



Programme Management and Monitoring

Information Dissemination

Information sharing among various stakeholders is one among three major programme principles of SCDP. A communication strategy was set up and applied at the national and field level as well. In order to share the best practices, shortcomings, and achievements of the Programme, various forums were created and the print and electronic media coverage helped the stakeholders to understand the Programme.

During the year, Nepal Television and other media flashed news stories and features regarding the programme impact on communities and individuals. This helped the people to know more about the programme and its achievements. SCDP has been one of the programmes that produced positive news among a number of negative news stories like attacks, killings, suicides, conflicts, and drug or girl trafficking published in the newspapers of Nepal. SCDP and GEF/Small Grants Programme also joined Nepal Business Expo 2001 in April that helped in disseminating programme information among a large number of visitors.

Several roundtable meetings and consultative workshops with the concerned stakeholders were done for wider public consultation to push up the works on the National Agenda 21. In order to create awareness among the

populations on the concept of sustainable development and SDAN, interviews, radio broadcasting, and outreaching campaigns were carried out through national and regional level media.

Radio Sagarmatha aired the news on formulation of Sustainable Development Agenda for Nepal and Nepal's preparation for WSSD. The information regarding the SDAN formulation process and WSSD preparation process have been regularly updated through a number of national dailies and weeklies. Announcement on the preparation of WSSD country profile and draft SDAN was widely disseminated through various leading newspapers and Radio Sagarmatha. Radio Nepal and Nepal Television also joined their hands with the Programme to disseminate the programme achievements that serves to fulfil the national commitment to the Rio Summit.

Internationally, UNDP/Capacity 21, New York, assigned Mr Kunda Dixit, Senior Editor of *Nepali Times*, to prepare a case study as a part of the approach to sustainability. Capacity 21 has published 'Building a New Nepal' on civil society and sustainable development: Perspective on participation in the Asia and Pacific region, as one of the case studies. Nepal's capacity 21 was also selected as an example of integration of development.

BOX 12: SCDP: doing something to people's lives

An action-directed project with direct field-level activities, SCDP has in the past six years gained a wealth of experience in participatory approaches to development that promote environmental protection. Some community-level initiatives under SCDP lead directly to resource conservation: biogas for domestic cooking, improved smokeless stoves, forest nurseries, eco-tourism projects, and environmental literacy classes. We now know how to mobilize community groups in villages with heterogeneous ethnicity, what not to do in villages with just one caste, how to prevent domination by the elite of community Programmes. The experience in the six districts is also beginning to show that once villagers reach a certain economic and social stability, once they don't have to worry about survival from day to day, once their children get proper education and healthcare – they seriously start thinking about conserving their natural resources for tomorrow. Environmental protection and sustainable human development stop being just jargons, and actually mean something to people's lives.



(Kunda Dixit, Editor, *Nepali Times*, English weekly, from 'Building New Nepal', a case study report, October 2001)

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring the Progress

SCDP has a nine-step monitoring strategy that has been exercised at every level of the Programme. At the community level, not only the community activists monitor the progress but the CBOs also measure their progress once a month by marking on the self-assessment chart provided to them. Immediately after the production of the chart, all the staff received an orientation on how to educate the CBO members to tick on the selected indicators. The chart was designed applying participatory tools. However after practice it was reported that the chart needs further improvement for easy handling. SCDP has been suggested to reduce the number of sub-indicators for comfortable marking.

The Sustainable Development Programme of Myagdi carried out monitoring and evaluation of 94 CBOs during this quarter. One of the CBOs has been ranked best while 48 CBOs were found at the satisfactory level of performance. Forty-five CBOs were

categorised with some positive elements. This categorisation will help the Programme to upgrade the performance level of the weak CBOs and pave the way to further improvement.

Chairperson-Manager's conference has been one of the important monitoring tools that provide them with feedback from their own adjacent CBOs. Monthly staff meeting is another opportunity to collect information from the field level. The Sustainable Development Committee, headed by the DDC chairperson consisting of LDO, DFO, and SCDP representative, organises monitoring visits to provide feedback to programme management. The District Sustainable Human Development Forum, which is called Local Initiative Forum in Okhaldhunga, is a larger forum where major stakeholders discuss to make the sustainable development activities more collaborative and coordinated.

Learning workshop is organised at the central as well as district level where detailed



Mr. Tripathi and Mr. Sharma observing the display of SCDP activities

information is shared and problems are discussed. This was instrumental in drawing the learning from micro and macro levels and was helpful in setting the appropriate strategies for future directions. The learning workshop has helped the Programme to combat the negative elements, especially in the context of insurgency and other kinds of disturbances. SCDP also organised an annual learning workshop in October to share the achievements and constraints of the Programme which has been discussed in Chapter 1.

Impact Assessment

SCDP carried out a self - assessment at the end of 2001 to analyse the impact of the

BOX 13: What SCDP did with the lessons learned in 2000

Can help in replication of SCDP on a wider scale on the information generated from the SCDP implementation.

The information gathered from the field level was used in mid-term evaluation of the Ninth Plan and preparation of the Tenth Plan.

NGOs attachment to the DDCs has increased the level of mutual understanding and has brought in a positive result.

The support organisations/NGOs have been an integral part of the DDC. SDCs/Team Leaders have been continuously involved in supporting DDCs in facilitating the periodic planning process. The level of interaction and cohesion has gone up.

Social mobilisation should be strengthened and regularly assessed before providing SDF loans.

The normal process to strengthen the social mobilisation part has been slightly impeded due to the growing insurgency. The SOs then decided to be more selective and investments are made in the least risky areas and on the mature CBOs.

It has helped in maintaining more transparency to mitigate the threats.

Sustainable Community Development Programme is appreciated by all and remains almost undisturbed due to its transparency and most inclusiveness.

Smooth micro-credit transaction has been affected due to the absence of banks in the rural areas as a result of political insurgency.

The district Programmes have set up strategies to minimise the risks according to their own particular situation.

programme on the communities. The assessment was conducted in three pilot districts Surkhet, Kailali, and Dang. These three programme districts have two separate management models. In Dang, a support organisation was created under the District Development Committee. In Kailali and Surkhet the local NGOs, called SDF worked as support organisations with the DDC. The purpose was to see how the two models worked. The Assessment had the following objectives:

- To visualise the improvement, if any, in the social, economic, and environmental status of the communities the SCDP is working with.
- To see the possibility of sustainability of benefits after the donor support ends.
- To know the willingness and capability of local governments in extending current sustainable development activities outside the VDCs and communities covered by the programme.
- To assess whether the SCDP model can be successfully replicated in other regions and districts of Nepal without external support.

The Assessment Team visited the Programme area, observed the CBO activities, interacted with CBO members and support organisation staff, and consulted local government authorities to gather relevant information.

The Assessment depicts SCDP's efforts in generating an impact on the communities and providing with a model for sustainable development. The team found SCDP was able to implement programme activities showing great flexibility in addressing the diverse needs of the communities. (See Annex 3 for the summary of baseline conditions and Impact Assessment Report). The findings and recommendations of the Assessment Team were as follows:

Environmental Management

- The Programme has been instrumental in building a high level of awareness and enthusiasm for conservation and utilisation of forest products that were on the verge of destruction. The communities (especially the women of Seukaliya, Kailali) have felt that it is more convenient to collect firewood and fodder when the forest condition improves from protection measures like controlling free grazing and encroachment from outsiders. The environment is much greener now and they hope that the forest resources can bring them more prosperity in the future.
- The practice of agroforestry in some of the plantation areas has provided immediate income opportunity for the local consumers. Promotion of such agroforestry farms in the plantation area will generate immediate incentives from the plantation works while insuring good care and protection to the tree seedlings.
- SCDP has facilitated the CBOs to establish multipurpose forest nurseries and train the nursery caretaker. SCDP has supported them in covering the remuneration of the caretaker for the initial period. Apart from encouraging the communities to establish nurseries of their own, the programme has also utilised the existing nurseries to fulfil the community needs for seedlings. There are now 26 multiple forest nurseries in operation in the SCDP implementing area.
- A total of 2558 Improved Cook Stoves (ICS) installed in Surkhet, Kailali, and Dang has made a positive impact on the environment. This has reduced both the firewood requirement of the farm households (to one-third) and the pressure on forest resources. Decline in smoke inhalation has resulted in reduced Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) cases. The kitchen environment is now cleaner. The ICS programme has thus proved a good success.

- The installation and use of biogas plants in 128 households has reduced the fuelwood requirement to one-third helping in forest conservation. Kitchens are free of smoke and are today more pleasant places to work in. It has reduced incidences of ARI. The hard labor for washing smoke-pasted clothes and cooking pots has been reduced to a minimum. The biogas digester has become a three-fold purpose apparatus for producing methane, digesting the human and animal excreta to yield fuel, and producing rich compost. This has encouraged the communities to construct toilets at their homes and thus helped improve individual and community sanitation. Prithivipur village of Kailali, named the Eco village with its biogas plants in all 16 households, alone saves 146 metric tons of fuelwood per year. The biogas has contributed to soil nutrition too.

Social Development

- Drinking Water schemes have been benefiting over 1300 households by increasing access to improved water quality. The frequency of water-borne diseases has come down and community ownership of these systems is very high.
 - Micro-irrigation, canal construction, rehabilitation, and repair works have increased productivity, and helped in promotion of vegetable cultivation that in turn has improved the nutrition status. Such systems have also minimised the loss due to irregular and inadequate irrigation water supply during the vital growth stage of paddy. A total of 38 systems benefit over 1800 farmers. This has built up confidence and capacity among the weakest farming communities to plan and carry out small construction activities of their own with very little external support.
 - Culvert, road, and village trail construction activities have increased people's safe
- access to market, schools, and service centers, especially to the children, women, elders, and animals. They have reduced dependence on timber from the forest for constructing bridges. Over 1600 households use these culverts on a regular basis.
- Childcare centers have created opportunities for the parents to prepare their children for school, saved time for community works and income generation activities, and have reduced women's workload as well. Pit-latrines construction has, moreover increased awareness among villagers about their health and the environment.
 - Seventy-seven environmental education classes have helped to make literate over 2500 community members of the age between 12 and 35 years. Through these non-formal classes, the participants have learned not only the letters and numbers but have also gained knowledge about planting trees, caring for nurseries and the plants and their relation to the environment. Attending the class has helped the participants to participate better in their CBO meetings to discuss the development issues.

Economic Development

- Programme has created through CBOs Community Funds that helped in social mobilisation. Rs 9.6 million raised and mobilised to fulfil urgent household needs. Especially, the women have found a great satisfaction in having their own money for spending whenever they desire. The rural poor's access to micro-credit has increased relieving the pressure on loan of higher interest rate (upto 60 percent) charged by local moneylenders and hassles in getting funds from financial institutions.
- Sustainable Development Facility Fund (SDFF), created to increase access to collateral-free micro-credit for setting up

micro-enterprises, has been activated for various on-farm and off-farm income generation activities. It has also freed the communities from the traditional loan system that kept the poor in debt or forced them to flee from their villages.

Capacity Building

- At the community level, the CBOs and their members have been provided with opportunities to acquire new skills and knowledge on practical aspects. SCDP has developed Village Specialists on sustainable development in the programme area to provide paid service to the community members on specific technologies. The technology they helped install or the services they have provided so far were found effective.
- A fairly high number of training and learning events for the SO staff on a wide variety of topics has taken place. These events enabled the staff to plan and implement the sustainable development programmes with the help of the participating communities, which is evidenced by the great success in community mobilisation, high level of participation, and integration achieved in programme implementation in the three districts resulting in :
 - emergence of the SOs as a key facilitator in the programme districts,
 - increased roles of the SOs' in teamwork with the DDC and other development players at the district level in participatory planning and implementation of sustainable development activities.

Annual Audit

UNDP conducted an annual audit for the year 2001. It was carried out by Joshi & Bhandary Chartered Accountants. The audit findings revealed a good delivery of resources and satisfactory impacts on the lives of people.

They also revealed the accountability and transparency of financial activities of the Programme (see Annex 6).

Conclusion

In the year 2001, SCDP was engaged mainly in influencing policy. SCDP has been assisting the National Planning Commission to formulate SDAN, which will be linked to the 10th plan. The consultants were assigned for looking into the existing policies and preparing draft sectoral policy documents. At the same time the work in districts continued support to the community organisations that would contribute to achieving the national goals on poverty reduction and improve environment.

During the fourth quarter of the year 2001 a nationwide state of emergency was declared that hindered the frequency of formal gatherings and created difficulties in smooth acceleration of the Programme. However, the supporting organisations were engaged in exploring the ways to safeguard the Programme properties and encouraging communities to continue their work despite the rebel forces' frequent actions and counter-actions of security forces in the rural areas. In most cases, normal communication channels, transportation, and mobility were badly affected. This meant less frequent visits to the remote settlements and very cautious investments of credit capital. Even then, the local staff were able to maintain integrity in favor of the SCDP and made Programme implementation possible in this difficult situation.

SCDP has been seen as a true community-led Programme. This is because of the development approach of SCDP and dedication of the support organisation staff. This approach has involved all the decision makers for an assessment of the learning processes leading towards informal decision making and securing Programmeme success.