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FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT

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Project Title

Natural resource management action plan development for Hubli-Dharwad PUI

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NRSP Production System *Date*

Peri-Urban Interface **5 July 2002**

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Abbreviations used in Final Technical Report

BAIF	BAIF Development Research Foundation
BGSS	Bharatiya Grameena Seva Samsthe (NGO based in Channapur)
BPF	Best Practices Foundation
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CEDOK	Centre for Entrepreneurship Development of Karnataka
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DFID	Department for International Development
DIC	Department of Industry and Commerce
DRDS	District Rural Development Schemes
EMP	Environmental Management Project
GP	Gram Panchayat (lowest tier of decentralised administration)
HDMC	Hubli-Dharwad Municipal Corporation
HDUDA	Hubli-Dharwad Urban Development Authority
IDS	India Development Service
JFMP	Joint Forest Management Plan
JRY	Jawahar Rozhgar Yojana (government scheme for infrastructure)
JSYS	Jala Samvardhane Yojana Sangha (Tank Restoration State Agency)
KAWAD	KarnatakaWatershed Development Society
KFD	Karnataka Forest Department
KFDC	Karnataka Forest Development Corporation
KUWSDB	Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Drainage Board
MWMG	Micro-Watershed Management Group
NABARD	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
NGO	Non-government organisation
NR	Natural resources
NRM	Natural resource management
NRSP	Natural Resources Systems Programme
OVI	Objectively verifiable indicator
PAPP	Participatory Action Planning Project
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PUI	Peri-Urban Interface
RFO	Reserve Forest Official
RNRRS	Renewable Natural Resources Research Programme
SC & ST	Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes
SHG	Self Help Group (sangha)
TI	Target Institution
UAS	University of Agricultural Sciences Dharwad
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VFC	Village Forest Committee
WCD	Women and Child Development Department
WDD	Watershed Development Department
ZP	Zilla Pachayat (District level tier of administration)

2. Background

The goal to which the project sought to contribute was *'Natural resources management strategies for peri-urban areas which benefit the poor developed and promoted'*. This project, along with NRSP funded peri-urban interface projects in Kumasi and Kolkata (Calcutta) was designed to address the following aspects of this goal.

1. Natural resource based systems need to be understood before they can be managed effectively. This is particularly so in the peri-urban interface (PUI) where change is rapid in terms of both physical development (urban expansion) and livelihoods as people seek to adapt to survive or to take advantage of new opportunities which arise.
2. Before they can benefit from new natural resources management (NRM) strategies developed by projects, the peri-urban poor need to be identified and their livelihood strategies characterised.
3. Promotion has to occur at several scales, both spatially and temporally: spatially; within the village and its locality, which can be managed by the research team; in non-project areas around the city, which needs the co-operation of government line departments such as the local extension services; wider afield, which can be achieved through media at the regional or state level; and internationally through conventional academic dissemination routes and by DfID. The temporal aspect refers to benefits generated being sustained beyond the life of the programme. This implies changes in attitudes of government line departments, particularly among those that develop policies and enact regulations, if these are considered to be inadequate for managing natural resources in the peri-urban interface and if they are inherently biased towards the wealthier and more educated sectors of the population.

This project sought to contribute to the above goal by addressing the important researchable constraint: 'How can plans of action for management for natural resources which benefit the poor, best be developed in the context of the peri-urban interface.'

In general terms of evidence for demand, there is increasing worldwide concern about the effects of expanding cities upon the surrounding rural areas, principally being expressed in terms of degradation of the natural resource base. In response to this, in 1995, DFID included the peri-urban interface around medium sized cities as one system to be investigated within its Renewable Natural Resources Research Strategy. The South Asia Scoping Study (R6463), in conjunction with Indian key stakeholders, identified Hubli-Dharwad as a suitable location for such research.

More recently, several governments, including those of India and the UK, have expressed commitment to the reduction or eradication of poverty. As a consequence, the research emphasis has shifted towards a pro-poor agenda and the management of natural resources within this context. Research has been undertaken under the RNRRS NRSP Peri-urban Interface Production System since 1996 in Hubli-Dharwad. This project is a follow up to a project commissioned by the NRSP management and the Peri-Urban Steering Group to identify and fill critical gaps in knowledge. In the NRSP PUI System logical framework, the project forms Activity 1.4. for Output 1 of the PUI systems programme, precursor for the next stage, programme Activity (1.5.),

in which strategies identified will be tested through implementation of action plans in pilot projects, and is thus a response to an expression of demand at that level.

3. Project purpose

The purpose of the project was: *'Plans of action to implement natural resources management strategies for peri-urban areas around Hubli-Dharwad which benefit the poor formulated through extended interaction with principal stakeholders'.*

There was no intention to achieve physical implementation of plans of action on the ground, so achievements were principally in the realm of enhanced interactions between the primary beneficiaries (poor people living in PU villages) and the government departments and officials who formulate policy and implement regulations, leading to the production of three plans of action. Specifically the objectively verifiable indicators (OVI) for the project purpose were:

1. By its end, the project should have generated an improved understanding by the research team of how different stakeholders in the PUI interact and how this process can be optimised and sustained.
2. Through extended interactions between stakeholders, there should be improved awareness by target institutions of NR management issues affecting the poor, and the desire of the poor for these to be addressed.
3. Where these impinge upon livelihood strategies of PU poor, recognition of need for a more inclusive approach in:

    a) planning processes by local authorities;

    b) extension recommendations and programmes of Karnataka Depts. of Agriculture, Livestock and Horticulture;

    c) research programmes of University of Agricultural Sciences.
4. Three plans of action for NR management available.

In the event, the above OVIs were very similar to the planned outputs, and there is no point in assessing to what extent these were achieved here and in the outputs section also. In that section , however, it will be shown that to a great extent the project purpose was achieved, and OVIs 1), 2) and 4) are evidence for this. On the other hand, it is now recognised that OVI 3) was too ambitious for a project of this duration, although the process documentation (Annex A) does contain indications of a recognition of need for a more inclusive approach in planning processes by local authorities.

4. Outputs

Chapter 13 of Annex A analyses the extent to which each output was achieved, in turn. The approach taken there is fairly anecdotal and heavily reliant upon recorded comments from team members, as would be expected from process documentation. This section will build upon the process documentation presented in Annex A by analysing what new knowledge has been generated during the achievements of these outputs.

4.1. Output 1.

Enhanced capacity of research team to establish and facilitate participatory action plan development processes.

Capacity of research team

Before analysing to what extent the capacity of the research team was enhanced, it is necessary to establish the base against which any improvement can be measured. Three members of the UK research team, Adriana Allen, Bianca Ambrose-Oji and David Gibbon, had extensive prior experience of participatory project planning, and the latter two wrote a guide for the team (Annex B) and conducted training during the initial project team meeting in March 2001 (Annex A; photo 3.2). The other two UK team members, Robert Brook and Fiona Nunan, had little prior experience of participatory planning, although they had conducted participatory rural appraisal techniques in a previous project in Hubli-Dharwad (R7099).

The production of three plans of action driven by people who are intended to be the primary beneficiaries in the successor project is evidence that the project did achieve this output, and maybe these action plans should have been OVIs rather than Output 5. The planned OVIs for Output 1 were achieved, and Annexes B and C are evidence for this. Training was by a mixture of workshop sessions with various members of the UK team and experience gained on the job.

The main areas where research team capacity was enhanced were:

1. Participatory project planning
2. Participatory logframe formulation
3. Mode of entry into villages
4. Engaging the excluded
5. Interactions with line government departments
6. Evolution of attitudes of participating organisations

Participatory project planning

Of the Indian organisations, both NGOs, BAIF and IDS, regularly make use of PRA approaches to finding out about the villages where they are working and the villagers' understanding of their local environment and their place within it. UAS staff who had worked on previous or concurrent DFID projects (R7099, R7209, R7867) were also familiar with PRA approaches to understanding village systems. Best Practices staff were new to these techniques, but being a NGO with experience of social issues, were already sensitive to the problems of the poor.

So although participatory techniques were familiar to most members of the team, with the exceptions noted above, participatory action planning was new. For example, prior to this project IDS would go to a village to find out what were the issues of concern to the villagers, then go back to their office to create a plan and take that back to the village. Thus issues would come from the community but they had no real ownership of the plan. This was the first time that IDS had involved village stakeholders in developing the solutions (Annex A; section 6.4.1.). Similarly, although BAIF was aware of the importance of people's participation during the execution of a project, *"to do this even before the project was grounded was exciting"* (Annex A; section 13.1).

Both NGOs learned new aspects of project planning from the PRA stage. Both IDS and BAIF found the iterations used during the PRA surveys a new concept. Both organisation previously used PRA as an extractive tool to determine information about the project participants. During this project they learned to move from PRA as a suite of techniques to PRA as an empowering approach (Annex A; section 13.1). Their concern was that it took rather a long time and thus was expensive for the primary beneficiaries in terms of opportunity costs. However, as BAIF noted, communities do not come out openly with their real problems the first time around. To get to the root of the real issues, the process needed to be repeated several times involving people from different categories (gender, castes, livelihood status). Many villages became quite adept at producing and interpreting PRA style diagrams (Annex A; photo 8.1; Appendix 5.2 charts).

Capacity enhancement for the UAS team was even greater in that although they had conducted PRA exercises to improve their own understanding of farming systems or people's livelihoods, there was no experience of doing any project planning with villagers.

Participatory logframe formulation

BAIF had used logframes in previous projects, and UAS were familiar with the concept. For IDS and BPF, this was the first time that logframes had been used as a management tool. However, for all organisations, the production of participatory logframes in villages was new. Training in the production of logical frameworks was given to the Indian research team by Bianca Ambrose-Oji and David Gibbon after the diagnostic workshop in June 2001 (Annex C; Annex A; photo 11.6). However, production of these did not move into the villages until the visit of Robert Brook and Fiona Nunan in September 2001 (Annex A; photo 11.2). Only five cells from the logframe were defined in the village: first the outputs (participants were asked to envisage what the village would be like in three years time after the project), then the activities necessary to produce those outputs. This process took 90 minutes to two hours. Then if time, participants were asked to suggests factors which could prevent activities taking place and activities from being turned into outputs (in the event, these cells were merged). It was also the intention that OVIs would be determined in the village (how would they know that outputs had been achieved) but in the event time precluded this. Women and men were divided at the start of the exercise and came together at the end to compare logframes.

The exercises in Gabbur and Channapur demonstrated that participants were well able to envisage outputs and the activities necessary to achieve those, and to distinguish between these. The exercise with the men produced more decisive results than for the women, which was probably due to a facilitation factor. It needs a degree of ease with

the concept of logframes and the confidence to direct the process without dominating it. The action plan for the Mugad cluster was produced before the participatory logframe exercise was conducted (the logframe presented in Annex A; Appendix 6.3 was produced by UAS and IDS team members), and the process in Kotur was less satisfactory, so the best examples of such logframes emanated from Gabbur and Channapur (Annex D, Action Plan 2 Logframe on page 21). Even here, the OVIs were drawn up with BAIF personnel, so the ability to produce this in the village was not tested. The process was far from perfect, but the experience did demonstrate the feasibility of using participatory logframes as a tool in planning projects.

As a planning tool, production of participatory logframes was considered to be useful. However, there has been criticism of the use of logframes when attempting to build participation into the development process[1, 2]. The criticisms probably arise from experiences of rigidly adhering to the use of logical frameworks as a management tool and thus where they are 'owned' by an elite initiated into the skills of using them. In this project, there were two quite different reasons for using logframes. At the village level they were used to more clearly define villagers' own aspirations and plans; to distil the communal thinking from rather voluminous problem trees and causal diagrams (Annex A; Appendices 6.4 to 6.8), they were restricted to only the five cells listed above and dealt only with implementation of a pilot project at the village level. At the project managerial level, the participatory logframe is incorporated into a larger one which includes research and dissemination outputs and associated activities. In any case, the logframe is never treated as a document chiselled upon tablets of stone, but as a living tool which is modified in the light of using it. Guijt (2000)[2] suggested that a 'slimmed down' or more flexible approach to logframes may work better, which is what was used in this project.

Mode of entry into villages

See Annex A; chapter 4. After initial contact has been established and PRA exercises conducted, both IDS and BAIF traditionally set up self help groups (SHG), or *sangahas*, consisting of the poor and disadvantaged identified during the wealth ranking exercises. In contrast, UAS team members worked through existing structures, using the more 'official' route of entering the village through the local council, the Gram Panchayat (Annex A; section 13.1), and the existing, government organised SHGs (Annex A, footnote 33). In Kotur, the village where UAS took the lead role, this led to immediate problems with the well connected dominating the project planning process. This was handled by IDS posting a senior and experienced community development worker in Kotur to specifically work with the poor.

Engaging the excluded

After a number of interactions with village stakeholders, despite diligent efforts on the part of the NGOs, it was apparent that the poor landless and particularly poor women were under-represented or not represented at all (Annex A; photo 10.2). In the Indian

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[1] Symes, J & Jasser, S (2000) Growing from the grassroots: Building participatory planning monitoring and evaluation methods in PARC. In: *Learning from Change* (Estrella, M., editor): 138 - 149. Intermediate Technology Publications, London. See Box 10.4, page 148.

[2] Guijt, I (2000) Methodological issues in participatory monitoring and evaluation. In: *Learning from Change* (Estrella, M., editor): 201 - 216. Intermediate Technology Publications, London.

context, this oversight is not unusual (Madely, 1991).[3] Engaging with this sector took particular effort (Annex A; section 6.5.11) as many did not believe that a natural resource based project had anything to offer them (Annex A; photo 7.4), many of whom were excluded from access to NR. Shifting the focus from purely NR management and more towards a livelihoods emphasis helped achieve this (Annex A; section 10.1.3.). This involved working separately with these groups, forming SHG comprising poor women, and taking them on exposure visits to see examples of how other poor people with low natural assets have developed new livelihood strategies.

Interactions with line government departments

UAS, being a government institution, was much more at ease at interacting with officers from line departments (Annex A; section 11.2). The first occasion where officers from such TIs were involved with the process was the diagnostic workshop in June 2001 (Annex A; chapters 6 and 7; photo 6.18), and it was largely through the good connections that Dr C. S. Hunshal had built up over the years that achieved this. BPF had also had some interactions with institutions at State level in Bangalore which proved to be useful when engaging them.

IDS had some experience at dealing with the Forestry Department, but to a large extent BAIF eschewed contact with government departments due to bad experiences in the past. Such interactions were built into this project, so were unavoidable for all project partners. BAIF found, to their pleasure, that many government officers were happy to cooperate and contribute ideas and resources (Annex A; section 13.2). It was still necessary to carefully manage interactions between village stakeholders and TIs, principally by means of strong chairing of meetings, as old habits die hard and many government officers were prone to lecture villagers and revert to the normal patron – client mode of operation.

By the end of this project, it was possible for BPF derive lessons from and to arrive at a set of recommendations concerning interaction with government institutions (Annex A; sections 7.6 and 7.7).

Evolution of attitudes of participating organisations

These can be traced in Annex A; section 11.2. For UAS, there was recognition that at the outset they did not know what they were doing, and have since learned how to work with farmers. BAIF evolved a more accepting attitude towards TIs, although they admit that it is still too early to say whether TIs will deliver on promises made. As an organisation, IDS is very open to working with other partners, and appreciated the opportunity presented by this project for cross-fertilization of ideas. Previously they had worked with government officers at a fairly local level, but this project presented the opportunity to interact with TIs up to State level. Their focus is more livelihoods oriented and they have admitted to learning much about NR management from BAIF and are happy to participate in recording bio-physical changes in the NR base with UAS. BPF admit that there has been a long learning curve throughout the project, this being the first NR based project they have been involved with. Being responsible for the process documentation, BPF have had to closely interact with all partners, and have learned to collaborate with the wide variety of organisation represented in the project.

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[3] Madely, J (1991) Missing the poorest in India. In: *When aid is not help,* 45 – 54. Intermediate Technology Publications, London.

4.2. Output 2.

Improved understanding of the participatory process for action plan development in the PUI by the research team.

Understanding the processes that occurred during the execution of this project was a key output. Although methodology is important, it is the understanding that leads to sustainability and transferability. One realisation is that there is practically nothing written on understanding the processes of participatory planning in the formal literature, and not a great deal in the informal, or 'grey' literature.

There is some material on methodology; not a plethora, and what is written tends to be internal reports by NGOs or documents that have to be downloaded from websites. There is more literature in the area of participatory technology development (PTD), and although that contains elements of project planning, the current project was not about PTD. Some examples of documents are given in the footnotes. [4, 5, 6, 7] Analysis of such processes is rare, although some examples exist. [8, 9] The latter report (Sontheimer, 1997) was the most illuminating; regrettably it was only consulted after this project was concluded. That FAO project was set up to address the observation that agricultural sector planners and extension personnel rarely take women's needs into consideration. This is because they do not know how to learn from women farmers about their activities nor how to respond to their needs. This situation is very similar to the one that pertains around Hubli-Dharwad. Despite lack of prior consultation of this report, it did reinforce many of the findings of this project: the need to separate 'community' into men's and women's groups to enable women's voices to be heard; the need to strengthen the women's 'unit' (in the case of this project, women's SHGs); that one short PRA in a village is not sufficient to bring about a fundamental change in how society views women's roles and status in the community; and a growing in women's self-confidence as the PRAs progressed over the week the team spent in the village. Interestingly, in none of the documents consulted was PRA used as an iterative planning tool as it was in this project; a finding reinforced by NGOs in this project (section 4.1 above).

4.2.1. Output 2.1.

Improved understanding of the participatory process for action plan development in the PUI by the research team. Specifically an understanding of appropriate mechanisms for fostering interactions and continued participation between poor peri-

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[4] Ellis-Jones, J (2002) *Participatory catchment planning in the context of small dam rehabilitation: semi-arid Zimbabwe.* Newsletter of Tropical Agriculture Association, June 2002: 8 – 12.

[5] Jiggins, J and de Zeeuw, H (1992) Participatory Technology Developemnt in practice: process and methods. In: *Farming for the future* (Eds: Reijntjes, C., Haverkort, B., Waters-Bayer, A.), 135 – 162. Macmillan / ILEIA, London and Basingstoke.

[6] Mitsuhiko, H (1994) *Community action planning (CAP) in urban Sri Lanka.* Briefing paper, UNCHS.

[7] Bhattacharyya, K., & Murray, J (*null datum*) *Community assessment and planning: a participatory approach in Ethiopia.* Presentation to BASIC, USAID, Ethiopia.

[8] Umans, L (1998) *Participatory process analysis*. Forest, Trees and People Newsletter **35**.

[9] Sontheimer, S (1997) *Gender and participation in agricultural development planning: Lessons from Nepal.* Women in Development Service, FAO. Background paper for project 'Improving information on women's contribution to agricultural production for gender-sensitive planning'.

urban stakeholders and those target institutions which formulate policy and implement regulations, to the point where action plans can be produced.

As far as NGOs are concerned, the first step in fostering interactions is community mobilisation (Annex A; section 13.2). This was considered to be a prerequisite before involving TIs due to concern that the latter would dominate the process if brought in at too early a stage. Thus it was several months into the project before TIs were included in the process (June 2001) after NGOs had worked with village groups to the point where issues had been identified to a preliminary level, and their representatives could present their case at the diagnostic workshop (Annex A: photos 6.10 to 6.14).

There is no question that the process of engaging with government line departments was considerably eased in this project because of the friendship between the Dharwad District CEO, Mr Vastrad, and Dr Hunshal. He was also familiar with those members of the UK team who worked on project R7099 from his time as the HDMC Commissioner. Also, BPF had links with Mr Nadadur, State Commissioner, Watershed Development Dept. He was particularly interested in learning how the participatory planning process operated, and visited Hubli-Dharwad with a team of his officials to see this at first hand. Thus, when a meeting was organised in Mugad for the villagers to present their action plan to the State Commissioner and the District CEO, lower ranking officials were obliged to attend. Due to the long history of IDS work with sanghas in Mugad, the various interest groups, men and women, were very articulate and confident in presenting cogent arguments for what NR interventions were required in their village (Annex A; photos 7.6 and 7.7). This greatly impressed not only the government officials who attended but also representatives of other project villages. It is recognised that this fortunate set of circumstances might not pertain elsewhere, which might slow down other projects less well endowed with good connections. Some of the Indian participating organisations (IDS, BPF) consider that this might make it difficult to replicate these interactions elsewhere.

Several factors need to be borne in mind when considering cooperation with government officials in India (Annex A, section 12.1.1.). One is that of not delivering promises, a second is corruption at various levels, and a third is attitudes of officials towards their 'clients'. These stem to a large extent from the strongly hierarchical structure of Indian society, leading to paternalism and patronising attitudes. All these are strong disincentives for NGOs to collaborate too closely with government, and indeed are a significant factor in the establishment of many NGOs, as 'government' is usually perceived to be failing people on the ground, particularly the less well-connected (those with low social/political capital). Due to good connections (high political capital) amongst some members of the team, many of these potential difficulties have been short-circuited. Thus, this element of the learning from this project may be atypical. However, it does point towards the need for similar projects to capitalise upon whatever good connections may exist or fostering these wherever possible.

Among some government officials there has been genuine surprise at the nature of the whole process (Annex A; Box 12.1) and how it has exposed the sufferings of poor people to government officers who were not aware of this. Participatory planning was new to all concerned, and some officers have been impressed by its potential. However, there is a perception among many that government departments would not be able to conduct participatory planning themselves, and that cooperation with NGOs might be necessary (Annex A; Chapter 12, p A106) due to their inability to interact

with the people. This self-recognition of shortcomings is heartening, and may form the basis of capacity and confidence building measures for TI officers in the successor projects.

A District Steering Group was established, chaired by the UAS Vice-Chancellor and held in the offices of the Dharwad Zilla Panchayat (district council). Various government officials and the research team attend and discuss progress with the project and future plans. One issue is that the lower level government officials have not been consistent in attendance, and it is recognised that this needs to be corrected.

One planned mechanism for fostering interactions was never implemented; the working groups. It had been envisaged that after the diagnostic workshop, village participants, the research team and appropriate officers from TIs would sit together to formulate the plans of action in three working groups (see OVIs for Output 2.1). At the diagnostic workshop it was apparent that the TIs were so far removed from the participatory and poverty focussed ethos of the project that this would not have worked. Instead, the research team (principally NGO community workers) and groups of intended primary beneficiaries (either as SHGs or in plenary village meetings) developed the plans of action independently of the TIs. The planned inclusion of TIs in the working groups was intended to be a mechanism to draw them into the process, but in the event this was achieved by other means, described above.

4.2.2. Output 2.2

Improved understanding of the participatory process for action plan development in the PUI by the research team. Specifically an understanding of factors which engender enabling environments for diagnosing problems/ issues/ constraints to livelihoods in PUI.

It is recognised that participatory approaches are vital. The use of participatory approaches to planning and the consequent perception by the intended primary beneficiaries that this was more than a token consultation exercise, has already been described above.

When considering this output, Annex A; section 13.3 concentrates upon the effectiveness of separate meetings with women, particularly the poor, to include them fully in the process and address their concerns. The importance of this has already been discussed above in sections 4.1 and 4.2.

However, one factor which was not mentioned in Annex A; section 13.3 is the importance of NGO community workers living in the villages (Annex A; section 4.1). Staff members staying in a village offers several advantages:

- They become a part of the community and the village inhabitants accept them as part of their community. Instead of being ‘outsiders’ coming into the village they become ‘insiders’ for the period of time they are assigned to the project. Many of them also bring their families which helps them to build a stronger base and identify more with the village.
- Living in a village gives the community worker first hand experience of the conditions and problems faced by that village. Many problems faced by the community are also experienced by the staff. They are as affected by the lack of amenities or pollution or natural resource degradation and so forth as any other inhabitant.

- The other important aspect is that the nature and frequency of interaction is better. Often women do not have time during the day and are free only late at night. Also when organizers visit a village they typically can only meet the people who are available during their visits. The group that is free is rarely the poor or the most vulnerable. Therefore having organizers live in the village allows the poor or marginalized groups to interact with organizers on their terms at times convenient to them.
- If a problem were to arise at any point, the community worker is present around the clock in the village to respond immediately.

Staff from UAS, on the other hand, do not like staying in villages and this limits the effectiveness of their interactions. However, they are not limited to visiting villages during office hours, unlike many government officers, and readily work in evenings when interacting with villagers.

One factor which hindered an enabling environment was bringing in TIs too early in the process and at too high a level into villages which were unused to their intervention (Annex A; section 14.5), as they tended to dominate the discussions. Lower level functionaries of TIs who are assigned to villages or blocks would be better participants in the early stages, and these are the officers that IDS has interacted with in the past. With the benefit of hindsight it is now recognised that there is a wide gulf between approaches adopted in this project (ownership of the implementation aspects of action plans by the beneficiaries) and that of government (delivery of services from outside). The UK members of the team assumed that this gulf was narrower than it turned out to be. However, bringing in higher level government officials is still considered to be vital, and attendance at larger, well managed meetings and in the District Steering Committee are probably the appropriate fora. These, and those at the State level, are the officials who need to understand the implications of the project's findings upon policy.

A good summary of factors which engendered enabling environments are presented in Annex A; section 6.6.

Annex A can be considered to be the means of verification that the OVI for this output exists.

4.2.3. Output 2.3.

Improved understanding of the participatory process for action plan development in the PUI by the research team. Specifically an understanding of ways in which conflicts of interest can be identified and resolved.

At the time of project memorandum preparation, it was anticipated that conflicts of interest would arise within the working groups or within villages over priorities for action. This proved not to be the case. Indeed, there was remarkable concordance in identified issues between villages with widely differing farming systems and social circumstances. In all the villages there was general agreement upon the need to address the following issues:

- Water
    - Seasonal lack of water in tanks due to micro-catchment degradation (all except Gabbur)
    - Pollution of water course with sewage (only in Gabbur)

    - Access to drinking water (Kotur, Channapur and Gabbur)
- Dairy enterprises
    - Low productivity
- Social issues
    - Failure of existing means of generating income
    - Harmful urban influences such as alcohol abuse and gambling

The main points of conflict or difficulties turned out to be location specific, in Channapur, Kotur and Kelageri, with the exception of the issue of target institutions.

Channapur

After the inaugural team meeting in March 2001, BAIF investigated this village for inclusion in the project, due to its readily apparent poverty and poor infrastructure. However, another NGO, Bharatiya Grameena Seva Samsthe (BGSS), was already working in the village. BGSS was organising the poor and had formed 10 SHGs already. BGSS staff, on discovering BAIF's plan to begin work in this village contacted BAIF and objected to its entry. To sort out this problem BAIF had meetings with the coordinator and staff of BGSS on 16 April and with its Chairman, members of the managing committee and staff of BGSS on 21 April. The pros and cons of BAIF's entry in the village were discussed in detail. BGSS staff felt that BAIF being a large NGO with well qualified manpower and big projects with a lot of material input would attract villagers and consequently BGSS activities would fail, leading to the break-up of the existing BGSS groups, whose members would join BAIF's programme. This would also create the perception among villagers that BGSS is a useless NGO without material support. They further felt that BAIF would expand its activities and thus this negative perception of BGSS would go beyond Channapur to all BGSS villages, adversely affecting its reputation. BAIF dealt with these concerns by explaining the project and activities to BGSS and responded to BGSS objections as follows:

- The present project is only a research project, and there will be no material input in this project. Action plans will be developed using participatory techniques.
- BGSS can introduce BAIF and taking credit for bringing them to the village.
- PAPP will initiate many new, advanced methods giving BGSS an opportunity to learn from BAIF's expertise, the project and by participating in PAPP activities.
- BAIF will train BGSS staff in PRA techniques.
- BGSS will get an opportunity to interact with UK collaborators and funding agencies.
- BGSS can also participate in the bidding process for supplementary projects.

After detailed discussions it was decided that:

- BAIF could work in the village but BGSS would introduce BAIF to the villagers.
- BAIF would involve BGSS in all activities of the project in the village.
- BAIF should indicate to the villagers that they have come only at the request of BGSS.

- BAIF should not do anything which will affect the base and reputation of BGSS.
- BAIF would provide every opportunity to BGSS staff to learn new techniques.
- BGSS would provide all possible cooperation to BAIF in implementing the project.

After reaching this understanding, Channapur was finally selected for inclusion in the project on 20 April. BAIF would not place its community worker there until that point. This was a good example of how a conflict was defused by negotiation, understanding each other's positions, compromise and common sense. This took a good deal of humility of the part of BAIF, as they are manifestly a successful NGO (the largest rural NGO in India) and their achievements in nearby Surashettykoppa are widely known. On the other hand, although BGSS had been working in Channapur for several years, due to lack of outside support their progress was limited to a few informal credit sanghas.

Within Channapur, alcohol abuse was a significant source of contention. This emerged during the mid term review in July 2001, when the male participants were taken out of the meeting to walk round their fields with the male research assistants and the UK visitors. Women said that nothing would be gained from improved NR management until the issue of alcoholism was addressed. The mid term review recommended that issues such as alcoholism be addressed, especially since it was demand driven (Annex A; photo 7.4). Interestingly, the problem is exacerbated by women who sell curds in Hubli each day would add value to their meagre earnings by buying alcohol for sale in the village for additional profit. One prominent woman from the Gram Panchayat for a period took to confronting women returning from Hubli as they disembarked from the bus, and confiscated the alcohol they had brought back. There had also been some police raids on the numerous unlicensed alcohol outlets, but both of these measures were temporary in their effect. One technique used by BAIF to stop alcoholism in other villages is spiritual development (although BAIF is a secular organisation).

The issue of alcohol abuse was raised more openly by one women in particular during the participatory logframe development in September 2001. However, she was prevented from attending a follow up meeting with TIs the next day in Gabbur (Annex A; section 8.2). Since then, BAIF has reported good success in raising public disapproval of the abuse of alcohol in the village.

Kotur

Due to the method of entry adopted by UAS, in the early stages of the work in Kotur the process was dominated by elites (section 4.1 above). UAS found it very difficult to identify the poor; even when visiting from house to house, because, *"People who were supposed to be backward lived in posh houses"* (Annex A; section 13.4). This was because the literate landless are able to work in factories on the adjoining industrial estate at Belur for wages considerably in excess of those paid to agricultural labourers. The elites who dominated the process were the landed who still farmed, many of whom also dominated the Gram Panchayat, but whose livelihoods were suffering because of severe land degradation. Thus, they wanted to implement an action plan that would put these problems to rights.

The issue was resolved by engaging IDS in the process, who firstly talked to women by themselves, and then located the illiterate landless, and ensured that their interests

were also going to be met. As Dr Hunshal said, "*Now I have better understanding of who are poor and conflicts of interest. In Kotur conflicts of interest are always there. Rich farmers always want benefits to come to them. The poor are always neglected because they are not organized. The rich wanted the benefits. This is an overall conflict where both want different things. We solved problems by convincing the big farmers to let the poor benefit first and next time priority would be given to you and all will be benefited."* The action plan that was conceived was pragmatic in that it addressed the concern both of the landed and the excluded (Annex D; action plan 3). Benefits which accrue to better off farmers in terms of higher productivity, will also benefit the poor who do not have the human capital necessary to work in factories if they are employed to work on farms.

This error in entry strategy in Kotur had several positive repercussions for the whole project. For one the stark lack of participation of the landless and women in Kotur in the initial stages forced the team to meet separately with these groups to bring their perspectives and needs into the planning process. This then resulted in similar meetings being held in all villages which then made the team realize that everywhere, although women were involved, the plans did not necessarily benefit them in terms of improving their livelihoods. Thus a new process emerged and new goals which has provided a distinct space in the plans for women and the landless. Also in Kotur, IDS considered it necessary to set up new structures outside the government system of SHGs (Annex A; footnote 33, section 7.2.6.). This was because the government initiated SHGs were failing to achieve their purpose (Annex A; section 13.4).

Thus, if handled wisely, conflicts can have positive outcomes if a research team learns from mistakes made.

Kelageri

This can be considered to be a village in uncomfortable transition from being a peri-urban settlement to being urban with some remaining rural characteristics. No NRM issues amenable to being addressed by plans of action within the scope of any successor project were identified (Annex A; section 6.1.1., Table 6.5). For example, although the tank was owned by UAS as its water supply, it was considered that there was little chance that it could ever revert to being under the control of the village. Similarly, there was little the project could do about the ingress of sewage (Annex A; photo 6.5) apart from alerting HDMC to the problem (which was done). The same applies to problems associated with the highway, the village coming under the jurisdiction of HDMC, etc. The project could have addressed issues around the margins such as fuelwood supply, but the team were not sure who the beneficiaries would be. It proved to be difficult to cultivate enabling relationships in the village and to contact the excluded (Annex A; section 10.1.2). IDS found it very difficult to work here as people simply had no time for them, so it was decided to reject this village as far as action plans were concerned.

Target institutions

It was accepted that the strategy of including district level officers in the diagnostic workshop was inappropriate. The result was domination of the discussion by officials (Annex A; section 6.4.2; section 13.4). Officials at this level gave the impression that they, and not the villagers, knew what the problems were. In a village such as Mugad with strong CBOs this did not present a problem, as they were confident of their own analysis. But for representatives from villages with no history of participatory

planning or implementation and with unsatisfactory prior experiences of government officials, this was a very discouraging start. Although this difficulty was overcome by persuasive argument by the NGOs, it was serious enough for BAIF to wonder whether they wanted to carry on with the project. The lesson learned was that any government officers brought in at such a preliminary stage should be grassroots functionaries.

4.3. Output 3.

Target institutions and PU stakeholders recognise what the NR management issues arising from change driven by urbanisation are, their effects upon the PU poor, and the need for increased commitment to pro-poor approaches.

Annex A; section 14.1 presents a summary of the peri-urban influences which were discerned during this project.

It is recognised that this project was an awareness raising exercise amongst TIs and PU stakeholders, as far as increasing understanding of the effects of urbanisation upon the poor is concerned. This process will continue throughout the successor project, R8084, particularly as the research team grows in understanding of the effects more clearly and so can articulate this more effectively.

UAS is a key institution in the peri-urban interface. Every two months members of the university sit together with representatives of the extension departments (Depts. of Agriculture, Horticulture, Livestock Husbandry) to formulate 'extension messages'. The extension model used is still the training and visit method. The venn diagrams produced by poor villagers are revealing (Annex A; Appendix 5.2; charts 5.3b and 5.4b); agricultural officers are regarded as being amongst the least relevant people in their lives. The reason is that extension officers work with their faithful clients who are usually educated and well endowed with natural capital. Poor farmers are still castigated as being backwards. As Dr Hunshal said, *"The extension officers have no rapport with the village"* (Annex A; section 11.2.1). A transformation in attitudes is vital if the extension services are to perform as they should, and UAS will be key player in driving any change. It is therefore encouraging to read of UAS team members articulating clearly some of the issues arising from urbanisation (Annex A; section 13.5), and also having observed increased awareness amongst other TIs. To give two examples of this awareness as observed by two of the collaborating NGOs:

> IDS, "*TIs have understood the peri urban interface. Earlier TIs did not know about the problems of the peri urban. People who are closer to the cities are more affected and they are aware of the problems. With this program they have understood*."
>
> BAIF, "*The TIs were not caring for natural resources, in particular they had no specific attention and plans for peri-urban area. They were treating it as an urban area. They were of the opinion that the peri urban effect is a natural process and it is beyond their capacities to do any thing for this area. The involvement of the TIs in the planning process of the project has raised their interest in the peri urban area."*

In terms of using OVIs to show whether the output has been achieved, as the workshop agreed on the diagnosis of NR management issues for the six villages, this first one was achieved. However, for the second, attitudes of TIs were determined using process documentation and not awareness audits (Annex A; section 12.1.2; pages A103-A110). This documentation revealed an increased awareness amongst

government officers of poverty in the PUI and also the ability of village stakeholders to both diagnose the issues and to propose solutions (Annex A; footnote 60), an appreciation of the benefits of participatory planning and willingness to help solve problems (Annex A; page A110). It is accepted that it is early days yet, and that there is time for understanding of the links between processes of urbanisation and poverty to grow; but a sound start has been made.

4.4. Output 4.

Knowledge of stakeholders' criteria for evaluating and prioritising issues identified, and any differences in prioritisation by various categories of stakeholders understood by all participants, through an interactive process.

Above it was pointed out that in its early stages that the poor without land and women had different priorities to those with land (Section 4.1). For example, in Kotur water was prioritised more highly by the landed to produce more crops. This group prioritised cash crops most highly (Annex A; section 13.6). Those without land prioritised income generating activities more highly. In Channapur, the main issue that women wanted to tackle was alcohol abuse (Annex A; section 13.6). For the poor in that village, basic needs are their priority as they are on the edge of survival, particularly in a drought year such as 2001 when total crop failure in the project villages was widespread. BAIF expressed their findings in the village thus: *"For the rich it is an increase in income but for the poor it is to meet their basic needs. When the basic needs are not met you cannot think of other things. For others it may be add on, for the poor it is a basic necessity. Literacy is not an issue till it becomes a need. People have lived without signing and without reading so they do not see the need."*

The criteria for prioritizing issues on the part of the communities (rich or poor), were based on material benefits from the issues to be tackled and the interventions planned. When it came to selecting NR management issues such as tank restoration, watershed interventions and access to forests, these issues were raised by village stakeholders not to necessarily improve the environment but because dealing with these issues would improve the material conditions of the community. However, some interventions would improve the situation for some groups more than others. For groups such as women and the landless who would not benefit directly from these interventions, their participation initially was minimal. Only when special attention was given to improving their livelihoods did they start to participate. The result was that interventions planned for them did not necessarily deal with natural resources. Women in prioritizing alcoholism were driven mainly by concerns arising from the resultant decrease in income and thus dealing with alcoholism had to precede other interventions.

4.5. Output 5.

Plans of action produced by working groups consisting of poor peri-urban stakeholders and target institutions.

These action plans are presented in Annex D. As pointed out above, in retrospect perhaps it would have been better for the plans of action to be means of verification of outputs such as Output 1.

Now that the plans of action exist, the next stage is to implement them. Initially the project was scheduled to finish in October 2001, whereupon the implementation stage would commence. At the mid-term review, the Indian team members pointed out that

this would lead to an unacceptable hiatus between the formulation of action plan one (the Mugad cluster) in June and the start of action, leading to loss of confidence in the project by the primary beneficiaries. On the other hand, interactions in Kotur were at that stage still beset with difficulties and a longer process was needed. It was therefore decided that the third action plan would be produced in February 2002, and the implementation would start in March.

In the event, production of the action plan in Kotur was hasty and the resultant plan was fairly flawed. The hastiness arose because of delays in arranging the move of an experienced member of IDS staff from his posting elsewhere in Karnataka to Kotur, and so the process of formulation was put on hold. He was posted to the village only two weeks prior to a visit by the UK team in February, which precipitated production of the plan. In the review process, the plan had to be returned to the Indian team for revision, particularly of the budget, as a consequence of which approval was not granted until May 2002. This uncertainty did not engender confidence in IDS and UAS that the implementation in Kotur would proceed.

Lessons can be learned from this. Inevitably international donors such as DFID have to be satisfied that they are funding viable projects, but ways of minimising delays between preparation and implementation projects needs to be found; maybe by merging these processes into one project.

5. Research Activities

Activities in the logical framework are arranged according to the outputs which they are supposed to deliver. In the event, activities could not be easily divided into those that addressed each output separately, and many activities were applicable to the accomplishment of various outputs. Thus, this section will be dealt with in a temporally linear manner.

Review of previous research on participatory planning.

As mentioned previously in section 4.2, written up research on participatory planning barely exists. There are some descriptions of the process and of some of the lessons learned, but little else. Annex B is a manual written to address the issue of lack of readily available material on the planning process.

Training of facilitators.

This took place at three junctures: the preliminary team meeting in March 2001, on participatory action planning process; in June 2001, on preparation of logical frameworks (Annex C); and in September 2001, on production of participatory logframes in villages. Much of the learning was done on the job, and it must be admitted that due to shortage of prior experience some of this was by trial and error. However, all the village communities (Kelageri excepted) are still on board, which is probably an indication of the tolerance of village stakeholders and their understanding of the fallibility of human nature. Certainly, where mistakes have been made, the team has been encouraged to own up to this to break down ‘them and us’ barriers.

Village selection

This was not a participatory activity, by necessity. This was left to the research team and was based upon prior knowledge of the area and previous experience in some of

the villages. For example, IDS had long prior experience in Mugad, and project R7099 also worked with some poor farmers from this village. Gabbur, Kelageri, Mandihal and Channapur had also hosted some research activities during R7867. In some cases the selection process was rapid and achieved during the initial project planning meeting in March 2001 (Annex A; photo 3.3; section 3.3). However, in the case of BAIF, the process took some weeks (Annex A; section 3.3.3.) due to their institutional requirement to work in villages which are predominantly poor (rather than in villages with a poor section of the population). IDS commenced work in Kelageri, but over time came to the conclusion that implementing a plan of action in the village would not work (Annex A; section 3.3.3.). The poor of the village could not arrive at any NR management issues amenable to a solution within the resources of the project, in terms of land use and employment characteristics the village was already extensively urbanised, and it proved to be hard to overcome a patron-client relationship with participants. For example, during the wealth ranking exercises, everyone claimed to be poor (Annex A; section 5.3).

Entry into villages

As a 'curtain raiser', street plays proved to be very effective publicity events, although there is no control over who attends. Drama is integral to Indian culture and is a recognised means of conveying messages (Annex A; photos 4.1 and 4.5; section 4.2). The Environment Planning and Management project (R7209, funded by IUDD, DFID) first used these in Hubli-Dharwad, and the idea was extended to include this project. The dramatists wrote a script which highlighted a number of peri-urban issues in a humorous way, such as pollution of water supplies, drunkenness, siltation of tanks, etc. All communication in villages and in workshops where villagers attended was in the medium of Kannada, the vernacular of Karnataka State.

PRA

The next step was to conduct PRA exercises in the selected villages (Annex A; chapter 5, photos 5.1 to 5.10). The initial purpose was to familiarize the teams with the village and its occupants, and the villagers with the team. Participatory wealth ranking exercises were conducted to identify the poor, and it was with this group that the NGOs concentrated their efforts. PRA was integrated into planning using 'PRA style' exercises such as depiction of natural resources, social mapping (see charts at end of Appendix 5.2; Annex A), problem trees and causal diagrams (Annex A; Appendices 6.4 to 6.8), and was continued until the team members were sure that they were hearing a consistent story from the various village stakeholders. As mentioned above in section 4.4, priorities differed between groups in the villages, and all these were accommodated in the plans.

Diagnostic workshop

Conducted in June 2001, this brought together representatives of villages, the research team and officers from TIs, at the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development of Karnataka (CEDOK), a conference facility north of Dharwad. This is described in Annex A; chapter 6. Here the first action plan for the Mugad cluster was formulated, and representatives of the other villages were able to present their cases.

Logical frameworks

These were formulated at the diagnostic workshop in the case of the Mugad cluster (Annex A; Appendix 6.3), in the villages in Channapur and Gabbur (Annex D), and in the village and heavily refined afterwards in UK in the case of Kotur (Annex D).

Production of action plans

These were largely the product of the Indian research teams, and were submitted to NRSP after only light editing to make them more understandable. The action plans were concerned with implementation of NR management strategies and alternative livelihoods strategies, and were not concerned with developing a research assignment.

Documenting the process

This is presented in Annex A and on the CD accompanying this report. Best Practices Foundation were responsible for this component. Techniques involved tape recording all vents, taking hand written notes of the same, photography (see section on photographs at end of Annex A, before the appendices), the production of a participatory video (Annex A: section 9.3), and two newsletters (bound into the end of this report as Annex E). The latter were distributed at all events where English was the medium of communication, to TIs and at a conference held at DPU, UCL in November 2001 (see section 7).