ENRAP: Knowledge Networking for Rural Development in Asia

A Mid Term Review
for
International Development Research Centre and
International Fund for Agricultural Development

Submitted by

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in collaboration with Chin Saik Yoon, Southbound
ENRAP Mid Term Review

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1. Introduction

The International Fund for Agricultural Development and the International Development Research Centre have commissioned a mid term review of the second phase of ENRAP: Knowledge Networking for Rural Development in the Asia/Pacific Region. The purpose of this review is to analyze the functioning of the ENRAP program, including the roles of the key partners, IDRC and the International Fund for Agricultural Development; determine whether the objectives can be met within the time remaining; suggest adjustments and lessons learned. In addition, IFAD has asked for insight into what it might do in future with respect to the use of information and communications technology and knowledge sharing within and across its projects in the region.

The review team consisted of Heather Creech and Terri Willard, International Institute for Sustainable Development, and Chin Saik Yoon, Southbound. The review was conducted in several stages:

- A review of ENRAP activities in Laos, Viet Nam and the Philippines, conducted by Chin Saik Yoon
- A review of ENRAP activities in Pakistan, India and Nepal, conducted by Heather Creech
- Consultations with the key partners in Rome and Delhi, conducted by Heather Creech and Terri Willard.

Comments made by ENRAP’s Steering Committee on the review report are also reflected in the report, followed by responses from the reviewers. The Steering Committee members represent IFAD and IDRC.

Abbreviations

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>ENRAP</td>
<td>Knowledge networking for rural development in Asia</td>
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<td>IDRC</td>
<td>International Development Research Centre</td>
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<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
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<td>CPM</td>
<td>Country Portfolio Manager</td>
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<td>PMU</td>
<td>Project Management Unit</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communications Technology</td>
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<td>MTR</td>
<td>Mid Term Review</td>
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Details of the consultations and site visits are appended to this report.

2. Background

The ENRAP II project period is November 2002 to the end of 2005 (three years). It builds on the experience of ENRAP Phase I, executed between 1998 and 2001. There was a one-year interim period between the two phases.
ENRAP originated in an approach from IFAD to IDRC. IFAD was interested in IDRC’s efforts, through its UNGANISHA program, to link IDRC projects through the effective deployment of ICTs, and in so doing, promote greater knowledge sharing, leading to improved project effectiveness and impact. IFAD wanted IDRC to undertake a similar exercise, to introduce ICTs into IFAD projects. In interviews with the Asia Division of IFAD, IFAD staff noted that they hoped that the introduction of ICTs would improve project efficiency and effectiveness, and would increase networking and knowledge sharing among project stakeholders within projects, between projects at the national level, and ultimately across the Asia Pacific region.

Some of IFAD’s expectations for ENRAP II, as expressed during the interviews, included:

- Building on the awareness, developed in Phase 1, of the importance of sharing knowledge and strengthening capacity of project staff to document learnings. Areas of knowledge to be shared included elements of the regional/country strategies, such as uplands management, gender mainstreaming, and microfinance.

- Building networks at 3 levels: local (within projects), national and regional: The “ideal would be if networks continued when our projects no longer exist”\(^1\). It was hoped that ENRAP would at least build strong national networks in India and China as IFAD invests a large portion of its loan portfolio in these countries within Asia. IFAD was interested both in building capacity for networking and creating a network of networks.

- Focusing less on hardware and connectivity, and more on software, non-digital communications approaches, and capacity-building for sharing knowledge.

IFAD hoped that ENRAP would

- Improve substantive knowledge about integrated rural development and
- Strengthen the project management units, by introducing ICTs to help improve accountability

IDRC entered the partnership out of a strong interest to work with IFAD as a major actor in rural development. IDRC would be able to share its own expertise on the role of ICTs in development (ICT4D), and on networking in general. Not only would IDRC help to build IFAD’s capacity in these areas, IDRC would also have an opportunity to attempt “upscale”: learning whether ICTs could be transformative in rural development on a large scale, by introducing ICTs into IFAD’s projects.

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\(^1\) Thomas Elhaut
IDRC views ENRAP as an “enabler” for knowledge management to start taking place within and across IFAD projects, rather than be a knowledge management project per se. Rather than doing all the documenting of stories, leading all the email discussions, etc., ENRAP seeks to build capacity in each project to do this as an integral part of their daily work.

ENRAP II was funded primarily through a grant from IFAD to IDRC, from IFAD’s regional grants program. IDRC has also contributed financially to ENRAP II. In addition, at the project level, it was anticipated that projects would contribute to activities supported by ENRAP.

The Steering Committee noted that the expectations expressed by IFAD staff interviewed may not necessarily match perfectly with the objectives defined in the ENRAP Project document which is the key guide for the implementation team. Progress of ENRAP is expected to be measured against these objectives.

### 3. Overview of ENRAP II

The recommendations from the evaluation of ENRAP I and the stated objectives from the project documentation for ENRAP II can be summarized as follows:

<table>
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<th>Phase II objectives</th>
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<td><strong>[Note that these are not listed in the same order as in the ENRAP project document]</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1. Assess and strengthen as necessary, present technical networking capacity in IFAD-funded projects</strong></td>
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<td>Note: The Evaluation Report for Phase 1 recommended that ENRAP II should:</td>
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<td>• Increase Internet access: “ENRAP should consolidate activities in the area of basic ICT access and institutional capacity-building before taking up ambitious plans for knowledge-sharing.”</td>
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<td>• Combine digital media with other approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Build a culture of sharing and learning</td>
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<td>• Reinforce communication between IFAD and project staff</td>
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Note: The Phase II proposal made the following commitment: a part of the budget will be used to ensure that all IFAD Project Management Units (PMUs) in the 8 countries will be properly connected to the Internet to ensure that they will be able to communicate and participate in the network. A minimum standard for connectivity of the PMU will apply.

2. Develop the following types of communities for sharing knowledge: Local, national, regional. “Projects in individual countries will be linked to national networks, which in turn will be linked to the regional ENRAP network.”

Note: Phase 1 recommended that ENRAP II should:
- Network at the national level: reconfigure ENRAP from a hub and spokes model (projects to central ENRAP coordinating unit) to a network of networks model. “ENRAP would comprise a national, or several subnational, networks within each country”.

3. Design and test innovative technical and institutional models and prepare guidelines for IFAD-funded projects to make effective use of ICTs

Note: Phase I recommended that ENRAP II should:
- Be integrated with core IFAD projects and address all computer applications within projects, not just connectivity (Management Information Systems, etc.)

4. Build and expand the capacity of community based organisations and rural communities in IFAD-funded project areas (including participating CBOs, NGOs, and line agencies) to integrate the use of electronic media into their day-to-day operations

The core activities of ENRAP II to date include:
- Staffing and management of the ENRAP coordination unit at IDRC South Asia Regional Office, Delhi
- Redesign and management of the ENRAP website; production of the ENRAP newsletter
- Regional and national workshops for IFAD projects
- Efforts to identify “champions” and subsequently local “facilitators” at the national level to catalyze and support development of national networks
- Connectivity assessments
- Management of small grants to IFAD projects
- Demonstration projects

4. Analysis of the functioning of ENRAP II

IFAD and IDRC have requested that the MTR team review the functioning of the programme and each of its components since Phase II became operational. IFAD wishes to know whether the original plan for ENRAP Phase 2 is still valid. To what extent have the objectives been met, and are they still achievable within the time remaining? IDRC
further seeks insight into the role and contribution of the key partners to meeting the objectives.

4.1 Objectives

Three of the four objectives are currently being addressed in the execution of Phase 2:

1. Assess and strengthen the technical networking capacity of IFAD projects
2. Foster the development of networking within projects, national networks and a regional network.
3. Design and test innovative technical and institutional models and prepare guidelines for IFAD-funded projects to make effective use of ICTs

The MTR did not observe any activities initiated to date to meet the remaining objective:

4. Build and expand the capacity of community based organisations and rural communities in IFAD-funded project areas (including participating CBOs, NGOs, and line agencies) to integrate the use of electronic media into their day-to-day operations.

4.1.1 Assess and strengthen the technical networking capacity of IFAD projects

In the opinion of the review team, ENRAP’s most significant accomplishment to date is the slow but gradual shift in culture within the IFAD projects with which it has had direct interaction, through workshops, local facilitators, demonstration projects and small grants. Projects visited during this review are familiar with web and email services, have adopted the language of knowledge sharing and are experimenting with a range of digital and other communications methods: establishing websites, creating digital videos, using GIS to create better maps, and writing success stories. All project management units have at least rudimentary connectivity to the Internet, with access to web and email services [although in many cases access may be extremely slow and unreliable, and may not yet be available from every project officer’s desk]. The only exception is the Northern Areas Development Project in Pakistan, where the absence of a local ISP and the cost of long distance dialup have been a barrier to access.

Within IFAD itself, there is a greater recognition of both the value and challenges of integrating ICTs into IFAD projects in Asia and the Pacific. Indeed, because of the challenges ENRAP has faced, IFAD informants have themselves noted that the integration of ICTs into projects requires not only infrastructure (hardware, software and connectivity) but communications planning and capacity development. Although it was not an objective of ENRAP, it may be that one of its important outcomes is its contribution to IFAD’s own increasing appreciation of the role of electronic communications in rural development.
As IFAD itself takes on a renewed commitment to knowledge management, and seeks to draw more knowledge from the regions and flow knowledge more effectively into the regions, it will find that ENRAP has paved the way for acceptance of this in Asia/Pacific projects. As noted in the site visit reports in the appendices, countries in the Asia Pacific region face a number of challenges:

- Some resistance to the practice of knowledge sharing (traditional views within bureaucracies that holding knowledge is power)
- Lack of a common language for the region, and great diversity of languages within countries; cultural diversity may also be a factor
- Continuing significant limitations in connectivity: connectivity may have been overestimated in the design of Phase 2. While the PMUs have basic connectivity, the PMU is only one small component of an IFAD project; connectivity is significantly lower at the level of the district project offices and virtually non-existent at the village level.

In spite of these challenges, ENRAP has made inroads in terms of raising awareness of the need to share information and of the value of different communications tools.

With respect to the commitment in the Phase 2 proposal, that a portion of the budget will be used to ensure that all the project management units will be properly connected to the Internet: IDRC has noted that on several occasions, IFAD and IDRC have had the chance to discuss the issue of the magnitude of funding needed to fully cover this commitment. It has been brought to IFAD’s notice that the budgeted funds in ENRAP are not sufficient to achieve full, reliable connectivity, although the available funds have been leveraged in a number of situations; but other additional resources may be needed to fully equip all participating projects in this regard.

4.1.1.1
The Steering Committee feels that the awareness raising accomplishment of ENRAP leading to a “culture shift, is a key achievement and should not be undervalued. ENRAP phase II included developing networks in new countries, which meant starting from scratch in those countries. Moreover, when working in the area of ICT4D, it is well known that raising awareness is a key activity, since most beneficiaries don't understand the potential and usefulness of information and communication technologies. One member of the Steering Committee stated “Many ICT projects fail or are constrained by the lack of awareness of the usefulness of ICTs. The recent article in "the Economist" questioning whether ICTs were useful is a perfect example of not understanding this: in the article, the author cites that rural people in India do not list ICTs as a need. It is difficult to imagine they would cite it as a need if they don't understand why it's useful. Hence this accomplishment of ENRAP should not be undervalued; it's the basis for everything else.”

The Review Team agrees. That’s why we placed this finding at the top of the list and considered the change in culture and awareness to be ENRAP’s ‘most significant “accomplishment”.

IISD, 2005 p8
4.1.2. Foster the development of networking within projects, national networks and a regional network.

A more detailed report on networking status follows in section 5.1. In brief, the review team observes that ENRAP has served to assist in many cases with improving internal communications within projects between the PMU and district offices, and to a lesser extent between PMU/districts and villages, through the documentation, either in video or in print, of village successes.

To date, there is very little progress on fostering national networks, although significant efforts have been made to find a workable approach (including experiments with local facilitators, and direct efforts from the ENRAP coordinator to stimulate the documenting and sharing of lessons learned). The national workshops, combined with IFAD’s own national meetings, are serving to improve awareness of what other projects in the country are doing, but this is not leading to “networks” per se; and certainly not to networks that will exist beyond the lifespan of IFAD projects. Efforts by ENRAP to have projects bring other stakeholders to the ENRAP workshops (implementing NGOs, research institutions, government line agencies) led to varied experiences. While key government agencies are engaged in Philippines, China, Laos, Nepal and to a certain extent in Vietnam; though in Pakistan, India and Srilanka ENRAP’s contact has been for most part with the project management units only. Similarly Philippines and Nepal invited their NGO partner staff to the national meetings. And without the national networks, ENRAP will not become a “network of networks”.

The review team would like to suggest that one of the challenges in implementation of ENRAP II is a lack of clarity on the difference between establishing “networks” and fostering “networking”.

Networks are organizational entities, and require structure, coordination and joint activities, especially in the formative stages when relationships that didn’t exist before need to be established. If ENRAP intends to create national networks, even in just one or two key countries like India and China, then it needs to take a much more deliberative approach. The role of the local “facilitator” needs to be significantly enhanced, and viewed as a formal “coordinator”, with specific tasks, timelines and deliverables. This national coordinator needs to support the projects with assessments of communications needs and plans; but in addition, the coordinator needs to develop a national plan: for example, are there one or two common information needs within all country projects that could be met through collective action by the projects?

If the emphasis is in fact on the more generic activity of “networking” – finding out who’s who and who’s doing what in the projects in each country, then that also needs to be more systematically addressed, and may require more direct engagement from IFAD CPMs. It would appear that some projects do not see a great deal of value yet in documenting and sharing lessons learned from their work. ENRAP’s requests are seen as
additional work rather than integral to improving project effectiveness. This could change only if this process is well-integrated in project design and operations, and receives the necessary encouragement from government units responsible for loan execution along with IFAD.

Strengthening the gathering of and navigation to project specific content on the part of the ENRAP coordination unit would also be helpful in supporting project “networking”:

- Organize the content more explicitly by IFAD projects. For each of the relevant IFAD projects in the projects directory of the website, include links to their ENRAP project activities (proposals, progress reports and final results such as websites and videos). Also share the technical assessment information so that projects can see what the technical infrastructure is in other projects.
- On the project pages on the ENRAP website, the technical support staff, communications officers, and monitoring and evaluation officers should be listed as well as the project directors; there should be links to IFAD’s information about each project; the project directors should be encouraged to post their project reports to IFAD on the ENRAP site, for sharing with other projects. Again, this may require much more liaison between ENRAP and the CPMs.

4.1.2.1
On the issue of networking being different from networks the Steering Committee feels networking is an activity that allows a network to develop. Thus, networking precedes the development of networks. One member of the Steering Committee stated, “Hierarchical public and civil society institutions need to go through a "networking" phase of communications and information sharing that is very different from the vertical systems of bureaucracies. Once people at different levels, in different roles, in different institutions and in different places begin "networking" then a "network” with more formal characteristics becomes possible.”

The Steering Committee also perceived the definition of network in this review document as being fairly limited to formal networks. IDRC’s own definition is more open ended: "Networks are social arrangements of organizations and/or individuals linked together around a common theme or purpose, working jointly but allowing members to maintain their autonomy as participants". Whether one refers to ENRAP as a network or not wouldn’t change the fact networking activities are still needed to ensure that people work and collaborate. Networks take time to flourish; therefore the Steering Committee agrees with the reviewers’ comments on the need to think of a different time frame for ENRAP that takes that into account.

The Review Team: Our definition of formal networks is not that dissimilar, and includes the same elements of “common purpose” and “working jointly”: A formal knowledge network is a group of expert institutions working together on a common concern, to strengthen each other's research and communications capacity, to share knowledge bases and develop solutions that meet the needs of target decision-makers at the national and international level”. We agree with the committee that networking capacity must be
fostered before networks can be established. However, the program logic in the ENRAP phase 2 proposal does not show how ENRAP intends to move from networking to networks, even though it is a stated intention that “Projects in individual countries will be linked to national networks, which in turn will be linked to the regional ENRAP network.” It is not just a different time frame that is needed; it is also a more explicit plan as to how the networks will be established and managed for “common purpose” and “working jointly”.

4.1.3 Design and test technical and institutional models and prepare guidelines

The review team found the terminology of “technical and institutional models” somewhat misleading at first, as we felt that this implied operational structures for hardware, software and staffing. Only the arterial connectivity project in the Philippines really met what we thought to be an experimental “technical and institutional model” for providing access that would in turn provide a platform for knowledge sharing.

In discussions with IDRC over this point, it is clearer that this objective has been interpreted to mean the testing of innovative methods to reach and engage the target group (projects and their communities), including experiments with different knowledge sharing tools such as digital video. With this interpretation, we can say more confidently that a number of approaches are being tried out, including, for example:

- Strengthening GIS capacity as a tool in community resource management [Nepal]
- Digital video as a tool to capture village success [India]
- Web site development as a means to promote project experience [Pakistan]
- Strengthening writing skills as critical to the communication of project work [Viet Nam, Laos]

With respect to the preparation of guidelines for IFAD-funded projects to make effective use of ICTs, this is an extremely important task and we would strongly encourage ENRAP to develop this prior to the conclusion of Phase II. IFAD is aware that one of the barriers ENRAP encountered was the inability of projects to make matching contributions from project budgets, or to change project budgets in order to purchase hardware. It will be a significant contribution from ENRAP to IFAD if it can prepare the specifications for future IFAD projects for hardware, software, connectivity and training. This capacity should be as fundamental as the purchase of vehicles and the installation of accounting systems.

The ENRAP Coordinator informs that such inputs were provided while participating in three IFAD project design exercises. Based on these project design exercises and other experiences it is planned that some guidelines be prepared at the end of Phase II.

4.1.4 Build and expand the capacity of community based organisations and rural communities
It is unclear from the project design how ENRAP intended to achieve capacity building for CBOs and other rural organizations. In the original project document, the table of activities and outputs make no reference to how this capacity building will be accomplished. Given the severe connectivity constraints in village areas, it was perhaps unreasonable to expect ENRAP itself to build capacity at that level, and should not have been included as an objective for Phase II. If ENRAP hoped for a “trickle down” approach – that once the projects had their own capacity built, the project staff would in turn build the capacity of their CBOs, NGOS and line agencies, then this should have been communicated to and planned for with the projects. The ENRAP Coordinator noted that ENRAP did not see a lot of encouragement by some projects to engage its CBO, NGO and line agency partners when it suggested that they also be represented at the national workshops.

4.1.5 Additional comments on ENRAP II objectives

The review team must also comment on some limitations to the objectives and expectations for Phase 2:

If ENRAP II is to be about knowledge sharing, the project would benefit from a much clearer articulation about the type of knowledge to be shared. Key informants to the review expressed a range of views:

- **IFAD** hoped knowledge to be shared would be substantive: such as uplands management, gender mainstreaming, and microfinance.

- **PMU, district project staff and CPMs** were often looking for more sharing of business process tools: how to set up community organizations; how to determine interest rates for microcredit; how to ensure state sanctioning of village level institutions (eg Natural Resource Management Groups) in order to ensure project sustainability.

- **Project staff** were also looking for tools for communications, and for training in the whole range of communications options: writing reports, dealing with media, street theatre, video documentation, and web.

It is not clear that ENRAP has fully internalized the distinctions among these knowledge needs. A separate and detailed plan of action would be required to build capacity and foster knowledge sharing in each of these areas, but this does not appear to be the case. Clearly ENRAP does not have the funds or the time to deliver on all three of these knowledge needs. However, better articulation of the distinctions might have helped to manage expectations among the stakeholders; and might also have helped in planning how some of these needs could be met in other ways.

Finally, it has been noted that ENRAP was intended to develop “innovative technical models”, pilots, and demonstrations. However, the review team did not see the
intellectual framework that such pilots and demos and models would be tested within. Without a thesis/hypothesis for such experiments, it is difficult to determine exactly what the learnings might be, and how applicable they might be to other IFAD projects.

For example, in Nepal’s experiments with GIS, has a set of assumptions been posed and tested: for example, does this approach serve to help communities participate in their resource management; does GIS work better than hand building 3-D models of community resources as a village communications tool; and what capacities would an institution need to adapt this technology to their own needs. Furthermore, was the experiment then tested in different regional situations to assess applicability in other environments?

In the absence of these types of guiding questions, it is less likely that the results of an experiment will be adequately captured, assessed and used for scaling up. Without this type of research framework for ENRAP demos and pilots, ENRAP is relegated to acting more as a small grants program for individual activities within IFAD projects rather than a series of experiments that the projects can learn from.

4.1.5.1
The Steering Committee sees value in small grants programs; certainly it is not always an ineffective strategy. This modality is used regularly in IDRC and is especially useful in bringing new people into networking and networks. Moreover, it might be useful to develop a flowchart of the IFAD cycle of idea-proposal-review-approval-implementation-evaluation so that an understanding of when things happen, and who does them, can be more generalized. Such a flow-chart might help to establish entry-points with an understanding of what can be achieved and the way to achieve it.

The Review Team: ENRAP Coordination notes, “we only responded to a need expressed by the project”. Small grants that meet that type of need are indeed useful; but this does not necessary meet the stated objective, “to design and test technical and institutional models” that will generate learnings for other projects.

We think the flow chart concept is an excellent idea and would encourage further exploration of that approach.

4.2 The key relationship: IFAD and IDRC

IFAD values its relationship with IDRC and believes that, within Rome, the experience of working with IDRC has served to increase its own appreciation of ICTs in rural development. IFAD is taking greater ownership of ENRAP, viewing ENRAP as one of its regional networks. Phase II project documentation and interviews clearly indicate that ENRAP first and foremost is being implemented to make IFAD projects more effective.

There are however mixed signals in projects visited: many view ENRAP primarily as an IDRC initiative rather than one mandated and supported by IFAD. Consequently, they
have a tendency to approach ENRAP as a small grants fund or side activity rather than a core commitment to improve their effectiveness through strengthened communications capacity. IFAD was very forthright in recognizing that it did not adequately engage the support of the CPMs in ENRAP; but IDRC may have inadvertently contributed to this perception. The ENRAP website is branded with IDRC’s wordmark and logo at the top of the page; the core design elements of the website make no reference to IFAD; there is no link to IFAD from the front page. Perhaps the issue here is not so much whether projects view ENRAP as IDRC’s or as a stand alone initiative; but rather that they do not see it as mandated and “owned” by IFAD.

The review team would like to suggest that this stems from how ENRAP was established and funded. IFAD provided a grant to IDRC, which IDRC accepted in the furtherance of its own interests in working with another major institution in rural development, and its interests in testing the introduction of ICTs into rural areas. However, if ENRAP fundamentally was to make IFAD projects more effective, then there should have been a much stronger “client-contractor” relationship in place.

While the weekly communications between ENRAP and IDRC are important, there should also have been equally systematic communications between ENRAP/IDRC and IFAD, beyond the submission of reports.

An appreciation of a client-contractor relationship might have led IFAD to more actively promote the value of ENRAP to each of the participating projects. In turn, IDRC might have been more atuned to the mechanics of IFAD operations, and how they might impact on the success of ENRAP.

For example, IFAD itself has been functioning in a hub and spokes manner in this region: it does not have country “programmes” per se (although it is now moving in that direction); each project has been established as a unique activity. IDRC’s attempts to move ENRAP from a hub and spokes model to national networks will not succeed, because IFAD itself is only just moving to function that way.

Second, the issue of how IFAD project budgets are negotiated and locked down (preventing investment in the necessary ICT infrastructure) might have been recognized and dealt with sooner, even during ENRAP I.

Finally, IFAD projects are established for long periods of time (6-10 years), while IDRC project cycles tend to be 2-3 years. ENRAP has been viewed by some IFAD projects as coming in too late, and for too short a time to truly support capacity building within the project. The project director at NERCRMP specifically questioned whether ENRAP had been adequately linked into the long term vision / commitments of IFAD within each project.

While IDRC and IFAD would like to view the relationship as a “strategic partnership”, the review team believes that there needs to be greater ownership and involvement of IFAD as the “client” and principal beneficiary of IDRC’s efforts. And in turn, as the
“contractor”, IDRC needs to monitor regularly how IFAD is shifting towards more of a
country program approach, how it is dealing with knowledge management challenges and
other related initiatives, in order to assess how these might impact its work on ENRAP.

4.2.1
The **Steering Committee** clarifies that the relationship between IDRC and IFAD is that
of a partnership with common goals and cannot be characterized as "client-contractor".
IDRC puts significant human and financial resources to ensure that ENRAP succeeds. “It
has also integrated ENRAP within its program framework. IDRC *never* implements
projects as a contractor and IFAD too is not in this relationship as a “client””. It is agreed
“partnerships are never easy and therefore administrative issues need to be ironed out, but
the will is there between both organizations to remain partners”.

The **Review Team**: We recognize the importance of characterizing the relationship as
one of partnership rather than client – contractor. We would encourage the two partners
take some time to define their roles and expectations of each other more explicitly, and to
interact more closely and more systematically, so that IFAD takes more ownership of its
role as partner; and so that IDRC can investigate in more depth how IFAD’s structure,
operations, and potential changes to those may impact ENRAP.

4.3 **Demand vs supply in the implementation of ENRAP II**

Several informants commented that the Phase I evaluation suggested that ENRAP II
should become more demand driven. On review of that evaluation report, the review
team is uncertain where that interpretation arises. Nevertheless, this perception appears to
have significantly influenced how ENRAP II functions. Consequently, a great deal of
effort has been expended in encouraging IFAD projects to submit proposals for assistance
that best meet their immediate needs.

Unfortunately, at the beginning of phase II, this appears to have resulted in a dearth of
proposal submissions, or in proposals being submitted that did not entirely meet the
criteria set by ENRAP.

ENRAP has now recognized that a “demand driven” approach assumed a capacity within
projects to assess their communications needs and an awareness of the range of options
available to address those needs. The success of the video demonstration project led by
Rana Ghose illustrates how it is sometimes necessary to catalyze demand. The review
team also suggests a stronger focus in the balance of ENRAP II on communications
planning: helping projects view the “bigger picture” of communications needs and tools,
and then identify the gaps that ENRAP could support.

4.3.1
The **Steering Committee feels** that in the case of an audience that is unexposed to ICTs
and their relevance for development, addressing immediate needs has helped effective
“entry”, built capacity and convinced projects of the usefulness of ICT tools. No doubt
more can be done but jumping milestones without following the process will not help achieve longer-term gains.

Furthermore, the Steering Committee doesn’t see a contradiction between being demand driven and using demonstrations and/or other centrally designed activities to drive this demand. It is true that the initial expectation of ENRAP regarding the awareness and capacity of projects to participate in such an activity, especially since it was in phase II, were overestimated. However, this was realized very quickly in about two to three months. Since then the effort has been to build demand and capacity in differing ways. In this context, the digital video documentation training was a well-planned exercise.

4.4 Communications

In the site visits for Pakistan and India, the review team took note not only of the technology infrastructure within the projects, but also the range of communications activities. One of the interesting findings from the site visits was the recent creation of a communications officer position in NERCRMP\(^2\). Other projects do not appear to have a similar position, although many do produce a range of communications products, including project newsletters, pamphlets, media stories, the occasional website [some initiated through ENRAP and some not], the occasional video documentation [again, some initiated through ENRAP and some not]. The communications officer position at NERCRMP has the potential to significantly increase local awareness of the project through local media and video, improve interaction among local stakeholders, and increase the capture and dissemination of success stories.

Informants from Pakistan and India, and the MTR team member who reviewed projects in Laos, Vietnam and the Philippine, believe that ENRAP may have focused too much on technology issues rather than communications skills. The introduction of ICTs certainly didn’t lead to good web practice at NERCRMP or BVDP or CTDS, in large part because at the time, they didn’t have a good picture of how web communications could or should be integrated into overall project communications strategies.

ENRAP should seriously consider, for the balance of its term, a strong focus on communications planning: the assessment of internal and external needs, the strategies and tools to support those needs. ENRAP needs to put the “C” back in ICT -- and in fact is starting to do this, through the success of the video project and the various trainings provided for writing and documentation. But the overall skills for planning and management for communications, including electronic communications, are absent from most IFAD projects.

\(^2\) It has since been learned that the communications officer position in NERCRMP hasn’t been extended by the project. As the Review Team was informed at the time that the position had in fact been recommended as part of an IFAD review of NERCRMP, it would be interesting to know why the position is no longer in place.
IFAD in particular should look carefully at how NERCMP is benefiting from the communications officer position. Serious thought should be given to making this a core position in all IFAD projects, similar in status to the monitoring and evaluation officer, the gender specialist, the agricultural coordinator, and other standard positions in IFAD projects.

4.4.1 The Steering Committee is of the view that the key is not only focusing on the "C" in ICT but also the "I", as good information (i.e knowledge) is essential for ENRAP to be considered useful.

Regarding the view of the informants that ENRAP may have focused too much on technology issues rather than communication skills, please note that ENRAP’s focus has been to improve networking among projects, whether it is through support to communication or “technologies”, or a combination of both; the choice has depended on project specific needs and their requests. Some of these examples are listed below:

- Pakistan: In funding activities with two IFAD projects, the only reason ENRAP agreed to finance hardware is because the projects maintained these were important to improve their communication capability. The primary objective of website support to another project is to disseminate project lessons and other information.
- India: Apart from networking meetings, the most comprehensive exercise involving three projects in India has been building digital video documentation skills aimed at improving communication through video.
- Laos: ENRAP support in Laos began with writing and documentation skills training. Some funds and technical assistance has been provided to support connectivity for two projects and the desk at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs responsible for IFAD loans. This of course is in response to the very weak communication infrastructure in the country.
- Vietnam: ENRAP support here also began with writing and documentation skills training. However, now funds have been approved to support documentation and dissemination of IFAD’s experiences with decentralization.
- Philippines: ENRAP is supporting the Northern Mindanao project to look into the improvement of its communication capacity with an appropriate technical solution that can connect project offices in remote and natural-calamity prone areas. Support for capacity building to maintain this system and enhancement of communication skills are also built in to maximize the potential of this improved capacity. The CHARM project, which ended a few months back, is receiving relatively substantial support for documentation and dissemination of project lessons including a radio program for the farmers.

4.5 Linkages to IFAD monitoring and evaluation systems

The Nepal informant noted that the drivers for connectivity within IFAD projects are now IFAD’s own monitoring and evaluation system. There is a mandated requirement that projects collect both quantitative and qualitative information. An interesting window of
opportunity for ENRAP is to work with projects to build further capacity for the systematic collection of anecdotal evidence about project impacts (ie, success stories). Placing this within the context of the required monitoring and assessment processes may be the motivating factor for projects to collect and document this information; once available, they will be in a better position to actually share it with others.

5. Status of Specific Activities

5.1 Networking status

ENRAP II was designed to promote knowledge networking at three levels: within project, within countries, and within the Asian region.

Within project:

All projects visited appear to be managing satisfactory information flows among the different components and project sites, although these cannot all be attributed to ENRAP interventions. Knowledge sharing among the staff is happening via structured activities as well as informally through peer interactions. All projects see their project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities as the natural focal points for the information and knowledge sharing to take place. However, the flow of information seems to be happening in one direction, flowing predominantly from the field to the central project office. It will be useful to bring a balance into these flows so that field staff and members of the community will be able to obtain feedback on their efforts and, at the same time, learn about work being done in other communities. The M&E systems also tend to concentrate on quantitative data. Field personnel and stakeholders have suggested the inclusion of qualitative data which are helpful for trouble shooting problems and appreciating reasons behind progress achieved.

Within country:

A satisfactory level of knowledge networking is occurring among Project Directors in all countries. This occurs mainly through the periodic national meetings they attend to review and report on the status of their projects. Knowledge networking does not appear to be occurring at a significant level among technical and field staff. No exchange is taking place between beneficiary communities of projects.

Within the region:

A low level of networking was perceived among the key informants interviewed in the countries visited. Those Project Directors interviewed who attended “the Bangkok meeting” which brought together representatives of participating projects, recalled it as a very useful opportunity for making contacts and exchanging experiences. Such useful interpersonal contact was not only made among participants from different countries but also from within the same countries. For example two Project Directors from the
Philippines met for the first time at this event. Key informants said they have not been making frequent visits to the ENRAP website, a key channel for the exchange of information and experiences.

However, most commented favourably on the ENRAP newsletter.

5.1.1
Regarding networking among IFAD project staff the Steering Committee feels since it is already mentioned earlier in the report that many projects and countries are participating in this phase of ENRAP for the first time, the process of networking and sharing may still be at an early stage, impacting some levels (project directors) of the IFAD projects more than others (technical staff). And this may be essential to reach the stage where communities begin to share effectively with each other.

The Review Team: Part of the challenge is that awareness raising of the need of ICTs, and the process for fostering networking skills does take time, as members of the steering committee have reinforced in previous comments. However, we do think more needs to be done to engage technical and field staff; but national level coordinators are needed to accomplish this. With respect to the beneficiary communities of projects, this is where we believe more attention to planned communications efforts would have real impact.

The Steering Committee wonders if the infrequent visits to ENRAP website by the project staff is because all the information made available on the website is also provided through the email list. It is also true that since last June when the new website was launched, project staff have registered themselves as users slowly.

5.2 Summary of the status of ENRAP funded activities in IFAD projects:

The projects visited are either completed or in progress. With the exception of Barani Village and Chhattisgarh, they appear to be on schedule and should be completed before the conclusion of ENRAP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pakistan</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• South FATA</td>
<td>Funding received to purchase tools for documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Barani Village</td>
<td>Website contracted to web development consultant, but appears to be significantly delayed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Northern Areas</td>
<td>Proposal still under negotiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dir Area</td>
<td>Have received funding for LAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Northeast Region</td>
<td>Completion of participation in video demonstration project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Chhattisgarh | Project proposal ideas for website and
writing/documentation skills approved in principle, but CTDS concerned about finding a competent local web developer; no response to follow-up by ENRAP as yet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>WUPAP Underway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Completed writing and documentation skills training for HRDP, Decentralization experience sharing beginning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>Writing and documentation skills completed; connectivity support and local facilitation arrangement underway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Connectivity support to Northern Mindanao underway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Status of key issues noted in the TOR

The consultant’s terms of reference (TOR) call for reviewing and reporting on the following issues. The following is a summarised response to the questions posed by the TOR. Please read the reports for the field visits for observations that support this summary.

(1) Did the choice of ENRAP activities correspond to the objectives stated in the project documents?

Yes, the activities do correspond with several of the stated objectives, although not all objectives are being met at this stage.

(2) Has the implementation of ENRAP activities been effective in reaching the project objectives?

The activities have been able to build useful capacities within the projects visited to enable the project staff concerned to network and share experiences. Where video documentation has taken place, ENRAP has also, at least indirectly in a few locations, touched communities, enabling them to share their experiences. ENRAP is operating with a modest budget to pay for hardware and Internet connectivity, as such support in these areas is understandably limited. Knowledge sharing is occurring at a satisfactory level within projects. Project Directors of the different IFAD projects in each of the countries have the opportunity to meet and exchange experiences during their periodic national meetings. However, technical and field staff working with the different projects in each country are not networking with each other. Networking between countries and across the region is not occurring frequently; key informants interviewed are visiting the ENRAP website infrequently or not at all.

(3) Does the project have adequate resources (financial, human) to achieve its

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3 There is a slight variation of opinion within the MTR team as to how far ENRAPP can be said to have enabled communities to network and share experience.
It is difficult to respond to this question without carrying out a systematic needs analysis across the highly complex countries visited. The answer is “no” if based on gut feel. IFAD projects in these countries are located in some of the most challenging and geographically isolated parts of the region. ICT infrastructure and skills in these areas are weak and will require significant support to strengthen. Apart from financial and human resources, one of the most obvious resources that ENRAP II lacks is time. It was designed on a three year project cycle. Its slow start up prevented the first year from being used for mobilising partners and stakeholders to design relevant activities and present them for funding; consequently mobilizing, implementation and wrap up of activities have to be completed within the remaining two years. ENRAP II seems to be rapidly running out of time. It may soon be shut down just when it may be opportune to implement its most effective activities.

(4) Has project staffing been adequate and relevant? What were the particular advantages or limitations of using local facilitators?

Staffing for the ENRAP office in Delhi appears to be adequate; plans are in place for the ENRAP local facilitator to begin efforts more intensively. She joined in October 2004 combining roles of administrative support to ENRAP and local facilitation for India activities and has been undergoing basic orientation and training. Terms of reference describing her role, tasks and deliverables have been prepared, although not reviewed by the MTR team. In preparation for that role, it is strongly recommended that the assistant become well versed in network management literature, and if possible, to consult with others in the region who have experience with network coordination. She should also undertake to liaise frequently with the India CPM.

Laos and Pakistan were the only countries visited with a Local Facilitator in place.
- In Laos, the facilitator’s primary role seems to be one of overcoming the linguistic barrier and also to document project stories. He has been translating documents and preparing reports for different purposes including the ENRAP website. He prepared a newsletter for the ENRAP website reporting on IFAD project experiences in Laos. He has also been coordinating the building of a website for Ministry of Foreign Affairs to provide information on all donor-funded projects in Laos.

- In Pakistan, at the time of writing the local facilitator had stepped down. She believes her most significant accomplishment in ENRAP has been the acceptance of her in the role of facilitator by South FATA, Dir and Northern Area project directors; and she has served to improve interaction among these projects. She was also used by the projects as a broker with ENRAP.

While these roles are important, and should continue, the Local Facilitator’s work should extend beyond project reportage to facilitating carefully designed interactions between key technical and field staff, and members of the project communities to create
communities of practice in the various sectors and disciplines so that meaningful exchange of project experiences can occur.

A more deliberative approach to establishing networks would require at least ½ time coordinators being recruited to establish and manage the national networks. It would be an interesting point of discussion, whether those coordinators should report to the CPMs or to ENRAP.

Staffing for ENRAP activities within individual projects seems adequate, given the small amounts of financing involved. All projects have appropriately drawn on the services of consultants.

(5) *Has the implementation of project activities made adequate use of available resources, in a cost-effective manner?*

It would appear so.

(6) *How efficient has IDRC administration been?*

The IDRC PAN team leader and the ENRAP coordinator are in regularly contact, and the reporting of the coordinator to IDRC is comprehensive and timely. Interactions between the coordinator and IFAD’s regional economist responsible for ENRAP are less frequent. The ENRAP coordinator takes her accountability to ENRAP projects seriously, and circulates “This week in ENRAP” to all involved. This newsletter is in fact much appreciated by informants.

Some concerns were raised by Pakistan projects about timeliness in the management of proposals to ENRAP for funding (complicated in part by local banking requirements); but at the time of writing, all but the Northern Areas proposal now appear to be funded and are underway. The NADP proposal will be addressed in a separate memo to IDRC.

IDRC is an important partner to IFAD in this project, contributing not only funds but also more than three decades of experiences in the Information Sciences and Development Communication.

5.3.1

On the 4th question regarding the sufficiency of staffing the **Steering Committee** agrees that each country needs a local facilitator or coordinator although it is not fully convinced that the position should be linked to a communication position. The idea of linking it to monitoring and evaluation activities seems much more appropriate. “Focusing too much on "communication" and the work of a "communication coordinator" might end up ensuring that project teams will view the information as "dumbed-down" (or too simplistic), whereas information on issues related to M&E could ensure that the information actually becomes knowledge.”
The **Review Team**: As a point of clarification: we see the national coordinator position as separate from individual positions within IFAD projects. However, responsibility or ownership of ENRAP participation does need to be designated within each IFAD project. There is merit to both approaches, anchoring ENRAP activities with either a communications position or a monitoring and evaluation position within projects. Recent work by IDRC and FAO on Communications and Development might serve to reassure the commentator that communications is not by any means a “dumbed down” delivery of knowledge. We would like to reinforce the point that it would be valuable to invest more effort in communications planning within IFAD projects so that the role of communications in development is better understood and valued in assisting the rural communities to talk about their knowledge, their experience, and in influencing decision makers and development practitioners about what works best on the ground.

6. **Mid term adjustments**

6.1 **Extend ENRAP for an additional 3 to 6 months**

Informants believe that within the funds available, it would be possible and beneficial to extend ENRAP to complete its activities in May 2006 rather than wind up in December. The review team agrees that the additional time would be helpful to consolidate some of the activities and lessons learned.

6.2 **Focus on a narrower selection of countries and activities**

A more interventionist approach may be necessary to ensure ENRAP achieves its objectives by May 2006. Rather than attempting to hold another round of national workshops in 8 countries, and fund a scattering of projects within those countries, we suggest that ENRAP focus only on a few countries and a carefully selected set of activities within those countries. We suggest that current commitments in countries that had the full benefit of Phase 1 as well as 2 be completed, and in the time remaining focus should be on a few countries. IDRC and IFAD as the key partners should review ENRAP’s progress and agree on where it might be in IFAD’s best interests to focus efforts. If IFAD hoped that national networks would be established in India and China, then, with the full engagement of the relevant CPMs, ENRAP should not only create the enabling conditions in the hopes that the networks would emerge, but it should actively plan and coordinate these networks.

In addition to work at the national level, ENRAP should also look at those activities in common across several countries, and strengthen its support to those activities. For example, ENRAP is already consolidating its work in the area of video documentation by planning to bring together those projects using this communications method to share best
practice. A Yahoo Groups site has also been established for these projects to share experience, although there is no reference to this on the ENRAP website.

ENRAP should look for other areas of consolidation: for example, a number of projects have been funded to establish websites. As with the video documentation, these projects could be brought together to demonstrate their sites, share best practice, receive more in-depth training on how to use the medium to its best advantage, and so forth.

6.3 Build capacity for communications planning

As noted in section 4.5, ENRAP should consider a special emphasis on building capacity for communications planning: the assessment of internal and external communications needs, the strategies and tools to support those needs, the resources available, and training requirements. Either in selected national workshops, or at a regional workshop, project representatives could be trained in developing communications plans for their projects, in which they would themselves examine how electronic communications (web, email) fit within a range of other activities (video, news stories, conferences, etc.). This would help to ensure the sustainability of ENRAP investments in electronic communications at the project level. There may be a role for IFAD’s Communications Division in assisting with this capacity building. Participants in this training would not be the Project Directors; if communications officers are not in place, then either technical staff or monitoring and evaluation officers might be appropriate candidates.

6.4 Emphasize practitioner knowledge and business process tools

At the national level, emphasize practitioner knowledge in exchanges to maximize the usefulness of experiences and information shared among participants. Practitioner knowledge is created in the context of application and most often goes unrecorded. When combined with scientific knowledge, it creates new knowledge that is particularly relevant to development efforts. The current emphasis on building capacities to write project style reports, while useful, does not always lead to sufficient understanding of how development activities are done to enable them to be replicated at a distance. Practitioner knowledge is probably the most relevant to the majority of ENRAP participants as the IFAD projects they work for have predetermined strategies that may not be easily altered. Therefore, project staff require less strategic and conceptual content than information on practice since their primary task is to execute the projects, not design them. This is consistent with the approach already being considered by the CPM Viet Nam, who is working on a community level implementation manual.

- Approach practitioner knowledge thematically: Technical and field staff working on similar problems did not seem to be interacting with each other across projects. For example the person managing the rural financial services unit in Oudomxay Province. Lao PDR was unaware of a similar micro-finance scheme in Ha Tinh.
Province, Vietnam. Most of the networking between the two projects has been between Project Managers who interact at the conceptual and strategic levels. While the exchange of such technical information is possible through online channels, the most effective means may still be face-to-face meetings. The review team suggests that the ENRAP website should strengthen its thematic webpages so that IFAD projects can contribute to sharing at the thematic level.

- Share tools as well: ENRAP and its projects currently emphasize the sharing of information at their websites. It will be useful to share tools as well. Such tools may include open source applications, blue prints for building various implements, draft ordinances, etc. The review team found that every project had developed its own M&E database from scratch. Others were in the process of developing management information systems (MIS) as well as applications to manage rural credit and savings schemes. Some suggestions from key informants included templates for community resolutions and standard formats for information coming in from villages.

6.4.1
The Steering Committee feels, “The distinction to be made between "information" and "knowledge" is important and the reviewers seems to leave the distinction vague. Knowledge is information that is retained and/or used by people, therefore making the information useful. This is exactly why ENRAP focuses on networking for "knowledge sharing" and not information sharing. However the challenge of getting IFAD projects (or ENRAP) to develop information that others will use is enormous (as the onus is as much on people at the receiving end as people on the sending end).”

6.5 Develop a balance between quantitative and qualitative information:

The linkage between IFAD’s M&E systems and ENRAP’s promotion of the documentation and sharing of success stories should be more integrated. ENRAP should work with projects to build further capacity for the systematic collection of anecdotal evidence about project impacts. It was felt by a number of informants that the current ad hoc approach to success stories should be strengthened.

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems of the three projects visited in Laos, Vietnam and the Philippines are the main sources of information shared via ENRAP activities. Current M&E reporting seem to focus on quantitative data. It may be useful to include some qualitative data in these systems as such data are important to field staff and members of the communities themselves to make practical sense of the quantitative data so that they can replicate successful activities or trouble shoot difficulties encountered. For a start, a means of sharing qualitative data obtained via the numerous participatory rural appraisal (PRA) studies that have been conducted at all project villages at the project-entry stage should be developed so that the numerous field workers from the
various sectors are able to refer to the relevant set of data when preparing themselves to work in each “new” village.

6.6 Develop ICT minimum requirements and specifications for IFAD projects in the region

As noted in section 4.1.4, with respect to the preparation of guidelines for IFAD-funded projects to make effective use of ICTs: it will be a significant contribution from ENRAP to IFAD if it can prepare the specifications for future IFAD projects for hardware, software, connectivity and training. In fact, ENRAP has already contributed project specific information for three IFAD project design missions. This infrastructure should be as fundamental to IFAD projects as the purchase of vehicles and the installation of accounting systems. A general document should be provided to support all design missions at the end of Phase 2.

6.7 Transfer lessons to new IFAD projects

The Project Director for NERCRMP suggests that ENRAP should play a much stronger and proactive role in transferring lessons from existing IFAD projects to new IFAD projects, to improve the overall design and implementation of IFAD projects – and the MTR team concurs. ENRAP should ask each project what is innovative in their project (what are the top 10 good things that have come out of this project), then help to transfer that to new IFAD projects. This might be an interesting exercise to manage through a national workshop followed by moderated email discussion, within selected countries where IFAD is in the process of establishing new projects. The discussion would include not only the project staff, but the CPM, government line agencies, and key implementing NGOs and other supporting institutions such as research centres connected to the projects. ENRAP would again have to be more than an “enabler”: it would have to take a proactive role in organizing and moderating the discussion, and actively securing participation from a range of stakeholders.

6.7.1 The Steering Committee would suggest it is important to address the issue of helping ENRAP demonstrate the usefulness of connecting people. One idea that could do this is to have a competition where each project team identifies three key challenges it has in its projects, which could then be circulated through the ENRAP list. Other teams will be able to bid on how they would deal with those challenges and ENRAP could fund their travel to the other site to help deal with challenge.

Additional suggestion from the Laos, Viet Nam and Philippines study:
6.8 Provide radios to villages:

It will be years before many of the project villages are linked to the telecommunications networks of their respective countries. The Internet is not a viable channel for reaching most of the project villages. Other ICTs should be considered for connecting villages to the project offices. Very-high-frequency (VHF) and single-side-band radios are potentially appropriate ICTs for meeting this purpose. ENRAP should, at the same time, also consider community radio and village public address systems as channels for networking villagers. These channels tap into the oral traditions of many of these communities, overcome literacy problems, and ensure that information is shared in the preferred languages and dialects of the project beneficiaries.

7. Future approaches to ICTS and knowledge sharing in the region: Lessons learned from ENRAP II

The knowledge flows in an organization usually follow channels aligned with the organizational structure, in spite of best efforts of organizations to create cross cutting, thematic communities. Although ENRAP was designed to facilitate knowledge sharing across IFAD projects, it faced challenges because in practice knowledge flowed from individual projects to UNOPS (as IFAD’s agent in country) and to the IFAD CPM. Some projects weren’t even all that familiar with IFAD, and consequently felt no sense of collegiality or common interest with other IFAD projects. Without a solid country orientation for IFAD, it has been difficult for ENRAP to enable inter-project knowledge sharing at the national level.

It is important to reinforce this point, because the future of ENRAP depends in large part on how IFAD intends to operate in future. Should IFAD undertake more of a country program orientation, then there will be more incentives for projects to share knowledge within countries.

That being said, there are some steps that IFAD should consider as it looks beyond ENRAP II.

1. Information Technology has to be an integral part of project design: all project staff should be supplied with computers; all PMU and district offices should have connectivity, in order for projects to become more efficient. This should be IFAD’s, and the national government’s, responsibility, not an intervention by IDRC with its limited resources. IFAD should ensure that IT is included in budgets for new projects; and when budgets for existing projects are reviewed and adjusted, accommodations should be made for the inclusion of IT line items.

The Steering Committee agrees with IT being an integral part of project design but it is important to better understand what we mean by that and how we plan to accomplish it. Once again, the flowchart of the IFAD cycle of idea-proposal-review-approval-implementation-evaluation may help here.
2. Establish communications officers in all projects as a core position. IDRC was very interested in the NERCRMP action to bring in a full time communications officer into the project, and agreed that if each project were to have someone in that role, progress on knowledge sharing, gathering success stories etc. would accelerate. The lack of such a person in each project to spend time on ENRAP objectives was a major barrier to success. As noted in section 4.5, IFAD should seriously consider making the position of communications officer a core position in all IFAD projects, similar in status to the monitoring and evaluation officer, the gender specialist, the agricultural coordinator, and other standard positions in IFAD projects.

The Steering Committee is not fully convinced of the need for a full-time communications position being established in all projects. It's also not clear who would be expected to finance this.

3. New activities supporting regional networking should map the lifespan of the projects rather than have a separate, and significantly shorter, timespan of their own. In other words, IFAD itself should make a long term commitment to the gathering and sharing of project knowledge, ensuring that in project design and workplans, the tasks for internal and external communications are as carefully articulated as the tasks for social mobilization, agricultural research, etc.

4. Redesign ENRAP as a regional network rather than an enabler of networking: IFAD should consider the distinction between a network and networking. At the end of ENRAP II, IFAD should consider restructuring and rebranding ENRAP as an IFAD regional network, with structure, including a coordinator and members, with roles and responsibilities articulated for both\(^4\), and with coordinated, focused activities and timelines.

5. IFAD should consider focusing ENRAP on one of the following three areas:

   a. ICTs for project management
      - The deployment of ICTs (and related capacity building) for communicating with project teams at PMU and district offices, and implementing NGOs at the village level; for business processes (MIS, M&E systems); for developing and sharing guidelines for project implementation (“How to” information: how to establish community organizations; how to prepare credit manuals); for “help desk” services – asking advice from another project in the area.

   b. Communications for rural development

\(^4\) For example, when asked what they were contributing back to ENRAP, informants were caught somewhat by surprise by this question. None viewed their role as participants in ENRAP as involving contributions on their part into ENRAP networking.
The planning and implementation of communications strategies in IFAD projects to raise the profile of village successes, fostering replication in non-project villages, and take up of lessons learned in other IFAD projects, government agencies and NGOs. Building capacity for understanding when and how to use the full range of tools: print, media, video documentation, radio, public address systems, web, etc.

c. The development and sharing of substantive knowledge on rural development

Finding staff and stakeholders across IFAD projects who share similar interests and enabling them to talk with each other: establishing epistemic communities around gender issues; new agricultural and livestock practices; microfinance; resource management and the management of community-designated protected areas; etc. Key to this activity would be the facilitators – resource people within projects or external, who would develop the social networks – finding and bringing into the community all interested stakeholders; who would “prime” the interaction with the dissemination of information, and who would moderate workshops, e-discussions and email exchanges.

All three of these are undoubtedly of importance to IFAD. But in the evolution of IFAD’s thinking about regional networks in general, and about a regional network for Asia/Pacific in particular, it is recommended that the network concentrate on one of these areas, rather than have a mixed mandate to deliver on all three. It may be necessary to consider how to focus ENRAP in light of how IFAD wants to focus its other regional networks, so that all regional networks are serving the same purpose. Other mechanisms should then be explored to serve the remaining needs.

The Steering Committee feels that for the kind of knowledge networking that IFAD and IDRC are promoting through ENRAP and also KariaNet, making the above-mentioned distinction may not be practical. It is important to get people interested in "networking", whether this is in project management, rural development, knowledge sharing or information sharing. At IDRC, the team designing KariaNet (ENRAP’s sister for MENA) debated in great detail whether the focus should be on specific knowledge themes/issues and products (say "gender issues" or "poverty" etc.) or stay flexible and develop its own knowledge products or sharing based on a more opportunistic model. Generally, it was concluded that flexibility was key. ENRAP follows the same model. The reviewers suggest that IFAD could focus on ICTs for project management or rural development, in which case it would be more directive and specific about the type of information it would convey. This could lead to the creation of information that is not actually used. Hence the alternative linked to development and sharing of knowledge on rural development seems like the most viable option.

The Review Team: We would like to reinforce that these three areas are quite different from each other and would require the involvement of different people - within IFAD projects, CBOs and NGOs, staff from Rome and even different people within IDRC - as
well as different skills and different actions. How these might be sequenced depends in part on whether IFAD would like all of its regional networks to have a similar purpose and structure and activities.

8. Concluding comments from the Mid Term Review Team

The Mid Term Review Team would like to thank IDRC and IFAD for the opportunity to undertake this study. We would be happy to respond to any questions or clarifications that may be required. We are particularly interested in how IFAD and IDRC might approach two issues we have raised in this report: building external communications capacity [communications planning, media, good web communications, etc.] within IFAD projects [putting the “C” back in ICT], and guiding the actual structuring of more formal national networks, eventually structuring ENRAP itself as a more formal network, should that be the direction IFAD wishes to take. We would be more than happy to pursue opportunities to provide IFAD and IDRC with advice and support in these areas, should that be of interest.
Appendix 1: Methodology

This study was undertaken through a combination of three methods:
- Desk research of documents posted at the “private space” set up by ENRAP; online review of websites and related content; and review of additional documentation provided by IFAD, IDRC and the projects visited
- Semi-structured interviews with key informants.
- Participant observation of a limited number of field activities.

Schedule of questions for semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions

The following questions were used to guide discussions with key informants met during the field visits. Answers provided by the informants guided follow-up questions as well as in-depth discussions about salient issues and experiences raised and shared by the informants.

1. Please explain to me what your organization does and the people you try to reach through your work.
2. In which areas have you been most successful in your work?
3. What are the main challenges you face in your work?
4. How can these challenges be overcome?
5. Which projects are IFAD funding here (with you)?
6. Please tell me about your experiences with ENRAP.
7. Please tell me about other IFAD-funded projects in this country.

Information from these interviews was collated into the following format:

Project background

1. Goal/objective/description of the project
2. Most significant accomplishments of the project
3. Technology notes
4. Communications notes
5. Social networks/Relationship notes
6. Education notes

Note: issues 4, 5 and 6 were added for India, Pakistan and Nepal, based on the review of the site visits for Viet Nam, Philippines and Laos. Communications notes were added to assess the place of electronic communications within the broader context of how the project communicates about itself and its successes; social networks notes were added to assess whether and how the project relates to other organizations and networks in the area; and the education notes were added to assess whether and how education infrastructure (schools, etc.) might be used to support communications at the local level.
ENRAP review findings

1. IFAD project familiarity with ENRAP
2. Project support from ENRAP
3. ENRAP integration with the project
4. Whether/how the project learns from other IFAD projects
5. Comments to ENRAP from the project
6. Recommendations to the project visited
Appendix 2: Observations from site visits

India

Overview

Out of the ENRAP projects either in progress or with proposals under development, two received site visits for the Mid Term Review:

- North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project for Upland Areas
- Chhattisgarh Tribal Development Project

2003 ITU indicators for India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population per sq. km</td>
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<td>GDP per capita</td>
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<td>Cellular mobile subscribers per 100 inhabitants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet hosts per 10,000 inhabitants</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet users per 10,000 inhabitants</td>
<td>174.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer ownership per 100 inhabitants</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: International Telecommunications Union (ITU) 2004

Chhattisgarh Tribal Development Project: staff from the PMU and district offices
North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project for Upland Areas (NERCRMP), Shillong, February 12 and 13, 2005

Overview of IFAD project

NERCRMP was launched in 1999 to “improve the livelihood of vulnerable groups in a sustainable manner through improved management of their resource base in a way that contributes to protecting and restoring the environment”. The project targets about 1000 villages and 42,000 households. The two key community institutions being established in the villages are the Natural Resource Management Group (NaRMGs) and the Self Help Groups (SHGs).

Major accomplishments of the project discussed during the site visit include:

a. Women’s participation in decision making
b. Sense of ownership of the project by the villages; Change in mindset of the villages and state government from dependency/subsidy syndrome. Now into “2nd generation” SHGs and NaRMGs – mothers passing on responsibility to daughters. It is worth noting that NERCRMP are now actively bringing village youth into the village projects.
c. Improvement of local environments: protection of watersheds for improved water quality; Forest reserves declared and maintained collectively by the community: no hunting, protection of fishing grounds, etc.
d. Banks now linked to some communities to give loans
e. Improved control of fund flow management

Challenges, including communication and information challenges

As with most IFAD projects in the Asia region, the key challenges are extreme distances, lack of connectivity (including permanent roads, bridges and telecommunications infrastructure), limited access to education for villagers, gender barriers, and the lack of communications products and information in local languages.

- Technology notes

According to the ENRAP connectivity assessment and the site visit, NERCRMP has Internet connectivity in the regional office in Shillong office with a LAN in place for access by individual staff. In district offices, some have Internet access, although 1-2 are not stable; but phone lines are better now than they were a year or so ago. There is no LAN in the district offices, but it is not seen to be really necessary either. They are still somewhat reliant on fax for important communications with the district offices. Cell phones are popular in the regional office and the districts, but there is only 5% penetration of cell phones into villages so far. In the villages, the power situation is very poor; most are not electrified (only 30%); and the power supply to those is not consistent. There is reliance on local generator sets in the absence of connectivity to the grid. Battery
operated radios are everywhere; and most villages have TVs and can pick up signals. VCD culture is growing rapidly: the equipment is very cheap ($30 for a player and $1 for recorded disks.)

The State government has attempted to put public Internet kiosks in most districts but found that people weren’t using them – people had no training, no understanding of what they could use the Internet for.

The regional office has a digital video camera and an editing software suite. They work extensively with 3D modeling for village land use management; however they use topographical/cadastral maps and build the models by hand from those maps in the absence of GIS/remote sensing capacity.

• **Communications notes**

NERCRMP has developed significant communications capacity. A position was created for a full time Communications Officer, plus an assistant, after an IFAD midterm review of NERCRMP which recommended that project communications be strengthened. The Communications officer works on flyers, a project newsletter, posters; and they plan to do more, including stories in local newspapers. The project director talked about how they once took the local Shillong media out to a village site: this was a very successful experience, and they would like to do more of that, even with national press. They recognize that they are doing something truly effective at the margins of society, and want others to know that this approach is working.

They have their own project website: [www.necorps.org](http://www.necorps.org), but staff noted that it is probably quite out of date, and they don’t really look at it much.

In addition to radio programming, some TV access and VCDs, villagers do read local newspapers purchased in market and district centres.

• **Social networks/Relationship notes**

Local NGOs are service providers in the villages themselves, acting as the hands and eyes of district project managers. The project has 14-15 staff to cover all villages in a given district: local NGOs are subcontracted to manage social mobilization in 10-15 villages each. They are the extension of implementation. This also builds capacity of the NGOs themselves – they are learning by seeing and doing. This additional capacity is key to sustainability of the rural development work once the IFAD project is done.

The project staff also mentioned good relationships with ICIMOD, and with ENRAP in Delhi.

• **Education notes**
The government runs schools for primary level education close to the villages, but the teachers don’t show up. Children have to move out of village for higher grades. Church schools are pretty good; in terms of ICT equipment, the Catholic run schools will often have more equipment than the government schools. Villagers are learning their rights and have become more able to put pressure on government schools to improve performance. They are also using funds generated through the SHGs and the project to hire private teachers.

ENRAP review findings

7. Project familiarity with ENRAP

NERCRMP was part of ENRAP Phase 1: As noted in the Phase 1 evaluation: “In Shillong the ENRAP coordinator, who is one of the key managers involved in implementing the IFAD project, ensured that ENRAP was integrated into the basic IFAD project.” While there appears to be no institutional memory of participation in Phase 1 [except possibly with Bijoy Sangma who was not available for an interview at the time of the site visit], nevertheless the advanced level of appreciation of ICTs and communications may be due in part to ground having been broken in Phase 1. A pivotal event appears to have been Rana Ghose’s video documentation training.

8. Project support from ENRAP

The Project Director commented that communications with districts was very bad at the start of ENRAP II: so they put in a proposal for 50 lakhs for a Vsat communications link. They understood that this was too large a grant for IDRC to support so it couldn’t be funded. In the meantime, phones have improved.

Rana Ghose, an IDRC intern, then provided an introduction to video documentation training. This was initiated by IDRC rather than specifically requested by NERCRMP. At first, they were a bit reluctant to participate as they didn’t know what the benefit might be, but now they are very enthusiastic and want to do more. They have found video documentation very important for communications, district to district and village to village. At present, most villagers meet at the market place. Video presentations have been made in the markets, and have shown villagers how they can share their lessons with other villages. NERCRMP now sees this as a valuable tool for communication and learning, and in particular how to get information around the villages. Villages also appreciate the change in perspective: the video approach focuses on village vs urban issues.

They have made one video for VCD distribution; in the next 2-3 months, they intend to do more video shooting in districts. They also want to do a thematic video, with a proper storyline.
They now have restriction on further equipment purchases out of IFAD project funds. They could use another video camera from ENRAP.

9. ENRAP integration with project

The project director believes that ENRAP has not really been integrated with the NERCRMP project; it is a parallel or side activity. But some lessons from ENRAP have been taken up a little bit (video in particular). The success story concept is not new to them, but the director finds written success stories too shallow – not enough substance. The success stories from ENRAP are “not very helpful”.

10. Whether/how NERCRMP learns from other IFAD projects

Some staff believe that little can be transferred from one IFAD project to another, even within a country. Circumstances unique to Shillong include agricultural practices, soils, culture, etc. Project Directors do meet nationally – information is transferred face to face.

11. Comments from the project to ENRAP

First and foremost, they are very thankful for the video training they received through ENRAP. They also commented positively on the March best practices workshop.

However, they believe that ENRAP should play a much stronger and proactive role in transferring lessons from existing IFAD projects to new IFAD projects, to improve the overall design and implementation of IFAD projects. ENRAP should ask each project what is innovative in their project (what are the top 10 good things that have come out of this project), then help to transfer that to new IFAD projects. Trying to introduce knowledge exchange into projects that are already underway or at their tail end hasn’t worked so well, especially given how IFAD project budgets are set in stone by that point. The projects are unable to provide matching contributions from project funds; and in particular are unable to purchase new hardware and software as that would require revision to budgets.

They believe that ENRAP may have focused too much on technology issues rather than communications skills. Local livelihoods information needs to be shared locally; so they need skills in writing case studies, in developing stories for newspapers, and so forth. NERCRMP wants to train young villagers to send in stories to the media.

The project director noted that IFAD projects are designed for the long term. Challenges with rural development in India include:

   a) expenditures based on political interests to maintain power bases in different areas
   b) civil servants get transferred a lot (no continuity).

IFAD projects are designed to work beyond shorter term political and bureaucratic interests. He questioned whether ENRAP had been adequately linked into the long term vision / commitments of IFAD within each project.
Recommendations for NERCRMP

In addition to the general recommendations made for the balance of ENRAP’s time and funds, NERCRMP could use the following support from ENRAP:

- Purchase of a second video camera
- More interaction between the communications officer and ENRAP, with particular attention given to identifying skills development needs for web communications (in order to update and promote the project website).
Overview of IFAD project

The objective for CTDS is “to develop and implement a replicable model that ensures household food security and improves livelihood opportunities and overall quality of life of the tribal population, based on sustainable and equitable use of natural resources.” CTDS is currently in its pilot phase (2002-2005): 114 villages have self help groups fully established. In scaling up, by 2011 they intend to reach 650 villages and 51,000 households. The project is addressing three major issues: food security, livelihoods opportunities, including management of land holdings, forests, etc; and social mobilization. Activities include microfinance, health and nutrition, aquaculture and animal husbandry, and watershed management. Over 50% of the population in their area is tribal; in the villages chosen, over 80% of the population is tribal. The project is establishing the following committee structure in the villages as integral to the social mobilization process:

- Program execution committee (PEC)
- Community Forest Committee
- Watershed Development Committee
- Village Credit Committee – acts like a bank if there is no bank in village

Central to CTDS is a demand driven work for food programme, run in collaboration with the World Food Programme.: The work plan comes from the “Gram Sabha” (the state sanctioned village leadership): they determine the work needed. They also determine the value of the work; manage and implement the programme. Nothing is done without the agreement of the Gram Sabha.

Major accomplishments of the project discussed during the site visit include:

a. Mindset is changing in the village; villagers are shifting from dependency to self help
b. Leadership and participation have achieved gender balance: 50% of leadership is female; 50% of registered membership in committees is female.
c. Leadership development: villagers who have served on village committees have been recently elected to Gram Sabha

Challenges, including Communication and Information Challenges

As with most IFAD projects in the Asia region, the key challenges are extreme distances, lack of connectivity (including permanent roads, bridges and telecommunications infrastructure), limited access to education for villagers, gender barriers, and the lack of communications products and information in local languages. Food security is particularly problematic in this area.

- Technology notes:
Internet access is only available in the Project management unit in Bilaspur. They have internet access in one district office (Ambikapur) but it is very slow. The 2nd district office in Patthalgaon requires a long distance call to an ISP, and is extremely slow [the Yahoo home page takes 10 minutes to open]. An ISP is needed in the districts; the government has plans but is slow to implement. There are no cell phones in villages: cell network not established in this area. There are landlines, but they are not stable. Radios are widely available in the villages; but there is a limited number of TVs.

- **Communications notes**

CTDS does not have a communications officer, although it does have a range of communications products, including a project newsletter; a website (which is not considered by them to be a success, commenting that the company hired to develop it lacked the social and technical expertise to deliver it); and video documentation, made with a local company (Digital News Service). They show these videos in marketplaces: they have found them to be a very popular combination of information and entertainment. They have also organized training for local NGOs in using street theatre for communications on health education (HIV AIDS, malaria, dysentery, etc.) These shows are held in village markets. Finally, CTDS is establishing a culture of collecting success stories. These have been packaged in a booklet. The training they provide to NGOs to assist with social mobilization includes the importance of sending in stories and actual achievements to the district offices.

- **Social networks/Relationship notes**

Local NGOs are service providers in the villages themselves. CTSD has created two categories:
- FNGOs—facilitative: mobilization, implementation, monitoring NGOs (actually working directly in the villages);
- RNGOs – resource: training, technical support to the NGOs and the project.

In addition to its relationship with the World Food Programme, the project also interacts with ICRISAT in Hyderabad, which provides new research on seed technology and other agricultural practices.

- **Education notes**

Primary schools only are available at the village level; these are basic facilities (one room, maybe two). Children have to go out of the village for higher education; this means boarding, which is not affordable for villagers.

**ENRAP review findings**

**IFAD project familiarity with ENRAP**

CTDS staff expressed very limited knowledge of ENRAP and other ENRAP projects in India. They were not at the Bangkok inception meeting although 2
people from CTDS came to the India national meeting. Only Rana Ghose has been to visit the project, according to those interviewed. Some staff did meet Shalini Kala at the IFAD India meeting in December. They talked with her about skills development at that time.

**Project support from ENRAP**

They have discussed with ENRAP their need for support for their website, to upgrade what they currently have. However, they are having difficulty finding someone they think can do a good job on technical or social aspects. ENRAP is waiting to receive a proposal from them. CTDS would also like support for “documentation” skills training, and capacity development in communications: how to share knowledge; how to network with other projects; writing, interviewing, and so forth. Their interaction with Rana Ghose was not as successful as NERCRMP’s, noting that Rana did not speak much Hindi and consequently was limited in what he could either produce or provide training for.

**ENRAP integration with project**

They do get the ENRAP email newsletter but they don’t send in mail messages to the newsletter, or participate in any kind of e-conferencing. They have shared their collection of success stories with Shalini Kala; who is now trying to secure an electronic copy for use on the ENRAP website.

**Whether/how CTDS learns from other IFAD projects**

They participated in the IFAD India meeting in December; but otherwise they have no interaction with other IFAD projects either directly or through ENRAP.

**Comments to ENRAP**

The project asked whether and how ENRAP could support capacity building: right now, they don’t have permanent formats for information coming in from village, and they haven’t created the channels for communicating this information. They would like some training and advice on how to do this more systematically. They would also like to upgrade to a P4 video camera plus card, software for editing; as the IFAD project budgets are now set, they can’t get this from the project funds.

More generally, project staff suggested that clearer objectives for facilitating ENRAP are needed: they seemed to be unclear on the coordination role, beyond receiving, vetting and funding proposals.

**Recommendations for CTDS**

In addition to the general recommendations made for the balance of ENRAP’s time and funds, NERCRMP could use the following support from ENRAP:

- Submit the proposal for upgrading the project website. As NERCRMP has an established website which also needs some upgrading, this may be an opportunity
for the two projects to possibly work together -- for NERCRMP to help CTSD to develop its basic structure and specifications for the CTDS website.

• As they have an established track record with video documentation, a new camera would be a good investment.

Limitations of the India Study

The extreme distances and limited time available prevented visits to district offices of the projects, and into the villages themselves.
Overview

Out of the ENRAP projects either in progress or with proposals under development, only the WUPAP project was interviewed for the Mid Term Review:

Western Uplands Poverty Alleviation Project (WUPAP)
February 21, 2005

Overview of IFAD project

WUPAP has been established for the poverty alleviation of far western and mid-western region of Nepal. WUPAP’s primary objective is to take a “rights base” approach to supporting poverty alleviation, through the promotion of grass roots organization and to addressing land ownership challenges in the region. The project has five components: infrastructure development; agriculture and livestock; leasehold forestry and non-timber forest production; micro finance and marketing; and institutional development within the villages. WUPAP is planned for 10 years.

Major accomplishments of the project discussed during the interview included the handing over of 200 hectares of leased land to communities.

Challenges, including Information and Communications challenges

As with most IFAD projects in the Asia region, the key challenges are extreme distances, lack of connectivity (including permanent roads, bridges and telecommunications infrastructure), limited access to education for villagers, gender barriers, and the lack of communications products and information in local languages.

- Technology notes:
  Internet access is available in the project management unit. Dial up access is now available in 3 districts of 4 districts, but it is slow (8 kilobits per second transfer rate). They rely instead on fax for reporting into main project office from the districts.

Source: International Telecommunications Union (ITU) 2004
The ENRAP project is viewed to be in line with national policy: the government has passed a national cyberlaw to establish connectivity throughout Nepal; a high level information technology commission has been established. There is much more to come for ensuring access to ICTs in remote areas. It is worth noting that the person interviewed was the former project director; who left the project in November to move to the Ministry of information and documentation.

- Communications notes

The project uses print media – every district publishes a newsletter; 2X a year for main Project newsletter; plus they submit the occasional project story to the national newspaper. They have also prepared a short video. The former project director also noted that they share success stories with other communities, but he did not explain clearly how this sharing was done beyond the newsletters.

- Social networks/Relationship notes

This project was the only one to comment that they work not only with NGOs but also with the local private sector. Other relationships include ICIMOD and the British Council.

ENRAP review findings

IFAD project familiarity with ENRAP

WUPAP was a participant in ENRAP. From the Phase 1 evaluation: “an external agency, World Link, succeeded in creating the necessary connectivity infrastructure and in building the technical capacity of project-level staff to use Internet resources.” Representative of WUPAP also participated in the ENRAP Bangkok meeting.

Project support from ENRAP

Phase 1 started with the installation of a LAN to link WUPAP project management unit staff to the Internet. They had hoped to get the 4 district office email access. If that wasn’t possible, then they at least wanted to get fax lines in. But setting up an ISP proved not to be feasible within ENRAP; but telephone lines are now available in 3 of the 4 districts so maybe a telecentre might be possible at some future date.

Three elements were finally agreed to in Phase 2:
- Design of the project website (World Link)
- GIS installation, training, set up database to produce local maps:
  - They are trying to get current maps combined with more specific information from the districts: mapping economic/poverty data, political boundaries (leased land, etc.), geological data. Software is now purchased; 2 people have been trained.
- Train staff in report writing: Funding was provided to send staff to 2 week long courses run by the British Council in Kathmandu: One for senior
staff, one for more junior staff on basic report writing. Training is an incentive for people working in remote areas.
The former director indicates that by July all activities should be completed.

**Whether/how WUPAP learns from other IFAD projects**

Shalini Kala’s reports are considered to be very good and quite informative about other IFAD project activities. The other projects in Nepal are fairly collegial. He believes that, at least in Nepal, the projects should be connected through success stories, and that ENRAP should continue to promote this.

The former director noted that IFAD’s new reporting and monitoring systems are now the internal drivers for connectivity. He believes that IFAD’s monitoring system should be applied at the national level not just at the project level. This indicates a desire to learn how other projects are doing – a notable culture shift from the projects reviewed in Pakistan and India.

**Comments to ENRAP**

The former director believes that ENRAP has been a very good initiation to ICTs for remote areas, and speaks highly of the initiative. He notes that ICTs are widely accepted in Nepal; they will ultimately be very useful in communities; once email is available in districts; then the project can provide market information (value of products) out into communities through the district offices at least weekly or monthly basis (for example, what is the real price this month in Delhi for nontimber forest products).

He believes that some further support (across ENRAP) is needed at least for another year. The initiative would be discouraged if it ended in December. There is a need to prove to people that ICTs are in fact useful tools.

He proposed 2 scenarios for the future evolution of ENRAP:

- IFAD should include ICT infrastructure in all its projects; it should design its MOU/financing agreement to streamline funds; Flow mechanism should be clearer in order to allow for the purchase and use of new technologies;
- Modality of funding to go to NGO sector; a single NGO would be contracted to support all ENRAP networking activities (this may be similar in concept to FIDAmerica).

**Limitations of the Nepal study**

A site visit to WUPAP was planned, but the coup and resulting questions of security in Nepal led to the decision to cancel the site visit. Attempts to call Nepal project stakeholders, including Pradeep Shrestha were not successful, due to phone lines being disrupted in Nepal. Only Surya Acharya was successfully contacted.
Pakistan

Overview

Interviews were held in Pakistan for four ENRAP projects.

- South FATA Development Project
- Barani Village Development Project
- Dir Area Support Project
- Northern Area Development Project

Two involved sites visits to the project management units (South FATA and Barani); Barani included a visit to a rural village to meet with a women’s community organization. Two project directors (Northern Areas and Dir) came into Islamabad to meet with the reviewer.

2003 ITU indicators for PAKISTAN

- Total population: 149.58 million
- Population per sq. km: 186
- GDP per capita: US$428
- Main telephone lines per 100 inhabitants: 2.66
- Cellular mobile subscribers per 100 inhabitants: 1.75
- Internet hosts per 10,000 inhabitants: 1.01
- Internet users per 10,000 inhabitants: 102.7
- Computer ownership per 100 inhabitants: .42

Source: International Telecommunications Union (ITU) 2004
South FATA Development Project
Peshawar, February 7, 2005

Overview of IFAD project

“South FATA Development Project (SFDP) is a participatory, poverty alleviation project in the three southern tribal districts, bordering Afghanistan. The Project began its operations in January 2004 with the objective to reduce extreme poverty, which is prevailing in the target area.” South FATA is working on a 6 year time frame, from 2002 to 2008. Targets of 750 male organizations and 240 women organizations have been set. This is a virgin area with respect to participatory processes.

Major accomplishments of the project discussed during the site visit include:
- Acceptance from local tribal religious leaders
- Creating a core group of experts in villages that has potential to extend project to other areas
- Establishment of 48 women’s organizations, with some hope that they have been able to establish the credibility of the women’s organizations within the villages.

Challenges, including information and communications challenges

As with most IFAD projects in the Asia region, the key challenges are extreme distances, lack of connectivity (including reliable roads, bridges and telecommunications infrastructure), limited access to education for villagers, and the lack of communications products and information in local languages. In SFDP, the gender barriers are particularly difficult. Only women project staff can work with women in the villages (and even that is resisted); and there is much resistance to allowing women to organize in self help groups. Male organizations must be established first in the villages, before working with women can be initiated. Restrictions on mobility prevent women from traveling to centres for skills training. There is no model at present to show tribal areas how women can be empowered in culturally acceptable ways. Outside agents with funding from donors are treated with suspicion in the villages.

- Technology notes:
The Project office in Peshawar has a LAN; project officers are connected to the email and the Internet (although the project director chooses not to be). They have only 2 active users of email and web: the computer support staff person and the monitoring economist. The project director does not have a computer, but keeps the fax machine in his office. They have computers and email access in project offices in each district, but power and phone connections are unstable. Villagers who have left to work in the Gulf phone home regularly and tie up the lines in this region. Fax use predominates for project work, especially for communications with the project director. Demand for better Internet access is coming from these areas: private Internet cafés are not available in some districts. The project staff related a story about how one village stakeholder went to a district centre cyber café to email his community resolution to the project staff. The government is increasing its support to the region, and its
commitment to SFDP has already increased; so they may be able to go to the
government to get necessary support for computers and connectivity in the districts.

3 vehicles are equipped with satellite phones for security reasons and for more
reliable information flows to and from the field.

- **Communications notes**
  There is no project website at this time.

- **Social networks/Relationship notes**
  The project works with the National Rural Support Programme as the
  implementing NGO in the region. NRSP is in turn part of the well established and
  highly considered RSPN – Rural Support Program Network. The project has also
  worked with ICIMOD.

- **Education notes**
  Educated females form less than 1% of the population.

**ENRAP review findings**

**IFAD project familiarity with ENRAP**
  Participated in the Islamabad inception meeting.

**Project support from ENRAP**
  SFDP identified a number of issues as important to them:
  - Training in how to document stories
  - “Sensitizing”: training in sensitizing project staff to the importance of
    communications and information flows
  - Hardware procurement

  They considered proposing the establishment of a Community computer centre in one
  district, but they are now going elsewhere for money for that. They saw the potential
  for income generation; for linking project stakeholders with project staff; and linking
  the younger generation in the villages with the rest of world.

  After much discussion with ENRAP, a proposal was submitted for equipment that
  would support the collection of field experience: a laptop, digital video camera,
  projector. The project is for “Strengthening Training Capacity towards Effective,
  Timely And User-Friendly Communication of Project Staff with Communities, Line
  Departments, Government and other stakeholders.” At the time of writing, they had
  only just received bank confirmation that the funds had been transferred from
  ENRAP.

  SFDP raised the concern that IFAD loan arrangements make it difficult to purchase
  additional equipment or to provide matching contributions once the budgets have
  been set.
ENRAP integration with project
SFDP believes that ENRAP has been successful at sensitizing the Project to the importance of information flows. They also give credit to ICIMOD for the IFAD-ICIMOD efforts to promote knowledge sharing in this region. They are very interested in the success story approach and noted that when staff are in a project for a long time, a kind of immunity develops: they don’t see the progress. ENRAP should do more work to showcase stories, innovation – for stakeholders in the project (the owners of the stories); for partners/facilitators in project (local NGOs, RSPs); for entities outside of South FATA. But there is an issue with whether PK experience is replicable in other countries, given its specific culture and gender challenges.

Whether/how South FATA learns from other IFAD projects
SFDP sees the benefit in capturing stories from one area to share with another; but they want to know how to capture and utilize stories. Project management information also needs to be shared; manuals should be posted on the web.

In general, PK projects appear to talk frequently with each other, especially those working in the most difficult areas (South FATA, Dir, NADP). The local facilitator has served to strengthen the channels of communication among the projects through regular phone and email contact. They don’t use the ENRAP website, even though SFDP has contributed a popular success story to the site which was taken up and redistributed through the main IFAD newsletter.

Comments to ENRAP
ENRAP needs something solid on capacity building for balance of ENRAP. The current approach to success stories by ENRAP should be strengthened: it is not enough just to paste stories from one country to another. It may be appropriate to hold another national Pakistan workshop fairly quickly.

Recommendations for SFDP
- A workplan for use of the laptop and video camera to document stories should include the contribution of stories and video clips to the ENRAP website.
- There may be an opportunity for the communications officer and video specialists used by NERCRMP in Shillong to share their lessons on video production with SFDP.
Barani Village Development Project (BVDP)
Rawalpindi, February 8. 2005

Overview of IFAD project

The Barani Village Development Project seeks to enhance productivity and income of the rural population in the project area, by improving access to irrigated land and opportunities for the diversification of the production system, including microenterprise development; supporting the development and adoption of better technologies and alternative resource management practices and mobilizing communities, strengthening their capacity for self help. The project is targeting 898 villagers with a population of 2,056,000. It is due to end in 2007.

This region has a low level of development but real potential for improvement with the availability of untapped water resources and improved resource management practices. This project has a strong applied research component to evolve and test options for the development of large areas of semi-arid range-lands; and sees the potential for disseminating research findings within and beyond the Project tehsils.

As the project nears completion, they are now challenged by how to ensure the sustainability of community organizations in villages after project support is withdrawn. Work needs to be done at the political and bureaucratic levels, to ensure that line departments in future work through the community organizations.

Major accomplishments of the project discussed during the site visit include:

- Before the women’s community organization was established, women felt they didn’t have anything to do.
- Men are happy that women are contributing to family economy
- There Real sense of pride among the women for their contribution.

Challenges, including Communications and Information Challenges

As with most IFAD projects in the Asia region, the key challenges are extreme distances, lack of connectivity (including reliable roads, bridges and telecommunications infrastructure), women’s mobilization, limited access to education for villagers, and the lack of communications products and information in local languages.

- Technology notes:
  In the Project management unit, email and internet access is available, although not all take advantage of it. Internet access is available and used at the District level – Internet cafes are readily available in district/subdistrict areas (but used by men). The district offices do not have LANs. One of the project staff commented that in the PK government, hardly anyone is using email, even if they have access.
At the village level, there is no computer literacy at present; there may be 2-3 cell phones (land lines are limited and unreliable), radios are prevalent; there might be 1 TV, probably with a VCR. There is electricity supply in only 40% of the villages.

- Communications notes
  Project staff commented on the need for content to be developed in Urdu as well as English. They have a project newsletter.

  A local reporter attended the meeting of the woman’s community organization in Ghick Badhal. The reporter was primarily interested in the nature of the funding for the project (illuminating the sensitivities noted by SFDP to “outside agents”.) There is also much resistance to the photographing of women: the reporter asked whether we would be taking pictures and how they would be used. The reviewer asked the reporter whether he might write a story about what the women have accomplished; he said he hadn’t been aware of this work before (he was new to the paper) but would consider writing a story.

- Social networks/Relationship notes
  BVDP works through the National Rural Support Program as the NGO implementing agency in the villages. They commented that they are also developing networks with health and education providers, although they were less specific on the nature of those networks. Of particular importance is their relationship with the International Centre for Agricultural research in Dry Areas (Syria), and the Barani Agricultural Research Institute and others working in collaboration with ICARDA. Research results go into the Barani Village Development Plan.

- Education notes
  Women’s mobility is better in this area than in the north, making it possible for them to come into Barani Agricultural Training Institute and other facilities.

ENRAP review findings

IFAD project familiarity with ENRAP
  They participated in the Pakistan National Workshop; they do like to get the ENRAP emails and would like to see that continued.

Project support from ENRAP

  They have received funding to build the BVDP website, in order to provide access to announcements, newsletters, reports, etc. As they produce only a limited number of paper copies, they view the web as the vehicle for strengthening delivery of their work, primarily to district level project offices. They also view it as a vehicle to communicate success stories to other projects. Once the website is developed, they plan to train staff in email, web use, etc. They agreed that results from the applied research work would also be posted on the website.
ENRAP integration with project

ENRAP is influencing a shift in culture in BVDP, where key staff now recognize the need for more information sharing sessions across the project.

Comments to ENRAP

BVDP focused many of its comments around the need for tools that could help make IFAD projects more efficient (for example, developing and making available electronically a standard template for community resolutions).

The project flagged an ongoing need for basic training in email and web, in order to increase use of these tools.

Recommendations for BVDP

At the time of writing, concern was expressed by the local facilitator that the company contracted to do the work was having significant delays in delivering the product. Although they started in October, by the time of the site visit in February it was still not possible to view a demo of the site. ENRAP may need to monitor this situation carefully.
**Dir Area Support Project (DASP)**  
**Islamabad, February 9, 2005**

**Overview of IFAD project**

DASP aims to improve the quality of life of poor small farmers, the land less, and rural women. It aims to alleviate poverty through agriculture and rural development, based on community participation. Key objectives are to boost agriculture production and income, establish the community organizations as the institutions through which technical and social services will be provided into the future; improve the status of women; improve access to markets through improvement of roads; and increase opportunities for off-farm employment. Dir is working is a difficult and challenging area. The project has received an extension to 2006.

Major accomplishments of the project discussed during the site visit include:

The IFAD project approach to social mobilization gave the concept of community involvement to line agencies that were already working in the region; as a result, DASP believes they have strengthened community involvement in development throughout the area.

**Challenges, including Communications and Information challenges**

As with most IFAD projects in the Asia region, the key challenges are extreme distances, lack of connectivity (including reliable roads, bridges and telecommunications infrastructure), limited access to education for villagers, and the lack of communications products and information in local languages. In Dir, the gender barriers are particularly difficult.

- **Technology notes:**  
The primary concern for DASP is the need to strengthen the Project Management Unit setup so that officers can have email access at their desk. As with SFDP, there is very limited phone and Internet access at the district level.

- **Communications notes**  
No communications vehicles were described: no website, or newsletter, or interaction with local media.

**ENRAP review findings**

**IFAD project familiarity with ENRAP**  
The project has a good relationship with the local facilitator and shares information with her; the project manager also appears to discuss ENRAP with other project managers, DASP participated in the Pakistan national meeting.
Project support from ENRAP

ENRAP has been approached to provide funding for the project “Strengthening project information system for improved project outcomes through Establishment of local area network (LAN). At the Project Management Unit, 4 computers would be supplied through ENRAP, and 16 from project funds (DASP was successful in getting this matching contribution from the IFAD project) – plus set up costs. At the time of writing, no written confirmation had been received that the funding was approved and being transferred. DASP’s primary driver for this proposal was to improve the project efficiency:

  o good coordination between district/government/Project management unit stakeholders
  o Establish a real focal point for all information on the project
  o Improve the Monitoring and Evaluation system at the project level, and flow information on impact assessment, success of programs in the field to IFAD, to other projects, and so forth.

Part of this program was to include training for government employees in the use of electronic systems, echoing the observations from other Pakistan projects, that government employees are not yet using email and the web to its fullest potential. The next stage for DASP would be linking up the district offices – they want to get computers for themselves.
Northern Areas Development Project
Islamabad, February 9, 2005

Overview of IFAD project

“The Northern Areas Development Project is to boost agricultural production and incomes, establish and/or strengthen community organizations, improve the status of women, reinforce the resource base and improve rural roads. Project components include community and women's development; village infrastructure development; agricultural development; rehabilitation and upgrading of valley roads; and strengthening of regional agricultural support services.” [www.ifad.org]. An estimated 1,000,000 people will benefit from the project.

Major accomplishments of the project discussed during the site visit include:

- “The project has managed to take the religious leaders on board and now it is expected that project would be able to work with the women’s groups.” [NADP Supervision Mission]

Challenges, including Communications and Information challenges

As with most IFAD projects in the Asia region, the key challenges are extreme distances, lack of connectivity (including reliable roads, bridges and telecommunications infrastructure), limited access to education for villagers, and the lack of communications products and information in local languages. In NADP, the gender barriers are particularly difficult. Coordination among stakeholders in the region is considered a key issue for the project.

- Technical notes:
  
  There is no Internet connectivity in the area (not even for the Project Management Unit). Quality IT people won’t go to work in the northern area of Pakistan. Nevertheless there is a real need to invest in IT because it provides equal opportunity for people whether they live in the north, in Islamabad or in Karachi.

- Communications notes
  No communications vehicles were described: no website, or newsletter, or interaction with local media

ENRAP review findings

IFAD project familiarity with ENRAP

The project has a good relationship with the local facilitator and shares information with her; the project manager also appears to discuss ENRAP with other project managers, NADP participated in the Pakistan national meeting

Project support from ENRAP
A proposal was submitted to ENRAP to set up an ISP in Chilas, where the Project management headquarters is located. The project noted the possibility for significant downstream benefit: support to local businesses, health services, and other social considerations. IDRC offered to fund a feasibility study that would outline the business plan for the ISP, ensuring sustainability of the connection for some years. According to IDRC conducting this study would be a necessary precondition to any further discussions around financial commitments. At the time, the project was concerned that they would have to commit a matching contribution of funds for the ISP from the project itself, but it was too late to get it into the revised NADP project plan with IFAD. This issue will be discussed in a separate memo to ENRAP/IDRC, as NADP is continuing to seek ways to get an ISP established in Chilas.

Separate from that discussion, NADP has also indicated a need to undertake capacity building among staff in the following areas:

i. Inhouse capacity to utilize ICTS to support the project, and for the longer term when staff move into other work once the IFAD project is wrapped up.

ii. Investment in ICTs is opening up the minds – ICTs facilitate linking people, transferring skills, and providing exposure to different points of view.

**Whether/how DIR and NADP learn from other IFAD projects**

In general, PK projects appear to talk frequently with each other, especially those working in the most difficult areas (South FATA, Dir, NADP). The local facilitator has served to strengthen the channels of communication among the projects through regular phone and email contact. They don’t use the ENRAP website. They do get the newsletter.

**Comments to ENRAP**

The projects believe that ENRAP needs to review / reassess what it can do and what it cannot. Expectation management appears to have been an issue for the Pakistan projects participating in ENRAP. If a second national workshop in Pakistan is held, some work will need to be done in the workshop to ensure that the IFAD projects are all clear on what will be acceptable in proposals for additional funding, and what will not. Timeliness [on both sides] in the submission, revision, approval and funding of proposals would be appreciated. This last issue has been of particular concern to the local facilitator.
Site visit: Pakistan ENRAP Local Facilitator

Overview

At the time of writing, the local facilitator has stepped down. She has been working on contracts with IFAD for 1.5 years, and was with ENRAP for 7-8 months. Her experience with IFAD started with her involvement in a series of IFAD funded/ ICIMOD run experience sharing workshops in the region. She had hoped through ENRAP to expand the experience sharing workshop approach. Her Terms of Reference included a particular emphasis on gender and ICTs.

She believes her most significant accomplishment in ENRAP has been the acceptance of her in the role of facilitator by South FATA, Dir and Northern projects project directors; and she has served to improve interaction among these projects. She was also used by the projects as a broker with ENRAP. In a culture not conducive to the sharing of information, she was able to secure at least 2 success stories from Pakistan projects; one of which made the IFAD newsletter.

Challenges, including Communications and Information Challenges

- Technology notes:
  The facilitator was well connected, with a laptop, printer, and Internet high speed cable.

  Of some interest is her observation that in IFAD projects in Pakistan, the culture of the civil service is such that the project directors and senior officers don’t have computers at their desks; and they don’t open their own emails. They have support people print them off. E-discussions, and other electronic sharing is not possible in that culture. She still has to use fax, phone to communicate with projects.

  She also noted that the Prime Minister has not been giving approvals for a telecom policy that would help with infrastructure and access in rural areas: there is a need for someone or some organization to be there in the political and bureaucratic circles pushing issue of policy, access, infrastructure.

  The bigger NGOs tend to have equipment and connectivity; they are better set up than government officers, they are more computer literate/more used to email, web etc.

- Communications notes
  The facilitator believes that print newsletters, workshops work better at this point in Pakistan. ENRAP needs to get beyond the connectivity / technology emphasis.

  On Gender and ICTs, the facilitator raised 3 issues
    o In order to convince and mobilize people to women’s empowerment, women need help to communicate their success; they need to know that
their knowledge, experience is valuable to others. One approach may be to make documentaries of rural women’s life for TV, VCDs, etc.

- ICTs may help to address the limited mobility of women. There are growing numbers of young educated women who don’t have much exposure but who want to learn computers and are willing to buy their own equipment. However, a male can’t teach them. The facilitator was approached during an IFAD mission by a young girl asking Rashda whether she could help learn to use a computer – her brother is educated and has a computer, and she wants one too.

- In Pakistan, one has to plan strategically for the long term: there is a need to have someone in place to pursue the work continuously and to monitor the long term impact.

**ENRAP review findings**

**IFAD projects: their familiarity with ENRAP**

The facilitator noted that IFAD itself is not well known; she has found it challenging to tell project staff what ENRAP is, when IFAD itself is not well known in the country. The facilitator had considered whether setting up a national IFAD projects website might help, but project contributions couldn’t support this, and her funding from ENRAP covered only her fees and office arrangements. She strongly believes that a real Pakistan ENRAP presence is needed, with its own website, newsletter, calendar, etc.

While the ENRAP newsletter was considered useful, it was difficult to persuade projects to contribute to that as they have their own ways publishing their information. This raises some questions about the role of the local facilitator is, and what their value added is to the IFAD projects.

**Comments to ENRAP**

- Sustainability may be a challenge with the current project design that provides small amounts of funding to a wide range of relatively unrelated endeavours.
- She is not aware of whether there are other local facilitators, who they are and what they are learning.
- If there is be an evolution of ENRAP, then the next phase should consider a different project design, perhaps with a much stronger emphasis on capacity building of project people to use email, to write case studies, to interact electronically. Only then can you really begin to capture their knowledge.

**Limitations of the Pakistan Study**

The extreme distances and limited time available prevented visits to district offices of the projects.
Lao PDR

There are three ENRAP projects in the country:

- ENRAP-DIFI collaboration for ENRAP Local Facilitator to support IFAD projects in Laos
- ENRAP connectivity
- Training on documentation and writing skills

Overview

The consultant reviewed the above three ENRAP-funded projects in the country. The second and third projects listed above will be discussed in the following pages as a part of the review of CISP in Oudomxay Province. The first project is discussed below.

ENRAP-DIFI collaboration for ENRAP Local Facilitator to support IFAD projects in Laos

Overview of project

The main aim of this project is to have a person in the country to help speed up the development and implementation of ENRAP activities. Mr. Keolaka Sovaya has been appointed as the Local Facilitator.
The consultant attempted to engage Mr Soiaya in the evaluation, first over the telephone and then via email. However, the attempts were unsuccessful. Mr Soiaya did share with the consultant an email to Ms Shalini Kaia, ENRAP, IDRC New Delhi, a listing of work undertaken in December 2004, and work planned for January and February 2005. The list shows that he has focused his efforts in building a website for IFAD projects in Lao PDR, translating content from Lao into English, and preparing a newsletter. He plans to continue with these activities in addition to conducting training workshops on website development for provincial project staff in the future.

The consultant discussed the role of the facilitator with the two Project Directors of Community Initiatives Support Project in Oudomxay Province. They welcomed the availability of a coordinator but was unsure what was his role. They suggested that the terms of reference of the facilitator be shared with the projects so that they are able to tap the services of the facilitator.

**Recommendation**

Circulate the terms of reference and email address for the Local Facilitator to all the IFAD project teams so that they are aware of his role and can tap his services.

**Community Initiatives Support Project (CISP)**

**Department of Planning and Cooperation**

**Oudomxay Province**

**Overview of IFAD project**

CISP is a project funded by four donors. IFAD provided a US$13.4 million loan, Lux-Development a US$15 million grant, World Food Programme US$1.7 million, Government of Laos US$3.3 million, and the beneficiaries US$0.5 million. The project team at the provincial, district and village levels employs a total of 360 staff members. This is a large project.

The project is in the early stages of mobilisation. It is scheduled to run from October 2002 until September 2010. The intended beneficiaries will be selected from some of the most remote and poorest communities in Oudomxay Province. The project will cover 10,000 households comprising 64,000 people dispersed across 187 villages. The main long-term objective is to overcome poverty within the communities covered. Short-term goals include developing food security, increasing income, and building village infrastructure.
CISP has five main components:

(1) Community Development.
(2) Agriculture and Natural resource Management.
(3) Rural Financial Services.
(4) Rural Infrastructure.
(5) Capacity Building of the Project Team.

**Communication and information challenges**

The majority of the project beneficiaries do not speak the national Laotian language. They are people who belong to three ethnic groups: Akha, Kmu, and Hmong. A significant proportion of the communities live in isolated communities. Many continue to practice shifting agriculture; the project is aiming to persuade them to give up this traditional practice to conform with the government's policy of stopping shifting agriculture. The government is also trying to resettle many of the isolated communities to sites with easy access to provincial roads.

The complexity of the project adds to the communication and information challenges. The fieldwork of the large number of project staff will need to be effectively coordinated to ensure not only the smooth implementation of field activities but also to avoid information overload which may happen when large amounts of new information and practices are shared among communities who are illiterate and are not fluent in the national Laotian language spoken by most of the field personnel.

**ENRAP projects**

ENRAP has funded two activities at CISP.

**ENRAP connectivity**

The CISP Project Directors explained that this project is being executed by CISP and will eventually cover Xaiyabouly Province. The connectivity project was in its early stages of implementation during the consultant’s visit. A computer had recently been purchased and installed in the Project Directors’ office. The links to the District Offices had not been established. The consultant was therefore not able to see the project in full implementation.
According to the technical design for the project by Mr. Dominic Soh, the external consultant for the project, the most cost-effective way for providing connectivity to the project is via broadband connections to the Central Provincial Offices which will act as hubs to the District Offices:

Therefore, the ideal solution is to connect all the Central Provincial Offices to broadband connections and connect all the District Offices to LTC dial-up corporate connections.

For reading electronic messages and surfing the Internet, the District Offices can dial up to two telephone lines in the Central Provincial Offices or LTC telephone lines. For transferring bigger files, the District Offices can deliver these big files to the Central Provincial Offices in writable CDs or USB thumb drives provided. The location between Central Provincial Offices and the District Offices are not very far apart.

One of the main intended uses of the connectivity is to facilitate the transmission of monitoring and evaluation data from the District Offices to the Central Provincial Office. The other major application will be emailing the messages required in managing, coordinating and facilitating such a large project staff.

Training on documentation and writing skills

This training course aimed at building the capacity of project staff to write concise reports about their project activities. It was conducted by two Canadian trainers. It took place in August 2003 and was attended by 9 participants from Oudomxay Province, 4 from Xayabury, 3 from Xiengkhuang, and one person from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vientiane.

The course was held over four days. The first two days were devoted to talks and lectures. The participants were then formed into three groups. Each group visited a different field activity after which they were required to write up a report as an exercise. The fourth and final day was spent on writing reports and critiquing of the written pieces by the trainers.

The Project Manager, who participated in the course, felt that the course was useful. It was the first time that the participants had been exposed to training on how to write concise reports. And because the course was attended by participants from several central provinces, it also offered them a rare opportunity to meet and share experiences.
He also identified the following as weaknesses of the course: The trainers worked only in English and much time was spent in translation resulting in a curtailed programme. The workshop should have been at least a day longer to provide participants with more time to practise their writing skills. It would also have been helpful if the trainers had prepared course notes and distributed them to the participants.

The Project Manager suggested that ENRAP considers hiring either Laoitians or Thais as resource people for the conduct of similar courses in the future so as to overcome language problems. Future trainers may be identified from local NGOs or from Thailand; Laoitians are able to understand Thai nearly perfectly given the great similarities between the two languages.

Observations

Other CISP communication activities: The main IFAD/Lux-Development project has installed 15 village public address (PA) systems in “big” villages with more than households. The systems are operated by local members of the Lao Youth Union. Each system comprise of an amplifier, radio-cassette player, microphones, loudspeakers, a large car battery and charger powered by a solar panel.

The PA systems broadcast to the village twice a day; in the morning and evening. It was reported to be popular with the people of Nam Heng Tai Village which was visited by the consultant. Each broadcast typically opens with about 15 minutes of content (usually in the Lao national language) relayed from the Oudomxay Radio Station or played back from tapes provided by CISP. This is followed by content, usually music, in the people’s ethnic language. Project information for the people may be inserted into this part of the programming.

The consultant believes the PA system is popular not only for its information content but also for its entertainment content. The villagers do not have radios in their homes and were therefore previously without access to any form of mass media. The broadcasts conducted in the languages of the people and under the leadership of members of the communities themselves must also add greatly to the cultural and communal significance of these broadcasts.

The consultant was able to meet with the committee running the PA system at Nam Heng Tai (the meeting was called, appropriately enough, via the PA system). The village head said he was happy with the system. He also requested for members of the committee running the system to be further trained in managing the broadcasts. Significantly, he also asked for a microphone with a longer cable which could reach the meeting space located next to the hut where the PA system is housed, and also for an electricity cable to be extended from the hut to
The village PA system committee at Nam Heng Tai posing in front of the village project office where the system's equipment are housed. Note the solar panels used to recharge the car battery that powers the equipment in the meeting area so that they could tap the battery to light a bulb. His requests suggest intentions to use the PA system to broadcast village meetings to the community; a move that will enhance participation and transparency as well.

The village head also requested for a "phonie". Interestingly, the same request had been made by district-level project staff for improving communication with villages (which may be hours away on foot). The consultant was unable to get an exact description of what a "phonie" was but descriptions suggest it is either a VHF or Single-Side-Band radio. Both villagers and district project staff had gotten the idea from equipment used by government officials and members of the armed forces.

**Farm-produce price information:** Cash crops is an important way for the villagers to increase their income (one of the main project goals). It is therefore important that farmers be provided with timely produce prices so that they will have some reliable reference when negotiating with the traders who buy the produce from them. The consultant met with some farmers during his visit to Nam Heng Neua Village when discussion turned to their bags of harvested produce (which sounded like hops used in brewing beer) sitting in their houses waiting for the arrival of the middleman. When asked how prices were fixed for their produce the farmers replied that prices were always determined by the traders. When further asked how the traders determined the prices they replied they did not know. Some effort maybe usefully invested in providing farmers in the project area with current prices for their crops.
Such an information service should be delivered in tandem with initiatives to organise farmers into marketing groups so that they will be able to negotiate for fair prices for their produce with the currently better organised traders.

**Recommendations**

(1) Initiate an experiment to link one of the Zones participating in CISP with its District office via either VHF or Single-Side-Band Radio to improve communication and information linkages between the project staff and villagers. The base station may be located with a Zone Leader or another respected community leader. Funds permitting, the Zone Leader may in turn be linked with Village Heads through low-cost transceivers. The experiment may also try patching one of these radios into a village public address system. A successful patch will open the way for village-to-village communication at the community level.

(2) The National Project Director, CISP suggested that farmer-exchange visits be tested as a channel for sharing experiences within the project. The consultant concurs. Farmer-exchange visits have been proven to be not only an effective means of information sharing but also in forming alliances and networks at the community level to tackle macro issues such as the environment and natural resource management.

(3) Laotian and Thai trainers should be engaged in the conduct of training courses whenever possible to overcome challenges associated with the use of English in the conduct of training at the provincial and district levels.

(4) A field activity information and coordinating mechanism be developed to keep the 300 (and growing) project staff members aware of each others plans and activities in the field so as to avoid overloading beneficiaries with commitments, activities and information. The beneficiaries should participate actively in managing this mechanism and determining the schedule of activities in their communities. A simple web-based scheduling application may be developed whereby field personnel are able to log on to the calendar for a particular village and reserve time slots for their field activities.

IISD, 2005 p65
Limitations of the study in Lao PDR

• The consultant was unable to read any of the project documents and reports or understand any of the radio broadcasts which were prepared in the Lao language.

• Most of the semi structured interviews were conducted through an interpreter.

• The consultant was unable to meet face-to-face with Ms Chongchith Chantharanouh, Director, Division of International Financial Institution, Department of International Cooperation, who is closely connected with the project, for an in-depth discussion.
The Philippines

Overview

Ms Susan Perez, Desk Officer for IFAD Projects at the Department of Land Reform very kindly arranged for a meeting of Project Directors and their staff from three IFAD funded projects at her office in Manila to orientate me to ENRAP’s work in the Philippines. The following IFAD projects were represented at the meeting:

- Cordillera Highland Agricultural Resource Management Project (CHARM)
- Western Mindanao Community Initiatives Project (WMCIP)
- Northern Mindanao Community Initiatives and Resource Management Project (NMCIREMP)

CHARM proposal

CHARM was launched in late 1997 with funds from IFAD and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The ADB loan terminated on 30 September 2004, while the IFAD loan is scheduled to end on 30 June 2005. However, the project has been recently assigned to implement other Department of Agriculture initiatives beyond June 2005, including the IFAD assisted Rewarding Upland People for Environmental Services (RUPES) project undertaken in collaboration with the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) that started up in January 2005.
CHARM does not have any ongoing ENRAP project but has drafted a proposal for it to fund. The goal of the proposed activities is “to document, package and make accessible to various users the best practices and lessons learned encountered during the CHARM Project implementation. Specifically, best practices on sustainable agriculture and natural resource management shall have been packaged and disseminated through information, communication technologies (ICTs) such as print, radio broadcast and video. This includes uploading to the Internet.”

The proposal will see CHARM improve its Internet connectivity, purchase new ICT hardware and software, train 25 staff members in report writing, field work to collect “missing” data to complete the project information already available, writing up at least 20 best practices for distribution in print and digital forms, and farmer broadcasts to share the documented best practices.

WMCIP ENRAP I and II activities

The IFAD project at WMCIP has been running since 1989. It has received support from ENRAP during its previous and current phases. ENRAP I supported the Regional Information Network Centre in setting up a website (http://www.wmcip.org.ph), a newsletter, and email services. ENRAP II is supporting stakeholder meetings, mailing lists and the website. Yet to completed are the development communication activities from this second phase project.

Networking among IFAD projects

The Project Directors do not have much opportunity to meet as a group. The Project Directors for the CHARM and WMCIP projects, for example, met for the first time during the ENRAP meeting held in Bangkok.

The Project Director for NMCIREMP had taken the initiative to meet with his counterpart at WMCIP during the launching of his project in Northern Mindanao.

The Project Directors were interested to find out from the consultant if ENRAP activities had to be confined to people directly connected to IFAD projects. They were interested in involving people with no direct project connections but who were nevertheless potentially important contacts, such as people with NGOs active in the same issues the IFAD projects are addressing.
Recommendations for Philippines projects

(1) The CHARM proposal is worthy of support. It promises to not only produce potentially valuable best-practices documents which can be shared not only among the project sites in the Cordilleras but also among land-reform projects in the Philippines as well with similar projects in other countries via the ENRAP website.

(2) The exchange of information and experiences should be open to all parties sharing an interest in the same communities and issues covered by the IFAD projects.

(3) Opportunities should be provided for technical and field staff from the different projects to meet and share experiences and work on solutions to common problems. The current system of quarterly meetings organised by DLR only involves Project Directors and a small number of other project staff. The technical and field staff networking can happen through thematic meetings (for e.g. about peace and order, rural credit, agriculture, handicraft making and marketing) and involve only those staff members working in these areas. It can also occur through thematic mailing lists or exchange visits.

(4) Please see below for recommendations regarding NMCIREMP.

Northern Mindanao Community Initiatives and Resource Management Project (NMCIREMP)
Department of Land Reform

Overview of IFAD project

NMCIREMP was launched in October 2003 to alleviate poverty among 58,000 rural households in northern and northeastern Mindanao. It covers 170 upland and coastal areas, 7 lakeside areas and 70 indigenous ancestral sites. The communities’ main occupations are fishing and farming. NMCIREMP aims to initiate development activities that are ecologically sound, gender sensitive, and nurturing of indigenous cultures and values.

The project has six main components:

(1) Community Institutions and Participatory Development.
(2) Community Investments.
(3) Natural Resources Management.
(4) Support Services and Studies.
(5) Support to Indigenous People.
(6) Project Management.
Communication and information challenges

The difficult terrain of the project sites poses obstacles to effective and convenient communication among the communities, and between them and the project team based in the towns. To make these challenges even more daunting, many of the towns where field staff are based are themselves without access to good communication and transportation infrastructure. The presence of bandits and insurgents along stretches of rural roads further isolates some of the communities. Two major project sites in Surigao Del Norte Province are located on smaller islands that can only be reached by boats.

ENRAP project

ENRAP has funded the Arterial ICT: Connectivity, Capacity Building, and Knowledge, Information and Management Project to develop and test solutions which may be able to help overcome the communication and information problems encountered so far by NMCIREMP.

The primary means of communication for the project is the Internet. It hopes to build connectivity among 5 provincial project coordination offices and 42 municipal project offices. Internet access will enable the 47 project offices to communicate with each other as well as with the central NMCIREMP office in Butuan.

The project is fortunate to have access to two types of ISP services: ADSL in the main towns and indigo/Dream satellite Internet service (http://www.indigo.net.ph) at any location with a clear view of the southeastern sky (118 degrees Southeast). These two services cover all locations of the NMCIREMP project area.

The main consideration in arranging connectivity for the various project offices is the recurring monthly ISP charges. The project had completed the GIS Connectivity Mapping study to explore how recurring costs could be shared to render connectivity affordable to the municipalities. The plan is for NMCIREMP to pay for the set-up and installation costs for each Internet connection and for the municipalities to pay the monthly ISP charges (amounting to 5,500 PPh or US$99 per month for the indiGo Basic II package) The study recommended clustering about five municipalities without telephone-land lines to share a single satellite Internet connection. This means that each municipality will have to pay only 1,100 PPh (US$20) per month for their share of the ISP bill. This is the main advantage of clustering the project offices for this propose.
The disadvantages of this approach are:

(1) Sharing limited bandwidth (Information posted at the indiGo website, http://www.indigo.net.ph, states that Basic II package may not be connected to a router and LAN).

(2) The high set-up investments involved in building tall antenna towers and installing the required WiFi hardware which is estimated to cost from about 250,000 Php (US$2,600) to 350,000 Php (US$6,300) per cluster.

(3) The logistics involved in keeping the clusters running efficiently, ranging from collecting payments for ISP bills to repairing faulty hardware and recovery from potential lighting strikes.

Field visits

The consultant was able to make fairly extensive visits across three provinces covered by NMCIREMP over two days in the company of Mr Yolando Arban, Head Monitoring Evaluation and Adjustment, and Mr James Plaza, Systems Analyst for the project. As the ENRAP project is just in its start-up stages there were no project activities to observe. However, the visits provided the consultant with first-hand appreciation of the communication and information needs of the various municipality project offices, as well as the opportunity to meet with the various community leaders who will be involved in the ENRAP project. The municipalities visited were those that had indicated firm commitment to take part in the Arterial ICT project of ENRAP by confirming in writing to NMCIREMP that they will pay the recurring monthly ISP bills.

Kitchareo Municipality in Agusan Del Norte Province was the first stop. The Project Manager said that the municipality was willing to pay the monthly fee of 5,000 Php to obtain its own Internet connection after listening to the alternative of joining a cluster of four other users to share the monthly ISP charges. He told the consultant that he and his colleagues plan to make use of the connectivity to do the following:

(1) Researching government policies and legislation.
(2) Researching ordinances passed by other municipalities while drafting related ordinances for the municipality.
(3) Marketing local products.
(4) Obtaining agricultural produce prices.
(5) Requesting for information and help from NGOs.
(6) Transmitting project reports.
(7) Researching planning issues.
ENRAP Mid Term Review

The municipality intends to set up an Internet café that will operate in the evening, after the municipality offices are closed, to make the Internet connection available to members of the public while at the same time generating revenue to pay the monthly ISP charges.

_Lanuza Municipality_. Surigao Del Sur Province was the second project office to be visited. The Mayor was keenly supportive of the ENRAP project. He had already written to NMCIREMP confirming that his municipality will pick up the full monthly ISP bill for a dedicated (not shared) connection. He plans to use the connectivity for the same reasons as Kitcharao and also to promote a surfing festival that the municipality aims to relaunch as an international event.

Like Kitcharao, the municipality intends to “sell” the connectivity after office hours to generate income to pay the ISP bill. These are two options: the first is to switch the connection to the school next to the municipality office, where a computer lab already exists, and to operate it in the evening as an Internet café; the other option is to share the connectivity with houses in the vicinity of the office and collect a flat monthly fee from each of the houses connected. A third option is to split the cost of the Internet connection among the different line agencies housed in the municipality hall.

_Cagwait Municipality_. Surigao Del Sur Province was the third project office to be visited. The Vice Mayor listened to the option of sharing a connection via a cluster of users but in the end also confirmed the willingness of his municipality to pay for its own connection, rather than share it with other municipalities. Unlike the other two municipalities visited, Cagwait had an additional incentive to get connected. The National Computer Centre has offered to contribute 3 PCs, a fax machine and a scanner to set up a Community E-Centre if the municipality were to provide an Internet connection. The e-centre will be located in the municipality library that is housed in a room on the ground floor of the mayor’s and project office. The plan is to run the Internet connection over to the e-centre after the government offices have closed for the day and to run an Internet café so as to generate revenue to help defray the ISP charges.

**Observations about NMCIREMP**

_Clustering users_: This is an innovative strategy worth piloting. As the technology package for this strategy is being assembled the project team may usefully confirm the following:

- If the wide area network connected to this cluster can be upscaled, both in terms of users and bandwidth, if the need to do this arises, and the cost of doing so.
• If official permission may be obtained from the relevant authorities to commission WiFi hardware and networks considering the special case of the Philippines where the WiFi frequencies have not been unlicensed.

• If WiFi base stations maybe located further apart than 10 km since experiences elsewhere have previously set this as the maximum reach of high-gain antennae used to extend the range of WiFi signals.

Setting up LANs: The municipalities visited have already installed an average of 20 computers in their offices. Discussions indicate that they intend to network all their computers so as to share the Internet connectivity. It will be useful to consider how such LANs will be built and who (and how) they will be maintained. Peer-to-peer networks maybe the easiest to set up and the easiest to maintain, but only a smaller number of computers can be networked in this way. Larger LANs will require the deployment of a server that in turn will require the services of a trained network administrator. In both cases LANs should ideally be protected behind hardware firewalls to protect against cyber attacks which may lead to irrecoverable loss of important project data.

Training of users: Staff of the project and municipalities will need to be trained on how to use Internet connectivity effectively immediately after connectivity is established as no one on staff are familiar with Internet usage. Such training should cover:

(1) Preparing, sending, retrieving and filing emails.
(2) Using search engines to conduct online research.
(3) Evaluating the validity and credibility of online content.

And in the case of selected staff of some municipalities requiring the following skills, the following training should also be conducted:

(4) Designing and building websites.
(5) Identifying and working with hosts for their websites.
(6) E-commerce.
(7) Running and managing a telecentre.

Information resources and training materials: The following directories should be prepared in advance of the connectivity being delivered to the municipalities so that they will be on hand for users to refer to and get them off to a good start with their attempts to get online:

• Directory of important email addresses within the municipalities, provinces, and the country.
ENRAP Mid Term Review

- Abstracted directory of useful websites arranged according to topics and issues covered by NMCIREMP. Each URL should be accompanied by a couple of paragraphs describing the type of information available at the particular website.
- Manual on how to operate a telecentre or Internet café
- HTML manual for those training in webbing to refer to.

It will also be useful to assemble a variety of open source software or shareware that may be required by the municipalities. These may range from monitoring and evaluation templates or applications, to software used to manage revenue collection at Internet cafés.

Recommendations for NMCIREMP

1. Develop and carefully pretest the technology package to be deployed for clusters of users sharing one Internet connection. At the same time check that WiFi systems can be used legally within the project areas.
2. Test the indiGo Basic II satellite Internet service package to confirm that it can support computers connected via a LAN. Also establish what is the optimum number of computers that can share the Internet connection at any one time.
3. Train users how to use emails effectively in their work, and how to conduct online research; municipalities planning to operate telecentres should also be provided with training on running such a service. 
4. Compile and distribute to users email directories and directories of online resources.
5. The current ENRAP project has funds to help bring connectivity to 10 municipalities; consider providing support to connect all 32 remaining communities since the funds required for this is relatively small. This will allow all NMCIREMP project field offices to be connected; it will be a good experiment to learn about the efficacies of project-wide electronic networking.

Limitations of the Philippines study

- The consultant was not able to test a connection provided by indiGo satellite Internet service provider or talk to a user of the service and confirm if its Basic II package will be able to deliver the bandwidth and quality of connectivity required by the various municipalities.
- The ENRAP Artciral ICT project is in its early stages of implementation so no actual project activities could be observed apart from work being undertaken to mobilise potential project partners.
Vietnam

The consultant was able to make contact only with the project in Ha Tinh in Vietnam.

The Project Director of the Ha Tinh Development Project did inform the consultant that directors of all IFAD funded projects meet biannually with the IFAD Country Officer. He said these meetings provided the various Project Directors with a regular opportunity to meet and exchange experiences.

Below: Members of the Thach Chau Commune Women's Union; on the far right is Ms Nguyen Thi True, their Chairperson.

Ha Tinh Rural Development Project

Overview of IFAD project

IFAD has been funding a large integrated rural development project in Ha Tinh since 1999. The project will end in 2005. It covers 137 communes spread out across 9 districts. The total budget for the project is US$19 million comprising US$15.4 million from IFAD, US$2.2 million Vietnamese counter-part funding, and US$1.4 million contribution from project beneficiaries.

The project team is pleased that the Ha Tinh initiative is considered as the most successful decentralisation effort in the country, and that its micro-credit scheme (which is a part of the project) is considered to be similarly outstanding.

2003 ITU indicators for Vietnam

Total population: 81.38 million
Population per sq. km: 247
GDP per capita (2002): US$429
Main telephone lines per 100 inhabitants: 5.41
Cellular mobile subscribers per 100 inhabitants: 3.37
Internet hosts per 10,000 inhabitants: 0.04
Internet users per 10,000 inhabitants: 43.10
Computer ownership per 100 inhabitants: 0.98

Source: International Telecommunications Union (ITU) 2004
ENRAP project

Writing skills workshop

ENRAP has supported one activity with the group in Ha Tinh. It was a training workshop on “Improving Skills for Project Formulation, Writing Reports on Project Impact and Lessons Learnt”. The workshop budget was US$7,840 with an additional local contribution of US$625.

The workshop was held in May 2004. Thirty five participants took part in the 10-day course which was conducted by Dr Mai Thanh Cuc from the Agricultural Economics Department of Hanoi Agricultural University.

The following were identified as the most successful outcome of the workshop: participants learnt:

- Log-frame method of evaluation
- How to write a concise report
- Standardised reporting system for the project

The evaluator was able to read the English translation of four reports written by participants of the workshop. The reports were concise and well structured. The workshop had obviously succeeded in imparting necessary reporting skills to the authors of these four reports. While the reports were clear and well structured they can be greatly enhanced with analysis of the activities undertaken, particularly the challenges encountered. The reflection and discussion of challenges are highly desirable in development project reporting as successes usually follow effective solution of challenges. Very useful experiences can be gained as well from projects that fail as others attempting similar activities in the future will learn from such failures and avoid pit falls.

Observations

M&E centred communication process

The project team’s main communications channel with members of the communities taking part in the IPAD project is through its highly systematised monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. The part of the M&E system that was shared in detail with me related to the credit scheme.

All the village credit groups are required to meet on the 25th of every month. Each group comprises about 10 to 12 women. There are an average of 5 groups in each village. Leaders from these village groups then meet the next day, the 26th, at the commune level. Each commune has an average of 5 to 10 villages. Funds are then disbursed on the
ENRAP Mid Term Review

27th to the new borrowers. Information regarding the month’s finances is then consolidated from the 28th to 30th of the month and submitted to the coordination unit at the provincial level.

The consolidation of the month’s data is sometimes delayed because “They [the group leaders] have too much work to do” reported Tran Dinh Quang who manages the M&E unit of the project.

The project has set up a management information system (MIS) for the data gathered from the villages and communes. Tran Sinh Binh is the project staff who helps to maintain the computers, server, and small local area network (LAN) set up for the M&E unit. He is trained in computer science and is identified as the person responsible for “communication” at the project.

Need for qualitative data

The information that is systematically gathered in the villages, compiled at the commune level, and then consolidated at the provincial level seemed to comprise mainly of statistical data regarding cash flows. The emphasis on such quantitative data is crucial for the effective management of such a large rural credit scheme and must continue. However, the ENRAP project should explore if qualitative data may also be useful to the project.

Duong Thi Tan, Thanch Ha District Chair of the Women’s Union was asked what she thought of the current system of data gathering and how it could be improved. She suggested the project “Include other details” in the system. She also suggested “More training for the women” and to “Install telephones at communes which don’t have phones yet”.

Need for more “training” at the village level

The need for more training for the women taking part in the credit groups was expressed by the chairs of the Women’s Union at both the commune and district levels. “Due to limited education, acceptance of new ideas [by the women in villages] is limited. More training is required for animal rearing and crop production” said Nguyen Thi Truc of her members in Thach Chau commune. She is the leader of 35 credit groups totalling 388 women who have taken out a total of 675 loans. The loans are used for crop production, livestock rearing, setting up rice-milling and peanut-dehulling businesses and other small trades.

Training is necessary not only to increase practical knowledge but also to build the confidence of the women. “Lack of self-confidence, poor health, and too many children” are the problems facing her members according to Duong Thi Tan who heads the Women’s Union for Thach Ha district.
Nguyen Thi Truc said her members now obtain information on animals rearing and crop production from agricultural extension agents working in their commune. She also said that they depended on television broadcasts and staff of the agricultural department for information on prices when selling their produce and livestock.

**Need for training at the provincial level**

Tran Dinh Hoa, the project director, and Tran Dinh Quang, the project officer responsible for M&E, wanted two additional training courses to be conducted to strengthen the project’s report writing and M&E skills. They had conceptualised the courses in advance and raised it as a point for discussion during the mid-term evaluation.

*Report Writing Workshop.* This is to be targeted at the Community Development Boards. Two participants will be invited from each of the 48 communes. The same workshop will be conducted three times to cater to this large group of trainees. Each workshop will take 5 days. The budget for this series of three workshops is US$9,600.

*M&E Workshop.* This course is aimed at representatives from the districts. It is intended to train the 44 participants in how to collect, process and share the data required for the M&E system. It is planned as a 10-day workshop. The budget for this workshop is US$9,750.

**Establishing two-way communication channels**

The Ha Tinh Rural Development Project has participation as an underpinning element of its design. Participation seems to be facilitated mainly through participatory rural assessment/appraisal (PRA) sessions conducted at villages participating in the project. It also seems to be facilitated via the monthly credit group meetings. The mid-term evaluation was unable to observe a PRA session or a group meeting to appreciate the nature of participation occurring in the project.

The log-frame method taught during the ENRAP supported workshop also promotes a certain degree of participation in M&E. It is particularly well suited to the village-road and bridge building activities of the Ha Tinh project. However, when applied to more dynamic activities (the credit scheme included) log frames can turn out to be rigid and may fail to capture unanticipated, but important, outcomes of projects.

To fill some of these gaps in the M&E system, as well as to better support the participatory intent of the project, two-way communication channels connecting villages to the commune, district and provincial levels may be usefully considered as a part of the ENRAP activities. This may be accomplished very simply, such as installing a telephone at
disconnected communes, as suggested by Duong Thi Tan, or conducting periodic training workshops where participants share problems, aspirations and solutions and communicating such vital qualitative information to their peers and others who may have a role to play in helping to overcome obstacles to solutions.

Recommendations

(1) Explore establishing two-way communication channels linking the village, commune and provincial levels.

(2) Include qualitative data in the M&E system using a strategy that does not increase the already heavy workload of facilitators at the commune and district levels.

(3) Support a training workshop on “report writing” that aims in part at gathering qualitative information about the project, such training to adopt “balanced reporting” approaches that discusses both successes and challenges encountered by villagers.

(4) Support a training workshop on M&E that introduces participants to the processing of both quantitative and qualitative data (including outputs of PRA processes). The workshop will also introduce participants to the analysis of qualitative data and decision making based on such data.

Limitations of the Vietnam study

• Field visits were limited to a meeting each with Women’s Union leaders at one district office and a commune office.

• The consultant was unable to read any of the project documents and reports which were prepared in Vietnamese.

• All the semi structured interviews were conducted through an interpreter.
Appendix 3: Observations from consultations with IFAD and IDRC

International Fund for Agricultural Development
Rome: January 12, 2005 and February 15, 2005

Overview

The mid term review team were able to make two visits to Rome to meet with a number of stakeholders in ENRAP. The following outlines the key points arising from group and individual interviews.

1. Expectations for the mid term Review
2. Review of the objectives of ENRAP
3. Progress and accomplishments to date
4. Challenges facing ENRAP
5. Challenges facing IFAD
6. Suggestions to ENRAP
7. Future approaches to ICTs and knowledge sharing in the region

Expectations for the mid term Review

The Director for the Asia Pacific Division would like the following explored in the mid-term review:

- Is the original plan for ENRAP Phase 2 still valid?
- Are the objectives still achievable during the current time span?
- Do we need to compose a new plan of action in order to achieve objectives?

In addition, the mid-term review should highlight what has worked well.

Review of the objectives of ENRAP

In discussions with IFAD staff, the objectives foremost in their minds for Phase 2 included:

- Building on the awareness of the importance of sharing knowledge developed in Phase 1, and strengthening capacity of project staff to document learnings. Areas of knowledge to be shared included elements of the regional/country strategies – e.g. uplands management, gender mainstreaming, and microfinance.
- Building networks at 3 levels: local (within projects), national and regional: The “ideal would be if networks continued when our projects no longer exist”. It was hoped that Phase II would at least build strong national networks in India and China since IFAD does so much work there. IFAD was interested both in building capacity for networking and creating a network of networks.
• Focusing less on hardware and connectivity, and more on software, non-digital communications approaches, and capacity-building.

A range of countries was selected in order to include some more difficult ones (e.g. Laos). It was assumed from the beginning that different countries would require different levels of support.

**Progress and accomplishments to date**

Informants noted that ENRAP is recognized for building capacity in many IFAD projects in the region to access and use electronic communications. Within IFAD itself, there is greater recognition of both the value and challenges of integrating ICTs into IFAD projects in Asia and the Pacific. Indeed, because of the challenges ENRAP has faced, IFAD staff interviewed have themselves noted that integration of ICTs into projects requires not only infrastructure (hardware, software and connectivity) but communications planning and capacity development. Although it was not an objective of ENRAP, it may be that one of its important outcomes is its contribution to IFAD’s increasing appreciation of the role of electronic communications in rural development. IFAD values the relationship it has built with IDRC through ENRAP.

Informants appreciated the flexibility of ENRAP in the support provided according to the specific needs of projects.

Selected country portfolio staff are beginning to recognize the potential of ENRAP, and are now helping within their countries to focus ENRAP activities to more directly meet project objectives. For example, in Viet Nam, efforts are being directed towards setting a national IFAD project website. Emphasis will be placed on disseminating business process tools: procedures for procurement, bidding, contracting. The project managers are not interested in the substance of rural development so much as they want standards and other project support tools.

**Challenges facing ENRAP**

Informants noted the following challenges and concerns:

• Wide variations in connectivity in the region, limiting ENRAP to working primarily with project management units in major centres.

• Lack of a common language, limiting the opportunities for knowledge sharing between countries; and limiting the ability of the ENRAP website to act as a common communications platform for all countries.

• Lack of a culture of knowledge sharing in countries: Many project managers have low levels of incentives to share knowledge. They came up through systems in which control of knowledge was power. There is a need to give recognition to people who do share their knowledge.

• Success stories are sporadic and lack substance.

• ENRAP does not seem to have linked into the ICT and rural development programs of other agencies in the region (including TERI, Development
Alternatives, ICIMOD). Lessons from these other agencies are not flowing into ENRAP projects.

- IFAD staff do not consult the ENRAP website.
- Local facilitators (for example, Viet Nam, Pakistan) are consultants and work on other activities; the challenge is to find the right facilitator.

- ENRAP was designed around linking the project management units. The rationale at the time was that the management of some of these projects was not very good. Strengthening communications across projects might serve to improve project management. Consequently ENRAP has only really dealt with the 4-5 people in the PMUs rather than the broader stakeholder group (government line departments, NGOs, the villages) who are involved in the projects.

- The decision to do ENRAP was done without including the CPMs very well, even though the CPMs manage all aspects of projects. “We missed out on the participation of the national level and jumped straight to setting it up as a regional programme managed by the regional economist.”

Challenges facing IFAD

- Lack of a knowledge sharing and knowledge management culture at IFAD. A number of references were made to the recent evaluation of IFAD in which strong recommendations were tabled to significantly improve knowledge management across IFAD. Others commented that there is no systematic basis for collecting and learning from project experiences; and that there is a disconnect between knowledge on the ground and Rome. IFAD tends “to drive tools down rather than draw knowledge up”.

- IFAD needs to shift towards the knowledge management potential in projects: “Societies are increasingly aware of the need to be knowledge economies. But are we helping them to create new knowledge or mobilize it from where it is generated?”

- Limited policy influence, nationally and internationally: “We would like to be able to involve more policy people in knowledge sharing and do more knowledge sharing that links to policy outcomes.”

- ENRAP was funded through IFAD’s regional grants program, but at present IFAD does not have any mechanism for learning about results from the grants programs. IFAD is not linking these to what is happening in the bi-lateral projects. For example, the Nepal project manager did not know about a regional grants project on environmental security that is currently happening in Nepal.

Suggestions to ENRAP

For the balance of Phase 2, ENRAP should consider the following:
ENRAP Mid Term Review

- ENRAP should be more focused, targeting only a few activities for the balance of its work, in order to avoid dilution of its efforts.
- In particular, it should continue to foster and reward a culture of knowledge sharing within and among projects.
- Local facilitators need to be more active in gathering and posting information to the ENRAP website.
- Some IFAD staff viewed ENRAP not only as a mechanism for projects to share information, but for IFAD to disseminate information out to projects in the region. Considers that ENRAP must be a two way process. Would like to be able to use ENRAP to know more about what is going on in a particular country/project.
- The Regional Economist for Latin America is interested in exploring further how ICTs could support small producers to access markets. He has suggested that FIDAmerica and ENRAP could work together on this issue. This may introduce the beginning of connections across IFAD’s regional networks.

Future approaches to ICTs and knowledge sharing in the region

In general, key informants in Rome believe that ENRAP III should be very different from I and II. “ENRAP needs to be rethought and redeveloped into something which can function on an Asian scale.”

The following should be considered in future:

- Ensuring that country programmes have clear budgets for the connectivity elements of ENRAP.
- Strengthening at the national level should be emphasized.
- A new approach should be more inclusive of all project stakeholders beyond the project management units.
- There is a need to actively pursue private sector linkages (including CBOs and corporations) to root the projects locally.
- The intersection between the regional network and the proposed Rural Poverty Portal needs to be planned to balance the desire for a single entry for IFAD knowledge and the need to ensure that knowledge is retained through the relationships established within countries, beyond the lifespan of IFAD loans.
ENRAP/IDRC
Delhi, December 2005 and February 17-21, 2005

Overview

The mid term review team were able to make two visits to Delhi to meet with a number of stakeholders in ENRAP. The following outlines the key points arising from group and individual interviews.

1. Expectations for the mid term Review
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7. Future approaches to ICTs and knowledge sharing in the region

Expectations for the mid term Review

The ENRAP Coordinator reinforced IFAD’s desire that this review should provide some insight into how IFAD can build on ENRAP 2, but taking a new approach, reflecting emerging ideas, lessons, and so forth.

Review of the objectives of ENRAP

The informants discussed a number of assumptions and expectations that underlay the objectives for Phase 2 of ENRAP.

- ENRAP is intended to be an “enabler” for knowledge management to start taking place within and across IFAD projects, rather than be a knowledge management project per se. Rather than doing all the documenting of stories, leading all the email discussions, etc., ENRAP seeks to building capacity in each project to do this as an integral part of their daily work.
- An underlying assumption is that ICT tools can make doable what wasn’t doable before: they provide a new opportunity to interact at lower costs. However, expectations may have been too high, that ENRAP would in fact demonstrate that ICTs could support entrepreneurship and strengthen rural development.
- Two recommendations from Phase 1 influenced the design of phase 2:
  - That Phase 2 be more “demand driven”; in fact demonstration projects had to be initiated well into Phase 2 in order to create demand
  - That in Phase 2, ENRAP should become a “network of networks”. Opinions vary on the level of emphasis in the design of Phase 2 on the creation of national networks. It was suggested that in fact that the ENRAP proposal never promised to create national networks everywhere, or ensure access everywhere: the language was to “demonstrate”, to “experiment” – 1 or 2 telecentres, 1 or 2 national networks, etc.
• Expectations were raised that Phase 2 would resolve the shortcomings from Phase 1; and would deliver far more than was realistic given the budgets available.

• Although at the Bangkok workshop, participants requested that ENRAP provide support for a full range of communications tools and training, including writing and documentation, street theatre, and so forth, it was reinforced that ENRAP was to focus on “ICTs.”

• IDRC had several interests in agreeing to administer ENRAP. It was a window of opportunity to work with larger partners like IFAD, sharing its own expertise on ICT4D and networking and building IFAD’s capacity in these areas. It would also give IDRC an opportunity for “upscaleing”: learning whether ICTs can be transformative in rural development on a large scale, by introducing ICTs into IFAD’s projects.

Progress and accomplishments to date

ENRAP/IDRC stakeholders believe that IFAD’s goal was to improve the efficiency of projects through better communications, and that ENRAP has accelerated this process. IFAD’s relationship with IDRC on ENRAP has led to a new partnership with IDRC to establish Karianet, to support knowledge sharing in IFAD projects in North Africa and the Middle East.

The following activities were summarized by the ENRAP coordinator according to the categories for ENRAP support agreed to in the Bangkok workshop:

1) Assess and strengthen connectivity: connectivity assessments have been carried out. The least amount of funding was available to address hardware and connectivity needs, but in a number of projects with significant connectivity constraints, cases for support for hardware were made and funds awarded.

2) Build capacity of projects and their stakeholders: The expectation was that projects would request training in the use of ICTs; however, there were significantly more requests for documentation skills. The coordinator observed that training in ICTs is often an issue before the technology is in place, but once access to email/Internet is available, staff learn quickly how to send emails, chat, etc. There is not a lot of demand for upgrading technical skills.

3) Supporting networking – national level workshops. The coordinator noted that projects haven’t asked for support for local experience sharing workshops.

4) Demonstrating the use of ICTs for poor communities: no activities have been proposed in this area.

A new website has been established, to replace the website developed in Phase 1. ENRAP also produces an ENRAP email list; some national lists are also now available. These national lists are breaking ground with the inclusion of the partnering NGOs and other connections at the national level.
The demonstration project on video documentation has proven to be very successful. They have now set up a Yahoo group on video training, and some projects have been using that.

Overall, informants believe that ENRAP has increased awareness of the value of ICTs, and have set up expectations that projects can be more efficient and have greater impact through ICTs.

**Challenges facing ENRAP**

Informants noted the following challenges and concerns.

Three assumptions underlay the Phase 2 design:

- Knowledge sharing would happen organically once project staff had the tools to share knowledge
- Projects already had hardware (PCs, etc.) or could obtain it through the project budgets
- Connectivity was relatively OK in all areas.

None of these turned out to be true. Connectivity assessments were carried out early in phase 2: the assessments at the time only covered connectivity available in the project headquarters but didn’t look in detail at district offices of projects (which are closer to where implementation is being done, and which are critical in terms of flowing information from the field to the project headquarters).

- Initial efforts failed to create “champions” in each country [one person in one country project who would “champion” ENRAP in all country projects]. Efforts were then made to appoint national facilitators from outside of the projects, but this also has not been very successful.
- It turned out to be a challenge that most people in IFAD did not know IDRC, and time needed to be invested to build that relationship. But this did not then percolate down to the project level, making it that much more difficult to build trust relationships.
- The small grants approach is very time consuming.
- There is no shared understanding of networking: ENRAP/IDRC stakeholders were surprised by this, and had to do more work with Country Portfolio Managers to get support for ENRAP. And yet, the impact of ENRAP relies heavily on what the CPMs think of it, and how they promote it to their projects.
- A culture of information sharing and document exchange is absent in many countries. Most information exchange happens at workshops where face-to-face interaction is possible. It was noted that in many of these countries “publishing” anything requires approval from higher levels of government: while in fact it may not have been necessary to get approvals to write and publish small success stories, project staff are culturally constrained from putting anything in writing for broader consumption.
Initial requests were for support for writing and documentation skills, and had “nothing to do with ICT”.

- Wide variations in language and culture, and in particular the lack of English as a common language for interaction;
- High staff turnover within projects [high level of moving around in many Asian civil services.]
- Lack of a formal ENRAP Communications plan

**Challenges facing IFAD**

ENRAP/IDRC stakeholders commented that in phase 2, there has been a little more involvement of IFAD (Rome). New CPMs for Vietnam, Pakistan are more atuned to the need and potential for ICTs. Still, there is the belief that IFAD [at least until Thomas Elhaut took over as Asia regional director] has continued to see ENRAP as “IDRC administered” rather than their own project, although they are the main investors.

A culture of knowledge sharing across IFAD is still not well established. Informants in Delhi also commented on the external evaluation of IFAD that pointed out its weakness in knowledge management. They believe that IFAD is now looking to its regional networks to support them in addressing the recommendations of the evaluation.

Some consideration was also given to whether there is a perception within IFAD that these technologies are not supportive of main IFAD goals for poverty alleviation.

IFAD has not yet made the connection between their new RIMS (their monitoring and evaluation system) and the systematic collection of success stories from the projects as part of monitoring at the qualitative level.

**Suggestions for ENRAP**

The following suggestions were put forward by ENRAP/IDRC stakeholders. First and foremost, informants believe that within the funds available, it would be possible and beneficial to extend ENRAP to complete its activities in May 2006 rather than wind up in December.

In the time remaining, a focus on knowledge sharing about procedural issues is key, including financial management.

Some consideration is being given to focusing on digital video interests expressed by India, Pakistan, Laos and China. A workshop is proposed, to bring together all projects who have gone through digital video training to come back with the movies they have made; share experiences, mechanism to strengthen, how well it works etc.

In order to promote how information and communications can make a difference, a story contest is proposed.
ENRAP will also be actively supporting IFAD interventions at WSIS 2 in Tunis.

Some project proposals need to be finalized and executed. It is hoped that at least one more proposal is received from each country. That, combined with some monitoring activities, should complete activities for Phase 2.

**Future approaches to ICTs and knowledge sharing in the region**

As IFAD considers its next steps after the conclusion of Phase 2, it should be asking “what can you realistically do with the budgets available”. If the regional networks are to contribute to improving IFAD’s knowledge management, significantly greater levels of investment may be required.

Recommendation to IFAD should include that IT has to be an integral part of project design: all staff should be supplied with computers; all offices should have connectivity, in order for projects to become more efficient.

ENRAP/IDRC was very interested in the NERCRMP action to bring in a full time communications officer into the project, and agreed that if each project were to have someone in that role, progress on knowledge sharing, gathering success stories etc. would accelerate. The lack of a person in each project to spend time on ENRAP objectives was a major barrier to success.

New activities supporting regional networking should map the lifespan of the projects rather than have a separate, and significantly shorter, timespan of its own.
Appendix 4: Key Informants

Rome

Director, Asia and the Pacific Division: Thomas Elhaut  
Regional Economist, Asia Division: Ganesh Thapa  
Viet Nam CPM: Atsuko Toda  
India, Central Asia Republics Associate CPM: Anshuman Saikia  
Bhutan and North Korea CPM: Tian Ya  
Web manager: Roxanne Samili  
Information and Communications Division: Sandra McGuire  
Regional Economist, Latin America and the Caribbean: Raul Hopkins  
Consultant, China Programme: Carla De Gregorio

ENRAP/IDRC

Program Coordinator: Shalini Kala  
Program Assistant: Apoorva Mishra  
PAN Team Leader: Renald Lafond  
Director, South Asia Regional Office: Roger Finan

India

North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project for Upland Areas

Project Coordinator and Development Strategist: K. Moses Chalai  
Natural Resource Management and Extension Coordinator: Dr. V.T. Darlong  
Administrative Officer: Mr. Hrishikesh Singh  
Monitoring and Evaluation Officer: Mr. Adrian Marbanian  
Office Assistant: Ms. Siroline Mukhim  
Music Producer: Mr. Peter Lim  
Freelance Linear Editor: Ms. Evalina Christy Lyngdoh Marbanian  
Lecturer, A/V, St. Anthony’s College: Ms. Etawanda Saiborne  
Project Fellow: Ms. Jabanaz Jahan

Chhattisgarh Tribal Development Project

Dr. Tanweer Ahmad  
District Program Manager, Patthalgaon: Anil. K. Tiwari  
Assistant Programmer: Sandeep Roy  
Finance and Administrative Officer: James Kujur  
District Program Manager, Ambikapur: Ashok Kumar Jaiswal  
Planning and Monitoring Officer: Brig. Raj Kumar  
Planning and Monitoring Officer: Jojendra Pratap Singh
Pakistan

ENRAP Local facilitator: Rashda Syed

South FATA Development Project

Project Manager: Faiz Mohammed
Monitoring Economist: Mohammad Akbar
WID Coordinator: Samia Naz

Dir Area Support Project

Project Manager: Mr. Rahimullah
Former DASP Project Manager: Mr. Ali Raza

Northern Area Development Project

Project Manager: Mr. Shahzada
Secretary, Northern Areas Planning and Development: Mr. Naseer

Barani Village Development Project

Monitoring and evaluation officer: Nusrat Gill, Javed Akhtar

Village in Barani area: Ghick Badhal:
  - Womans Community Organization manager: Shaheda Perveen,
  - 10 members of the WCO
  - Reporter from local Gujar Khan newspaper

Nepal

Western Uplands Poverty Allievation Project, Nepal.

Former Project Director, Surya Acharya

Lao PDR

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ms Chongchith Chantharanonh, Director, Division of International Financial Institution, Department of International Cooperation.

Department of Planning and Cooperation, Community Initiatives Support Project (CISP) Oudomxay Province
Mr Houmpheng Southivong, Provincial Project Director.
Dr Sacha Backes, International Team Leader.
Mr Bounta Phetdara, Project Manager.
Mr Syphay, Head, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Team.
Mr Somsamouth Phongsavath, Head, Agriculture Team.
Mr Khammy, Director, Xai District Project Team.
Mr Xiay Savanginkeomany, Project Manager, Xai District Project Team.
Mr Heinz Willems, Rural Financial Services Advisor.

**Information and Culture Department, Oudomxay Province**
Mr Chanhdy Yang, Director
Mr Phonesavanh Phanthavichith, Deputy Director
Mr Bounseng Chanthakhamsouk, Officer

**Nam Heng Neua (North) Village**
Mr Thang Ben, Zone Leader.
Mr Kham Meuang, Village Head.

**Philippines**

**Department of Land Reform**
Mr Gerundio Madueno, Undersecretary, Support Services Office and Foreign-Assisted Project Offices.
Ms Susan Perez, Desk Officer, IFAD-Funded Projects

**Cordillera Highland Agricultural Resource Management Project (CHARM)**
Mr Cameron (Ron) P. Odsey, Project Director

**Western Mindanao Community Initiatives Project (WMCIP)**
Mr Rogelio (Toto) G. Borbon, Project Director
Mr. Orlen C. Ocleasa, Community and Institutional Development Specialist

**Northern Mindanao Community Initiatives (NMCIREMP)**
Mr Antonio (Tony) B. Mensor, Project Director.
Mr Yolando (Lando) C. Arban, Head, Monitoring Evaluation and Adjustment.
Mr James A. Plaza, Systems Analyst.

**Kitcharao Municipality, Agusan Del Norte Province**
Mr Raul M. Del Agua, Municipal Project Manager.
Mr Alberto M. Garrido, Barangay (Village) Development Coordinator.
Ms Irenita L. Moran, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.
Mr Jonathan I. Macasa, REACH Foundation Community Development Coordinator.

**Surigao Provincial Planning and Development Office**
Mr Antonieto M. Charcos.
Mr Celso O. Bagalay Jr.
Mr Al P. Gallardo.

**Lanuza Municipality, Surigao Del Sur Province**
Mr Gerry Irizari, Mayor.
Mr John Melchor Largo, Project Manager, Lanuza.
Ms Crislynne Mae A. Sugian, Project Manager, Carrascal.
Mr John R. Virtudazo, Community Development Coordinator.

**Cagwait Municipality, Surigao Del Sur Province**
Mr Guardiano C. Lozada, Vice Mayor.
Baby Niel D. Quiñonez.
Arthur R. Luengas.
Juanito G. Alngog Jr.

**Vietnam**

**Ha Tinh Rural Development Project**
Mr Tran Dinh Hoa, Project Director
Mr Phan Thanh Nhan, Deputy Project Director
Mr Tran Dinh Dinh Quang, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
Mr Tran Dinh Binh, Computer Officer
Mr Phan Thanh Bien, Finance Officer
Mr Nguyen Van Hau, Interpreter

**Thach Ha District**
Ms Duong Thi Tan, Chairperson, District Women’s Union.

**Thach Chau Commune**
Ms Nguyen Thi True, Chairperson, Commune Women’s Union.
Appendix 5: Documentation reviewed

Terms of Reference: ENRAP II Mid-term Review, December 2004

Thematic Evaluation: Electronic Networking for Rural Asia/Pacific (ENRAP I)

ENRAP Phase II: Knowledge Networking for Rural Development in Asia

Learning to Network: Annual Progress Report 2003: ENRAP II; and annexures

Workshop highlights: ENRAP II startup workshop, 11-13 February 2003, Bangkok, Thailand

Workshop highlights: ENRAP India National Workshop, October 15, 2003

Workshop highlights: ENRAP II Regional meeting/Midterm Review Workshop and mini-meetings for China, Laos and Viet Nam, 19-21 June 2004, Bangkok Thailand [Draft]

ENRAP Coordinator trip reports

Pakistan Local Facilitator trip reports

ENRAP II Connectivity Assessments

ENRAP website

IFAD website

Selected Powerpoint presentations:
  • ENRAP Phase I
  • ENRAP II
  • Overview of IFAD’s Information Networks
  • ENRAP in Pakistan
  • Draft India National Plan for ENRAP (2003)

Status report on ENRAP contributions to IFAD projects

ENRAP proposals:
  • Establishment of GIS system in WUPAP and training to staff
  • Strengthening project information system for improved project outcomes through establishment of local area network (LAN), DASP, Pakistan
  • Strengthening training capacity towards effective, timely and user friendly communication, South FATA Development Project
Towards video documentation of IFAD’s Poverty Alleviation Work: three proposals from Rana Ghose, March 25, June 7, Sept. 26, 2004
ENRAP supported video documentation and training: a report. R. Ghose, 2004

Other IFAD Project documentation

- Brief on Barani Village Development Project
- Community Organization Profile Ghick Badhal (Barani Village Development Project)
- Northern Areas Development Project, Pakistan. Supervision Mission, 2004. R. Sayed, for UNOPS
- AJK Community Development Project, Pakistan. Supervision Mission, 2004. R. Sayed, for UNOPS
- NERCRMP brochures and posters
- NERCRMP CD: N.C. Hills “The success stories” (SHG/NARMG activities): video documentation
- Chhattisgarh Tribal Development Program: An introduction [print pamphlets]
- Chhattisgarh Tribal Development Program: An introduction [digital video]
- Chhattisgarh powerpoint presentation
- Digital News service: CTDP digital video
- Reaching the Unreached! [a collection of success stories from CTDP]

Other materials received and reviewed

The Rural Support Programmes Network [Pakistan]
Discussion paper on communications directions for IFAD 2004-2007
Rural Poverty Portal Project Description (IFAD)
Appendix 6: Disclosures and Acknowledgments:

- IISD receives funding for its Information Society and Sustainable Development project from the IDRC ICT4D program. Terri Willard is IISD’s manager for the project; Renald Lafond is IDRC’s project officer for the project grant.

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