as a whole ²⁶.

Relevance. The project is considered as very relevant for many reasons. It is in line with major national poverty alleviation efforts, the national grass-roots self governance policy and felt material and immaterial needs of the poorest sections of the population. Continuous efforts are undertaken to adapt programme content and approach to new emerging needs and contextual changes. The programme explicitly aims at empowering its target groups, which might not be in line with the overall government policy (following merely a welfare approach), but seems justified considering the high level of exploitation of the poor.

Efficiency. The project reaches a good level in terms of efficiency. Project inputs always act as a catalyst for local efforts and, hence, lead to higher levels of outputs. This is further enhanced by a carefully elaborated and decentralised approach in each of the programme components and by the coolie's organisation's capacity to mobilise and effectively use local government funds. Capacity building at all levels, the target group in first instance, further increases efficiency. An excellent management information system allows close monitoring and rapid course correction if needed.

Overall efficiency is slightly affected by the following factors. The ADATS culture (low salaries and fringe benefits, no long-term institutional perspective) leads to short term efficiency but considerable turnover of qualified staff. CCF are over-capitalised in the early stages of their development and entirely externally funded.

Effectiveness. Globally spoken the project reaches a good level of effectiveness. There are clear signs that major outputs and specific objectives of the project are reached to a major degree, even though part of them are of a qualitative nature and, hence, difficult to be fully assessed. On the basis of its four-phase approach, ADATS imposes itself strict time limits in reaching desired levels of organisational strength at CSU level and succeeds generally in meeting these, even though they imply an increasing commitment from the target groups on the organisational and financial levels. The preoccupation for long term sustainability affects to a certain extent short term effectiveness (drop out of members or entire CSUs); in many cases however, the drop outs join the programme later, which is a sign of the viability of the approach.

It should be noted that this good achievement in terms of effectiveness is reached in a constraining context of a strong opposing feudal, caste and political nexus and unfavourable climatic conditions.

²⁶ This note applies as well for most other projects (IN-2, IN-3, IN-4, IN-5, IN-7 and IN-8), but will not be repeated when these projects are discussed.

Impact. The ADATS programme reaches a good impact. Although impact of the programme components is not yet systematically assessed (the data-base is actually under-utilised in this regard and impact indicators are hardly developed), there are ample signs of immediate and sustainable impacts. CSU members clearly indicate that they evolved from a situation of inhumanity and gained recognition and identity as a human being. This constitutes the basis for effectively coping with the local power elite and embedded patriarchy, defending and bargaining for their gender, political and economic interests and, eventually, self-reliance in the social, political and economic fields. Up till now, people have attached primary importance to socio-cultural and political issues; a process is now going on to focus more on the economic aspects of their empowerment.

Sustainability. The level of the sustainability of the benefits generated by the programme is good. Contrary to many other programmes, from the very start of its co-operation with villages, ADATS follows a well thought and operationalised approach leading to sustainability of the project benefits and impact. It implies concrete and often painful activities (for instance the 10 % “revenue tax” for the sangha fund) that should guarantee sustainability on the long run, both for economic and health and education programmes. The concept of sustainability is further firmly rooted in the coolie’s mind who consider ADATS’ intervention as temporary. ADATS’ policy is further facilitated by its long-term co-operation with northern partners, which goes beyond the classic project approach.

It is important to note that ADATS’ partners are also open to ensure its institutional sustainability. However, up till now institutional support has been limited to the level that is directly beneficial for programme implementation only. This is in line with ADATS’ policy showing a high level of confidence in their capacity to continuously attract outside funding. Considering that a certain (limited) support to the Coolie Sangha movement will always be needed, one can question whether this policy should be maintained.

Overall General Comments on the Project

EC funding of the ADATS programme was undoubtedly appropriate. An important explanation of ADATS’ performance is the quality and continuity of its leadership that has been a main factor in the gradual improvement of its approaches. The ADATS’ performance can be rated as exceptional in two fields: first, their capacity to eliminate gender differences and ensure women control on key decisions while including both men and women in village organisations that are able to bring their members - men and women - to self-reliance. Second, the well operationalised four-phase approach leading to sustainability, thereby accepting temporary shortfalls in village dynamics. ADATS has been able to implement this long-term strategy because, among others, of long-standing partnerships with ENGOs. The EC co-funded project has only supplemented their efforts.

3.3. IN-2: SUPPORT FOR PARIVARTHANA'S ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, ACTION AND WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, HUNSUR, KARNATAKA, INDIA (NGO/PVD/BG/1996/132/UK/11)

Project Context

The project was implemented in Hunsur Taluk, which is part of Mysore district in Karnataka. The taluk comprises 281 villages with a population of nearly 300,000 people. Approximately 30 % of them are classified as so-called scheduled tribe and scheduled caste. Agriculture is the most important activity of the population whereas around 20 % of them do not own land. During the last decades, environmental degradation has become prevalent because of continuing deforestation, unsustainable agricultural practices (mono-culture of tobacco) and changing climatic conditions with a decreasing and less reliable rainfall. In comparison with most other areas visited, people of Hunsur are slightly better off and even low caste people often dispose of some land to ensure their livelihood. This explains that caste relations are not that exploitative as in many other parts of India (such as North Kolar, the working area of ADATS, for instance).

Parivarthana has been established by a small group of social activists in 1988 from a concern with the environmental degradation caused by massive tobacco growing. It started its activities with a pilot project in 1992. After one year of assessing needs and perceptions with the people, the original environmental focus was slightly broadened by incorporating income generating activities in the programme. At that time, it was also decided to work exclusively with women (who showed more interest in the programme) and to focus mainly on dalits and backward castes. Dalits presently constitute 70 % of the target group of Parivarthana; others belong to the backward castes.

Christian Aid has supported Parivarthana since the start of its activities. After the inception year, three consecutive three-year programmes have been funded. Its support has been relatively limited (on average around 22,000 € yearly) and coming entirely from Christian Aid's own sources, except for the year 1996-97 when part of a block grant was used to fund some additional institutional expenses (office building, small training centre, vehicle) of Parivarthana.

Project Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the programme is the promotion of sustainable development. Short-term objectives are the creation of self reliant women groups (sanghas) and the introduction and adoption of a model of sustainable agriculture.

Inputs and main Outputs

In the period under study (1996-97), Parivarthana disposed of 6 staff members and a budget of about 20,000 Euro for the implementation of the programme.

Major activities conducted were: the set-up, accompaniment and guidance of sanghas, training and education around environmental issues, dry land horticulture and agro-forestry activities (including tree nurseries, assisting sangha members in tree planting, promotion of vermi-compost), and the promotion of savings and credit schemes in the sanghas (including the provision of small revolving funds). In view of the withdrawal of the NGO, the creation of apex-structures at circle and taluk level was initiated in this year.

45 groups (average membership of 20) were created and/or supported. In 1996-97, their credit delivery and savings activities increased considerably, and 8 sangha houses were constructed. Sanghas have shown an increased confidence in tackling local issues related to gender, bureaucratic attitude and alcoholism. In and around the land of the sangha members, more than 70,000 seedlings were planted (among others: mango, coconut, teak, neem, betelnut, caswhewnut); the survival rate was about 70 % for horticulture plants and 55 % for forestry plants. Further, a similar amount of seedlings were prepared for the next season. About 35 villages have been provided with bins for vermi-culture. 176 so-called smokeless chula (stoves) were installed.

The construction of the office and training centre was started in this period, but could only be completed in the following financial year. The total built area is more than 2,200 square feet; a jeep has been purchased.

Project Performance in relation to FIVE KEY VARIABLES

Relevance. The relevance of the project can be rated as good for different reasons. Parivarthana's programme is in line with the national and state agenda of promotion of sustainable agriculture and afforestation. The option to sharpen the organisation's focus, in the pilot phase, on the poor is also relevant. Moreover, Parivarthana did well take into account their needs by combining their environmental programme (with long term effects) with activities aimed at poverty alleviation on the short run. Maximum use has been made of local resources and other relevant experiences included. Some questions can be posed with regard to the policy of focusing solely on women for the promotion of sustainable agriculture development as men play a key role in agricultural activities.

Efficiency. Overall efficiency of the project can be rated as good (even close to very good). The resources of the project have been carefully used as a catalyst for local participation in all activities and, hence, led to higher levels of output. The technical quality of implementation of the activities is clearly above standard. The organisational set up of Parivarthana is kept intentionally simple but efficient and transparent, with a low level of overhead costs and decentralised responsibilities. The office building and training centre have been constructed in a simple but extremely functional way at a low cost. They are maintained in an exemplary manner.

Effectiveness. The effectiveness of the programme can be rated as acceptable to good. Most outputs are reached within the desired time frame and produce the intended benefits. There is a fairly good adoption of outputs that often are difficult to achieve such as the effective use of vermi-compost and smokeless stoves. Most of the trees planted in the project year have survived and are expected to produce their expected benefits in time. Groups have made clear progress, but need to be further consolidated. The construction of an office and training centre has effectively supported Parivarthana's programme and serves the needs of other small networks.

Some contextual constraints such as unreliable rainfall, the existence of a dominant mode of agricultural production (tobacco with high external inputs), wild animals and alcoholism have negatively affected effectiveness.

Impact. The impact of the programme is rated as acceptable. The agro-forestry and horticultural outputs have a good chance to produce long lasting benefits, which is also demonstrated by the spontaneous adoption of these activities by non-members. More doubts exist about the benefits that are related to the sanghas institutional survival; much will depend on their capacity to sustain their activities after Parivarthana's withdrawal.

Sustainability. The sustainability of the programme can also be considered as acceptable. Attention for sustainability has already been brought in at the level of the institution and in its co-operation with the sanghas. Some measures are already being implemented, such as the creation of apex bodies and a revolving fund, but few concrete steps are yet defined to upgrade the groups' capacities. Hence, the sustainability concept is not yet sufficiently internalised at the sangha level.

The benefits related to the agricultural activities have a bigger chance to become sustainable as they depend less on the continuity of the sanghas.

Overall General Comments on the Project

This block grant project has been an effective instrument to enhance the implementation of the activities of a small local NGO, in the framework of an on-going partnership with a ENGO, which had gained a good understanding of the institutional needs of its partner. The project provided funding at an appropriate moment of time in the development of the INGOs' programme and has enhanced its effectiveness and efficiency considerably. As is the case in other projects evaluated here, the local NGO leadership played an important role in the development and continuity of the partnership.

3.4. IN-3: COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF 35 VILLAGES IN YERPEDU MANDAL OF CHITTOOR DISTRICT THROUGH ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS (NGO/PVD/1997/131/FR)

Project Context

The project has been implemented in 35 villages of Yerpedu Mandal, which have a total population of nearly 25,000. The area is mainly dependent on predominantly rain-fed agriculture. Hence, it is very much affected by the unreliable rainfall that has been severely below average during the last years. The survey conducted at the start of the programme in 1985 revealed that around 60 % from the population lived below the poverty line ²⁷, that the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes constituted an important part of the population, that more than two thirds of the households disposed of only two acres or less of farming land, and that the literacy rate was only 26 %.

RASS (Rashtriya Seva Samithi), a local NGO, has been responsible for the implementation of the EC-funded project. The organisation has been established in 1981 and since then grown out to a premier NGO in South India. By 1998, RASS disposed of an annual budget of 78 million of Rs., covering a population of 2.31 million in more than 3,500 villages and employing 3,695 programme staff. RASS is focusing on the poor, follows a holistic village approach and has four key elements in its strategy: human resource development, attitudinal changes, economic development and self-management. Children and women are considered as the key agents of change and receive priority.

The high level of poverty in the area constituted the main reason for RASS to start, in 1985, a programme in the area, which was prepared jointly with Action Aid (UK); after two years, Aide et Action (AEA, France) took over the partnership from Action Aid. Both partners are co-operating for 15 years and prepare now their withdrawal from the area, which is planned for 2003. For quite a long period, education and health have been the sole components of the programme. Around 1995, both partners decided to broaden its scope in view of creating better conditions for sustainability. Hence, activities in the field of agriculture and savings and credit were started up and more attention was paid to the built up of local village and apex institutions that have to take over the programme management after the withdrawal. This extension of the programme constituted the main reason to look for additional funding and introduce a 3-year proposal to the EC.

Project Purpose and Objectives

The project aims at an improvement of the conditions and quality of education and an intensification of the existing services. It further wants to strengthen the economic base of the families, especially in agriculture, animal husbandry and small industries. The organisation of the village communities, their training, the promotion of savings, thrift and self help groups are considered essential to attain the above mentioned objectives.

²⁷ The State of Andhra Pradesh has developed its own poverty indicator, which has been used for this assessment.

Inputs and main Outputs

The programme is run exclusively by local staff. There are around 120 staff members, mostly men, of whom around 75 % works temporarily in the so-called supplementary education programme or as social worker. Project staff get regularly administrative and programme support and supervision from the Chennai AEA office (located at 175 km of the project area).

The main activities and outputs of the project can be summarised as follows. Education of children is mainly taken up through pre-school activities and running 35 supplementary schools that are set up to complete regular education which shows a considerable lack of quality. Around 3,700 children are covered by these activities. As a result of the school programme, school drop outs at higher secondary level has decreased from 43 % in 1985 to 14 % in 1999, whereas the promotion percentage has raised from 46 % to 91 % (same two years). 425 students have become graduates. In all villages, so-called Village Education and Development Committees (VEDC) have been installed and take, with project assistance, care of all issues related to education and broader development at their level.

In the field of health, all villages are included in a quite comprehensive programme composed of, among others, anti- and post-natal care, environmental sanitation, family planning and health promotion in schools. The programme is implemented by project health staff who liaise with village health workers. Linkages are established with government health centres. 95 % of the eligible couples resort to family planning, infant mortality rate has decreased from 15 % to 2 %, maternal death is reduced to nil and other health needs related to common diseases are effectively taken care of.

Economic development and empowerment of the people, especially women, have been achieved to an important degree by income generating activities (loans for land reclamation, irrigation, cattle raising, etc.), formation of 150 women sanghas for savings and credit and, recently, the set up of an apex body. During the project period, about 2,420 loans for an amount of 10.7 million Rs. of loans have been distributed with a repayment rate approaching 100 %. In most cases, these loans have effectively contributed to the increase of income of the families concerned. Group formation among women has clearly led to an improvement of their position, especially in the economic field, in the family and the village as a whole. Women have gained in confidence and start to take up key function in village life.

In all project components, RASS has succeeded in establishing linkages with government structures and make effectively use of the opportunities offered by various government programmes.

Project Performance in relation to FIVE KEY VARIABLES

Relevance. The relevance of the project can be rated as good. Its major components of education, health, strengthening the livelihood sources and

village institutions are clearly in line with the national and state policies. They also respond to the needs of the local population. By adopting a supplementing approach, government services, mainly in health and education, are reinforced. RASS is aware of the danger of playing a substitution role and tries to avoid this. The broadening of the programme with economic activities was a wise decision in the context of the changing policies (decrease of subsidies and reduction of government intervention in the economic sector) and in view of sustaining the programme's benefits. Finally, the programme succeeded in carefully selecting its beneficiaries using economic indicators (poverty line) as its major criterion.

Efficiency. The level of efficiency of the programme is acceptable to good. Given the size of the institution, RASS has very well succeeded in setting up an appropriate project structure with clear roles and responsibilities, good follow-up and monitoring and data collection. Staff are hard working, have developed a good relationship with the population but sometimes lack specific skills. There is a good linking up with existing government programmes. In the early stages of the programme (till 1995-96), the participation of the population was rather weak, but this has improved since then. Village structures are now taking over tasks from project staff. The cost of the education component could have been lower by providing less costly materials and adopting a more decentralised approach.

Effectiveness. The project/programme has reached a good level of effectiveness. In all sectors (health, education, income generation) good delivery systems have been put in place, leading to the achievement of the planned outputs in a timely manner. The programme has succeeded as well in making the government efforts at village level more effective (for instance in education). Relatively spoken, progress in the field of institutional and capacity building is lagging behind. This can be explained by a rather conventional service delivery approach that has been followed for a long time; the process of actively involving the population and strengthening their institutions started quite late.

Impact. The impact of the major programme components (health and education) is very difficult to assess, even more because no studies have been conducted so far, nor have indicators been developed. Globally spoken, the evaluators think the impact can be rated as acceptable to good. There are clear indications of change of attitude towards education, a drop in mortality rates, the decrease of the average family size, and improvement of the economic position of the poor (according to RASS, only 16 % of the population are now below the poverty line compared to 60 % at the start of the programme).

Sustainability. The project performance related to sustainability is rated as acceptable. The issue of sustainability was not incorporated in the programme design and only taken up since 1995. As such, the project had to work against an attitude of dependency that inhibited the population to take up a more active role. Structures to ensure sustainability (VEDC, Mahila Bharat: apex body of women groups) are now being put in place, but need time to be consolidated.

Overall General Comments on the Project

Via the EC co-funded project, RASS and AEA have extended their co-operation to areas that were quite new for them. By broadening their health and education programme with economic and institution building activities, they were able to develop new approaches that can ensure more the sustainability of the benefits. This particular experience has been beneficial for RASS that is now following a similar approach in its other programmes. RASS' good relations with government structures also has brought the government in many cases to adapt its approach. The impact of RASS can to a big extent be explained by the hard work of its charismatic leader and his capacities to liaise with leaders and higher officials at state and even national level.

3.5. IN-4: SEARCH EXTENSION PROGRAMME 1998 – 2001 (NGO/PVD/1999/377/NL)

Project Context

This programme is being implemented in 22 panchayats that form the bigger part of Karimangalam Block, located in Dharmapuri district in the state of Tamil Nadu. SEARCH intentionally has chosen that area because of the many challenges it posed. At the start of the programme, Karimangalam block was a backward area for many reasons. It was characterised by a high level of poverty, due to, among others, a lack of productive resources, a drought prone character, high population density and non-availability of employment outside the agricultural sector. The high degree of poverty was a major explanation for the indebtedness of a significant part of the population. Women suffer most, as gender inequality is high and violence against women rampant (because of a high level of alcoholism and the prevalence of female infanticide). The health situation was also preoccupying and so was the quality of education.

The project is implemented by SEARCH, an INGO based in Bangalore, the capital of the neighbouring state of Karnataka. Since its creation in 1975 it has specialised in providing different types of training courses geared to the NGO-sector. The extension programme evaluated here was set up in 1987. It was initiated out of the need to keep in touch with field reality and to test out emerging concepts in development. Other linkages with the training programmes were also envisaged, such as the set up of field visits for trainees.

The programme started with a survey to identify the target population and their needs. Quite early in the process, it was decided to focus on women living below the poverty line and, to a lesser extent, on the Dalit population as a whole ²⁸.

²⁸ Men proved to be difficult to organise because of seasonal migration, rampant alcoholism and political interference.

After the survey, community groups (sanghas) were formed with the aim to establish independent people's organisations, which will enable the marginalised people, especially women, to improve their living conditions. A broad range of activities was then set up to empower women in various fields (psychological, cultural, social and economic). The major activities in the period till 1997 included organisation building, leadership development, non-formal education, savings and credit, income generating activities and promotion of participation in local government bodies. Gender issues were taken up in various aspects, such as female infanticide, alcoholism, children's schooling, domestic and societal violence. In 1996, there were 142 well organised and homogeneous women sanghas; one year before, a federation of these groups has been established.

Project Purpose and Objectives

The project has a very broad purpose that can be summarised as the comprehensive empowerment of the poor women from the target communities. Ten different issues have been identified. They include poverty alleviation, special focus on dalit women, food security (land based activities), consumer rights, female infanticide, girl child education, domestic violence against women, illiteracy of women, women's health (reproductive health and protection against HIV-AIDS) and political empowerment of women. For each of these issues, strategy, objectives, activities and outcomes have been defined.

Inputs and main Outputs

The project has 46 staff. At the moment of this evaluation, it consisted of a core team of five Unit Co-ordinators headed by two Assistant Directors. The other staff are formally part of the Women's Federation but still paid by the programme. Moreover, the Women's bank employs presently 6 people who are all, except for the Manager, paid by the bank itself. The SEARCH head office provides some support in terms of logistics, administration and participation in the planning and monitoring.

The programme disposes of a simple training centre and office, existing sangha buildings and some office equipment. The programme budget foresaw the purchase of a jeep and the construction of a building for the Women's Federation and Women's Bank. At the moment of the evaluation, the jeep was purchased. The construction of the building for the Women's Bank and Women's Federation was nearly completed; another building in the same compound was constructed to provide the Programme's new office and a big meeting hall. Last but not least, an important matching grant (nearly 150,000 €) had been budgeted which is supposed to increase the working capital of the Women's Bank. At the moment of the evaluation, the Women's Bank disposed of an important amount of funds, which were not yet used as loan capital. Considering the present development of the Bank, it is expected that it will be impossible to use the budgeted matching grant on the short term for its intended purpose.

The programme has achieved important outputs related to most of the ten issues mentioned above. The most striking results are mentioned hereafter. The number of sanghas has increased drastically to 306, covering nearly 5,000 members. The Women's Federation got formally registered under the Societies Act. Many sangha leaders participated in the Grama Panchayat elections and 33 of them were selected. The monitoring committees to prevent female infanticide were successful in 344 cases. The women's own savings have crossed 10 million Rs. and a lot of groups were liaised with government credit programmes and got 1,7 million Rs. of loans. During the financial year 1999-2000, the Women's Bank issued loans for more than 3.8 million Rs. The campaign against illicit liquor was successful in the sense that 913 people got arrested for illegal sale. 33 Consumer Vigilance Committees were formed and successfully followed up the activities of the fair price shops (see box 3); they got 328 ration cards sanctioned for needy families. 287 literacy motivators were trained.

The change of pattern in agriculture continued favourably: more food crops are now being planted. The specific health programme got started with training for village workers by a lady doctor who was recently recruited. She will focus on the promotion of herbal medicines and train village para-medical workers.

Project Performance in relation to FIVE KEY VARIABLES

Relevance. The relevance of the programme is good to very good. It is in line with government's policy on women empowerment through panchayat raj, sangha formation, income generating programmes and poverty alleviation in backward areas. The so-called ten-issues/programmes have been carefully

Box 3

The Public Distribution System (PDS) – One Form of increasing accessibility to food for the poor. During the food crisis after the second World War, the Indian administration decided that one way of ensuring accessibility to food for the poor would be through the distribution of essential commodities through a system which is known as the Public Distribution System (PDS). The importance of having a controlled market and distribution system for basic commodities led to a legal basis for the PDS through the Essential Commodities Act of 1955, which states that the PDS should distribute at least rice, wheat, sugar, oil, kerosene, clothe (saree and dhoti) to the lower income households. Three categories of ration or identity cards are distributed based on the family size & income – of which 'green' is meant for poorest families. The commodities are distributed through licensed shops called Fair Price Shops. The PDS programme faced stiff challenges after the introduction of the New Economic Policy in 1991. The thrust for privatisation and gradual removal of subsidies on development and welfare schemes have impacted on PDS and led to a decreased quantity and increased price for the commodities distributed. PDS shops are further often subject to manipulation and corruption by the local elite. Women sangha often follow up closely the management of the shop and have in some cases succeeded in obtaining the right to run the shop.

designed in close co-operation with the target groups and based on the prior working experience of 9 years in the area. The programme shows courage by its deliberate option to go against inhuman practices, mostly related to gender discrimination (female infanticide and foeticide) and caste issues. SEARCH has made a deliberate choice for a backward area and developed good mechanisms of target group selection (focus on landless, dalits and women).

Efficiency. Considering the 13 years programme period, the efficiency is to be rated as moderate to acceptable. Especially in the first 10 years, the output and outreach have been relatively small compared to the important inputs in terms of human and material resources. Frequent internal reorganisations and course corrections were needed. Furthermore, the programme disposed of few qualified staff to tackle often very complex issues.

The situation has changed favourably during the last three years, all the more since the introduction of the so-called unit approach, in which the ten issues are grouped in five units headed by a technically qualified co-ordinator and allowing specialisation of the field staff. The major problem now in efficiency terms is the severe under-utilisation of the grants that has come and will come from EC/ICCO for the credit programme (an important amount is now kept on a deposit and more funds are planned to come in the near future). The programme has a good system of data collection and analysis, which is however not yet used for cost-effectiveness; the monitoring mechanism is quite good (including involvement from head office). Efforts to liaise with government services, specialised networks and increased participation of target groups add to the efficiency of the programme.

Effectiveness. The effectiveness of the programme is acceptable to good. Especially, during the last years, it has achieved good to excellent outputs/outcome in issues related to the social, political and gender field. This can be noticed mostly at sangha level. The results attained by the Consumer Vigilance Committees and the Monitoring Committees on Female Infanticide are worth being mentioned. There is however less convincing evidence with regard to other sectors. Efforts in the health sector were only recently streamlined. The promising approach in sustainable agriculture was very much constrained by two consecutive years of drought. The outputs in savings and credit remain under the potential. The process of institution building at apex level (Women's Federation and Women's Bank) is however lagging behind.

Impact. The impact of the program is acceptable. A clear impact on the political, social and gender field has been achieved in terms of change of attitude and values. This is an important achievement, considering the strong traditional beliefs and values. The outreach of the programme is however still limited. Sanghas are now recognised institutions at village level and increasingly taking up a role in local government institutions. The impact on the economic level is less obvious, among others because of the prevailing drought.

Sustainability. The sustainability at sangha level is good. Most sanghas have clearly become village institutions that can autonomously take up a broad range of issues affecting women in particular and village life in general. Sustainability at the apex level is however moderate. The issue of sustainability has far too late been incorporated in the programme approach. The federation leaders do have the commitment to sustain and further develop their action through the apex

structures, but lack the necessary insights and skills to do so. No clear distinction of roles between the SEARCH extension programme and the people's institutions has been made yet and no coherent steps defined yet in view of sustainability. This situation is rather disappointing in view of 13 years of continued presence in the area. For some activities (consumer rights, agriculture, HIV, ..) good linkages have been built up now with other organisations and these will be useful in view of sustainability

Overall General Comments on the Project

In its present shape, the programme is promising. It has taken too much time to define the right course, but the basis is now laid down for impact at a broader level. Additional expertise is however urgently needed to assist in the further development of the two apex structures. The ambition of SEARCH to establish close interactions between extension programme and its core activities in the field of training is laudable but has not fully materialised. The EC-project has come in to further strengthen ICCO's and SEARCH's efforts and, more precisely, provide funding for the strengthening of the apex bodies. This happened at the moment the efforts of both partners are gaining momentum and is, as such, very relevant. The additional external resources provided for the apex bodies (bank and federation) have however come too early in the process.

3.6. IN-5: RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN TAMIL NADU 1994 – 1996 (NGO/PVD/1994/232/DE)

Project Context

This project has been implemented in 8 villages belonging to the Madurai and Anna Districts of Tamil Nadu, India. Most of the villages are situated around G. Kalupatti, the location of the headquarters of Reaching the Unreached (RTU), the INGO that has taken the initiative for the project. The population of the project area depends predominantly on agriculture. Chronic periods of prolonged drought have increased their already immense difficulties to ensure a decent livelihood. Hence, many families migrate to the neighbouring states of Karnataka and Kerala for employment.

RTU has been established by Brother J. Kimpton and has recently celebrated its 25 years of commitment for the poor. In this period it has undertaken a broad range of activities. Most important to mention in this regard are: the set up of so-called children's villages for orphans and children from extremely marginalised families, rural housing (more than 5,500 houses have been constructed) and village water supply (more than 1,700 bore wells), educational activities (primary school, supplementary schools, kindergartens, scholarships) and health activities (health centre, community health in surrounding villages). In 16 villages a more

comprehensive village development programme is presently run, in which also other activities (group formation, savings and credit) are implemented.

RTU has initiated this project with the support of the Developing Countries Foundation of 1962 (DCF), a Danish NGO and one of its long standing partners. During a visit of DCF representatives in 1993, the project plans were discussed in detail; later on, DCF decided to introduce the project for funding to the EC. It incorporates only part of the entire RTU programme.

Project Purpose and Objectives

The project proposal describes the project purpose as “to assist the poorest part of the society to further develop their living conditions”. The programme aimed more specifically at the construction of 430 houses and 12 bore wells and the establishment of the construction of 6 double guest-rooms and a dining hall in view of the sustainability of RTU. The support to the on-going RTU programmes included: improved kindergartens, primary education and supplementary education via RTU run schools and centres, assistance to a limited number of very needy people and limited scholarships for children that have stayed in one of the organisations’ children’s villages.

Inputs and main Outputs

The project was implemented by RTU’s staff belonging to the relevant departments (housing and education). The bulk of the budget went to the housing component. Houses were constructed by a local contractor, using locally produced low-cost materials and involving beneficiaries in the construction activities. The guest-rooms were constructed with similar materials. Inputs for the school programmes included salaries for the teachers, the purchase of low cost educational material and one or two nutritious meals per day. The assistance to needy people was provided weekly in the form of a small amount of money. Scholarships supplemented the funds to be raised by the students themselves.

RTU succeeded to build 430 good quality houses within the set time frame. Six bore wells were constructed (of which one was a failure). 10 kindergartens were run for on average 270 children; the primary and middle schools provided good quality education for yearly 840 children on average; the supplementary classes were attended by 840 children yearly and allowed them to significantly increase their knowledge and, hence, increase their chances to continue education. 24 needy (sick, old age people) were weekly supported.

Project Performance in relation to FIVE KEY VARIABLES

Relevance. The project relevance is good. The project's efforts in education, drinking water provision and housing are in line with the national and state's poverty alleviation efforts. They respond to the poor people's priorities. The project has directed its efforts to the poorest sections of society; an important part of its beneficiaries belong to the Dalits and backward castes. RTU's nearly unconditioned efforts to solve the most urgent needs of the people has however to a certain extent led to a substitution effect (with government services) and the creation of an attitude of dependence at the level of the beneficiaries.

Efficiency. The performance of the project in terms of efficiency cannot be rated easily. The excellent organisation of work at every level, the high level of commitment and skills of the staff, the good supervision, follow-up and monitoring mechanisms make that short term efficiency is to be rated as good. However, the lack of involvement of other key actors (beneficiaries, government) leads to a moderate efficiency on the medium and long term. Houses and bore wells are provided for free; people do participate in the construction, but their inputs remain limited. The contribution of the parents in the educational activities has been limited. RTU's approach has also made it difficult to tap government resources. Hence, the external resources have been used without any multiplier effect, whereas mechanisms could have been put in place to revolve these at least partially.

It is also important to note that RTU realised the project at a cost which was above budgetary provision in Indian Rupees, but less in Euro. Due to management problems within DCF, this was only noticed quite long after project completion. Hence, DCF was forced to repay the unspent balance to the EC; it will however compensate RTU from its own funds for the extra spending in India.

Effectiveness. The effectiveness of the project is good. Most of the planned outputs have been reached within the set timeframe and meeting the quality standards. The target groups highly appreciate the outputs (housing, drinking water, improved education). However, as already mentioned, the pre-occupation for the immediate fulfilment of the poor people's needs has led to less concern for long term results.

Impact. Immediate impact of the programme can be rated as acceptable to good. The construction of houses and bore wells, and the provision of good quality education lead to clear outcomes in terms of increased social status, relief from the consequences of extreme poverty and better school results. Long term impact is however moderate as in most cases the outcomes achieved are not leading to broader social and economic progress, both at the individual and village level. Moreover, the spin-off effects of the programmes are limited. Neither government instances nor individuals take over the housing approach of RTU, even though they show interest. The same applies for the concept of "joyful learning" applied in the schools. Last but not least have RTU efforts led to the creation of an attitude of dependence among the target groups.

Sustainability. The sustainability of the housing programme is good. Around 97-98 % of the houses are still occupied by their original owners. This can be explained by the excellent preparation of the programme at any location (control of land ownership), the excellent quality of the buildings, the low level of maintenance required and the location of the houses. Ownership is firmly rooted and beneficiaries generally take well care of their houses.

The sustainability of the benefits of the other programmes is weak to moderate. In spite of a long commitment in the sector of health and water supply, measures to ensure sustainability are only now taking shape, but hampered by the attitude of dependence of the beneficiaries and by RTU's overall policy to take care of immediate needs without any constraint.

The construction of the guest rooms should also be mentioned. This has been a success in the sense that RTU is now able to provide board and lodging for its many visitors. The room occupancy rate is above 50 %. Hence, some additional income is created and, more importantly, linkages are established with people from India and abroad that are willing to support RTU's programmes.

Overall General Comments on the Project

This project has supported part of the programme of an organisation that has started 25 years ago under the inspiring leadership of a Brother who is still leading the organisation. He has been able to recruit committed personnel and developed internal decentralised working mechanisms giving much authority to the Director and Department Heads. He still plays an important role in liaising with numerous individual and institutional donors who are predominantly in the North, but is confident that this will continue when he will not be there anymore.

The EC-project has contributed to the continuity of the programme, without however having produced any impact on its overall approach. The ENGO that was responsible for the project has acted out of solidarity and admiration for the work produced by RTU, without contributing to the quality of the programme. The recent reflections within RTU towards approaches that could better enhance future sustainability of the programmes are locally induced. A more careful screening from the EC would have encouraged RTU to take up these issues earlier.

3.7. IN-6: SHELTER, PROTECTION, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT FOR YOUTH (NGO/PVD/1999/1103/UK)

Project Context

This project intends to focus on street children and working children living Dindigul and Palani, two urban centres with a population of nearly 500,000 in Tamil Nadu, India. Both cities have experienced a steady growth of their population, which is partially due to the recent increase of both industrial and commercial activities. Moreover, Palani is a major temple-city supporting a large

transient population. As such, both cities experience a disturbing growth of street and working children. Their industries (lock manufacturing, textile, steel furnace, leather) and small-scale businesses in automobile spares and services attract a lot of child labour. As a pilgrim centre, Palani attracts on top a large number of children begging on the streets. Most of these children are very vulnerable to physical, economic, psychological and sexual abuse.

ICT, a UK based NGO, started working in India in 1987. Five years later, the Indian chapter of the organisation was established as a legally independent organisation. Since the start of its activities, five projects have been set up. They cover several sectors in rural areas (rural health, savings and credit, silvi-culture), but are all situated in Anna District, to which Dindigul belongs, where the headquarters of ICT-India (ICTI) are located.

ICT-India responded to appeals from social workers and concerned authorities by undertaking research on street children and child labour. This survey formed the basis of the project, which ICTI considers as part of its work with some of the most deprived and isolated communities. The survey indicated that virtually no other organisations were assisting street and working children. ICT has experience with similar projects in Kenya and Sri Lanka.

Project Purpose and Objectives

The wider objectives of the project are to raise the status and self-worth of street and working children in Dindigul and Palani, to improve their quality of life and to raise awareness of child rights amongst the wider community. The immediate objectives are to provide safe shelter for up to 120 street living children (initially at Dindigul, later in Palani), to identify and satisfy their major needs in terms of health, education and nutrition, to establish non-formal education programmes and to provide appropriate job opportunities.

Inputs and main Outputs

The project has started early 2000. At the moment of the visit of the study/evaluation team, all planned staff had been recruited; they have been complemented by five field workers (not foreseen in the budget) who identify the street and working children and try to establish a relation of trust with them. An initial shelter has been rented in Dindigul and adapted to the project needs. The shelter has various functions: it acts as a drop-in centre and provides safe housing for children (30 boys and 30 girls maximally); it is open on an around-the-clock basis to cater for emergencies. Two house parents run the centre and are assisted by specialised staff if necessary. A building was constructed for a mechanical training on two-wheelers and equipment bought and installed for that purpose and for another training on tailoring. The centre is further equipped with a television, games, etc. to ensure the entertainment of its young guests and with a kitchen to provide nutritious meals on a daily basis.

The outreach services of the project have been able to quickly establish contacts with their target groups. By the end of June, they had identified 537 working children, 50 street children and 160 distressed, single parent or orphan children. Respectively 125, 22 and 45 of these children were motivated to be counselled by the project staff. The identification and rapport building with their parents is still going on. A minority of the children have enrolled as residents in the drop-in centre and/or as trainee in one of the first two courses that have started in the previous months. Each course is attended by 20 girls or boys and is planned to last for one year. Attendance seems to be regular and enthusiasm among the youngsters high; however, some of them do not belong to the group of street and working children.

Box 4

A burdened street boy. *The street boy Ramesh, in Dindigul town is not just a boy who lives in the street but he is with the additional burden of supporting his parents in the neighbouring district. The eleven-year-old Ramesh works as a "load-man" in the flower market and he earns an average of 30 Rs. Per day. He is now benefiting from the ICT programme but continues to earn. When the study/evaluation team members enquired as to what he does with his earning, the reply was startling: "I send a minimum of Rs. 600 every month to support my parents and younger sisters". He is satisfied with the ICT support but cannot accept their offer to stay overnight in their drop-in centre as nobody wakes him up early morning to go to the flower market. Moreover, the centre is far from his working place. Participating in a future ICT training course is not feasible, as it would imply that he cannot send money to his parents anymore.*

On average, 35 children spend now the night in the centre. Fifteen of them follow one of the two courses; eleven are school going children and around eight are street children; a few more street children come in for having a meal, a bath, recreation

or simply some rest during day time. Eight of them are registered as orphan and distressed children and have been admitted in neighbouring schools.

Project Performance in relation to FIVE KEY VARIABLES

Relevance. The relevance of the project is acceptable to good. The education of children and prevention of street and working children form part of the nation's and state policies. The project wants to focus on a particularly marginalised group of children and has defined its programme on the basis of an assessment of their needs. The approach to base any action on the child's willingness is also appropriate. Weaker points relate to the lack of analysis of other relevant experiences (inside India and elsewhere) and the lack of attention for co-ordination with other similar initiatives and for joint action in view of adapting existing policies and for prevention (all activities are on the "curative" side)²⁹.

Efficiency. The efficiency of the project is acceptable. The start-up period has been well managed: in a short period of time, a location for the drop-in centre has been identified and equipped, committed staff has been recruited that

²⁹ The evaluators accept that it is appropriate to start a project of this type with "curative" activities to create goodwill and trust. However, the project seems to have little ideas on how to development a preventive component in the future.

immediately has started up the programme and liaised with the children; two trade courses have also been initiated. Children and parents are adequately involved in project implementation. A monitoring system is being evolved and a good reporting system established. Weaker points are: relatively high personnel and administrative costs compared to other projects (among others because of close accompaniment by expatriate personnel planned for the entire project period), no clear guidelines as to the degree of cost-effectiveness to be reached, a rather complex organisational set-up with many layers of leading personnel, insufficient co-ordination with other similar programmes.

Effectiveness. Up till now, the effectiveness of the project can be rated as acceptable. The project has succeeded in delivering outputs and activities in a timely manner and reaches its target groups effectively. However, there are strong indications that the strategy and approach need further improvement, which, as such, is not unusual at this stage in project implementation. More specifically, it might be necessary to combine curative with preventive measures. Moreover, the initially planned target groups are now only very partially reached in some of the major activities such as the trade courses and the drop-in centre; there is a danger of deviation from the initial target groups to better-off children, even if the latter have also genuine needs to be fulfilled. These activities might not be sufficient or well suited enough to really interest a major part of the target group (for instance: the centre is too far from the location of activity of most of the street children, participation to the courses requires a certain level of literacy, which most of the targeted children do not have; see also box 4).

Impact. It is far too early to assess the impact of the project. Project staff are confident that the combination of their activities (counselling, providing shelter and trade skills, follow-up of the children when they will be employed) will lead to mature adulthood and integration in society. The project also plans to develop activities to influence public awareness and sensitivity on the issue.

Sustainability. At this level also, it is too early to assess the chances of the sustainability of the project benefits. However, the planned integrated approach of the children's development and the stress on their own initiative seems to create a solid base for their eventual economic and mental autonomy. At the level of the organisation, the issue of future sustainability is also reflected on.

Overall General Comments on the Project

EC-funding has allowed to finance an initiative focused on a very specific target group. The initiators of the project had no expertise with this type of activities in the country but had identified other similar programmes and tried to incorporate their experiences during the preparation and start-up phases of the project. It was nevertheless found that actual project implementation deviates considerably from the initial plans. The changes made (recruitment of 5 field workers to establish relations with the children; the set up of two trades courses) are

relevant to our opinion, but could have been foreseen if project preparation would have been of better quality. The project will further need some additional efforts to ensure that its major services will be directed mainly to its intended target groups. Another option is to include other target groups, but this will obviously change the character of the project.

3.8. IN-7: BASIC HEALTH, EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN VILLAGES OF TAMIL NADU AND ORISSA, INDIA (NGO/PVD/1997/364/FRG)

Introductory remark

This project has four different components of which only two are interrelated to a certain extent. The German NGO, Kindermissionswerk, used to introduce many small projects for EC co-funding. On the request of the competent EC desk officer, they combined several similar small projects in one proposal so as to decrease the administrative burden. In this programme, four projects are presented, implemented by three different partners located in different states of India. The two first projects are situated in Tamil Nadu and implemented by the same partner organisation, SDMI. The evaluation has only analysed the first project, which is the only one of an integrated nature (community development). On its turn, this project is implemented at five different locations in Tamil Nadu, two of which were visited by the evaluation team.

Project Context

The project is situated in five rural locations of Tamil Nadu, which are quite far from each other. Each of these components is run autonomously by a local project team. The project focuses on marginalised groups (SC, ST, BC). Most of them depend entirely or partially on coolie work in the agricultural sector; some of them have a small piece of rain-fed land that is however insufficient to ensure a decent livelihood. Access to education is difficult and quality of the educational system low; many children drop out from school to assist their parents to get some additional income. Most of the target groups have only limited access to quality health care and resort often to unsound traditional practices and beliefs. They lack basic knowledge on nutrition and hygiene. In some of the areas covered, infant mortality reached 40 % before the project intervention.

An Indian priest founded the local partner organisation, SDMI (Society of Daughters of Mary Immaculate), in 1984 in Tamil Nadu. At present, it has 345 committed and dedicated young women as members and around 600 paid staff in development and other fields. The organisation is committed to serve unconditionally the marginalised people, particularly women and children, who live in human bondage such as ignorance, illiteracy, ill health and economic slavery. SDMI is dedicated to take part in the efforts and struggles of the poor for

development and considers an empowerment process as crucial in this regard. As opposed to many other religious societies, development work is the core of the Societies' mission.

The EC co-funded project is part of an on-going effort in line with the mission mentioned above, which started in the late eighties and gradually expanded over several areas in Tamil Nadu. The entry point for an integrated development approach is education and health, which lead to better informed people, the creation of local organisations and the gradual growth of the development momentum. Inputs from outside are kept to a bare minimum and consist basically of staff and their working expenses. Training is considered as crucial to achieve sustainable development.

Project Purpose and Objectives

The project purpose is the further strengthening of the integrated development process. To that end a broad range of results are aimed at: improved health, improved children's education, the set-up and strengthening of local sanghas that can take up autonomously important local issues related to public amenities (street lights, bus services, road improvement, drinking water, sanitation, land titles), and the establishment, at the level of these sanghas, of savings and credit groups. Increasingly, participation in the local self-governance system (panchayat raj) is envisaged.

Inputs and main Outputs

All major inputs are realised via the project staff, that consists partially of well trained and committed sisters and partially of others. Temporary teaching in regular schools and conducting tuition classes lead to an increase of the quality of education and school attendance so that the conditions are met for a take-over of the schools by the government. Health education focuses on both children (integrated in the school system; development of child-to-child education on health) and their parents, and focuses on all major health problems identified through yearly in-depth surveys. A lot of training is dispensed, which focuses on various issues (global awareness, health, education, gender, skill development, environmental issues). The village communities are encouraged to set up groups who then often start with savings and credit schemes that are accompanied by the project team.

Finally, the project envisaged to construct and to start up a resource centre for health education and functional literacy for children in Chennai.

This project covered 100 villages that are part of the global development effort of SDMI. In all villages, groups were set up or strengthened that took up various issues (see above). The process of federating these groups at cluster, block and taluk level was initiated when the project ended. These federations are meant to take up broader and more complex issues. Savings and credit schemes have

been installed in all groups and linkages with government programmes are established, which will allow the group members to access bank loans. In the field of education and health, the major results were the following: 6,980 children have been made aware of health problems, functional literacy classes and basic health education were conducted in 175 villages (average attendance 35 children per class), and health education is being implemented in 37 schools of the project area; AIDS prevention classes were held for high school level children. Staff members have been trained thoroughly.

The resource centre for health education has not been completed yet as the arrival from the last instalment from Europe is still waited for.

Project Performance in relation to FIVE KEY VARIABLES

Relevance. The project's relevance can be rated as good. Its activities are in line with the national and state governments' policies on education, health and women's development. The project responds to basic needs as these have been expressed by the population. It is directed at socially and economically marginalised parts of society. Among these, women and children are the main target groups.

Efficiency. The efficiency of the project can be rated as good to very good. The project succeeds in reaching considerable outputs at a minimum cost. Its staff are highly committed, well trained and stable. There is a good monitoring system while the local units are given a high degree of autonomy. Deliberate and successful attempts are made to link the people's initiatives with relevant government schemes. Where government duties are taken up (for instance in education), it is with the aim to hand these over to the government as soon as possible. The target group's participation is good in all project phases and the project succeeds in gradually handing over tasks to people's structures.

Effectiveness. The effectiveness of the project is good. Even though the project adopts a process approach with few quantified targets, its effectiveness is beyond doubt. An important number of children have been educated, the groups are successful in addressing local issues (ban of illicit liquor sales, resolution of village conflicts, etc.). These results are attained with a low level of external material support. Moreover, the groups clearly value the results achieved and they realise steady progress.

Impact. The project has reached an acceptable to good level of impact. Notwithstanding the low level of external support, considerable impact has been achieved on the social (basic needs fulfilment), cultural (attitudinal changes, especially among women) and institutional level (sanghas have become strong villages institutions). The impact on the economic level is less, as activities in this field have only recently been started. There is a clear potential for achieving bigger impact on the medium term, more precisely in terms of women empowerment.

Sustainability. The sustainability of the project can be rated as good. The concept of sustainability has been built in from the start and consistently applied. As such, groups are already able to ensure the continuity of some programmes (education) without external support. They can take up issues autonomously, without project support. Moreover, the low level of external inputs and the low degree of complexity make sustainability easier to achieve. The apex structures still need some support, but are also clearly moving towards autonomy. Finally, SDMI has defined a clear policy to achieve institutional sustainability of its development programme by 2005.

Overall General Comments on the Project

This project presents a unique case of a religiously inspired society that is entirely devoted to secular development work for the poor and marginalised. The way they fulfil their mission provides excellent chances for sustainability of the project benefits and the development momentum at the grassroots. Moreover, compared to other civil society actors, SDMI seems to have few difficulties to ensure its institutional sustainability.

However, the specificity of SDMI's vision and approach has been left totally unnoticed in the project documentation available at EC level. The idea to combine several proposals from different local actors to increase administrative efficiency might be laudable as such but has worked in this case against a proper understanding of the project.

3.9. IN-8: IRRIGATION AND INCOME GENERATING PROJECT (ONG/PVD/BG/1996/40/FRG/11)

Project Context

This block-grant project has been implemented in seven villages of Vikravandi Block in Villapuram District, in the North-Eastern part of Tamil Nadu, India. Villapuram region is characterised by its high concentration of Dalit population and (at the moment of project implementation) by a high level of tension among castes leading to frequent clashes. The population reached by REAL (Rural Education and Action for Liberation) belongs to the lower castes that often do not dispose of agricultural land and depend on coolie work for their income.

REAL has been working in this area for more than eleven years now. Initially, its activities were geared to awareness building among the lowest castes. Gradually, a broad range of activities were undertaken related to the set up of women and youth groups, savings and credit managed by self-help groups, income generation activities, literacy programmes and the creation of a people's organisation out of the youth and women groups. The awareness raising programme encouraged the groups to contact government institutions to claim

better public amenities, the ban of illicit liquor sales and increase of coolie wages. By the time of the implementation of this project, around 250 families were covered. REAL has in the meanwhile extended considerably its outreach.

DESWOS and REAL were in contact with each other well before the start of this project. The project was defined by REAL to complement its on-going efforts. DESWOS was unable to continue funding, but its desk officer has facilitated contacts with other European donors.

Project Purpose and Objectives

The aim of the project is to increase the income of landless labourers and small farmers by the provision of crossbreed cows, the deepening of existing irrigation wells and the construction of a storeroom. The project was directed to the groups that REACH supported since a few years.

Inputs and main Outputs

The block-grant project has been implemented by an agricultural officer and two supervisors. They provided 50 crossbreed cows to 25 carefully selected families on a loan basis, arranged intensive training (in total 13 days, also accessible for other members of the community) on various issues related to animal husbandry and management. They also co-ordinated the milk collection and sale and followed up the repayment of the loans, which started by the end of the (one year) project period.

The deepening of 25 wells belonging to 25 small farmers of two villages was the second major activity. Again members were carefully selected and the progress of the works closely monitored. Loans were given in several instalments in accordance with the progress of the works. The farmers concerned got also technical assistance on the appropriate use of water. Six training sessions were organised.

A community storeroom was constructed and furnished for various purposes: storage of agricultural products, community hall.

By the end of the one-year project period, it was too early to assess the major outputs. During the visit of the study/evaluation team, around 3 years later, it has become clear that both schemes (milk cows and well deepening) have led to an increase of income for the families concerned. Through the revolving character of the funds, more group members had received support and new initiatives undertaken at an apex level. These last activities have however been less successful: the dairy marketing unit is running at loss and facing serious organisational problems; the relevance of the establishment of the co-operative that has to co-ordinate part of the credit activities can be questioned as it actually centralises activities that can be undertaken by the groups and, hence, limits their participation.

Project Performance in relation to FIVE KEY VARIABLES

Relevance. The programme's relevance is good. The activities undertaken are in line with the policy priorities of the government and the major needs and concern of the local population. The programme has undertaken a serious effort to focus on socially disadvantaged groups and to liaise with relevant government programmes.

Efficiency. The efficiency of the programme is moderate to acceptable. The activities financed via this project have been carefully selected, prepared and implemented. However, as a whole, efficiency is too weak. The programme covers only a limited number of villages and groups compared to the staff employed. Many staff lack the necessary skills and training, be it that the staff responsible for the block grant project disposed of the necessary qualifications. There is a high turnover because of discontinuity in funding. Moreover, role and responsibilities of staff and executive committee members are not clearly delineated. Finally the set-up and management of the economic programmes implemented with the funds that revolved from the EC co-funded project lack quality and transparency (no adequate financial records of diary programme that runs at loss, incoherent administrative support system for co-operative, destination of part of the revolving fund not clear).

Effectiveness. The effectiveness of the programme is acceptable. The activities undertaken via the EC co-funded project have produced clear and immediate results in terms of poverty reduction. The programme has also been successful in forming groups, increasing the self-confidence of women and ensuring that the assets created are owned by the women. Long term effectiveness with regard to the marketing of milk and the set up of a second level co-operative is however weak. The store room is now more serving as a simple office for the project staff, which is not in line with the proposal but acceptable in itself.

Impact. The impact of the project is acceptable. The women who benefited from the programme have improved their economic position. Via the sanghas, they have clearly gained in confidence at the social and political level. Their economic benefits have been used for education, asset creation and other relevant purposes. Globally spoken, these results remain however limited to a small amount of people. Moreover, REAL remains firmly in control of key activities and decisions notwithstanding its long term involvement with these groups.

Sustainability. The sustainability of benefits at grassroots level is acceptable to good, as the systems are quite simple and controlled by the beneficiaries. Groups depend however on REAL for certain services and co-ordination at the other levels. The sustainability of the apex-structures is poor to moderate. The dairy unit is unsustainable and the long term relevance and, hence, sustainability of the co-operative can be questioned. Last but not least, REAL has not yet succeeded in securing funds on a continuous basis for its programme.

Overall General Comments on the Project

This block-grant has allowed the funding of two small income generating activities which have been carefully chosen and implemented by the local NGO and, hence, produced considerable benefits. Moreover, as it consisted mainly of a revolving fund, it has provided an occasion for the resource poor local NGO to sustain its programme and strengthen its capacities. Unfortunately, the local NGO has not been able to make full use of this opportunity. The options taken to use the revolved funds were not really adequate and none of the funds have been used for capacity building, which is the major need of the organisation.

4. PRESENTATION OF THE CONSOLIDATED FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE PROJECTS STUDIED IN RELATION TO THE KEY VARIABLES AND OTHER MAJOR ISSUES STUDIED

4.1. RELEVANCE

All projects score good to very good in terms of their relevance for a number of reasons explained hereafter.

- They are in line with national goals and strategies in different sectors such as the National Policy on Education, the National Health Policy, the National Population Policy, the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments of 1992 for self-governance – Panchayat Raj.
- They have without exception explicitly focused on marginalised groups and (with IN-1 and IN-3 and to some extent IN-4 as exceptions) on women and children within these groups, using caste and/or class as a major indicator. As such they respond to one of the major criteria of the budgetline B7-6000.
- They address problems that are widely recognised as important, both at the national and the local level. The National Economic Policy and Structural Adjustment Programmes have led to a decreased availability of vital services for the poor and, hence, caused increased marginalisation. INGO projects have focused on those groups having lost access to vital services and, hence, often taken up a critical role.
- INGOs' choices for specific groups (SC, ST or women) are politically acceptable considering the prevailing government policies (reservation schemes for women and dalits in elections; special welfare schemes for dalits). In all cases, projects have adopted a process approach giving ample space to analyse the local situation with the people concerned and ensuring that activities respond to their major needs.
- Within this framework and the major constraints described (see chapter 2), most INGOs have made good strategic choices with regard to their interventions:
 - they have opted for long term co-operation with target groups (beyond a project's time frame), stressed awareness raising on socio-political rights, capacity building and mobilisation of government resources;
 - they have combined socio-political (awareness on political rights, participation in local governance, fighting caste injustice), social (supplementary education, preventive health care, ensuring basic

- amenities at village level) and economic activities (savings and credit, land development, income generation activities) in view of strengthening local structures and ensuring their sustainability;
- they have developed “supplementary approaches” with regard to government action and avoided substitution (sometimes with difficulties, see IN-3 and IN-5 see also Box 5);
 - they have promoted good exchange with other actors and integration in state level networks; some INGOs work however too much in isolation (IN-1, IN-5).

Notwithstanding this globally positive assessment, some critical observations and reflections should be put forward:

- the national and state policies are actually very broad and not delineating clear roles and responsibilities for the respective development actors; hence, very few limitations actually exist for INGOs to work along their own vision and approach.
- State governments in South India have copied some INGO-approaches and now try to implement, with NGO co-operation, programmes on a massive scale (sometimes with perverse effects). The NGO-sector reacts differently to these programmes (entire acceptance, critical co-operation, refusal), but does not, as a sector, develop a coherent strategy.
- The increased success with women groups has brought nearly all INGOs to work exclusively with women, without formulating a strategy to ensure that men will be associated in the development process (see also point 4.7.).
- The notion of “empowerment” is used by all parties involved (state instances included); it covers very different understanding and practices ranging from “empowering” individuals by granting them a house till building up a countervailing power to destroy the prerogatives of the local and/or political elite. Although the “emancipatory” view on empowerment is not shared by State, the Constitution grants the INGOs and civil society groups in general the right to develop such approaches. This being said, most INGOs included in

Box 5

Gulliver sends note to Lilliputians. For sure, the Indian Government is the mightiest and major actor in the development for the country as a whole and for her people, without negating the significant contribution of the INGOs in the whole process. However, it is quite interesting and may also amuse some to learn about the following. The poor people of G. Kallupatti, the project area of RTU (IN5), approached the government District Authority for housing facilities and to their surprise the District Official decided to send them with a note to the INGO. The note requested RTU to seriously consider the request for housing, of course, with the funds of RTU!

the study, are only indirectly involved in Human Rights issues; other INGOs that intervene directly in this field, face however much more difficulties.

4.2. EFFICIENCY

- The overall efficiency of the projects is acceptable to good. All INGOs succeeded at least in ensuring immediate outputs that suggest that funds have been used in an efficient manner.
- The major strong points, in terms of efficiency, were:
 - most INGOs (except IN-5 and IN-3 in its early stages) consider their input as a catalyst and supplement to local efforts; they have been able to develop participatory approaches and mobilise important local contributions in kind (labour), funds (savings and sangha tax in IN-1) or services (keeping records);
 - most INGOs managed in setting up local structures and training local people that gradually have taken over tasks from project staff;
 - all INGOs have used low cost approaches in providing support to the grassroots; they have paid particular attention at using locally available materials and skills;
 - all INGOs (except IN-5) have empowered the communities they work with to access to appropriate government resources that are often linked to rural development programmes (see also box 6)
 - all INGOs have gradually improved their organisational capacity over time; they were able to learn from their mistakes and develop more efficient approaches; this process has often been enhanced by the provision of infrastructure (often EC co-funded: all projects except IN-1), which we found in all cases appropriate;
 - all INGOs have decentralised to a varying degree their internal functioning; compared to the situation of a few years ago, strong leadership seems no longer to imply a monopolisation of power; this might be partially due to the fact that some INGOs have seen their programmes grown considerably which made devolution of authority imperative;
 - most staff of the INGOs are very committed, hard working, experienced but relative-

Box 6

Python gets electricity. Struggle for basic village amenities like drinking water, electricity, etc. is domineering in almost all the village sanghas. The struggle of the Pandravedu village sangha women in the project area of SDMI in Tamil Nadu for electricity is not an exception but is very novel. For months the sanghas were demanding electricity for their village street from the government. During this struggle, one night a python entered into the compound of a house in the village and could not move away quickly as it had just swallowed a fowl. Though the lazy python met its end that night by the villagers, it proved to be an instrument to get the electricity department activated. The dead python was carried and placed in front of the Electricity Office the next day. The trick did work to get street light for the village immediately!

- ly low paid;
 - most INGOs have set for themselves clear targets with regard to the outputs to be produced and succeeded in reaching them within the set time frame;
 - another surprising positive evolution is the INGOs' increased capacity to monitor activities and immediate outputs; most INGOs now dispose over well elaborated data bases.
- Some weaker points should however also be mentioned:
 1. notwithstanding the extensive data available, INGOs are not assessing their cost-effectiveness and actively looking for ways to improve it;
 2. the outreach of some programmes has remained small compared to the resources available and/or the long period of involvement (IN-4 in its early stages, IN-8) or programmes have mobilised local resources to a minimal extent only (IN-5);
 3. in some cases, programme staff was insufficiently trained (IN-3, IN-4, IN-8). This can be explained by lack of programme continuity and funds, changes in the roles to be taken up by the staff (from stress on awareness raising to guidance of technical activities, for instance).
 - ENGOs do not seem to attach much attention on the issue of efficiency when dealing with their southern partners and their projects (exception to a certain extent: IN-1 and IN-4). As is the case with their southern partners, they do not assess projects in terms of cost-effectiveness.

4.3. EFFECTIVENESS

- The effectiveness of all projects has been rated at least as acceptable and in half of the cases even as good. This can be explained by the fact that, prior to EC funding, most INGOs' already had built up their capacity and were able to organise their activities in such a way that the envisaged outputs were produced. There are indications that most if not all INGOs have gone, in their early years, through a trial and error process, before reaching the present level of effectiveness. This is however also an illustration of their capacity to learn from previous experiences.
- All INGOs have reached the planned level of outputs without opting for a "quick and easy success" approach by, for instance, providing high levels of external support (exception: IN-5 to a certain degree). In other words, the INGOs have resorted to an often painstaking approach starting with awareness raising and grassroots participation which was often heavily contested by the local power elite and the men folk. They have nevertheless been able to sustain the process and create the basis for a long lasting development. It should be noted that the start-up phase of this valuable

approach can hardly be fit in a context of project co-funded by EC or another funding agency, where pre-planned tangible and intangible outputs are to be produced.

- Important investments (buildings, revolving funds for credit programmes) have been financed via all EC co-funded projects. First it should be noted that they were conducted to enhance existing processes, both at the level of the existing INGO and at the level of people's organisations that were created as a result of the INGOs actions. The evaluators have found these investments in

Box 7

The Foreign Contribution Regulation Act 1976 (FCRA). *It is "an act to regulate the acceptance and utilisation of foreign contribution or foreign hospitality by certain persons or associations, with a view to ensuring that parliamentary institutions, political associations, voluntary organisations, ... may function in a manner consistent with the values of sovereign democratic republic".*

Under this Act, no organisations that are registered are allowed to transfer any foreign contribution or donation to other organisations or NGOs, which are not registered with the Act.

During the last years, getting a FCRA number has become increasingly difficult for NGOs. Some NGOs are also threatened that they might lose their FCRA number (and, hence, their access to foreign funds) and are forced to respond to increasing requirements from the Government. Many observers see in these moves an attempt by the Government to curtail the thriving NGO-sector and, more specifically, those NGOs that are politically active.

accordance with original plans. However, the issue of ownership of buildings (INGO or people's organisations) has not always been adequately dealt with; it is further complicated by the provisions of the FCRA (see box 7).

In two cases (IN-1 and IN-4) revolving funds were granted, which were (or will be) under-utilised; it is however expected that on the medium term, this problem will be solved.

- All programmes aim to reach both tangible and rather intangible outputs.

The former (for instance: acres of land levelled, loans distributed, children having followed supplementary classes) are always recorded via good monitoring systems with appropriate output indicators, including a time frame. Intangible outputs (such as stronger groups, better understanding of group rules and functioning, awareness on health) are less monitored and it seems to be accepted that they are not time bound. Hence, they are not followed up closely.

- As most programmes stretch over a long period of time, their objectives undergo gradual changes and become more complex. Many INGOs are now involved assisting the people in setting up apex institutions. This is for many among them a new area in which their experience is limited. It is also a process that can be less "controlled" via well designed activities and interventions. We have found that the rate of success in this regard is less, especially when these apex bodies engage in economic activities. We think even that in some cases strategic errors are made, among others by

centralising activities that should better remain at the level of the individual sanghas (IN-4 and IN-8).

- All INGOs place their action in a long-term perspective and consider the outputs achieved as an intermediary step. The most obvious example is related to gender: INGOs work with women because they are the easiest entry point for village development and the creation of immediate tangible outputs, but, at the same time, they clearly envisage women's empowerment at all levels. It has however been found that these long-term considerations often got somewhat lost by short-term preoccupations and the desire to meet the targets. For instance, many INGOs set up savings and credit schemes, which are supposed to lead to income increase and improvement of the position of women in the household. The focus of the projects remains on the savings and credit schemes as such, while the achievement of outcomes is not really facilitated.
- In relation to the previous point, it should however be underlined that long-term considerations guide the INGOs' approach and might even affect short-term outputs. INGOs for instance try to build in processes that increase the groups' capacities to sustain their activity and decrease dependence from external instances. These processes increase however the burden of the groups and might lead to considerable drop outs (see box 9 on Sangha Tax).

- Finally the role of external contextual factors should be noted. The emancipatory approach focusing on the marginalised is politically tolerated in South India even though some of the INGOs have faced stiff opposition during a certain period. On the other hand, both political leaders and government bureaucrats recognise the potential of the INGOs and seek their collaboration or support, be it often for opportunistic reasons.

Box 8

The Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP). *The objectives of IRDP are to enable selected rural families to cross the poverty line and to provide financial assistance for income generating activities in primary, secondary and tertiary sectors of the rural economy. The subsidy rates varies – 25 per cent for small and marginal farmers and artisans subject to a ceiling of Rs. 4000 / Rs. 5000 depending on the areas. SCs/STs get 50 % subsidy with a ceiling of Rs. 5000 per family. Other provisions under IRDP include emergency expenses and immediate consumption needs. Under this program, NGOs can play the role of guiding the proper utilisation of the schemes, identification of beneficiaries, help borrowers in proper management of the assets and repayment, provide supplementary assistance, information, etc. Through its important subsidy component, the programme has created an attitude of approaching the programme for the sake of the subsidy among the poor. Moreover, corruption was often rampant in the implementation of the programme. (Ref: Local Development Programs and NGOs – Volume 2- DSI, Bangalore – 1997).*

- Important constraining factors include: (in some areas) the prevailing caste system (and its nexus with local political and economic forces), the general

failure of monsoon in the area over the past years, the very high level of subordination of women (box 11) and the attitude of indiscipline created by many government programmes (see, among others, box 8). None of them has however prevented the programmes from being effective; they only might have slowed down the process.

4.4. IMPACT

- As most INGOs have not developed a system of impact monitoring, our impact assessment has been essentially qualitative.
- In most cases, concrete evidence of immediate impact and indications of long-term impact have been found, leading to achievement in terms of impact that have been rated as at least “acceptable” (with one exception). Evidence of impact was mostly found in the following fields:
 - Attitudinal changes at the level of the target group: people (mostly women) who have often undergone extreme oppression have clearly emerged from that situation, have found or rediscovered their identity and are now showing a high degree of self-confidence. This is illustrated by their successful actions to confront government instances and force them to ensure basic amenities (drinking water, bus services, street lights, roads) (see also box 6). At village level, sanghas are considered as institutions that cannot be ignored in any major event, which adds to the prestige of their members. At household level, women have often taken the lead towards change and discuss crucial matters with their partners on an equal footing.
 - Values related to health (environmental cleanliness, immunisation, anti-and post-natal care, family planning) and education (importance of basic education for both boys and girls, functional literacy) have clearly engendered at village level, having an outreach that clearly goes beyond the group.
 - Sanghas are firmly embedded as village institutions and their members do not at all feel dependent on the INGO that has supported them. They act as mediators in village conflicts. Sangha members are increasingly contesting in panchayat and sometimes taluk elections and are often successful. The NGO movement is increasingly giving attention to this evolution by providing adequate training to the elected members. Sangha members also participate more and more in Gram Sabha meetings (see box 10) to ensure transparency and accountability of the panchayat level political system.
 - Globally spoken the impact on the economic level has been less up till now. This can be mainly explained by the fact that economic activities were taken up later in the process, that some activities produce only effects on the long term (agro-forestry, for instance, in IN-2) and that the prevailing

drought has badly affected some of the agricultural programmes. Both INGOs and sanghas consider however economic impact as a necessity to change their livelihood in all aspects.

- A few cases have been identified where a centralised approach set up to arrange savings and credit programmes and milk marketing at the apex level (IN-4, IN-8) might affect the impact on the long run. In one case (IN-5), a basically charitable approach is an impediment to create impact on the long run.
- As already mentioned, INGOs are weak in impact assessment and have not developed appropriate indicators in most cases. As a result, they have not undertaken actions to “isolate” their impact from that of other actors or external forces. As such, this is not an indication of the lack of impact; it implies however, that most INGOs remain vague on what they want to attain in the long run. For instance, the concept of empowerment, which stands at the heart of their mission, is most often not clearly defined; hence, it cannot be tested to which extent their present programme will effectively lead to empowerment. An exception is IN-4 where an impact assessment exercise after 10 years has provided a useful framework.
- Notwithstanding their clear successes, few INGOs undertake deliberate actions to influence policies at a higher level. There are nevertheless clear signs that government institutions learn a lot from approaches developed by INGOs.
INGOs participate increasingly in networks, but these are mainly considered as a means to improve the situation of “their” target groups. In the same line of thought, they are only preoccupied by the impact realised on the level of their target groups and show few interest in the changes that take place elsewhere. For instance, negative impacts on not participating villagers are hardly noticed or recorded.

4.5. SUSTAINABILITY ³⁰

The issue of sustainability has to be considered at different levels: that of the individual, that of village institutions (sanghas), that of federation of village institutions and, finally, that of the southern NGO. Although all INGOs now attach importance to the concept, it has been found that the results achieved vary considerably among INGOs and among the different levels. As can be easily understood, sustainability becomes weaker when size and complexity increase.

³⁰ Sustainability could not be assessed at the level of the ICT project (IN-6) that just started. Hence, it is not included in the subsequent analysis except when explicitly mentioned otherwise.

- Benefits achieved at the level of the individual beneficiaries are to a major extent sustainable. They relate often to their identity and dignity gained, newly acquired skills and values (for instance related to gender and education), which they will never give up. They are further reinforced by thriving sanghas, which they belong to. Economic benefits are also sustainable provided no major external event (prolonged drought, major caste conflict) takes place.

Box 9

Sangha Tax. *The Government of India is desperately making efforts to introduce the concept of “tax” especially in rural areas in order to bring the eligible citizens into the “tax bracket”. Hence the government will certainly be happy if they know that the concept of “tax” is being introduced and practised locally among the villagers themselves in the project area of ADATS in Karnataka. The annual income of each member has to be reported voluntarily to the village coolie sangha and in proportion to the income a minimal tax has to be paid in order to become eligible for the benefits mobilised and channeled through the local sangha. More importantly, the system implies a local mechanism of self-governance and offers real chances for sustainability of social services in the field of health and education. This concept and practice of “tax” has thrilled many, including the facilitators of this evaluation. After having faced difficulties in its early stages, the sangha tax seems now firmly rooted in the programme strategy.*

- The sustainability of benefits at the village institution level is in most cases well assured. Those programmes having built in the concept from the start (IN-1, IN-7) are most advanced and their village institutions show considerable strength, capacity and determination (see also Box 9). Actually, they already function without major external support. Other programmes have brought in the concept at varying stages during programme implementation. All village institutions and the benefits they generate are clearly moving towards sustainability, be it in a varying degree. The process seems quite advanced in most projects (IN-2, IN-3, IN-4, IN-8) be it that sometimes groups are still dependent on the INGO for particular services (for instance group administration related to savings and credit). In all projects mentioned in this paragraph, the village institutions are really owned by their members and the concept of sustainability internalised to a major degree. This can be explained by the INGOs’ focus on awareness raising, group and leadership building, skill training, capital formation and exposure, exchange and linkages with other similar groups. Half of the INGOs (IN-1, IN-2, IN-3 and IN-7) have even put forward a clear timing and indicators to achieve group sustainability.
- Many INGOs and their partners at village level have engaged in the creation of apex (second level) bodies. As such, for instance federations of women sanghas and so-called women’s banks have been set up. The sustainability of these structures seems to be heavily dependent on the role they are supposed to play. Those structures involved directly in economic activities (banks, milk collection centre) face difficulties to become sustainable because of the complexity of the operations and the mental distance between members at the

grassroots and the central body. In many cases they have led to a centralisation of operations that also could be undertaken by village level structures.

On the contrary, institutions that are created to tackle social or socio-political issues or even to monitor economic programmes, are much more sustainable. They aim to create a bigger impact to solve problems that go beyond the village level but are clearly felt at that level (illicit liquor, female infanticide, road construction or improvement, International Women's Day). This type of activities can be undertaken more easily as their complexity is limited and no significant additional skills are needed. Often the activities also have a strong mobilising character as they appeal on the emotions of the members and/or can be taken up efficiently through the association with networks at the district and state level.

- The issue of institutional sustainability of the implementing INGO is approached in a different way. Some INGOs deal with it explicitly and have elaborated strategies to reach financial independence and institutional sustainability (IN-4, IN-5, IN-6, IN-7, IN-8) by the creation of corpus funds, local fund mobilisation and the set-up of economic ventures, which is not always without complications given the Indian context (taxes, legal status). Other, rather big INGOs (IN-1 and IN-3) are not paying that much attention to the issue, either because they consider asset accumulation at NGO level as inappropriate, or because they are confident that the quality and impact of their work will ensure continued support from both local and international donors.

Importantly, it was found that all INGOs have been able to increase significantly their capacities over time. They have gone through a process towards increased professionalism and mostly have experienced a considerable growth in size and/or complexity of their programmes. To this it should be added that the majority of the INGOs are led by an often charismatic leader-founder who has to a major extent be responsible for their growth and continuity. It is not clear to which extent the eventual disappearance of these leaders will affect the organisations' future.

Summarising it can be stated that most INGOs take seriously up the issue of sustainability and that many of them have reached considerable achievements in this regard. This could not have been possible without the long-term support of their European partners, who have mostly collaborated in a perspective of long-term partnership³¹ but at the same time have been instrumental in bringing the issue of sustainability at the heart of the programmes' approaches. In many cases, they have also enabled their southern partners to improve their sustainability. This is appropriate considering the overall need of a strong civil society sector but knowing as well that the people's structures will need a certain (but different) type of limited support even when they (will) have become autonomous.

³¹ This issue will be dealt with more into detail under points 4.9. and 4.10.

4.6. DEMOCRATISATION AND STRENGTHENING OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The issue of democratisation can be considered from different angles: at the level of the INGO, that of the participation of the project beneficiaries in all stages of the project cycle and that of the promotion democratic processes in the wider environment.

- It was found that INGOs function in a reasonably democratic way. Much progress seems to be realised in the recent years. Most INGOs now apply decentralised ways of functioning, with appropriate levels of delegation of authority to local staff. A culture of discussion and critical reflection is firmly embedded in most organisations. This situation co-exists with an often outspoken leadership. Most of the INGOs visited are led by strong leaders who were often the founders of the organisation and dispose of a high level of authority and even charisma. It can be stated that the devolution process noticed is merely the result of their openness to change than that of second level staff attempts to install new internal ways of functioning. In general, this process is being conducted in a satisfactory way; the low degree of personnel turnover in many organisations is a good indicator in this regard.
- Many of the EC co-funded projects have produced capacity building effects on the level of the INGO, even if these were not directly envisaged by the project. The good score of EC funding in this regard can be understood when keeping in mind the overall context of EC aid which usually has fit in a long standing co-operation between two partners. EC aid has precisely been contracted to cover additional expenses that have often a capacity building character, both at the level of the INGO and/or the people's organisations. INGOs have been supported in the following ways: establishment or extension of office premises or key infrastructure (training centre, drop-in centre, guest-house) for the INGOs (IN-2, IN-3, IN-4, IN-5, IN-6, IN-7, IN-8) and/or for community based organisations they support (IN-1, IN-2, IN-3, IN-4, IN-8); revolving funds for economic actions to be used by groups or federations of groups (IN-1, IN-2, IN-4, IN-8) and managed by these groups and/or the INGOs concerned. This support has mostly be in line with the INGOs' capacities and size of its programme and always been useful for its further institutional growth. All INGOs have made good use of these additional resources and were able to increase their performance.
- The only critical remark relates to the ambiguity of ownership where it concerns assets that are (or could/should become) the ownership of the community based organisations. INGOs are not always keen to hand over these assets to the people's structures even when this is desirable. Moreover, in some cases, the ownership issue is not clearly arranged. Project documents state that "the people" are (or will become) the owner, but in practice this is not always the case or not yet formally arranged. To the credit of the INGOs it

should be stated that the present FCRA regulations make this a delicate issue (see box 7).

- It is important to state that the EC support is mostly part of a long-term capacity building process that is not always described as such in the project proposals. The assessment of the INGOs' evolution has clearly indicated that most of them have experienced several phases of institutional growth. They have grown in professionalism and size and some of them now start playing a role in district and even state level networks. As such, the scope of their action is gradually expanding and their programmes become examples of successful undertakings that will hopefully influence policy and practice of other actors.
- All INGOs have adopted participatory approaches, be it that they have been introduced at different moments in the project cycle. Most INGOs (except IN-3 and IN-5) have included the target groups in an active way from the very start of the process, i.e. during the preparatory phases. Often, considerable efforts were spent on getting acquainted with the local context and on dialoguing with the local population. Priorities of action have been defined with the target groups and their participation has often been a prerequisite to external commitments. The set up and strengthening of local institutions is at the heart of the approach of most projects. These institutions play a key role in the co-operation between target group and NGO and, as such, become partners in the development process. Moreover, they quickly start to take up other functions that go clearly beyond that context. They become transparent and democratically functioning village organisations that play an increasingly important role in village and panchayat life. By their attempts to take up issues of public importance (public amenities, conflicts between castes), they make the functioning of government structures and the legal system more transparent, accountable and effective. Two remarks should be made in this regard. First, most INGOs do not maximise the beneficiaries' participation. It has been found that the latter participate only to a limited extent in monitoring and evaluation; many INGOs seem to restrict the function of these activities to that of instruments for internal quality follow-up and accountability towards funding agencies. Second, it has been impossible to get in-depth knowledge about the actual democratic character of the sanghas, their federations and their relationship with the supporting INGO. Discussions with sanghas seem to suggest that

Box 10

Panchayat Raj. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment passed in 1992 provides a third tier governance to the rural and urban citizens of India. The Panchayat Raj system is a three-tier system; Zilla Panchayat at district level, Taluk Panchayat at taluk level and Grama Panchayat at village level. This local self-governance system also provides space for all adults in village to participate in the planning of village development through Grama Sabha. Provision for similar status is made within the Panchayat Raj system (74th Amendment) for towns and cities (municipal bodies, district and metropolitan planning committees).

they function quite democratically and independently from the INGOs, but this needs to be analysed more in depth.

- Acquiring dignity and a minimal level of confidence have often been the first but highly appreciated results of the programmes' activities. As such, target groups and their partners have been able to lay down the minimum basis necessary for any kind of human development and democratisation. In practice, it has often constituted the start of an empowering process at the local level geared also at the acquisition of political power. The latter has often been the logical consequence of the increased role of sanghas in village life and the increased confidence of their members. In many cases, projects have actively endorsed this process (very clearly in IN-1 and IN-4, to a lesser extent in IN-2, IN-3, IN-7 and IN-8), among others by training election candidates or elected village leaders in the basic characteristics and functioning of panchayat raj (see box 10), the local governance system, and by encouraging group members to attend the so-called grama sabha meetings of these panchayats, which are held on four fixed dates a year and function as a kind of open village parliament³².
- The process of democratisation is further enhanced by the programmes' consistent efforts to organise people and liaise them with the relevant political institutions, government bureaucracy and the legal system. Many village institutions supported by the projects have succeeded in getting access to government funds or services in various ways. As such, they often have contributed to the increased effectiveness of these services, ensured that government programmes reach the people they are supposed to reach, diminished corruption, increased transparency, and installed (formal or informal) accountability mechanisms at the local level. They do not refrain from looking for justice via the judicial system in case of serious events (for instance cases of violence against women). The combined action of so many sanghas and their apex bodies is in many places leading to a slow but undeniable metamorphosis of the government and juridical landscape; institutions start slowly to function in a way they actually are supposed to do.

4.7. GENDER

One of the most striking outcomes of this evaluation is that all projects, which claim to be of an integrated nature, are focused exclusively or to a major extent on women. IN-1 is the only exception in this regard as it has developed an approach that includes both men and women (see below). Other projects only focus on men in a marginal way. Male children are however often included in

³² In the past, these gram sabha meetings were either not held or entirely dominated by the local elite.

specific programme components (street children and education activities such as supplementary classes).

The overrepresentation of women among the project beneficiaries has several causes. Most importantly, all INGOs are fully aware of the precarious situation of women in India and in its Southern States in particular. Issues such as domestic violence against women, sexual exploitation, female infanticide and foeticide and their so-called “double exploitation” (as a woman and as a member of a scheduled or low caste) are widely known and documented in NGO circles (see also box 11). Another major reason is of a rather pragmatic nature. By experience, many INGOs find it much easier (but still difficult enough !) to work with women than with men. Women sanghas are much more successful than men sanghas that often disintegrate quickly for various reasons (seasonal migration, lack of discipline, individualistic behaviour). A few projects (IN-2 and IN-4 for instance) initially involved men also, but quickly decided to work with women sanghas exclusively. This has led, over the past decade or so, to the emergence of a standard approach of working (nearly) exclusively with women groups, which most INGOs follow to a varying extent but mostly with a considerable degree of success.

Given this situation, it was surprising to find out that most INGOs have never undertaken a gender analysis in the full sense of the word. The concept of

Box 11

My neighbour's village name is my husband's name.

Are you puzzled? That is how the patriarchy system in some villages expects the women-folk to respect their husbands. The evaluators had to confront in Premadesam ('place of love') village with a middle-aged woman. It was the introductory meeting with the women representatives from the eleven villages where IN-8 works. The middle-aged woman stood up and said: "My name is Sarasu and I represent my neighbour's village". It took some time to understand why she did not want to say the name of her village. There was bit of a confusion and finally the neighbour had to say the name of the village! Sarasu did not want to do so because the village name and her husband's name are the same – Vikrapandi, a name she is not supposed to tell as a sign of respect to her husband. She seems to be facing similar ordeal wherever and whenever she had to tell her village name, and hence she always prefers to travel with someone to the town.

gender is even clearly misunderstood in an important number of cases. Nearly all INGOs have spent much effort in surveys prior to the project formulation and implementation. These surveys did pay attention to the situation of women but often lacked a clear gender perspective and sex disaggregated data. IN-1 and IN-4 are the only exceptions in this regard, whereas the approach in IN-2 has considerably improved over time under the influence of the European partner. This

lack of conceptual strength has however not prevented most INGOs from developing a good understanding of the local situation including the major constraints affecting the development of women. INGOs' work with women is further enhanced by the presence, in most INGOs, of women staff of good quality and in adequate numbers, be it that the project (and NGO) leadership is always in the hands of men (IN-4 and IN-7 are the sole, partial, exceptions).

This rather complicated situation has led to the following major outcomes in terms of project performance related to gender issues:

- the major (or even exclusive) focus on women coupled with a basically good understanding of their situation has led to a considerable progress in the position of women both in the social, cultural, political and economic field. Again, it should be underlined that these important achievements are the result of a longer term process that goes clearly beyond the scope of a single (EC or otherwise) funded project. The major benefit most women indicate is their increased self-esteem and self-confidence at household and village level, which they consider as the basis of all progress achieved subsequently. Women have clearly benefited more from the projects than men. Even if the latter have got some indirect gains, their benefits were, as a whole, more limited and merely the result of dynamics that developed out of the projects' scope. In many cases, the progress of women has also influenced the behaviour of their husbands and men in general.
- The lack of a proper understanding of the gender concept has *not* led to a situation where the projects have focused on "traditional" women sectors that would reaffirm the existing gender differentiation. These sectors (health, education) might indeed have constituted the entry point and/or a major field of action (for instance in IN-7 and IN-3). The programmes however never stopped at that level but have focused on the empowerment of women, which has often led to tensions at the household level and women periodically facing harassment by their husbands. Many projects have focused to a major extent on strategic needs for women (without even ever having heard of this term), for instance by ensuring their control over the assets (cows, land) they acquired and increasing their participation in politics at the village and panchayat level, and clearly challenged existing power relations. One negative exception in this regard is family planning that is considered as an exclusive women's matter by the INGO's³³.
- The lack of a clear gender focus

Box 12

Illicit Liquor. Speaking from the background of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, the people are prohibited from brewing liquor/ alcohol, whereas the States have permitted the sale of 'arrack' (liquor brewed from sugar cane molasses) and Indian Made Foreign Liquor (whiskey, rum, brandy etc.). But some local village people brew liquor illicitly and sell it to the villagers for a cheap price. It is done more often with the support of local bandits and the local police. The villagers often get hooked to this liquor even though there have been cases of deaths caused by the illicit liquor. Other important aspects are that many men spent most of the daily wage on the alcohol and that it often leads to domestic violence. As a result, combating illicit liquor has become a major issue in the empowerment process of women.

³³ Confronted with this statement, it was accepted by many NGOs. They however pointed out that since the Gandhis' governance period (with big family planning campaigns including sometimes forced sterilisations), the issue has become extremely sensitive to be taken up with male folk.

has however produced some less desirable effects also. In view of broader long-term impact, the major problem lies in the fact that men are remaining out of the picture. None of the INGOs (with IN-1 as a notable exception) has conceived a clear development strategy using a gender perspective that incorporates men. This has several consequences.

Box 13

Mahalir Thittam (Women's program). *The ultimate objective of the Mahalir Thittam is the empowerment of women in rural Tamil Nadu and the benefits are envisaged at two levels: direct benefits to the individual women and women's groups, and development benefits for families and community as a whole. The sub-objectives are to improve access of self-help group members to various government development schemes and bank credit schemes, to develop leadership qualities, to build self-confidence, to increase social awareness, to increase income and assets, etc. The expected spin off benefits in the village is improved health, family, education, literacy, settlement of local disputes in groups, acting against social injustices to women and children, etc. Potential and credible NGOs are identified and recognised to play the role of facilitator, motivator and trainer in the line of stated objectives for the rural women's groups. The training is offered in modules in a phased manner and the trainees are paid a daily wage, travel and food expenses. The women's groups are directly linked to the banks in terms of availing and repaying the credit amounts. The credit is extended with a strict repayment schedule.*

On the household level, as men are not or only marginally included in the project, it is left to the individual woman to manage the process of difficult change induced by the programme's action and enabling women to correct gender inequalities. This process might go quite smoothly (for instance when the wife's access to loans is also beneficial for the husband), or might provoke difficulties (for instance when local sanghas take up the issue of illicit liquor – see box 12). In some situations, men might also be so powerful that they manage to reap a considerable part of the material benefits. No indications were found that this happens on a broad scale. This issue is however not consistently monitored by the INGOs and studies to assess the degree to which men and women benefit from the project outputs are very rarely undertaken. INGOs state in general that, indeed, they want men to benefit also and that this happens via a "trickle down" effect. They have however no idea to which extent this process takes place and is desirable. It is further stated that the fact that women belong to a sangha protects them to a major extent against too much pressure from their husbands.

On the institutional level, many projects are in the process of setting up strong village institutions at the panchayat and apex level. These are, most often, exclusively run by women. As such, they might be best suited to take up specific gender issues (but even that can be questioned). When it comes to building up and exerting political power and influence on higher levels, their entirely female composition can however constitute a serious handicap as no corresponding male organisations exist to increase political weight.

As mentioned earlier, one project (IN-1) has succeeded in developing an integrated approach. In this project, the so-called "coolie sangha" constitutes the key institution at village level, but the women's sangha that is part of it has

a veto power on key decisions (such as loan provision) and manages the group's health and education budget. Women are also ensured of minimum (one-third) representation in the apex bodies and do not feel refrained from taking up gender sensitive issues. The integration of men and women in the same institutions clearly has led to a considerable political power and influence at the local and taluk level, which could not have not been achieved if these institutions would have been composed of women only.

4.8. POVERTY

While all projects deal nearly exclusively with poor people, they mostly do not make use of clear concepts to describe and fully understand poverty. "Poverty" is however utilised as the major criterion for selection of the beneficiaries of the programme. The surveys that have preceded the formulation and implementation of most projects have, at least implicitly, defined the concept by using indicators related to land ownership, income, caste and literacy level.

More important is however the implicit understanding that INGOs and their staff have of the concept of poverty. This understanding has often developed over time, guides their approach and has a strong influence on the contents of their projects. It perceives poverty as a complex, multi-faceted but dynamic concept. Deprivation of human dignity and of basic human rights constitutes its core. It is caused by a lack of access to resources (land, capital) and quality services (health, education). This in its turn is caused by the situation of dependence of the poor that is maintained by a nexus of political, economic and social forces that try to perpetuate the existing exploitative mechanisms (caste and gender discrimination, legal and political systems controlled by the rich).

All INGOs visited subscribe more or less the description of poverty presented in the previous paragraph. Most probably, it constitutes the major rationale for their decision to start up and develop an integrated approach, combining activities in different sectors. By doing so, empowering the poor by organising them in sanghas remains the central issue. Most INGOs (IN-5 is the major exception) seem not hurried to bring quick and tangible results for their target groups. They prefer to focus in first instance on an often slow and painstaking process of socio-political change that has to affect existing gender and caste imbalances and bring people the necessary level of self-esteem and self-confidence to become actors of their own development in the fullest sense of the word.

A major consequence of this approach is that material benefits are often quite limited in the early (3 to 5) years of the process. Benefits in this period often relate to the feeling of recognition as a human being only (by becoming member of a group, by tackling some issues successfully) or to the *alleviation* (as opposed to reduction) of the poverty situation by, for instance, better access to health and education services and drinking water. It has however struck the

evaluators to see how much this progress is valued by the people and how determined they are that this will constitute the basis for material progress later on.

Sustainable progress in terms of poverty *reduction* is mostly often achieved after a relatively long period of efforts. The set-up of savings and credit schemes is a major factor in this regard, although this will not always allow their beneficiaries to gradually build up assets and ensure higher levels of income. Although nearly all beneficiaries depend on agriculture to ensure their livelihood, activities in this sector are not so important in the programme's as one could expect. There are many explanations for this: the bias towards non-technical interventions, especially in the first years of the programme, and, subsequently, the difficulties to switch to a broader approach, the fact that an important part of the target group belongs to the landless, the lack of control of women (major target group) over land, the high level of unreliability of rainfall making agriculture increasingly risky, the high demands in terms of technical skills and expertise to identify and implement appropriate actions and, last but not least, the high cost of implementation of activities in the sector. The last element is very important in the sense that most INGOs have a strong tradition of limiting their material support for local communities. This being said, many INGOs and their target groups alike become increasingly aware of the need to complement their programme with activities in the field of agriculture. Up till now, only IN-1, IN-2 and IN-8 to a minor extent have reached significant results, whereas IN-3 and IN-4 have set up promising initiatives.

The importance INGOs and their target groups attach on what we can call qualitative progress in terms of poverty reduction and alleviation, is a major explanation of their lack of interest to assess tangible outcomes. They increasingly collect output related data (among others because their northern partners request them to do so), but are less concerned about the eventual outcomes. In this regard, INGOs seem to consider the increased confidence of their target groups and their adherence to the programme as the sole important indicator.

Last but not least it is important to mention that the issue of poverty and poverty reduction strategies is, as such, hardly debated in the many existing NGO networks and forums in South India. The saying "The fish does not talk about the water" might be an explanation in this regard. INGOs have nevertheless, be it mostly indirectly, contributed to policy changes at the local and even state level. Many important government poverty reduction programmes, funded with local and/or foreign resources, have taken over major components of the NGO approaches. Elements such as the women sangha, savings and credit schemes and approaches for dry land agricultural development are now increasingly incorporated in government projects.

4.9. ENGO-INGO PARTNERSHIPS

Although every ENGO-INGO partnership is a different story, a few patterns emerge that allow us to make some global characterisations of the prevailing types of relations between Northern and Southern partner.

- In an important number of cases (IN-1, IN-2, IN-3, IN-4, IN-5, and IN-7 and IN-8 to a lesser extent), the project is to be situated in a long standing partnership between both organisations. This partnership often lasts for more than 10 years and in this period the organisations have learned to know and respect each other. At the level of the Northern partner, a basic trust has grown in the capacities and integrity of its southern counterpart, which has often led to a gradual extension of the size and depth of co-operation over time.
- In some cases, this long standing partnership has been supported by a continuous financial support via the Northern partner (IN-1, IN-2, IN-3, IN-4). In all these cases, it concerns well established ENGOs that dispose of important own resources. The other cases refer to situations where funding has been merely on a project-by-project basis (IN-5, IN-7, IN-8), most probably because of the ENGOs' incapacity to ensure continuity of the funding. In these cases however, contacts between both partners have continued in periods without financial support.
- The continuity of the partnerships in seven of the eight projects studied indicates a relation of trust but does however not provide any further indication of the nature of the partnership. In reality, different patterns seem to emerge that are partially overlapping:
 4. "critical co-operation": both partners co-operate on the basis of mutual respect. The ENGO tries to carefully follow-up developments at the level of the INGO, brings in its preoccupations but respects the identity and autonomy of its partner. The staff of the ENGO disposes in this case of a certain level of development expertise and tries to contribute to the improvement of the quality of the programme. In one case (IN-3), the ENGO has a local representative office that regularly visits the southern partner. INGOs have declared that they appreciated this type of "interference" from their European counterparts as IT could be placed in a long-standing co-operation; they underlined as well that they never felt obliged to "give in" to all observations and suggestions from their partners. There are also examples (IN-1 for instance) where both partners "peacefully disagree" on some issues, without this affecting mutual confidence and respect.

Although time was lacking to assess in depth the effects of this type of co-operation, there are clear indications that it has been beneficial in most cases: critical dialogue has undoubtedly led to a considerable improvement of the INGOs' performance in IN-2 and IN-3 and, to a minor extent, in IN-1 and IN-4. In one case (IN-8), we doubt about the

- appropriateness of some of the interventions from the European partner, which were related to the set-up of apex structures (see 3.9.).
5. “unconditional support”: in a few cases (IN-5 and IN-7), the ENGO tend to support their partner unconditionally, either because they are convinced of the value of the latter’s work, or because they consider their role as that of an intermediary, or because he lacks the required expertise to engage in a dialogue on the contents of the programme.
- IN-6 is an atypical case in this study in the sense that it concerns a project that has been recently set up by the Indian chapter of an ENGO. ICT India has been set up by beneficiaries and staff of an ICT-UK funded project. ICT India is formally a local an autonomous organisation. Up till now, it is very closely linked with ICT-UK whose staff follow up closely this and two more projects in two neighbouring districts of Tamil Nadu. The project studied here has been recently started up, while the two other projects being implemented are in other sectors. Up till now, the added value of the approach followed is not yet demonstrated; in view of the richness of the NGO-community in South India, one can even doubt whether it has been the right choice.
 - In all projects, ENGOs have been very open to include, in the EC co-funded projects, items that aim at the institutional strengthening and capacity building of the INGOs and/or people’s structures that have emerged as a consequence of their action. All projects studied contain such a component that is often, at least in financial terms, of considerable importance. This is another illustration of the relation of confidence in the Southern partner and in the value ENGOs attach to its institutional development. The image emerges that, in many cases, the rationale for EC-funding is to be found here to a major extent: EC-funds are resorted to when the ENGO resources (obtained from own funding and/or other donors) are insufficient to cater for the partner’s need. This is particularly the case when the latter wants to include an institution building component in the programme ³⁴.

³⁴ This issue has been dealt with more in detail in point 4.6..

5. FINAL ANALYSIS

In this final chapter some issues will be taken up which did not yet receive enough attention in the previous points.

5.1. STAKEHOLDERS' VIEWS ON B7-6000

All INGOs knew that their programme has been co-funded by the EC and were aware of this before the initiative of this study/evaluation has been undertaken. The extent to which they have been involved in “EC-matters” has however varied among the different projects:

- in some projects, the possibility to apply for EC co-funding and its eventual consequences have been thoroughly discussed by the ENGO and its partner before an eventual decision has been taken (IN-1, IN-2, IN-3); in these cases, the local partner was well informed of these consequences (higher requirements in terms of reporting; possibility of visit by EC staff and external evaluation);
- in some other projects, the local partner was informed on the EC co-funding, but the decision was considered as an internal ENGO matter (IN-5, IN-7 and IN-8). Some ENGOs purposely “protected” their partners against too much administrative and financial burden.

None of the local partners seemed however well informed about the major characteristics of the budgetline, its particularities, its recent evolutions, and – most importantly – its “European” character. B7-6000 is simply considered as a welcome additional source of funds that has been very useful in supporting the efforts that have, in most cases, been undertaken by the ENGO since a considerable period of time. Their attitude is further explained by the EC-delegation’s incapacity to visit the projects regularly or to establish a structured form of dialogue with the NGO community. This is understandable considering the severe understaffing of the Delegation’s section responsible for EC-NGO co-operation and the size of the country.

The weaknesses in the management of the budgetline documented in the desk phase report are only to a limited extent experienced by the local partners and this for the following reasons:

- the long waiting period prior to approval could be neutralised via funds from the ENGO and/or locally available funds (note that EC-funds were often applied as a complement to an existing programme); in some cases, the implementation of some “capital intensive” programme components was delayed till arrival of the EC funds.
- INGOs and their partners were in general capable to cope with the EC’s requirements in terms of submitting proposals and reporting; this can be

explained by the level of professionalism of INGOs and ENGOs and by the fact that most projects concerned on-going programmes.

- There are two exceptions in relation to the previous point. IN-5 has been introduced by a small Danish NGO that could not ensure the necessary follow-up to the reporting by the INGO so that it had to repay part of the grant to the EC, which could have been avoided. The implementation of IN-7 has been delayed, apparently because of the ENGO's incapacity to provide the EC on time with the necessary narrative and financial intermediary reports.

5.2. ROLE OF THE EC-ADMINISTRATION IN THE PROJECT CYCLE

The way the role of the EC administration in the project cycle has been described in the Desk Phase Report is confirmed by this Indian case study. A few particularities are worth being mentioned:

- "Project documentation does not tell everything". Our study sample contains a few examples of the lack of correlation between the quality of the project documentation and the quality of the actual project. Especially in cases of a relatively weak ENGO, quality of project documentation was mostly well below that of the project as such (IN-7 for instance).
- The EC-delegation in New Delhi has undertaken remarkable efforts to meaningfully comment on project proposals without having had the opportunity to visit the projects. Although in many cases, these comments are relevant, appreciation errors could, understandably, not be avoided in a few cases.
- The quality of the assessment of proposals by the NGO desks in Brussels varies considerably. This can be partially explained by the size of the projects: bigger projects are clearly screened more thoroughly than smaller projects. In a few cases (IN-5 for instance) opportunities have however been missed to put forward relevant questions and, hence, stimulate reflection among the project initiators.

5.3. ADDED VALUE OF B7-6000 IN THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

This report has clearly demonstrated that funding by B7-6000 has created considerable added value in most if not all projects studied. This has however little to do with the specific characteristics and management of the budgetline as such. B7-6000 has simply provided additional funds, which have been skilfully and consciously used by ENGOs and, in first instance, by their Indian counterparts. Both partners in most cases have developed a long-standing relation of partnership, which has allowed the INGO to strengthen its capacities considerably. In many cases, the development of the programme of the INGO

has gone through a trial and error process, which was however not funded by the EC.

In view of the above, the following reflections can be made:

- The success of most programmes can be explained by a high level of local commitment (strong leadership, persevering target groups) coupled with a long-standing support by an external partner who has been ready to be patient during the first years of the process when tangible benefits are limited. The past and present modalities of EC-funding via the B7-6000 budgetline seem not to be really adapted to such type of support.
- In the same line of thought, the projects studied here have provided good examples of successful efforts of poverty alleviation, empowerment and sustainable benefits. The major factors of success in these areas seem to be the integrated process approach and the long-standing support of target groups. As said above, the present modalities of the budgetline seem not really adapted to this situation, at least not in the South Indian context. This should encourage policy makers to:
 6. either review some of the existing modalities (timing for funding, ...);
 7. either become less demanding and more realistic in what can be achieved in terms of poverty alleviation, empowerment and sustainability in a short period of time.
- The formats to be followed when introducing proposals seem to be adequate when funds are applied for *existing* programmes, but not for entirely new programmes. As many projects submitted for EC co-funding build on existing partnerships, this would suggest the elaboration of formats that are adapted to the phase of co-operation between the partners.
- The image of B7-6000 as a budgetline open for innovative undertakings is not confirmed by this study. On the contrary, ENGOs seem to resort to the budgetline for programmes that are firmly established, produce tangible results and are implemented by solid partners. They seem to finance risky undertakings with their own funds (or other public funding?) and apparently take care of their image at EC-level.
- In many other countries, initiatives are undertaken or being considered to increase the coherence of EC funded NGO programmes, among others by increasing the strategic focus, by defining the role of the NGOs in specific sectors, by promoting networking and policy dialogue, etc. Such initiatives are laudable in themselves but seem to be difficult to implement in the Indian context. Indeed, EC co-funded projects seem to be too thinly spread to allow proper co-ordination. Moreover, most INGOs increasingly understand the necessity to scale up their action and place it in a broader context. In such a

situation, it seems more realistic for the EC to ensure that INGOs link up with broader civil society dynamics than to take a lead itself in this process.

Annex 1.

Evaluation of co-financing operations with European non-governmental development organisations (NGOs) in fields of interest to the developing countries

(Council Regulation (EC) No 1658/98 of 17 July 1998 and Budgetline B7-6000)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

A. INTRODUCTION

Within the overall framework of the EC's development co-operation, and as a complement to the programmes managed by the Community institutions, the Community Budget contains provisions to support – while respecting their independence and right of initiative - initiatives by European non-governmental development organisations (NGOs), organisations representative of European civil society (Budget Line B7-6000).

Under the General Conditions for cofinancing (1977 and subsequent revisions) and Council Regulation 1658/98 the Commission has co-financed operations with European non-governmental development organisations (NGOs), to meet the basic needs of disadvantaged people in developing countries. From 1976 to end 1998, 8597 development projects were cofinanced for a total EC contribution of approximately €1533 million. Implementation is currently carried out in conformity with the General Conditions for Cofinancing approved by the Commission in 1988 and presently (Autumn 1999) being revised.

To optimise utilisation and management of the EC's co-financing programme, to help to prepare the revision of the present Regulation in 2001, and to guide the application of (and if necessary further modify) the revised General Conditions, this evaluation will examine the implementation of the Budgetline under the present General Conditions and the terms of the Regulation by the Commission and the NGO's over the past six years (as of 1994). The evaluation will also be a means of transparency to the European Parliament, the Council and the public as regards how the Commission and the NGO's have discharged their responsibilities for use of Community funds; and will inform the debate on the future of the Regulation including, if necessary, proposals for change.

B. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

OBJECTIVES:

The evaluation is to analyse the use of the budget line and application of the General Conditions and Council regulation within the framework of the EC's Development co-operation, and complementing other instruments. It will examine in particular the relationships between some more successful cofinanced actions and the mechanisms, practices and procedures of Commission-NGO co-financing , **with a view to improving the mechanisms (including project selection), practices and procedures as much as possible** – taking careful account of the sometimes severe resource limitations on both the Commission and the NGO's.

The other objectives are to clarify the (other) 'issues' mentioned in D below.

SCOPE:

The evaluation will -

1. Make an overall assessment of the activities financed on this Budgetline during the last six years (1994 to 1999) in qualitative and quantitative terms, measured against:
 - the needs of the people concerned
 - the main objectives of the Budget line and Regulation, viz.- 1) meeting basic needs of disadvantaged groups, 2) strengthening of local NGOs and grassroots organisations and the target groups own development capacities, 3) strengthening democracy and human rights. With regard to these objectives due account must be taken of when the objectives were introduced, in order to avoid measuring projects against standards which were not intended to apply to them.
 - the framework of the commission's co-operation
2. Assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the budgetline and its implementation, as outlined in point D below.
3. Draw conclusions and make practical, realistic recommendations for improvements, especially to the cofinancing procedures (including selection criteria), mechanisms and practices.

It will focus on cofinancing of development operations. With regard to Awareness-raising on development, which is also an objective of the regulation, a major sector has recently been carried out, this sector is not covered in this evaluation

Cofinancing here means cofinancing under the Budget line B7-6000 (implemented according to the General Conditions for Cofinancing and the Council Regulation; funds managed by NGO's acting as implementing agents for

the Commission under other budget lines, Regulations and the European Development Fund are not covered in this exercise.

In view of the high number of projects co-financed, the evaluation will draw extensively, particularly in its 'desk' phase, on existing analyses, studies and evaluations, notably the 'NGO Evaluation Synthesis Study' (OECD/DAC 1997), various reports of the Court of Auditors, and various recent evaluations of Memberstates, particularly the 1999 Danish study, and verify and complement their findings and hypotheses for the Commission/NGO cofinanced actions through limited field studies. (The ECDPM evaluation of the Liaison Committee should also be used, in reference to the Commission/NGO's relationship.) It is emphasised that improving cofinancing mechanisms and ultimately the quality of the co-financed activities etc., rather than producing new research insights into impact, remains the main objective of the evaluation.

The evaluation will also take account of a parallel evaluation being conducted simultaneously for the Commission, of decentralised co-operation. To the extent possible, terminology and definitions should be harmonised and overlapping issues debated and clarified with the other evaluating team. Nevertheless this evaluation must remain focussed narrowly on cofinancing within the Regulation, whereas the other is much broader in scope.

C. BACKGROUND

The main pillar of the Commission's support to European NGOs is through the co-financing programme which began in 1976, and which has since provided about 1.5 bn € from the Commission to match a further 2 bn Euro from the NGOs.

The Commission's support goes both to NGO development projects in countries in the South and, to a much lesser extent, to their activities to mobilise public opinion in favour of development and fairer international relations between North and South. NGOs are seen as representatives of European civil society, whose actions are apt to reach the poorest and most marginalised people and to complement official aid. The Commission supports the role of NGOs in encouraging participatory development and the creation of a democratic base at grass roots level, and in developing the capacity of their partners in the South.

EC cofinancing with NGO's has increased significantly in recent years, doubling from 378 m ECU in 1986–90 to nearly 800 m ECU for 1991–5, which is in line with the growth in EC aid overall. In 1997, 767 projects were financed for a total of 169.8 Mio €, of which 596 under the development heading and 171 aiming at awareness raising, the latter representing 9.4% (or 16.8 Million €) of the commitments under B7-6000.

Geographical breakdown of the development projects for the last years is as follows:

	1997		1996 (%)	1995 (%)
	Million €	%		
sub-Saharan Africa	45.7	36.3	35.5	32.4
Latin America	41.2	32.7	34.6	36.1
Asia	28.5	22.6	18.3	17.5
Caribbean	2.2	1.8	4.5	6.0
Mediterranean	8.0	6.4	5.8	8.0
Pacific	0.5	0.2	0.7	0
Other	0	0	0.6	0
	126.1	100	100	100

In 1998 a total of 173.8 Million € was committed, of which 152 M€ funded 575 development projects and 18 M€ for 140 awareness raising activities, the reminder on co-operation and co-ordination.

The present regulation, adopted in July 1998, outlines three main sectors of intervention which can be seen as the objectives of this budgetline:

- 1- poverty alleviation and enhancing the target group's quality of life and own development capacity.
- 2- public support in Europe for development and for strategies and operations benefiting people in the developing countries.
3. - co-operation and co-ordination between NGOs from the Member States, and between them and the Community Institutions.

The present Regulation provides for activities in each main sector of intervention as follows:

1- local social and economic development in rural and urban areas, the development of human resources (especially by means of training), and institutional support for local partners in the developing countries. Special attention is to be given to operations connected with:

- the strengthening of civil society and participatory development, and the promotion and defence of human rights and democracy,
- the role of women in development,
- sustainable development.
- the protection of threatened cultures, especially endangered indigenous cultures,

- the protection and improvement of children in the developing countries;

(This is complemented by the additional criteria laid down in the current General Conditions)

2 - public awareness and information operations shall be targeted at clearly-defined groups, deal with clearly defined issues, be founded on a balanced

analysis and a sound knowledge of the issues and groups targeted, and involve a European dimension

3- co-operation and co-ordination should, inter alia, concern the development of appropriate exchange and communication networks.

As indicated above, the evaluation will concentrate on the first sector of intervention and cover parts of the third sector only in as much these contribute to the implementation of the first. The second sector will not be evaluated.

The Commission also co-operates with NGOs by 'contracting' them as implementing agents for projects in various regions and countries, outside the scope of the Regulation. This is outside the scope of the present evaluation.

The NGO Liaison Committee (CLONG) is the central point of contact for dialogue between development NGOs and the Commission. It represents partner NGOs (some 800) in dealings with the European institutions, and also acts as a forum for discussion between European NGOs themselves. An evaluation of the CLONG was carried out in 1995/96.

D. ISSUES TO BE STUDIED

Within the overall assessment of the Co-financing Programme and its implementation, as indicated in B above, the key issues are (in order of priority):

1 – how can the mechanisms, practices and procedures of cofinancing be improved, given the complexity and difficulties of development work, the importance of quality, the high number of often small activities, and the limitations (funds, staff) both of the Commission and of the NGO's ? The main 'mechanisms' are project cofinancing and block grants; but the size and nature of both the NGO (or group of NGO's) and the project can vary considerably, and have major implications for the quality assurance of projects, so they also are to be taken into account.

2 – how has consistency and non-incompatibility been assured³⁵ with other development actions, actors and policies as appropriate ?

3- To what extent has the right of initiative and independence of NGO's been respected?

4 –What has been the 'added value' and 'comparative advantage' to the EC in contributing funds through European NGOs for development in the current partnership relationship with local NGOs and other local development actors.

³⁵ See council regulation art 2

'Best practices' in terms of successful projects will in particular be examined and used to analyse, support and illustrate what improvements can be made, how and why. The need to take, at all times, fully into account the funding and manpower resource constraints of both the Commission and the NGO's is again emphasised.

In making their recommendations the evaluators may consider other cofinancing mechanisms and practices as possible alternatives; any specific examples should be identified if possible in the desk report, together with any justification for (limited) visits to other donors or investigation in the field phase.

The evaluation will look in particular at the following hypotheses and questions (list not exhaustive):

i) Relevance

How well was the relevance of projects and activities to the beneficiaries needs ensured? How far did the actions fit into the objectives of the Budget Line, existing General Condition, the Regulation and the overall framework (coherence/compatibility with Government policies, Commission policies , NGO policies)?

How was the obligation to respect the autonomy of NGOs and their right of initiative in presenting projects for cofinancing, reconciled with the Commission's duty to ensure the efficient use of funds and the pursuit of its overall development objectives ?.

ii) Project preparation and design

As a general principle, NGO activities are mainly legitimised through their close contact with the beneficiaries carrying the project. Where did project ideas originate? Which role did the beneficiaries play in the identification and preparation phases of projects? Were participatory approaches used?

Many countries follow policies of decentralisation: how has this been taken into account , have trends been visible in the project cofinanced?

To what extent have completed (through evaluation and monitoring), ongoing and planned or eventual future other aid actions been taken into account ?

Did the Commission's general conditions and their application in practice, provide a suitable framework for the selection of projects and partner NGOs? New general conditions are to be adopted end 1999; it is not yet possible to evaluate

them, but to the extent possible conclusions should take them into account, thus providing recommendations for possible further adaptations.

iii) Effectiveness

How well were the projects' immediate objectives (project purposes – see Commission's Project Cycle Management manual) realised?

“Were the right things done ?” .

How well were the beneficiaries involved in the implementation?

Have the planned services / benefits been delivered to the planned beneficiaries ? – or to others, whom, why ?

Have lessons of experience (both internal and external to the project) been considered with regard to improving effectiveness?.

What influence have the cofinancing mechanisms, procedures and practices had on effectiveness?

iv) Efficiency

As a general principle, NGO execution is seen to be cost cost-efficient. Are there more precise indications or results of studies to confirm this? What are the mechanisms foreseen to ensure this?

Were “things done right ? “

What ‘best practices’ can be noted as regards efficiency, and why ? The difficulties ? Could the same effects have been achieved in a simpler, cheaper way?

How efficiently has the Commission organised itself, in light of the constraints (personnel in particular), to carry out its tasks under the Regulation and the general conditions?

Does this system allow the NGOs and the Commission to meet objectives in the most efficient available manner?

How efficient were the reporting and auditing arrangements ? Were there more efficient alternatives?

Have the reorganisations during the last 3 - 5 years helped to make the system better? To what extent have the Delegations been able to help ?

Have the conclusions of audits been fed back into the decision making process?

What influence have the cofinancing mechanisms, procedures and practices had on efficiency?

v) Impact

How well did the projects financed help to reach the objectives of the Budgetline and Council Regulation? – and their own overall objectives³⁶ ? What have been

³⁶ for the definition of logframe terminology, see PCM manual

the wider and long-term effects of the actions on their economic and social environment? Can the effects on other relevant objectives such as gender equality, poverty alleviation and environment be appreciated?

What have been the broader, longer-term effects of the projects on poverty? Are there indications that the target groups quality of life and own development capacity have been enhanced?

What influence have the cofinancing mechanisms, procedures and practices had on impact?

vi) Sustainability

Are there indications that the beneficiaries or others have become able to continue to provide the services / benefits in a sustainable manner, after projects end?

One of the objectives of the North-South NGO partnership is capacity building within organisations representing the civil society in the south. Are there indications that this is happening? Can general conclusions be drawn concerning the use of local expertise (excluding support staff)? How important, and frequent, is the definition of exit strategies by the (European) NGO's ?

Financial sustainability depends largely on the users ability to meet limited cash requirements and is determined by the NGOs ability to put effective self-management structures in place. The evaluation should assess this statement and, if possible, make recommendations.

vii Other Issues

Any development work, including the activities implemented by NGOs, is more effective and sustainable and has more impact, if properly co-ordinated with relevant stakeholders, such as the beneficiaries , official authorities, other NGOs, donor and executing agencies. How do NGOs ensure this co-ordination?

Earlier evaluations have stated that due to the multitude of actions financed and the relatively small size, it seems to be difficult to ensure systematically monitoring and evaluation or even regular contact with the donor. The evaluation should assess this statement and, if possible, make recommendations

E. Approach

In undertaking the evaluation, the Consultants are expected to follow a three-phase approach, as set out below:

Phase I Desk study of relevant documents: (list not exhaustive)

Existing studies analyses and evaluations on this topic by other institutions etc. as mentioned under point B of the terms of reference, concerning preparation, decision, implementation and evaluations of development projects cofinanced with NGO's under the co-financing Budget Line.

The desk phase report should include a proposed methodology, detailed hypotheses, selection criteria and a set of indicators and measurement concepts for field evaluations, to be agreed with the evaluation unit.

Phase II Limited Field Evaluations of projects selected. These studies will include contacts with NGOs (European and local partners), beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

Phase III Preparation of a Final Report, summarising the findings of phases I and II and elaborating key issues and the lessons learned.

F. PLAN OF WORK AND CALENDAR

The consultant will begin work in Brussels and will then be required to carry out country visits. At the beginning and the end of each phase briefing meetings are planned with the Commission services, and, where appropriate, with the EC Delegations in countries visited. The consultant will also present first findings and conclusions during the general Assembly of European NGOs planned for April 2000.

During the field visits, the views of the stakeholders (national authorities, beneficiaries, executing agents, list non-exhaustive) as well as those of the Delegations will be sought. The timetable foreseen is as follows:

Weeks	1- 4	deskphase in Brussels
Week:	7	deskphase report
Weeks:	12 - 18	field missions
Week:	22	draft final report
Week:	26	comments of draft final report by stakeholders
Week:	30	final report

April 2000: presentation of first findings and conclusions.

F. EXPERTISE REQUIRED

The following kinds of expertise are required:

i) Strong knowledge and experience in NGO – managed and NGO – supported projects, co-operation with various actors, such as grassroots organisations,

Community based organisations and the informal sector; in rural and urban development, education, health and sanitation;

ii) Multilingual capacity to cover a wide range of projects in English, French, and possibly – depending on the sample for the field phase – Spanish and Portuguese

iii) Social development/gender expertise, good understanding of poverty alleviation, targeting and supporting vulnerable groups

iv). Practical experience in organisation (notably the interface between donors and NGO's) and use of aid delivery mechanisms and development projects.

v) Proven ability in conducting evaluations of aid programmes, in particular concerning the fields and issues mentioned above

G. Reporting

The following Reports will be provided by the consultants:

1. short Inception Note
2. Desk study report of the ECs as detailed above
3. Short (1-2 pages) project/field reports/analyses to be annexed to Final report
4. Final Report (Synthesis)

A short inception note (3 copies, English) is to be submitted during the second week of the desk study, summing up the first results and observations, and, if necessary, proposing a revised methodology and workplan. The desk report (max. 50 pages) is to be submitted two weeks after the end of the respective work. A draft final report will be submitted four weeks after the end of the field missions. The final report (synthesis) should not exceed 80 pages + annexes; it should include an executive summary of not more than eight pages and the annexed project reports, as well as a short résumé of two pages suitable for a wider distribution and DAC summary (format attached). The draft final report comprises the above-mentioned summary, résumé and annexes.

The outline format for reports is attached.

The desk report will be submitted in English and French (10 copies each). The Draft (20 copies each) and Final Report (Synthesis) (50 copies each). will be submitted in English and French. The desk and draft final report in French can be a machine assisted translation with necessary corrections.

All reports, including draft reports and summaries have to be provided in electronic format (word for windows or compatible). The final report must be in electronic format and entirely ready for electronic distribution. For information, Commission services use Word 97 and Windows NT.4

Annex 2

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY OF PHASE TWO

INTRODUCTION

The evaluation of the EU Co-Financing Operations with European NGO is being undertaken by a Consortium headed by Southresearch (Belgium) and including IDPM (Belgium), INTRAC (UK), Particip (Germany) and Prospect (Belgium). The evaluation began in February 2000 and is essentially divided into **three phases**:

Phase 1: A Review and Analysis of the Framework of B7-6000 and the selection of countries and projects to be included in Phase 2

Phase 2: Limited Field Studies of projects selected in a number of southern Countries

Phase 3: Summarising the Findings and Conclusions of Phases 1 and 2

This Approach and Methodology document refers to **Phase 2** of the evaluation and this phase is expected to begin in late June/early July 2000. Whereas Phase 1 is more concerned with the mechanisms, practices and procedures of B7-6000 and its major institutional characteristics, Phase 2 is more concerned with evaluating the performance of B7-6000 at the programme and project level in a number of southern countries. (In this respect we are referring to projects that might form part of a larger programme: in such instances the project would be the focus but its role within a larger programme would also have to be considered). This aspect of the evaluation takes place within the context of the overall purpose of B7-6000 in terms of **poverty alleviation, democratisation and human rights** and how the many programmes and projects that it co-finances help to enhance the quality of life of the world's poorer people. More particularly the Terms of Reference for the Evaluation calls for the evaluators to assess a number of **key aspects** of the Budget-Line:

- *The needs of the people concerned*
- The main objectives of the Budget-Line and Regulations: (a) meeting basic needs of disadvantaged groups, (b) strengthening of local NGOs and grass roots organizations and the target groups own development capacities, (c) strengthening democracy and human rights
- Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability of the Programmes and Projects supported by funds from the Budget-Line.

The above clearly will become central to the evaluation work undertaken at the programme and project levels and will form the basis of the evaluation's approach and methodology. However, it should be kept in mind that the analysis of the above variables in each of the projects included in the evaluation will, of course, vary in relation to the nature of the project under study. For example, with recent projects issues of 'impact' for example will be difficult to assess given the short life of the project. Each consultant, therefore, will need to apply the above variables as she/he sees appropriate. As to the **context**, after a lengthy process of consultation within the Evaluation Core Team and with officials of the EU it has been agreed that the following countries will be included in the evaluation of B7-6000:

India Kenya Senegal Brazil Cuba and Bolivia

Furthermore in its proposal to the EU the Consortium suggested an approach to Phase 2 that would select a number of **illustrative** programmes/projects in each country for more detailed analysis. These would be selected on the basis of a number of basic criteria – type, size, geographical location, best practice, innovativeness – and would also be grouped by **sector** in each county. In this respect the overall **matrix** of countries, number of projects and sector selected is as follows:

India: Multi-Sectoral Development – 6 Projects + 2 Block Grant Projects (BGP)

Kenya: Development of Human Resources – 5 Projects + 2 BGPs

Senegal: Political and Institutional Development – 5 Projects + 2 BGPs

Brazil: Development of Human Resources – 6 Projects + 2 BGPs

Cuba: Socio-Economic Development – 5 Projects + 1 BGP

Bolivia : Socio-Economic Development – 3 Projects + 1 BGP

The above matrix will form the basis of the Phase 2 operations and will be the framework within which the study of the Projects and Block Grants take place. We should note that Bolivia will be dealt with in a separate way and only a Northern Consultant will undertake the study of the projects.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

There are a series of terms whose understanding it will be important to determine before the evaluation in order to ensure that the evaluators employ broadly common understandings. Several of these terms are notoriously difficult to define

in a way that leads to consensus but there is a core to their meaning that is common to most interpretations. The following is a range of the terms that are most likely to emerge during the evaluation:

- **BENEFICIARY ASSESSMENT:** The opportunity for both women and men, who have been involved in and benefited from the project, to give their views on the project's development.
- **DEMOCRATISATION:** The involvement of previously excluded groups in national political debate and/or activities, and the extent to which a development project has broadened the base of community participation in development activities.
- **EFFECTIVENESS:** The degree to which a development project is able to implement its stated goals and achieve progress towards its objectives. Furthermore an analysis of whether these project results have contributed towards the achievement of the project's purpose.
- **EFFICIENCY:** The extent to which a development project is able to maximize the use and the potential of its resources, and optimize their effect and impact. This can involve issues of means and costs, organization and management and the methods employed by the project to implement its activities.
- **IMMEDIATE IMPACT (EFFECT):** The immediate tangible and observable improvements or change(s) in people's lives which have been brought about as a direct result of project activities.
- **LONG-TERM IMPACT:** The long-term and sustainable changes brought about by a development project. Impact can either be anticipated in relation to the project's objectives or unanticipated.
- **KEY INFORMANTS:** Individuals who have no formal relationship with the project but who have accompanied its development and are able to comment on its achievements.
- **POVERTY REDUCTION:** The degree to which poor people and their families are able to access and increase the resources they need, in order to meet their basic livelihood needs and improve their standard of living. It can also encompass issues of knowledge, and the extent to which poor people can freely exercise their social and political rights.

- **POVERTY ALLEVIATION: An essentially welfare approach that seeks improvements in the quality of life of poor people in terms of increased access to basic services of health, education, water, food and habitat.**
- **RELEVANCE:** The extent to which a project intervention is appropriate and can be seen as being a useful and positive contribution to nationally and locally perceived development needs
- **SUSTAINABILITY:** The potential of a project to continue its developmental momentum, to be maintained and to produce benefits which are valued by and important to its beneficiaries in the long-term.

The above Key Terms should be used in conjunction with the EC's own **Guidelines on Evaluation Methodology** which will be a useful supplement to the above and which explains the Commission's understanding of some of the above terms in more detail.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE METHODOLOGY TO BE EMPLOYED

Key Stakeholder Involvement: At the different levels of the evaluation in Phase 2, we will ensure that key stakeholders who have some form of relationship with the project(s) being evaluated – EC staff, Partner Agency and European NGO – are given the opportunity to express their views on the outcomes and impact of the project(s) being reviewed. This will be done in a series of different ways that will be outlined below. This will not always be straightforward given the fact that many of the European NGOs may not be represented in the country and may not have any particular views on the project. However, we must give them an opportunity, probably by means of a limited questionnaire since it will not be possible financially to, let's say, fly to Italy to interview one Italian NGO concerning its views on one project in Cuba. In country, however, we should be able to set up the mechanisms for both the national NGO Partner staff and Project Beneficiaries are able to give their views.

Beneficiary Involvement: To the extent possible at each project, we shall similarly seek to ensure that the views of project beneficiaries are also heard. These beneficiaries will include not only men but also equally importantly women and, where relevant, children. This beneficiary involvement will demand its own particular approach and the adjusting of the evaluation instruments may be necessary.

Evaluation as a Learning Process: This principle is frequently pronounced but often forgotten in the often-unpredictable turmoil of evaluation activities. However it is critical that we undertake the project level evaluations in a manner that consistently seeks to inform stakeholders of what we are doing, explain the method of our work and generally give them a sense that we are all – and not just the external consultants – involved in trying to understand the outcomes and impact of the project.

Consistency: A major difficulty of multi-project and multi-sector evaluations is to ensure that the outcome is not a series of individual exercises. In order to achieve this we must ensure consistency of approach both in terms of analysis and method. It is only in this way that we will be able to **aggregate** our findings and be able to draw generally applicable conclusions from the whole exercise. Once we have agreed an overall framework and approach to the evaluation we cannot deviate too far from this.

Comprehensiveness: It will similarly be important, wherever possible, to ensure that on every individual project study we complete the whole range of analysis and activities contemplated. Unless we can achieve this we will end up with incomplete and fragmented data and information and this will complicate our ability to summarize our overall findings. Every effort should be made therefore, to cover all of the aspects of the evaluation approach and not merely concentrate on one or two of its aspects. However, we must also be realistic and recognize that we may have to make choices and not be able to complete everything that we would wish to do so.

A Balance between the Qualitative and the Quantitative: As we construct this approach and methodology, we must ensure that we achieve an acceptable balance between the qualitative and the quantitative in terms of data and information. Inevitably we will almost certainly find on most projects adequate descriptive and explanatory data and information on project inputs, activities, immediate results and financial aspects. The challenge will be to provide both qualitative and quantitative data and information on those critical dimensions of project performance that we have seen above.

Emphasis on Analysis and Conclusions: Given the fact that this is a multi-project evaluation and that we will need to aggregate our findings for an overall summary report, it is important that we use the limited time available for analysis and key findings in respect of the critical dimensions. Existing project documentation will provide the factual data and information necessary and there will be no need to repeat these.

MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

While we can establish the above basic principles and below suggest the key methods that we could employ, there will be a number of key determinants that will influence this evaluation methodology:

- (a) The **TIME** available to undertake the 'evaluation' of each project in the overall matrix. In allocating this time we need to take into account a number of issues:
- Tasks that have to be undertaken: project visit, travel, report writing, other meetings and so on
 - Access and geographical distribution of the projects
 - Size and complexity of each Project and an estimate of how much time will be needed to complete the tasks on each one

Taking all of this into account the two consultants will need to examine the total amount of days that have available to complete each country visit and distribute the time available between the multiple tasks. This will be entirely for the two Consultants to determine and this they will need to do fairly quickly for planning purposes. Finally it should be noted that there is no additional time for report writing and that country reports will need to be completed within the time available.

- (b) The **preparations** that we can successfully complete BEFORE we visit each country will also have a major influence on what we can achieve in the 6 days. In this respect it will be critical that we ensure that both the northern NGO and its southern Partner are not only aware of the project study but have taken the steps necessary for us to undertake the work. This will involve briefing staff, arranging for project visits and meetings with beneficiaries, making project documentation available and so on. If this is not done – and it will not be easy – then a lot of time could be wasted. Given the fact that it is a third party that is organizing the study and not the NGO or its Partner, getting these to take on a sense of involvement of the exercise could be a challenge.
- (c) **Dividing the Time and Tasks between the northern and southern Consultant:** There is probably no perfect model for this but it will be an important issue for us to discuss. Once we see the tasks below and have been able to meet with and discuss the matter with our colleagues, we will probably be in a better position to approach this issue. There are clearly alternatives that we could explore: (a) joint project visits, (b) dividing the project visits thus allowing for more time on any one project, (c) dividing the tasks. It is strongly suggested that both consultants work together on the first two projects, so as to establish a common understanding and style, before perhaps dividing and undertaking the work on a different basis.

COMPONENT 1 : Analysis of Project Documentation

In order for the above analysis to be possible, it will be important to ensure that for each of the projects to be evaluated at the country level, the following documents are available, IF they exist:

Original Project Proposal: date begun and concluded (if finished)

Project Contextual Analysis – if not included in the above

The Last Three-Year's six monthly or Annual Project Reports

The Reports of any Evaluations undertaken of the Project

Any other Studies done on the Project that could be relevant to the Evaluation

Project Contract

Key Correspondence relating to the development of the project.

NUMBER the projects to be evaluated in each country as follows:

India : IN1, IN2 etc.

Kenya: KY1, KY2

Senegal: SN1, SN2

Brazil: BR1, BR2

Cuba: CB1, CB2

Bolivia: BL1, BL2

The final report will include a full list of all the projects visited and their abbreviation – IN1, CB2 – and this will greatly help the analysis section. In the narrative section of each country report, the above abbreviation system should be used and NOT the full title of the projects.

(a) Brief Summaries (Narrative and Data)

As a first task it would be useful to draw up a two-page summary of the **key information** on each project to be studied. This can then serve as the basis for discussing project performance with project management and staff:

Project Purpose and Objectives

Project Context; Note quality of Contextual Analysis

Principal Inputs

Principal Outputs

(b) Ex-ante Evaluation of Key Variables in the Project Documentation

(Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability)

(FORM No. 1)

On the basis of an initial and rapid review of the documentation above in terms of content on the key variables of the project study, we should then score the project documentation for the depth of its treatment of each of the variables. The scoring should be done on the following basis:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 3. GOOD INFORMATION / ANALYSIS | 2. SOME INFORMATION / ANALYSIS |
| 1. SOME REFERENCE ONLY | 0. NO REFERENCE IN DOCUMENTATION |

This ex-ante analysis of the project documentation and initial scoring will be crucial in helping us to determine the emphasis and focus of the evaluation at the project level. It will also provide us with the evidence on which to base our questions to and discussions with the stakeholders. At different stages both key actors and the consultants will also be asked to score the project in relation to the above key variables.

COMPONENT 2 : Stakeholder Workshop(s)

Ideally it would be useful and create a greater sense of involvement if we could organize workshops with the main Stakeholders – EC officials, NGO representatives (if resident in the country) and southern Partner representatives – both **before** and at the **end** of the project evaluations. But realistically this might be difficult within a 3-4 week period to set up two half-day workshops. In this respect, it would be better to let each country study decide what is realistic and do what they feel is possible. Of the six countries only Brazil presents difficulties due to the widespread geographical distribution of the projects to be studied. In each of the other countries – except Bolivia – it should be possible to arrange at least one workshop. However it will probably be important to meet with the EC representatives both before and after the project visits.

We would expect our national consultant to take a lead in organizing the any national workshop that hopefully the EC office would host. In the event that a workshop with stakeholders is held only before the project visits, as well as explaining the overall purpose of the study, it would be useful to explore themes such as the following with them:

- Role and effectiveness of NGO supported development projects in the country
- Perceptions and views on the functioning and usefulness of B7-6000 in terms of contributing to NGO ability to address issues of poverty in the country
- Strengths and weaknesses of B7-6000: what, if any, is its added value in terms of both southern and northern NGOs abilities to undertake relevant and

effective projects? National NGO views on the mechanisms and procedures of B7-6000

- Views and opinions on the future working of B7-600

It would be probably wise to restrict this workshop to 2-3 **key issues** and go into them with a bit of depth rather than allowing too wide-ranging and unstructured discussions. We assume that our southern colleague will be responsible for liaising with stakeholders in the country in setting up the venue, arranging for invitations etc. for the workshop. We should, however, approach this issue of a Stakeholder Workshop with some realism. IF it can be held, it would be a useful way of getting the different stakeholders to engage with the evaluation of B7-6000 and to share views.

Please NOTE Section 4.3.5 of the Phase 1 Report and ensure that the ISSUES outlines there are included in the discussions

COMPONENT 3 : Project Visits

Project visits will constitute the major component of the overall methodology of Phase 2. These will involve several **stages** and also a series of **inter-related actions and meetings** with different groups of stakeholders/beneficiaries. It will probably be wise to follow the stages **sequentially** since each one will help construct the lines of inquiry/questions/issues for the next stage:

Verification of Basic Data and Information

Reconciling what we have learned about the project from the documentation with the actual situation on the ground. The data and information in the documentation might be incomplete or unclear and it is always useful to check with project management that our understanding is complete. This is particularly so in terms of Inputs and Outputs and the current financial situation.

Self Assessment

This will involve sessions with (a) Project Management, (b) Project Field Staff and (c) Northern NGO staff, if in country. On smaller projects groups (a) and (b) may well be combined and if the Northern NGO is not represented in the country, we will have to find a means to seek their views on the project's outcomes; for

example, we may need to either 'interview' non-resident northern NGOs or prepare a questionnaire on the main issues to be covered by the self-assessment.. With each of the above groups, the lines of inquiry will basically follow the main parameters of the overall B7-6000 Evaluation:

1. Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, Sustainability

(FORMS 3a,b,c,d,e)

2. **Broader Issues related to the Sector: (See Annex A)**

2. **Strengthening of NGO Capacity, Democratization, Poverty and Gender (FORMS 4a,b,c,d)**

4. **Their overall views on the usefulness, effectiveness and procedures of B7-6000 in relation to project performance. (See Component 2 above)**

For this component of the overall methodology we will prepare a number of **Standard Forms** for some of the sections above. This will be particularly important for 1 and 3 since it will help us to better synthesize the findings in respect of each country and ensure that we do systematically explore each issue with each project. The other two sets of issues under 2 and 4 will not be based on a separate form and it will be for each team to set up its own internal system.

Finally, in relation to the KEY VARIABLES, at the end of the discussion on each during the self-assessment sessions, we could ask stakeholders individually to RANK their assessment of Project performance on each variable on a range of 1-5. (FORM 2) Please NOTE that the Research Team will need to prepare photocopies of this form so that each participant in Self assessment can fill it in).

Beneficiary Assessment

It will be difficult to prepare a common approach to Beneficiary Assessment since much will depend on accessibility, the experience of the beneficiaries in participating in such exercises and whether we have the opportunity to talk to the beneficiaries alone. In this respect it would wise to agree that, as a matter of principle, we shall seek to negotiate with the stakeholders some free access to the beneficiaries. However, we must take note of possible language difficulties in Africa and Asia and adjust accordingly. It will be important also to try and ensure that we don't only meet the 'model farmers', key influentials, those who are politically connected and the men. Furthermore it will be important not to base the questioning too much on the notion of the **Project**. Some beneficiaries may

be aware that they are involved in a 'project'; others may see things in terms of receiving support and resources from a particular NGO. We must, therefore, phrase the questions in the most appropriate way. Finally it is probably better not to have too ambitious a list of 'questions' to put to the beneficiaries, but to try and get their views and perceptions on generic issues such as:

- In what way(s) do they feel that the (Project) has helped to improve their family's lives
- Has their project group/organization/community been strengthened as a result of their involvement in the (Project)
- What have been the main strengths and weaknesses of the (Project)
- How has their relationship been with (Project) Management/Staff
- Have there been any unexpected consequences of the (Project)

Of course, it may not be possible to be as specific as this and we should adjust accordingly and try to achieve some approximation of the above and add in any other issues that arise during the project evaluation. However, it will be important where possible to meet with beneficiaries **in groups** both for the mutual support that group meetings can bring and also to avoid too many meetings with 'key individuals' who may consistently give too positive a picture of the Project. Furthermore it would be good to identify, let's say, **2 beneficiary families and 2 individuals** and prepare **short case studies/boxes** of how they feel that the Project has or has not affected their lives. Finally we should try and quantify overall beneficiary assessment of the project by asking each member of each group 'interviewed' to assess the Project as follows:

- (i) *Big (Impact) on our Lives - Some (Impact) on our Lives - No real (Impact)*
- (ii) *What has been the biggest contribution of the Project to improving our lives*

(FORM 5)

Again, it will be important to adapt the term **impact** and to explain it in the more appropriate manner. Most importantly we must allow the beneficiary groups to speak but try and guide them in way(s) that direct them towards the issues related to the evaluation.

Key Informants:

We should consider these as an option and decide whether we will either have the need or the time to organize the selection and the setting up of meetings with Key Informants. We can leave each country's consultants to decide whether to seek the views of such informants and we should not formalize this component. If it were decided to seek their views, presumably these would be linked to a number of broad and general questions in relation to 'relevance' and 'impact' in particular.

NOTE: In order to show the extent of our consultations at the project level, we should keep a record of the **numbers/sex** of all of the above categories of people. We should count the numbers in the groups that we meet and distinguish between management and project field staff.

Feedback to Project Management and Staff

It is suggested that a brief concluding session be held with Management and Project Staff at whom the **broad conclusions** of the project study could be presented.

COMPONENT 4: Post Evaluation

This component will probably be quite unpredictable and will depend on the availability of stakeholders and how far we feel that such a final session might be necessary. At a minimum it might be necessary to de-brief with the **EC office** if that is both realistic and expected. In terms of the **other stakeholders**, such a post evaluation session might only be realistic if many of them are located in the same city/area or region. Given the nature of the Co-Financing Evaluation, it will probably not justify asking stakeholders to travel great distances for a short debriefing session. However, if it is possible, then such a post-evaluation session would be most useful in seeking stakeholder responses to some the **broader conclusions** concerning B7-600 and the projects that it supports in the country.

METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS

Methods

Key Questions: These are meant to ensure both consistency and also that certain common issues are explored with the different stakeholders. These key questions should be a small number of *broad framework questions* which will be used as a guide and be supplemented with and lead into other questions and issues as the discussions unfold. It is important, however, to remember that the study is not a survey questionnaire and to ensure that the questions focus on stakeholders' views and perceptions relating to the key project variables of the study.

Matrix of a Sample: It would be useful to construct a **matrix** of an appropriate **sample** of the various stakeholders who are to be included in both the beneficiary and self-assessment. Given the time constraints, however, this might prove difficult to do in any 'scientific' way. In the circumstances the evaluators

will need to ensure that as wide an illustrative sample as possible of the different stakeholders is included in the time available, but not to be too ambitious and end up not being able to cover a larger sample.

Stages of Project Impact: it would be useful, as each of the projects in the matrix is analyzed, if the evaluators could begin to construct an impact ‘**time-line**’. This would trace, if possible, the evolution of the project and the principal stages at which some noticeable impact may have occurred. This is an exercise that it is often useful to do with project management and staff early on and it can then be developed as the project study continues. The construction of a project impact ‘time-line’ could begin with the project analysis and be supplemented at the self-assessment stage with the project partner and the European NGO.

Useful Instruments

Mini-Case Studies: One page narrative of families or particular organizations that could usefully illustrate a particular aspect of the evaluation, particularly in terms of the key variables or the impact of the project on beneficiary’s lives.

Individual Case Studies: The same as the above but focusing on individuals whose particular circumstances illustrate the intended or unintended impact of the project

Quotations: always useful to be able to include some direct quotes into the narrative.

Quantitative Assessment: it is legitimate to quantify, where possible, the overall performance and impact of the projects evaluated. In some instances this might be possible if the project itself produces quantitative evidence in its reports. However, in the self assessment exercises with both Project Partners and European NGO staff, it might be useful to get them to assess performance on the key variables, for example, by asking them to rank performance on a scale of 1-5. The results could then be presented, for example, as a ‘**spider diagram**’. We might wish to adopt this instrument which, if we did, would have to be applied consistently in all of the projects.

Focus Group : *This will probably be the basic instrument of the Evaluation and brings with it the direct benefits of access to a large sample of beneficiaries the more active participation and re-inforcing that group participation can stimulate. Almost certainly, however, we will have little say in the composition of the groups that could unbalance the mix of beneficiaries who get involved. It will be important to raise this with the Project Partner and see what their reaction is.*

FINAL ANALYSIS

At the end of each Project Visit and when you think that it is all completed, please take out the **DESK STUDY QUESTIONS FORM** that we would like each Research Team to fill in. This should only be done AT THE END of the project visit and will represent the overall findings of the field level work. The purpose of this exercise is to then compare it with the overall findings of the Desk Study and see what conclusions we can draw. This Form has a total of 27 QUESTIONS but PLEASE NOTE that some relate to ALL projects while some relate ONLY to Block Grant Projects or to Chapter X11 Projects.

INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY REPORTS

1. INTRODUCTION: list of projects and details, approach and methodology of the evaluation (3 pp)

2. COUNTRY CONTEXT: a brief summary of the main contextual issues that are useful in terms of the evaluation (4-5 pp)

3. BASIC DETAILS ON EACH OF THE PROJECTS

Individual Project Reports: (ABSOLUTE Maximum 3 pages per Project)

- Project Context
- Project Purpose and Objectives
- Inputs and main Outputs
- Project Performance in relation to the FIVE KEY VARIABLES
- Overall General Comments on the Project

4. PRESENTATION OF THE CONSOLIDATED FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE PROJECTS STUDIED IN RELATION TO THE ABOVE KEY VARIABLES AND OTHER MAJOR ISSUES EVALUATED: (maximum 10 pages).

Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
Impact	Democratization	Gender	Poverty

Strengthening of Civil Society NNGO – SNGO Partnership

5. FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS OF THE COUNTRY REPORT (5-6 PAGES)

Stakeholder's views on B7-6000, Beneficiary Perceptions, and Added Value of B7-6000 in terms of NGOs and National Development, Future Strategic Choices for B7-6000, Strengths and Weaknesses of development initiatives supported by B7-6000 etc.

ANNEX A

SPECIMIN BROADER ISSUES THAT COULD BE USED TO ANALYSE PROJECTS BY SECTOR

DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

- The **relevance** of the project's approach and objectives in relation to both the services needed and to the problems, in respect of the services, which it is addressing
- A summary of the total **inputs** into the project
- A summary of the services delivered by the project (**outputs**) with an assessment, in relation to the costs involved, of the **efficiency** and **effectiveness** of their delivery
- An assessment of the **coverage** of the services provided with respect to the principal socio-economic groups and their respective needs
- The immediate or medium term **effect** which the services have had on the problem that the project was addressing
- Evidence that the services provided have, or can be, maintained on a sustainable basis

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- The thinking, arguments and strategy of the project in order to assess both its **appropriateness** in relation to perceived need and also the **relevance** of its approach: evidence that crucial factors such as markets, availability of inputs and labour and pricing, for example, have been taken into account
- Summary of the key **inputs**
- Detailed evidence of the **quantitative output** of the project and an assessment in terms of **efficiency, effectiveness** ; also **who** has benefited and who might have been negatively affected by it
- Evidence of both short and long term **impact** of the project on people's livelihoods in terms of increased income, net increase in resources

- available for production etc.
- Whether the production activity resulted in the formation of the organisational basis for its **sustainability** and whether access to production resources was institutionalized or at least maintained

POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Evidence of a clear understanding of the **terms** used to structure the project – for example, ‘participation’, ‘empowerment’, ‘democratization’, ‘strengthening civil society’ – and that this understanding has been consistently and adequately translated into strategy and methodology
- The relationship between the objectives of the project and the current **trends** and **needs** of ‘civil society’, particularly in relation to efforts to promote the greater involvement of civil society institutions in national policy debate
- The project **inputs** in relation to the nature and demands of its objectives and how adequate these have been
- The **activities** of the project in relation to both its quantitative and qualitative objectives
- Evidence that the project has noticeably **strengthened** the institution or group involved, both in the immediate context and also in relation to civil society at national level

Annex 3

IMPORTANT PEOPLE MET IN INDIA

List of participants at the start-up meeting (12 July 2000)

P. Tamil Selvi SEARCH, Dharmapuri

Malini	SEARCH, Bangalore
G.S. Raje Gowda	Parivarthana
R. Lakshminirayanan	Aide et Action, Chennai
K. Ananth	Aide et Action, Chennai
Rajkumar	ICT
A. Abdul Rahman	ICT
Ram Esteves	ADATS
Mario Esteves	ADATS
Michael	DMI, Chennai
Sr. Virgin	DMI, Chennai
Balaji	RASS
Dr. Muniratnam	RASS
S. Venkataratnam	RASS
A. Lawrence	REAL
Alphonse	REAL
P. Rajan	RTU

IN-1: ADATS:

8. Mr. Ram Esteves – Project Director
9. Mr. Mario Esteves – Executive Assistant
10. Mr. Vivy Jacob Thomas – Accounts Adm. Assistant
11. Mr. Sudhama Rao – Project Assistant
12. Mr. Venkateshivappa – BCS President
13. Mr. L. Nandundappa – BCS Treasurer
14. Mr. Nazeer Ahemd – CCF Extension Worker
15. Ms. Geethalaxmi – CCF Extension Officer
16. Mr. Rasheed Sab – CCF Field Worker
17. Mr. N. Sivarama Reddy – Area Field Worker
18. Ms. K. Govindappa – Women's Fund Field Worker
19. Ms. Laxmamma – Women's Fund Field Worker
20. Ms. Laxminarasimhappa – Cluster Secretary
21. Ms. Shahina – Mahila trainer
22. Ms. Manjulamma – Women's Fund Field Worker
23. Mr. Rathnamala – Area Field Worker
24. Ms. K.S. Annapoorna – Mahila Trainer
25. Ms. Mamatha Esteves – Extension Worker

26. Ms. Manjula – Mahila Trainer
27. Mr. K.V. Ramachandrappa, BCS Secretary
28. Mr. N. Ramachandra – Area Field Worker

IN-2: PARIVARTHANA:

1. Ms. Chandrakala – Field Officer
2. Ms. Jafeena – Extension Officer
3. Ms. Leelavathi Bai – Field Officer
4. Ms. Suma – Extension Officer
5. Ms. Manjula – Project Officer
6. Mr. Nagaraj – Project Sector Officer
7. Mr. Ravi – Field Officer
8. Mr. Gowda – Extension Officer
9. Ms. Geetha – Field Officer
10. Mr. G.S.Raje Gowda – Project Director
11. Ms. Jeyamma – Apex Body Leader
12. Ms. Mahadevamma – Community Leader
13. Ms. Puttaveeramma – Apex Body Leader
14. Mr. Mahadevamma – Sangha Leader
15. Ms. Sidamma – Apex Body Leader
16. Ms. Puttamma – Sangha Leader
17. Ms. Jeyamma – Community Leader

IN-3: RASS:

1. Mr. Muniratnam – General Secretary / RASS
2. Mr. Venkataratnam – Executive Director / RASS
3. Mr. Balaji – Director / RASS
4. Mr. Gopal Mudali - RASS
5. Mr. Rajasekhar Naidu – Advisor Chairman
6. Mr. Dhanagayal Naidu – Ex-Mandal Vice President of Yerpada Mandal
7. Dr. Sugaja – Medical Officer, Primary Health Centre
8. Mr. Srinivasalu – Manager Vysya Bank
9. Mr. S. Mani Reddy – Member Mandal Parishad
10. Mr. Bhaskaran, Agriculture Extension Officer, Yerpada Mandal
11. Mr. K. Yanathi Reddy, Health Supervisor, Primary Health Centre, Paperpad.
12. Mr. Venkataramana – School Teacher, Vikuthamala Village.

IN-4: SEARCH EXTENSION PROGRAM:

1. Ms. Nagamma – Acting President of the Federation
2. Ms. Santha – President of the informal Women's Bank

3. Ms. Rajam – Incharge of Panchayat Unit
4. Ms. Shanthi – in the Women’s Bank
5. Ms. Murugammal – in Small Farmers Cooperative Unit
6. Ms. Sarasu – in Consumer Forum Unit
7. Ms. Mathamma – in Consumer Forum Unit
8. Ms. Selvi – Supervisor of the Loan
9. Ms. Ratha – in Consumer Forum Unit
10. Ms. Rashmi – in Women’s Bank
11. Ms. Savithri – in Women’s Bank
12. Ms. Chellamma – in Health Unit
13. Ms. Cauveriamma – in Small Farmers Cooperative Unit
14. Ms. Madamma – in Small Farmers Coop Unit
15. Ms. Janaki – in Health Unit
16. Ms. Ponnamma – in Health Unit
17. Ms. Santhamma – in Small Farmers Coop Unit
18. Ms. Parvathi – in Health Unit
19. Ms. Maheshwari – in Women’s Bank
20. Ms. Laxmi – in Women’s Bank
21. Ms. Nagamani – in Small Farmers Coop Unit.
22. Ms. Tamilselvi – Project Director
23. Mr. Sevathan – In-charge MIS
24. Mr. Mahindra – In-charge of Organic / Bio-diversity Agriculture
25. Ms. Maina –
26. Ms. Savitha – in Consumer Forum Unit
27. Ms. Prasanna Kumari – Legal Advisor
28. Ms. Kanaga – Federation
29. Dr. Thilagavathi – Sidha Medical Doctor
30. Ms. Susheela, in Female Infanticide Unit

IN-5: RTU:

1. Brother Kimpton - Founder President
2. Mr. T.K. Nathan - Director
3. Mr. Panneer Selvam – Coordinator Administration
4. Six other core team members

IN-6: ICT-India:

1. Mr. Steven, Representative of ICT UK
2. T. Raj Kumar – Overall Project Director – ICT India
3. Mr. Amstrong – Overall Office Administration
4. Mr. Remi – Overall Chief Accountant
5. Mr. Muruganathan – Secretary of the Board of ICT India
6. Mr. Abdul Rahman – Project Coordinator – Street Children Project

7. Mr. Balamurugan – Field Staff of Street Children Project
8. Ms. Eashwari – Field Staff of Street Children Project
9. Mr. Navish – Field Staff of Street Children Project
10. Ms. Rajeshwari – Field Staff of Street Children Project
11. Ms. Regina Mary – Field Staff of Street Children Project
12. Sethu – Silverpatti Tree Plantation Project
13. Mr. Charles – Pharmacist - Silverpatti Health Project
14. Mr. Arockiasamy – Silverpatti Tree Plantation Project
15. Mr. Krishnamurth – Research Manager – Silverpatti Project
16. Mr. Jones Selvaraj – Program Manager – Silverpatti Project
17. Mr. Karuppan – Silverpatti Project
18. Ms. Rajakumari – Sevagampatti Project
19. Mr. Kathiresan – Sevagampatti Project
20. Ms. Amutha – Sevagampatti Project
21. Mr. Bodumani – Sevagampatti Project
22. Ms. Sudha – Sevagampatti Project
23. Mr. Rajavel – Sevagampatti Project
24. Mr. Marimuth – Sevagampatti Project
25. Ms. Chellathai – Health Coordination – Sevagampatti Project
26. Ms. Shanthi – Lab Technician – Sevagampatti Project
27. Ms. Sughana – Health Worker – Sevagampatti Project
28. Ms. Pandiammal – Health Worker – Sevagampatti Project
29. Ms. Saraswathi – Medical Doctor – Sevagampatti Project

IN-7: SDMI:

Overall:

1. Fr. Arul Raj – Overall Director
2. Sr. Virginia – Mother Superior of SDMI
3. Mr. Michael – Overall Consultant

Staff of SDMI – Kodaikanal Chapter:

1. Mr. Thangavelu – Cluster Coordinator
2. Ms. Vasanthi – Women Organiser
3. Ms. Rajeshwari – women Organiser
4. Ms. Pappa – Women Organiser
5. Ms. Kalaiselvi – Cluster Coordinator
6. Sr. Sabeena – Project Coordinator
7. Balgis – Organiser
8. Rengish – Organiser
9. Judit – Organiser
10. Seva – Cluster Coordinator
11. Mr. Krishnan – Cluster Coordinator

12. Mr. Balraj – Organiser

Staff of SDMI – Keechalam Chapter:

1. Sr. Baby – Project Coordinator
2. Mr. Palani – Cluster Coordinator
3. Mr. Pushparaj – Cluster Coordinator
4. Mr. Jeeva – Cluster Coordinator
5. Ms. Theresa – Cluster Coordinator
6. Ms. Kannagi – Cluster Coordinator
7. Ms. Daisy – Cluster Coordinator
8. Ms. Bakiam – Block Coordinator
9. Mr. Gunasekhar – Cluster Coordinator
10. Ms. Rita – Cluster Coordinator
11. Mr. Iyappan – Cluster Coordinator
12. Mr. Masilamani – Trainer
13. Ms. Rama – Cluster Coordinator
14. Ms. Fatima – Cluster Coordinator
15. Mr. Jeevanatham – Cluster Coordinator

Dirk: I do not know the names of sisters whom we met during the core team debriefing at the end. Hope you have their names written down.

IN-8: REAL:

1. Mr. Lawrence – Project Director cum President of REAL
2. Mr. Alphonse – Consultant
3. Ms. R. Ranganayaki – Executive Committee Member of REAL
4. Mr. V. Arumugam – Secretary of REAL Board
5. Mr. Selvakumar – Board Member of REAL
6. Ms. R. Jeyakodi – Health Worker
7. Ms. Bakiam – Pre-school Teacher
8. Ms. Valli – Health Worker
9. Ms. Chithra – Villager Supervisor
10. Ms. Vijaya – Pre-school Teacher
11. Ms. K. Chithra – Pre-school Teacher
12. Ms. Kasthur – Coordinator
13. Ms. Prema Juli – Village Supervisor
14. Ms. Jenifer – Villager Supervisor
15. Mr. Shivaraj – Milk Marketing Accountant
16. Mr. Balaganpathi – Tuition Teacher
17. Mr. Shivanathan – Tuition Teacher
18. Mr. Ashirdeva Kumar – Villager Supervisor
19. Mr. Murugavel – Milk Collection & Transporter
20. Mr. Edwin Raj – Tuition Teacher

21. Mr. Lourdusamy – Tuition Teacher



