

**Consultation meeting of Andhra Pradesh Livelihood Learning Group (APLLG)
on 'Natural Resources based livelihoods'**

26th, May, 2006 Centre for World Solidarity, Secundrabad

Back Ground

A Two day workshop on 'Sustainable Livelihoods: Emerging Practices' was organized during 1st – 2nd July 2005 by APMAS and ISLP with the involvement of all key players on livelihood aspects in the state. About 88 participants representing various organisations attended the workshop and discussed livelihood scenario in the state and chalked out strategies to be adopted. Based on the discussion, it was agreed that for addressing the livelihood challenge a multi pronged strategy focusing on the following aspects should be taken up together by the Government, NGOs and the support institutions:

- Capacity building at multiple levels
- Strengthen appropriate institutions
- Enhance productivity of natural resources
- Focus on livelihood finances
- Manage risk
- Create enabling policy environment

With this back ground one day consultation meeting was organized by CWS in collaboration with APMAS with the NRM Institutions – engaged in implementation of projects, support institutions, agencies engaged in livelihood promotion through natural resources management at different levels to discuss about the way forward for this thematic group.

Enhance Productivity of Natural Resources

There has been some fascination among livelihood promotion agencies to promote off/non-farm activities. However, the data indicates, a large number of livelihoods are in the primary sector. Also most non-farm activities are directly or indirectly dependent on inputs from the primary sector. Therefore, the most significant area for livelihoods promotion is investment in enhancing the productivity of natural resources including land, water, energy, forests and livestock. This will lead to highest employment generation with high GSDP growth and least income disparity.

Different agencies involved in livelihood promotion have demonstrated innovative ways of productivity enhancement and effective management of natural resources. Several organizations have been working on promotion of water based, land based and livestock based livelihoods apart from the non-farm activities.

| The land-based activities being introduced include improved nursery/grafting, tree based farming system, composting, cultivation of vegetables and medicinal plants, and

sericulture. Livestock based livelihoods options such as dairy, breeding of bullocks as draught animals, goat/sheep rearing and backyard poultry are being developed depending on the availability of resources. Activities such as sericulture and poultry are seen as low investment and low risk options. Some of the organization like FES is working through management of commons including the revenue wastelands and the reserve forests. These areas have been restored through community protection and investment in afforestation and soil and moisture conservation measures. The impact on these interventions can be clearly seen in the form of incomes from various resources which are managed like watersheds, forestlands, commons etc

Still we have a many challenges and a long way to go a head which include:

- How to facilitate institutional mechanisms and systems for natural resource management and extraction
- Up scaling the various best practices in NRM
- Mitigation of issues of inequity in access and usage of natural resources
- Improving the productivity of natural resources of marginal and small farmers, land less and many more.....

With this back ground Sri. MV Sastry inaugurated the consultation meeting with him opening remarks. The present growth 8% GDP not creating many opportunities as envisaged and the pressure to use technology wherever necessary reduce the existing opportunities. In this context, he requested the agencies involved in livelihood promotion to draw relevant lessons from the experiences particularly in the area of natural resource based livelihoods. He mentioned that CPRs were the major source of livelihood for the poor over a period of time. But now there is increasing pressure on CPRs which is the major concern for the livelihoods of the poor. Sri. Sastry quoted the example of GCC where credit, market and research combined to maximise the benefit of NTFP for the tribals. Similarly he urged the CSOs to build capacities in the areas of marketing and study the examples and replicate them to benefit the large number of poor depended on natural resources.

Mr. CS Reddy, CEO of APMAS adding to the opening remarks mentioned that now India is in critical juncture with 8% GDP growth and on the verge of becoming developed country. But the major challenge he mentioned that how to work in more collaborative manner in view of the increasing challenges to CSOs. He mentioned that 3 lakhs SHGs availing Rs.1700 crores of credit from banks but the utilization of the credit available for the investment for sustainable livelihoods remained as challenge. At the same time 70% of the poor are not able to access financial services from formal institutions. He mentioned that the forums like LLG-NRM should look for the initiatives that could be replicated on larger scale and have the capacity to address the livelihood issues of the poor. Sustaining the enthusiasm and follow up between meeting to meeting are the challenges faced this kind of forums, he mentioned.

Dr. Shankar Datta explained about the evolution of LLG and how the idea came up. Natural resources contributed to be a major source of livelihoods. Effective and optimum use of natural resources is going to be major challenge in future. In this context, Dr. Datta

mentioned that promoting learning and sharing between various agencies involved in livelihood promotion is critical and LLG is one of the forum for that purpose.

Dr. Uday Shankar made presentation on over view of NRM based livelihoods in Andhra Pradesh. During the presentation he focussed different dimensions of natural resource based livelihoods and how the macro level policies impacting the livelihoods of the poor. Over view from different angles provoked the thinking of the participants and emphasized the need for collective action to face the challenges posed by Government and other macro level actors.

Experience Sharing

Later different organizations MEOS, APPS, DDS, CPF, FES, DDNN and AWARD presented to the meeting shared their work and experiences;

Majority of the participants reflected on the presentation made by Dr. Uday Shankar and quoted their experiences. Representative from DDS cited an example where 5000 hectares developed with the support of NWDP but how recent land distribution by government made the effort futile. Majority of the participants raised concerns about how do the CSOs to get in to the issues and raise the voice against anti poor policies of Government and how to mobilize the people to raise the issues.

Scope of LLG - NRM

Post lunch discussion was on the scope of LLG-NRM. Participants tried to identify the areas in the broad arena of Natural based livelihoods. However, the following cross cutting themes identified as the scope of LLG-NRM;

- The groups capacities for livelihood intervention
- Resource group for best practices
- Policy advocacy (the specific thematic areas need to be evolved over a period of time)
- Collaboration for advocacy on the basis of grass root experiences
- Documentation of relevant experiences for greater learning
- Think tank on Analysis of policies

Way forward

The meeting concluded with the following action plan

Action point	Lead Person
Collation of best practices from ISLP	Mr. Kasim with ISLP
Initiation of E.Group	Padmaja, APMAS
Finalization of membership Criteria, identification and contact details	Mr. Ramachnder, WASSANand Mr. Sreenivas Reddy of DDNN
Bring out the presentation of Uday shankar as publication	Mr. Uday Shankar and Padmaja, APMAS
Next Meeting during July 4 th Week	APPS, Ananthapur

