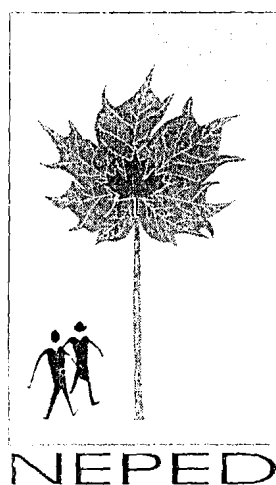


INDIA - CANADA ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
NAGALAND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT



Prepared by the External Evaluation Team

Richard Baerg
Surendra Kumar Vettivel
Dipa Singh Bagai

February 2000

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The India-Canada Environment Facility (ICEF) recently prepared performance assessment guidelines for use in the review of the projects which they fund. The purpose of the performance assessment is to undertake, in a participatory manner, an assessment of the relative performance of the implementing organization and its partners in formulation, implementation and control of the project and success in achieving results consistent with the project objectives.

The Nagaland Environmental Protection and Economic Development Project (NEPED) is the first project in which these guidelines have been applied. Four separate teams assessed the project. They were the NEPED Project Operations Unit (POU), the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU), ICEF and a team of external evaluators.

The assessment guidelines and in particular the participatory process which was used to evaluate the project were judged by all of the review teams as being a very effective approach to evaluating the project's performance. The assessment findings were synthesized in a participatory workshop in which a moderated assessment grid was prepared. This process greatly expanded the exchange of views and thereby enriched the quality of the assessment. In undertaking this assessment a wide range of indicators were developed which should be very useful in guiding the development of future project activities as well as measuring future performance. The consensus of the various assessment teams was that the guidelines and the process used, help to build capacity within the participating organizations to more effectively guide the implementation of projects.

The report, while written by the external evaluation team is in fact a direct outcome of the participatory process and as such is a project team report.

Nagaland is a very diverse state with a high range of variability in geography, environment, culture, land tenure and economic conditions. The delivery of development assistance is further complicated by the difficult political environment. It is within this complex environment that the project is judged to be very successful.

A unique project structure was created to deliver the project activities to the field. This structure, which is based upon a multi-disciplinary team and a decentralized delivery mechanism, as served the project very well in addressing cross sectoral issues and being free of political interference. The lessons learnt from the structure are being adopted by other departments as an effective way to deliver development programmes to the village level. In addition a "Core Group" which mirrors the structures of the NEPED project and is comprised of 150 people, representing all of the Government of Nagaland (GON) departments meets on a monthly basis to discuss and review cross-departmental issues of interest and concern.

There are a number of areas where the project requires strengthening which are summarized as follows:

- The NEPED model of land shaping has only been replicated on a small scale and the challenge for the project in the future will be to identify cost effective technologies to improve traditional land shaping methods.
- The lack of survey data which provides the organizations with key information for project analysis and planning is judged to be a weakness in the project. It is recommended that the development and implementation of a baseline survey be a key component of any future project activities.
- The parallel research project sponsored by International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and implemented by the State Agriculture Research Station is attempting to identify and introduce alternative land use options. These include the introduction of crops which can be produced and harvested during the fallow period. The linkages between this project and NEPED are very weak and should be formalized and strengthened.
- A very significant amount of training has been undertaken during the first five years of the project. This includes training at all levels from the POU to the village farmer. Training in technical aspects related to jhum cultivation, gender training, results based management, participatory rural appraisal systems, reporting, financial accounting and more. The majority of this training was undertaken in the absence of a formal NEPED training plan. It is recommended that in planning future project activities a formal training plan be prepared which targets the specific needs and gaps of the various project participants.
- The development of markets for the forest products to be harvested from the jhum fields will be critical to sustaining the NEPED model. Some work has been undertaken in this regard but much more needs to be done especially in the development of non-timber forest products - an area which is becoming an increasingly important component of the project.
- During the first five years of the project the project activities have been undertaken through a highly decentralized structure. This structure has worked well for the project however there is an increasing need for a centralized structure which would play a key role in disseminating project materials, providing a forum for training activities, and for collecting and housing information on lessons learnt. The creation of a Resource Centre which provided a point of contact for the above noted functions would be highly beneficial.
- many of the fallow management practices found in Nagaland are much more advanced than those in other countries in the region. NEPED could be "a window to the world", providing opportunities for learning and the exchange of information with other countries in Asia.

In summary, the project was designed to support the establishment of test plots in all of the 1,000 Naga villages. It has been highly successful in this regard. The project has led to a high level of replication and built a strong foundation for future activities which could further address key environment issues while providing farmers with increased income generating opportunities. Now that the test plots are established and replication is ongoing on a massive scale the project should focus on delivering support in additional value added activities rather than establishing more test plots per se.

ICEF's mandate focuses on the development of capacity in Indian institutions to address environmental issues. NEPED is clearly focused and supportive of ICEF's mandate. There is much work still to be done to solidify the progress made to date and to fully address the goal level impact indicators which, like the jhum cycle, can only be assessed over a ten year period or longer. The external assessment team is very supportive and recommends continued ICEF involvement in this project.

GLOSSARY

ADC	Assistant Deputy Commissioners
CAD\$	Canadian Dollar
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DPT	District Project Team
ET	External Evaluation Team
GOI	Government of India
GON	Government of Nagaland
IAS	Indian Administrative Service
ICEF	India-Canada Environment Facility
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
MTR	Mid-term Review
NEPED	Nagaland Environmental and Economic Development Project
PAG	Performance Assessment Guidelines
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
POU	Project Operations Unit
PSC	Project Steering Committee
Rp	Indian rupees
SARS	State Agricultural Research Centre
TP	Test Plot
VBD	Village Development Board
VC	Village Council
WTP	Women's Test Plot

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The India-Canada Environment Facility (ICEF) recently prepared performance assessment guidelines for use in the review of the projects which they fund. The purpose of the performance assessment is to undertake, in a participatory manner, an assessment of the relative performance of the implementing organization and its partners in:

- Formulation, implementation and control of the project;
- Success in achieving results consistent with the project objectives as defined in the Project Management Plan, sound development principles and ICEF's mandate

The assessment was made with regard to the following areas:

- Support of ICEF's mandate and objectives
- Capacity building
- Sustainability
- Governance
- Project management
- Learning and innovation

The assessment guidelines, which are attached as Appendix 1, further breakdown the assessment areas into specific sub-areas.

The Nagaland Environmental Protection and Economic Development Project (NEPED) is the first project in which these guidelines have been applied. Four separate teams assessed the project. They were the NEPED Project Operations Unit (POU), the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU, ICEF and a team of external evaluators. The external team was led by Richard Baerg together with Surendra K. Vettivel, Community Participation Specialist and Dipa Singh Bagai, Institutional arrangement Specialist. The terms of reference for the assessment are attached as Appendix 2.

Section 3 of this report outlines the approach and methodology used to ensure that the assessment was undertaken in a participatory manner.

The external evaluation is based on extensive field visits, interviews with local farmers, Village Elders and other representatives of the Village Community. Wide ranging interaction with the Project Operations Unit (POU), the Director, NEPED Project from IDRC, and the Project Officer from ICEF have enriched the evaluation and helped to make it participatory and transparent. The itinerary of the mission is attached as Appendix 3.

This report sets out the findings and conclusions of the four assessment teams. The individual team assessments are found in the appendices and the main report provides a synthesis of these collective findings plus a moderated performance assessment grid which was prepared as part of

collective findings plus a moderated performance assessment grid which was prepared as part of the participatory process.

2.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND¹

2.1 Geographic and Environmental Focus

Nagaland is located in the northeastern corner of India, between approximately 25° and 26.5° north latitude, bordered by Assam on the west and Myanmar on the east. Nagaland is predominantly covered by tropical and sub-tropical forests and has been identified as a 'biodiversity hot-spot' by the United Nations.

Nagaland is a mountainous state of 16,579 km². Altitudes range from 200 to 3,800 metres above sea level, with an average annual rainfall of 2500 millimeters. Most of the villages and agricultural activity are located above 1,000 metres, with some villages located in the extreme highlands over 2,000 metres. Agricultural production often occurs on moderate to very steep slopes, especially in land-scarce areas where declining food security has pushed farming to steeper fragile slopes. In the 1991 census, over 82% of the 1.2 million population was classified as rural. High population growth rates (estimated at over 4 % annually) and rural-urban migration have occurred since 1991, with most Naga's continuing to depend upon the natural resource base for their livelihoods.

Agriculture is the primary economic activity and land use in Nagaland. Farmers have historically practiced two primary forms of agriculture, jhum (the local name for swidden agriculture) and irrigated paddy cultivation. Jhum cultivation is by far the dominant land use in most districts - the forest is cleared and burned with crop production occurring for a two years before the field is abandoned for a fallow period that ranges from as short as five years to over 20 years. Due to rapid population growth, jhum cycles have declined to under ten years in most districts (10 years is generally regarded as the threshold for sustainability). Roughly 7,000 km² of Nagaland's total area have been subject to jhum cultivation, with roughly 1,000km² under jhum in any one year. In jhum fields a wide range of foods are intercropped, normally with rice, the staple grain.

The majority of the forest area is in a degraded and/or denuded condition. Deforestation along with forest and soil degradation have long been major problems, which prompted interventions to promote alternative land uses. Forests are 88.3 % privately owned, with only 9.1 % state owned in reserved and protected forests plus an additional 2.6 % in wildlife sanctuaries. As a result of limited public ownership of forests, an effective plan to manage and conserve forest resources must be based upon a high level of individual and community participation.

¹ This section of the report is based primarily upon extracts from existing project documentation.

Most Naga's are dependent on subsistence agriculture for their livelihoods. They have very limited opportunities for sedentary agriculture and even more limited opportunities for off-farm employment, Nagaland has reached a critical point in its development. The population will likely double again in the next twenty years, or less, so the livelihood options for most Naga's are: 1) even shorter jhum cycles, causing more severe soil and forest degradation; 2) expansion of the jhum area into even more fragile areas of accessible primary forest, and 3) intensify production on jhum lands by adoption of agro-forestry systems and tree farming.

2.2 Project Concept

The project concept originated in Nagaland and had a long gestation period. Some senior government of Nagaland officials (notably Mr. A.M. Gokhale, Chief Secretary, Government of Nagaland and Mr. K. Kevichusa, Secretary, Department of Agriculture) were concerned that the top-down programs to wean subsistence farmers from jhum cultivation were not successful. They instead proposed that the indigenous knowledge and cultivation practices of jhum farmers could be better utilized and more sustainable systems developed by integrating tree farming into the traditional jhum systems as an additional crop. In other words they suggested improving the system rather than replacing it.

Since most of the land is privately held, another key element of the project concept was the strategic decision to use a project delivery mechanism which is a farmer-led selection, testing and demonstration of agroforestry models, under the support of a project operations unit and the State Agricultural Research Station.

2.3 Project Implementation

Project implementation began in November 1994. The project management plan identified the project goal as "Sustainable management of the natural resource base for the benefit of the Nagaland people". The project objectives were identified as follows:

- a) enhance environment by reducing soil erosion, increasing soil fertility and forest cover on jhum lands while promoting and managing biodiversity;
- b) increase the cash and in-kind income of the jhum cultivators; and
- c) increase the capacity of farmers and Government staff to improve jhum cultivation practices.

The external funding is provided primarily by ICEF (CAD\$ 5.37 million), with IDRC funding a parallel and collaborative research project through the State Agricultural Research Station (CAD\$0.42 million) and also contributing to the operational costs of NEPED beginning in 1998 (CAD\$ 0.14 million).

The Government of Nagaland is a contributing partner in NEPED, providing both funds and in-kind contributions. Farmers in Nagaland contribute land and labour to NEPED.

In Nagaland, the project is co-ordinated by a Project Operations Unit (POU) which is responsible to a Project Steering Committee (PSC). The POU is staffed by Government of Nagaland (GON) employees, who have been seconded from their home departments and assigned to the POU for the duration of the project. The project is managed by a Team Leader, a senior IAS officer in the GON. IDRC manages the project on behalf of ICEF. A Project Coordination Unit (PCU) has been established at the IDRC office in New Delhi.

The project is supported in the field by District Project Teams and Field Staff, who are primarily responsible for implementing the project at the village level under the guidance and support of the POU.

Integration of agroforestry into jhum cultivation as the approach used to improved land management. NEPED was designed to provide maximum participation and flexibility, beginning at the grassroots level. It was designed to encourage the integration of tree and food crops in jhum fields. While an agroforestry model was originally developed, no single agroforestry model was imposed upon farmers. Instead, farmers themselves experimented with different techniques and systems by participating in the selection and design process.

The key activity of the project and main budget item is the establishment of test plots (TP) which are used by the farmers to experiment with new cultivation practices. TPs were designed to serve as the primary strategy in NEPED for farmer-led testing, development and improvement of agroforestry techniques. Villagers themselves selected the farmers for participation and farmers selected the specific technology to be adopted. NEPED provides training and advice to farmers, with payment for TP establishment being released only upon verification of satisfactory planting and soil management practices.

Other project activities include:

- A gender component, not included in the original project plan, was added to the project in 1996. At the same time a gender coordinator was added to the POU and a related program of work was identified;
- Training and capacity development; formal training of POU and field staff in agroforestry, computer usage, exposure trips and workshops;
- Farmer-to-farmer learning and experience sharing;
- Dissemination; published briefing papers, a 200 page resource book, farmer exposure visits, exposure visits for women, on-site training, mass motivation;

- Non-timber forest products are being field tested in TPs;
- An assessment of the market for non-timber forest products, including poles which will be provided from thinned tree plantations.

3.0 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

This section explains, step by step, the methodology the external evaluation team (ET) adopted to undertake the performance assessment of the project.

ICEF provided performance assessment guidelines (PAG), a new approach which it has developed, for the assessment of projects. ICEF's objectives were three fold: (a) to improve partnership between the different partners; (b) to assess their performance and successes consistent with the indicators as defined in the project management plan and ICEF's mandate and objectives; and (c) to make judgments about the extent to which an allocation in support of a project is likely to contribute to sustainable development.

At the start of the mission, the ET spent a day and a half with ICEF officers and the PCU-NEPED Director. The objectives were: (a) to discuss in detail the performance assessment guidelines; and (b) to identify indicators specific to the project as the guidelines are generic. It soon became clear that indicators could not be identified in Delhi, and it was suggested that this be done together with the POU in Kohima, Nagaland. ICEF emphasized that, while filling the grid was important, the process was more important. Following this, the ET spent half a day reviewing among itself the PAG.

Upon arrival at Kohima, the ET spent a day and a half with the POU members discussing the PAG. The ET and the POU agreed that they would not jointly define the indicators for each criterion prior to field visits as it seemed impractical to do so. Instead, the ET and the POU would proceed to make their assessment independently, and would exchange notes on the workshop day.

The ET, guided by the POU, went on a six-day field visit halting on towns or villages en route. Each ET member took an independent route. The ET members visited the test plots and nurseries, met with test plot owners, VCs, VDB secretaries, village elders, women VDB secretaries, women leaders, women groups involved in nurseries, DPT members, local experts, DCs and the IDRC research team.

The ET members spent the next four days sharing between themselves on their field observations, recording the findings for each criterion and meeting with the POU members, the NEPED Director and the ICEF Senior Project Officer who had arrived by then. It took almost a day and a half for the ET to complete their rating. The rating process was undertaken as follows. Each ET member had given a rating based on his/her own findings and the indicator chosen. In the first round, each member made a presentation of the findings, rating and a justification for the

the team rating should be given based on those indicators which measured/defined the results achieved. Interestingly, for some criteria the three members had given same rating for very different reasons. This exchange greatly enhanced the assessment process.

A one-day workshop was organized to share observations, findings, comments, indicators, conclusions, rating and justification between the POU, the NEPED Director, ICEF and the ET. Based on the presentations made and the discussion which followed the workshop sought to arrive at a moderated score which reflected a consensus of opinion rather than an average rating which would not accurately reflect the level of performance. This approach was used for all of the main assessment areas with the exception of the area related to governance. The moderated process was judged to be inappropriate for the governance criterion since they are very specific to the PCU and ICEF and in some instances the POU was not able to fully assess these related criteria. The scores for the governance criteria are presented as average scores. Similarly, as noted in section 4.1.5, the workshop did not reach a moderated score for criterion 1.5, Technology Adoption, since one team felt this criterion did not apply to NEPED. Therefore an average score is included in the grid for this criterion.

In summary, the assessment guidelines and in particular the participatory process which was used to evaluate the project were judged by all of the review teams as being a very effective approach to evaluating the project's performance. This process greatly expanded the exchange of views and thereby enriched the quality of the assessment. In undertaking this assessment a wide range of indicators were developed which should be very useful in guiding the development of future project activities as well as measuring future performance. The consensus of the various assessment teams was that the guidelines and the process used helped to build capacity within the participating organizations to more effectively guide the implementation of projects. A number of recommendation which were generated in the participatory workshop and they are found in section 6.1.

4.0 ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

As described earlier in this report, the assessment guidelines were used in a participatory process to assess project performance. This section of the report provides a synthesis of the findings and comments from the four assessment teams.

4.1 Support of ICEF's Mandate and Objectives

The six assessment criteria in this component have been used to assess the extent to which NEPED is contributing to the achievement of ICEF's objectives and priorities.

4.1.1 Sustainable Improvement of Land/Water/Energy Resources

"To what extent is the project effective in facilitating the sustainable delivery of environmentally-sound activities and services to poorer groups?"

The main activity of the project is the establishment of test plots (TP). The project has established 1,794 TPs in 854 villages covering 5,379 hectares. The reported success rate ranges from a low of 60 percent in Mon district to over 70 percent in some of the southern districts. At the TP level success is difficult to measure since it is based on the number of seedlings which survive and there is a very high level of variation in the planting density used by the recipients. A better measure of success is therefore judged to be the rate of replication. Replication is an impact of the project and not an activity per se since no project funds are directly used to support replication. Replication does not imply that the NEPED model has been replicated in all of its aspects but rather that for each unique site those elements of the model which are appropriate have been applied. In early 1999 the Klein survey found that replication had occurred at the rate of 6 times the area established through test plots. In 1999 this rate is judged to have increased even more.

The livelihood of most jhum farmers is subsistence based and as such they represent the poorer groups in the State. The project is therefore considered to be well targeted at addressing the poor and making a very strong link between poverty and the environment. While many of the original TP recipients were not the poorest of the poor, it is notable that the farmers who are replicating the NEPED model are from poorer groups in the community (1999, Klein report). The products from these tree crops will help to diversify and augment the farmers income thereby improving their level of food security.

The project objectives as stated in the project management plan included a statement which reads, "enhance environment by reducing soil erosion". The major component in the original NEPED model was land shaping, the construction of contour trenches and bunds to reduce soil erosion. As noted in section 4.1.5, for reasons primarily related to the limited availability of labour, this component of the model is not widely adopted. In its place farmers chose to use traditional methods of soil erosion control. While the land shaping activities may not have had a significant impact on reducing soil erosion the establishment of tree crops in degraded jhum fields had a positive impact. It is felt that the project has had a small but positive impact in reducing soil erosion. This remains as an area where significant additional effort will be required in the future.

The increased level of tree planting will also have a positive impact on sustaining water cycles. In addition, it will have a positive impact in increasing the availability of fuelwood and timber poles. These, like soil erosion, are goal-level impact indicators which can only be assessed within the context of the jhum cycle which is 10 years, and in some areas longer.

The development of markets for the forest products to be harvested from the jhum fields will be critical to sustaining the NEPED model. Some work has been undertaken in this regard but much more needs to be done especially in the development of non-timber forest products - an area which is becoming an increasingly important component of the project.

Based upon the strong poverty/environment linkages and the high level of replication this criterion was awarded a moderated score of 5.

4.1.2 Environmental Concerns Addressed

"To what extent does the organization adequately address environmental concerns in its programming?"

The most significant environmental issue by far, facing the people of Nagaland is soil conservation and soil management as related to sustainable agriculture. Over 80% of the population of Nagaland lives in small rural villages, where jhum cultivation is the primary economic activity. More than 42% of the total land area in the State is subject to jhum, much of which is being farmed with increasingly shorter fallow periods which are resulting in increased forest and soil degradation. In addition, with the current high population growth rates the State population is expected to double in 20 years or less putting further pressure on the natural resources. NEPED is clearly focused to address this extremely critical environmental issue.

Environmental policies, strategies and objectives are reflected in the statements found in the majority of the documentation prepared by the project, both for internal use and external dissemination, and they clearly identify environmental policies, strategies and objectives.

Training activities similarly incorporate environmental issues and build capacity in the POU, DPT's and field staff. As a result, environmental awareness has increased at all levels and in particular at the farmer level. Farmers most often plant on average 5 or 6 different tree species in their jhum fields. In some villages they have identified pockets of natural forests on community lands which they have set aside and marked as protected areas not to be exploited. This is judged to be a direct result of the high priority which NEPED has assigned to maintaining and managing a high level of biodiversity.

A moderated score of 6 was awarded to this key criterion.

4.1.3 Women's Participation

"To what extent does the organization ensure that women are full and equal partners in guiding and shaping the development process and are full beneficiaries of the process?"

The original project document did not provide for a gender component. This issue was not addressed during the strategic analysis, planning and design phase of the project. It was only in 1996 that women came to be included in the project, in consonance with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and ICEF guideline that inclusion of the gender dimension was mandatory.

Women in Nagaland do not have ownership or hereditary rights to land. This severely limits their participation in a land-based project of this nature. Full and equal partnership of women in the project would therefore necessitate far reaching social and cultural changes in Naga society, and

would go far beyond the parameters of this project.

Nonetheless the project has made significant effort in giving women a place, not only in the context of project activity, but in a societal context as well. This is the first development project, in Nagaland to address the gender issue. A woman member was inducted into the POU team for carrying out all works related to gender. Since 1996, women have had the opportunity to carry out test plot activity, and women have been allocated 93 of the 1,794 test plots established by NEPED. No specific targets have been set and it is up to the POU members to initiate women's test plots (WTP) in their respective Districts. There are wide variations in the number of WTP in each district ranging from 29 in Zunheboto to 4 in Wokha. No additional resources or differences in approach were used for incorporating WTP into the project.

The VDB and VC have played a big role in the decision to allot test plot to women, often on the basis of specific requests made by women's groups. Out of the two plots allotted to each village, in 25 cases, the VDB/VC have allocated one of the two to women. In some cases women have even been given land voluntarily by the VC to establish test plots. The POU members have, however, had to take the lead in the form of intervention with the VDB/VCs to allot the WTPs.

Women have given empowerment training through the project and 213 women from 123 villages have been trained. Some women have also been taken on exposure trips within and outside the state. The nursery activity has also encouraged women's participation in the project and 80 women nurseries have been established.

The number of women involved within various project activities is limited when seen in absolute terms, but it is of significant impact given the paternalistic culture, and absence of land ownership. It is a small but historic step, and in the right direction.

However, it can not be said that women have participated fully in the decision making process with regard to the selection of beneficiaries, location of WTPs and choice of species planted, even though they have come together as a group and purchased land to establish test plots. The sharing arrangements of benefits from the test plots are still nebulous, generally verbal. The women may not own the land, but own the trees within the WTP.

With no initial gender component in the original project plan, the NEPED gender intervention has been a learning curve. However, a separate, targeted strategy recognizing women's needs and constraints is needed. The POU members have become sensitized to the gender issue, but much strengthening is still needed. It is acknowledged that progress in this area is slow and difficult. Limited but commendable work has been done. This project component was judged to be weak and requires an increased level of support. The ratings for this criterion ranged from 2 to 4 and represent a significant level of divergence. A moderated score of 3 was awarded to this criterion.

4.1.4 Poverty Reduction

"To what extent does the organizations project contribute to the poverty reduction? Does this project address the inter-relationship between poverty and environmental degradation?"

The aim of this project is to make jhuming a more sustainable activity by adding value in the form of trees. The project provides for the establishment of two test plots of 3 ha. each in approximately 1000 villages in Nagaland. The two main objectives of the project are environment protection and economic development, as articulated in the project title itself. The conditions for the selection of the test plot farmer are that they should be (i) jhum farmers who have jhumed the plot in the year of selection, and (ii) the test plot should be prominently located, preferably close to the road. The selection criteria therefore, do not particularly emphasize the poverty level of the farmers. Each test plot has been planted with 3000- 5000 trees. These trees would be commercially exploitable within 10 to 15 years. Even with a survival rate of 50%, the test plot farmers would have a considerable timber resource in the next few years.

The idea of tree planting has been widely replicated, by more than six times the original project area. The species used in replication have been more varied, better maintained and having richer exploitation potential. Tree farming has established itself as a viable agricultural activity in Nagaland. Some progress has also been made towards establishing more complex agro-forestry systems, including fallow cash crops. Some farmers have obtained additional income already from some of these e.g. ginger.

During the five years of its existence the project has not contributed directly to the enhancement of income levels, but is perceived as an investment for the future. There is no doubt that a significant income-generating asset has come to be in control of the tree farmer as result of the project. Even though no hard data is available on the likely income to be accrued, the test plot farmers, as well as those who have replicated the tree planting activity, believe firmly that they would be able to get very significant cash returns from their trees. Where the trees are very thickly planted, the farmers anticipate substantial income from the sale of poles when the thinning is done within the next 5-6 years. Test plot farmers perceive direct economic benefits from tree planting in the form of timber for cash sale and home use, money for children's education and security for old age.

Even though the project has not so far led to any direct reduction in poverty, it has created substantial wealth. The project will contribute significantly to benefitting the poor, and avoiding deprivation in the future, in a sustainable manner.

There is a direct linkage between this project and environmental degradation. The project seeks to break the vicious circle of poverty and environmental degradation. It is the poverty of the jhum farmers which forces them into causing environmental degradation and this continued environmental degradation re-enforces their poverty. The mainstay of this project is tree planting.

The economic benefits from the trees go hand in hand with environmental benefits. The project has successfully created a source of income for the poor farmer, while addressing simultaneously the larger issue of environmental degradation. The addition of fallow crops will provide further returns to the farmer, and should be a very significant input in the event of a second phase of the project.

In sum, the project has created a very significant income-generating asset for the people of Nagaland, and contributed to environmental conservation alongside. It fulfills both the criteria to a very high degree and was awarded a moderated score of 5.

4.1.5 Technology Adoption

"To what extent that adoption and dissemination of pollution abatement, energy conservation and renewable energy technologies are effective in facilitating the sustainable delivery of environmentally sound technology?"

As described in the assessment guidelines, this criterion is only marginally applicable to NEPED since there are no pollution abatement or renewable energy technologies. The POU felt that this criterion was not applicable to NEPED and did not make a related assessment. The project does however have a significant component related to the adoption of new and modified natural resource management technologies. It is therefore within this context that the other three assessment teams assessed this criterion.

The introduction of an agroforestry model, "the NEPED model", which included a major land shaping component is the most significant technology which the project attempted to introduce. In the original NEPED model, land shaping accounted for 76% of the TP establishment cost. In later years this was reduced to 50%. Land shaping in the original model required the recipients to build terraces and bunds to reduce the level of soil erosion. This activity was to be undertaken after burning the jhum and before planting. This is the period during which soil erosion rates are the highest. It is also the period when labour availability is the lowest. The high cost of land shaping and the small window of time within which land shaping had to be completed made it very difficult for the farmers to successfully implement this component of the project.

In year two a review of land shaping activities resulted in revisions to the NEPED model which focused more on traditional land shaping technologies (using bamboo and other local materials to construct bunds). Land shaping costs were reduced and the savings were used to expand the TP area, undertake more gap filling and other approved activities.

The NEPED model of land shaping has only been replicated on a small scale (7% of farmers indicated that they intended to use the model again, Klein report). The same report found that 93% of the farmers use traditional methods of land shaping. The original NEPED model is not replicable on a large scale and the challenge for the project in the future will be to identify effective approaches to improving traditional land shaping methods.

Another example of appropriate technology is found in Phek District. Here the integration of alder trees into the jhum cycle has been proven to be very effective in improving soil productivity while at the same time providing fuelwood and pole material to the farmer. This technology is not known in many villages in Nagaland. The project has been able to transfer this technology to a number of villages but not on a large scale.

The parallel research project sponsored by IDRC and implemented by the State Agriculture Research Station is attempting to identify and introduce alternative land use options. These include the introduction of crops which can be produced and harvested during the fallow period. The linkages between this project and NEPED are very weak. Exchanges only occur on an informal basis when either party is seeking information or support which they feel the other may be able to provide.

When the research project was designed, IDRC had a full-scale regional office in New Delhi which was responsible for coordinating this project. Part way through the project the office in New Delhi was downsized and the responsibility for coordination was transferred to the IDRC office in Singapore. This transfer in responsibility is judged to have, in part, contributed to the weak linkages. The linkages between these two projects should be formalized and strengthened. This might best be done by having a single manager responsible for both projects.

In summary the technologies which are being introduced to reduce soil erosion have only marginally been adopted. In its next phase the development of appropriate and cost effective technologies should receive high priority. In addition the linkages to the IDRC supported research activities need to be strengthened. Since only three of the assessment teams rated this criterion a moderated score was awarded. The average rating given for this criterion was level 3.

4.1.6 Micro-enterprise development

"To what extent is the implementing agency effective in supporting and strengthening sustainable income generating activities and fostering micro-entrepreneurship among the poor?"

The original project document did not envisage micro-enterprise development. The nursery sector, which the project has spawned, is a micro-enterprise activity that was neither planned, nor anticipated, at the start of the project. The need for planting material led to the establishment of one nursery in each district in the early days of the project. These nurseries were established by NEPED. The general enthusiasm and wide response to the tree planting activities led to widespread replication and generated a large demand for good quality saplings. The mid-term review also commented on the lack of quality planting material. Thus locally managed nurseries to supply seedling demands became a felt need. The NEPED nurseries were simply inadequate to meet the ever-growing demand.

Nursery management soon began to be viewed as niche that could be effectively filled by women groups, generating much needed cash through the supply of planting material. NEPED encouraged women to establish nurseries as part of its gender focus. Eighty women's nurseries were established by the project. Looking at the potential for replication, a local nursery sector has emerged in Nagaland, as a spin-off.

The increased demand for tree saplings has led to many nurseries being established in the villages of Nagaland. In Viswema 22 privately owned nurseries have come up after a NEPED assisted nursery was established there. In 1998, in Phesama village, there were only two nurseries - one private and the other supported by NEPED. By 1999 there were 24 replicated nurseries established with private resources. The Jalukie women's society started a nursery with NEPED support which has been extremely successful, and the women's group has now diversified into the lucrative business of high value rubber saplings.

A large number of nurseries have, however, not been as successful. There is an urgent need to provide more technical training on nursery management. Many nursery owners are learning as they go along, using trial and error methods. The POU members themselves have limited expertise in nursery management and have not received sufficient training to provide extension support to the nursery owners. Quality control is also lacking.

Declaration of 1999 as "The Year of Tree Planting" led to a greatly increased demand for saplings and provided good profits to many nursery owners, both NEPED supported and private. Many of them feel that the increased awareness and keenness to plant trees would help sustain their nursery activities. Many NEPED supported nursery owners would thus like to continue the nursery activity, even without project support.

Nursery activity has come to be firmly established as a micro-enterprise. The technical support and training have been inadequate, leading to some failures, notwithstanding some significant successes. A moderated score of 4 was assigned to this criterion.

4.2 Capacity Building

The four assessment criteria in this section, assess the extent to which the project is contributing to capacity development among itself and its local partners.

4.2.1 Institutional Strengthening

"To what extent does the support provided by the implementing organization strengthen the capacity of local organizations and institutions to formulate, manage and sustain development processes?"

The key implementing organization is the Project Coordinating Unit (POU) and the key local organizations are the District Project Teams (DPT) and the Village Development Boards (VDB).

The POU and the DPT's were created specifically for this project whereas the VDB's have existed for many years and play a key development role at the local level. The POU is comprised of 15 individuals who were seconded from various line departments and charged with delivering the project to the field. The DPT's were created in the same manner as the POU representing a range of expertise from various line departments. The DPT members however undertake their NEPED function within their regular program of work as opposed to being seconded to the project on a full-time basis.

The multi-disciplinary structure of both the POU and the DPT has significantly enhanced the mobilization of the necessary skills to deliver the project. It is highly unlikely that these skills could have been effectively accessed through the line departments in the absence of institutional structures which define the two organizations, the POU and the DPT. The multi disciplinary teams have similarly improved the technical capability of local organizations and partners.

The level of collaboration between the local organizations such as the VDB's and the DPT's is very high. This is witnessed by the frequent exchanges between the two on technical matters, and on-site training. This has led to a conducive environment in which the organizations experiment, learn and adapt. The best evidence of this is in the evolution from the original NEPED test plot model to the current situation which sees numerous and various models which are adapted to ensure they are site specific.

Based upon the earlier project experiences there has been a very high level of replication of the test plots which is seen as evidence that the farmers and other local partners are moving towards a greater level of self management.

The unique administrative structure which was created for NEPED has functioned very effectively and it is significant to note that other government departments plan to use the same structure in delivering services to the field. In addition the unique structure of the POU has been replicated in the creation of a "Core Group". This group of 150 people, is comprised of representatives from all of the GON departments in the form of a monthly meeting where they discuss and review cross-departmental issues of interest and concern.

Lastly the degree to which the implementing organizations and the local partners have increased their capacity to formulate policies and plans has also increased however the scope for further growth is very significant.

In summary the institutional capacity is judged to have increased very significantly. A moderated rating of 5 was assigned to this criterion and it would of been higher had the high level of staff turnover in the DPT's been lower. The frequent rotation of DPT staff to other districts requires significant additional retraining and thereby reduced the level of support which could of otherwise of been provided.

4.2.2 Strategic Selection of Local Partners

“To what extent does the implementing organization select and work with local partners that are either making a significant and sustainable development impact or have the potential to make such an impact with support or strengthening?”

The implementing organization (POU) has selected (a) project teams (DPTs) specially formed for this project at the district level, (b) one local expert per district, and (c) village councils (VC) and village development boards (VDB) as strategic local partners to work through. Their selection was made and partnership established right at the beginning.

The DPT comprises district-level line department officers who have given additional time for this project without any additional benefits from the project. As the project is spread throughout the state, a small number of POU team members could not have, on their own, reached the vast project area without forming and placing at the district level the DPT and without its active support. Despite the rough terrain, long distances and absence of vehicles to travel, the DPTs have played their roles exceptionally well. The DPT members have been able to provide technical support and verify *all* the test plots allotted to them and certify the progress made based on which the POU released funds. The relationship between the POU and DPT has been fruitful and has continued.

The local farmers have traditionally practiced jhuming for centuries, and jhuming is the center of a number of cultural activities. Culturally, the village elders command enormous respect from the village community. Making the VCs, VDBs, and the test plot farmers accept and adopt the ‘NEPED model’ and cooperate with the project, thus, required a team of local village elders who were widely respected in the area, had the knowledge of traditional practices, influential and were able to liaise between the POU and the local community. The fact that the test plot farmers and the VCs/VDBs have generally accepted and adopted the ‘NEPED model’ with local modifications indicates that the local experts have been a very useful strategic partner.

The village council is the traditional, village-level institution that has complete authority over the village community and is responsible for development, law and order, justice, village defense and use of natural resources, for example, identifying areas for jhuming and preserving forests. The VC meets annually, decides on new projects, approves budget, and reviews progress of work and expenditure. The VDB implements the approved projects. The deputy commissioner (DC - chief government official of the district) is the VDB’s chairman. This arrangement has generally worked well to implement government programs. The project has used this self-reliant arrangement to its benefit. With the help of DPTs and local experts, the POU has been able to establish excellent partnership with the VCs and VDBs.

In conclusion, each of the local partners, namely the DPTs, local experts and the VCs/VDBs, has been strategically useful not only to implement successfully the project activities but more importantly to provide verification certificate on *all* the test plots allocated to them. The

partnership relations have not only been fruitful but they have continued well up to this date. Thus, their selection has been so strategic that without one of them the project could not have even been initiated much less could it have moved on to this level of achievement, and that the process and selection of the local partners have been based on sound "strategic" criteria. A moderated score of 5 was assigned this criterion. The range in scoring (from 3 to 6) between the four assessment teams reflects different interpretations of this criterion.

4.2.3 Partnership of Local Partners

"To what extent is the implementing organization's relationship with its local partners characterized by principles of partnership".

The responsibility to select villages in these phases has rested exclusively with the DPTs. The initial villages were selected based on accessibility and that certain level of cooperation was forthcoming from VCs. An important criterion was that it must be a "recognized" village. The village list was jointly finalized by the POU and the DPTs. The DPTs also had the responsibility to verify the test plot, certify the work the test plot farmers had undertaken and recommend for payment. Based on this recommendation, funds to the VDBs were released through the DCs. Thus, there has been a close relationship between the POU members and the DPT members. The only problem faced by the DPTs was that they did not receive additional support from the POU to meet their travel costs and overheads to do the project work. As there was not much work to do in the district as the funds were limited, the project had given them a good opportunity to do some useful work. The former DPT members, who worked during 1995-97 (the peak project period), were only too happy to meet with the external assessment team, accompany them to the field and proudly explain what they had contributed. The problem faced by the POU with the DPT was the turnover in its members, and that they had to meet with new Deputy Commissioners (DC) and Assistant DCs and make them understand about the new participatory approach the project adopted.

Once the villages were selected, the responsibility to select the test plot farmers and the test plot was given to the VCs and VDBs. This to a large extent excluded outside pressure. The test plot farmers were selected based on if (a) the farmer owned land on the main road and it is accessible, (b) jhuming in the plot will be done in that year, and (c) the farmer had the willingness and capability to undertake the test plot work. The TP farmers were quite capable, but except for few, many test plots were not on the road side; and some could not be reached even in the fair weather. However, everybody in a village seemed to know about the TPs. While the common elements in each test plot are land shaping and tree planting, each test plot is unique. This indicates that the local partners' views have influenced the test plot design.

The local expert is the silent partner and has played the crucial role of facilitator. The local expert does not have a particular responsibility but accompanies the POU and/or DPT members. His presence in itself gives credibility to the project. In one village, when the VDB secretary explained about the community test plot, he always referred to the local expert saying, "He knows

everything". The relationship between the local expert and the local communities has continued up to now and will continue beyond the project period as well.

In conclusion, the responsibility for test plot designing and project implementation has resided almost entirely with the local partners. The POU has played the role of facilitator, overall coordinator, technical support provider and capacity builder; it certainly has not enforced control. The views of the local partner have certainly been taken into account and it has influenced programming. The project relationship has continued up to now very well and will go on. For this very capable partnership establishment a moderated rating of 5 was given.

4.2.4 Increased Participation and Empowerment of Target Groups

"To what extent is the project of the organization and its partners contributing to increased participation of communities and groups in decision-making and guiding the development process?"

The state of Nagaland is well known for evolving the concept of village development boards (VDBs) which were established in 1977 under an Act of the state Assembly. The VDBs, like panchayats in the other states of India, are village-level administrative bodies representing the state government. The VCs have been vested with the final authority to decide on projects which they intend to undertake in a particular year. The VDBs receive funds for the projects from the state government through the district administration, and are responsible to both the VC and the district administration for accounting. The VC and the district administration monitor the progress of work until its completion. The above arrangement brings together the best of both: the local culture and state administration.

In mid 1990's "women VDBs" came into existence on the pattern of "general" VDBs. A women VDB is a village organization exclusively for women. They receive 25% of the allocation that the VDB receives. The women VDBs can independently decide to spend this amount. In addition, it can also seek a share from the 75% for women-focused projects. This way women have a double advantage.

It is an interesting coincidence that the person, who was responsible for conceptualizing the VDB and was awarded the title of *Padmashri* in recognition of his contribution, was also responsible for conceptualizing this project. He designed the project in such a way that in this project also the VCs and the VDBs took active part. Thus, this project is based upon sound participation policy and procedures.

Most VCs and VDBs members indicated that although the project provided a small amount of funding, it is a very important project for them. As the VCs/VDBs decide independently on the government-funded projects, they have played central roles in selecting the TP farmer, test plot, monitoring the progress etc. They also selected the species and spacing. They said that it is the only project which received many supervision visits and much technical support. A number of test

plots have been taken up by the VDBs as 'community test plots' under their direct control. The trees that are growing now will be worth millions of rupees in 20 to 25 years, and will become a good asset for the VCs/VDBs. They said that it was their 'bank deposit'. Some VDBs have maintained their TPs using their own funds. The village communities have contributed labour in land shaping, planting and weeding and have decided on the species.

The women VDBs and women groups have also undertaken TPs and nurseries of their own. These activities have created long-term assets and generated incomes for them. Their participation and the assets/incomes have contributed to a new feeling of "women empowerment". As one group put it, "It is a long way to go to make fundamental changes in the gender relations that have existed for centuries, but we have made a good beginning."

In conclusion, the implementing organization has adopted in the project, and improved upon, the sound, time-tested and established policies, processes and procedures followed by the state government for involving the local communities. At the village level, the local communities, and women separately, have greatly involved in the analysis and designing the test plots and nurseries. The village institutions undertook most of the decision-making. More importantly, the local community members feel that the test plot in their village is "theirs." This feeling of ownership is crucial both for sustainability and for guiding and shaping future action after the project period. For this laudable achievement, the moderated rating was 5.

4.3 Sustainability

The three assessment criteria related to sustainability assess the extent to which the implementing organization is able to increase the impact of its programming through targeting its interventions at key points, or through coordination and cooperation, replication, and the mobilization of resources beyond ICEF.

4.3.1 Strategically Focused

"To what extent does the organization focus its efforts on particular strategic areas or sectors and direct its activities at root causes of impoverishment and key constraints to development."

The project was designed to support the establishment of TPs in all of the 1,000 Naga villages. While some have expressed the opinion that this approach lacked focus it was in fact very strategic in that it took away opportunities that might have otherwise resulted in political favoritism in the selection and delivery process. In addition 80% of the population and the majority of the poor live in rural villages which practice jhum cultivation. NEPED is directly focused on these farmers.

Another strategic decision which was made and helped to focus the project was the selection of a local experts group. This group of 12 elders, includes representation from the major tribal groups and provides expertise through their local and traditional knowledge in all aspects of project

execution. They have also been very useful as mediators when local disagreements have arisen.

When project implementation began, establishing the test plots was the primary priority and focus of the POU, and remained so for the first two years of the project. A base line survey which collected key data from the TPs was to be undertaken as part of the project. In the first year a format for the survey was established and agreed to and the POU and DPT's began to collect the baseline data. The POU members however found themselves on steep learning curve with a very heavy workload and a decision was made to put the baseline survey on hold. This decision is reported to have been made by the project steering committee (PSC) however there is no record in the minutes of the PSC meetings to indicate that this was the case.

To date no additional work has been undertaken in the collection of baseline data and as such many of the lessons learnt have not been fully captured as part of an internal monitoring, review and adaption process. The lack of a baseline survey which provides the organizations with key information for project analysis and planning is judged to be a weakness in the project.

More recently the project has supported a number of workshops, including a strategic analysis workshop, which was designed to more fully capture the lessons learnt and to provide input into the planning process for the period beyond the current project. Additional resources have been allocated to the gender component, programs on fallow management have been added and partnerships with NGO's (e.g. Eco-waves) have been established.

In summary, the lack of critical baseline data has hampered the ability of the implementing organization to undertake strategic analysis however the project is judged to have been well focused and efforts are currently being made to capture lessons learnt and build on these experiences. A moderated rating of 5 was assigned to this criterion.

4.3.2 Replication

"To what extent does the implementing organization and its partners expand and replicate successful development processes and models and foster and support the expansion or replication of these models by local organizations or government?"

Culturally, the Nagas are a very open society, and the informal, rural communication system is very strong. Thus, what happens in one place is easily widely known very quickly. There is also the so-called "mini bus" syndrome, that is, what one Naga starts doing, if found good, the entire neighbouring Naga community follows doing. Based on this principle, mass replication was predicted even at the time of project planning in 1994. This has been proved true.

The first test plots were established in 1995. And much of the remaining test plots were established in 1996-97. So in some of these test plots the trees have attained an impressive height of up to 20 feet and a girth of more than 2 feet. The core message that the NEPED model has conveyed is "add trees to the jhum land". Interestingly, in a few instances, the test plots may have

failed, but not the message. As the test plots have been established in about 80% of the villages in the state, on the one hand, this message has spread mainly on its own to almost the entire state. On the other hand, to encourage tree planting, the state government declared 1999 as the Year of Tree Planting. Many state government departments also focused their attention on tree planting in 1999. A massive education and awareness program was undertaken for youth and school children throughout the state. Many VCs passed a resolution that each family must plant at least 100 plants, and instituted prizes for those who planted more. The importance given by the farmers to the seedlings planted can be seen from the sticks stuck next to the seedling so that it is not cut during weeding.

The fuel wood and other low-income-yielding trees become ready for cutting in about 8-10 years which fits well with the jhum cycle. Depending upon whether the jhum land is located nearer to the road or far away, a jhum farmer might earn about Rs. 10,000 to 25,000 (@ Rs. 1,000 per stock of 6'X6') from fuel wood and get about 200 tins (about 13 kg. per tin) of rice per ha. in the first year. If the land is good, a ten-year jhum cycle could be sustainable and provide adequate food and income for a family. But with decadal population growth of more than 50% and with increasing expenditures and reducing jhuming cycle, jhuming will soon be unsustainable. The timber species, however, have a cycle of more than 15-20 years and in some cases even 25 years. One youth put it "The jhum cycle in the test plot has now become 20 years". But in 15-25 years the timber species could give a return of millions of rupees. Thus, tree planting is creating a long-term asset as the elders said "We are doing it for our children", and those who have not taken it up already feel "We are late". Hence the rush for tree planting and for seedlings. While the project has promoted nurseries through women groups, a number of private nurseries have also come up on their own. The demand has been so much that some women groups have sold seedlings that are hardly two-three months old. It is difficult to estimate the number of farmers who have taken up and the area that has been covered in tree planting, but it would definitely be more than six times the total test plot area. One test plot farmer has planted trees in more than 12 ha. instead of 3 ha., the size of the test plot. The high economic value of the timber trees compared to the low-value fuelwood trees obtained in the jhum land has been the predominant motivating factor.

In conclusion, a crude indicator of success of any project is the extent of its replication. Replication does not usually happen automatically. But in this project, not only has replication been taking place with much less project effort, and rarely so, it has also taken place well within the project period itself. This indicates that the jhum farmers have adopted the NEPED model in ways suitable to their condition. Thus, the purpose for which the test plots were established, that is, to evolve a sustainable alternative methodology to jhuming has been more than fully achieved. For this outstanding achievement a moderated rating of 5 is given.

4.3.3 Resource Mobilization

"To what extent is the organization able to increase the amount of support for development programming it mobilizes from sources other than ICEF?"

The sources other than ICEF which have provided resources are IDRC, GON, VDBs and TP owners.

The actual IDRC contribution is more than 50% of what was originally envisaged, and their contribution over time has increased significantly. At a number of occasions, POU members were sent for overseas training or exposure from IDRC's own or from other resources which was mobilized by IDRC, and these were not originally planned.

The GON has contributed a number of things in kind. It has provided the office space for the POU and residences to all POU members, and met the cost of staff salaries, vehicle running and maintenance, and administration and overheads. It has also provided funds from other departments for nurseries and purchase of seedlings. The recurring cost alone works out to about 16% of total ICEF contribution. This level has remained stable. The GON funds for project activities has increased significantly contributing to mass replication, and this is going to increase significantly well beyond the project period.

The project envisaged that 50% of the resources for land shaping would be provided by local sources. One VDB had provided Rs. 85,000 from its sources for its 'community test plot'. This works out to about 1:3. In many other community test plots, there was evidence that the local community had contributed labour for land shaping, pit digging, seedling planting, weeding etc. As most lands on the roadside are privately owned, land was purchased to establish community or women test plots, and those who work only get, as per tradition, lunch for their labour contribution. The ratio here may also work out to 1:3 (ICEF contribution to the test plot: VDB/local contribution).

It is difficult to estimate the contribution of an individual test plot owner because he has not kept account of his contribution. It may be about 1:1 (ICEF contribution: test plot contribution).

In conclusion, while IDRC contribution has increased both quantitatively and qualitatively, the GON contribution to maintain the technical staff, administration and overheads has remained stable. The GON contribution to project activities to replicate the NEPED model has increased significantly and will continue to increase manifold. There is strong evidence to suggest that the historical and unprecedented success of the NEPED project will lead to many other agencies, both GOI and bi/multi lateral, committing funds for scaling up. We have not taken into account the time thousands of volunteers - women leaders, *gaon buras* (village elders), village council chairmen, VDB members, youth leaders and others - have given, the cost of 6,000 hectares of land that was contributed and the financial contribution made by about 800 VDBs which could not be quantified for lack of information. A rough estimation would indicate that the ratio of total resources mobilized vis-à-vis total ICEF contribution should be more than 1:5 (ICEF: other resources). More importantly, the resources from other sources are only going to increase after the ICEF funds have been utilized. On this basis a moderated rating of 4 was given to this criterion.

4.3.4 Sustainability of the Local Village Institutions

"To what extent is the organization able to increase the amount of support for development programming it mobilizes from sources other than ICEF?"

The local village institutions with which the project has worked are the village councils and village development boards. These have been established under the acts of the state Assembly. They receive funding mainly from the state government, an amount based on the number of families in the village. Annually an honorarium is paid to the VDB secretary. The VC chairmanship is an unpaid job but the village gives free labour to work in his field. Thus, these are permanent organizations having organizational and financial sustainability unless the state government changes its policy. So the project did not pay any money for the up-keep of these institutions.

In the context of this project which has worked with the existing local institutions such as the village councils and village development boards which are permanent institutions and have in-built financial and organizational sustainability, the question of what constituted sustainability and its application to these institutions was debated. The question of sustainability, it was argued, would apply only at instances wherein the project organization had formed 'new' local institutions exclusively for the project.

These village institutions have been primarily responsible for planning and implementing the test plots, not for one but two. The POU and the DPT members have been constantly visiting them and the test plots, and the village leaders have attended the training programmes organized by the POU, the district administration and other departments. Fallow management is now being undertaken in selected test plots. They are thus very aware about the need to protect their environment and have developed enormous skills in undertaking land development, planting etc. The counter argument was that the project has enhanced their capability. They are promoting on their own tree planting in the jhum land. Many VCs have passed resolutions requesting all families to plant at least 100 seedlings and have instituted prizes for those who planted more.

In conclusion, the aspect of organization and financial sustainability per se is not applied here to assess the performance. The critical indicator is that the local institutions have been instrumental in promoting the project concept i.e. adding trees to the jhum land. This they will continue to do, and they have developed enormous capability to do so. The range in scoring between the four teams reflected a range in the basis upon which the criterion was assessed. Following discussions during the workshop a common understanding was agreed to and a moderated score of 5 was assigned.

4.4 Governance

The performance assessment guide included three criteria related to governance. This project is unique when compared to other ICEF projects in that it includes a Project Coordination Unit

(PCU) based in Delhi which plays a very significant role in project delivery. As such it was agreed that a fourth criterion be added which would assess the PCU's responsive mechanism in the same manner that ICEF's responsive mechanism was assessed. All four criteria assess the extent to which the project is effectively governed.

The ratings in section four on governance were not moderated in the workshop where the four assessment teams met to review their ratings. It was judged to be inappropriate to moderate the ratings since they dealt very specifically with the performance of ICEF and the PCU, both of whom were also assessors. For each of the four criteria on governance an average score has been recorded.

4.4.1 Effective Direction and Control of the Project's Steering Committee

"To what extent does the project's steering committee effectively direct and control the affairs of the project?"

During the first 3½ years of the project the steering committee met formally on only two occasions, while during the last 1½ years they have met on three occasions. It appears that the main reason for these irregular meetings was largely based upon the limited availability of the members.

While the committee had full access to the varied sources of information to assist them in the decision making process the level of information and reporting was limited during the first half of the project.

A number of key decisions were taken over the course of the project which apparently were discussed and reviewed by the PSC but no record of these discussions are reflected in the minutes of committee meetings (e.g. decision to put the baseline survey on hold).

On occasion, the irregularity of the meetings held up some decisions which had a negative effect on the project. For example, a decision on vehicle maintenance was put on hold for more than a year, and this grounded the POU and effective project delivery.

The ratings assigned by the four assessment teams showed a high level of variance in the scoring ranging from a high score of 5 to a low score of 2. An average score of 3 has been assigned to this criterion. The External Team however feels this score is high based upon based upon the irregularity of PSC meetings, the associated delay in reaching decisions, and the apparent lack of a clear record of the decisions taken this criterion obtained an average score of 3.

4.4.2 Accountability

"To what extent is the implementing organization able to demonstrate that adequate accountability is being exercised over the ICEF funded project?"

IDRC and the Government of Nagaland (GON) are the primary implementing organizations. The contribution agreement is a tripartite agreement between ICEF, IDRC and the Indian Ministry of Environment. The GON accountability is defined in a parallel agreement between GON and IDRC. The contribution agreement has never been amended however some of the key reference documents such as the project management plan have been amended and annual plans have further modified the management plan by taking into account changes in project work plans. These annual plans, having been approved by the project steering committee have guided the activities of IDRC and the GON. Both the GON and IDRC are respecting the approved work plans and as such they are judged to be in compliance with the contribution agreement.

During the first two years of the project ICEF reporting requirements were not understood by the implementing organization however with the support of the PCU the reporting to ICEF has during the last two years been both more timely and effective.

With regard to the contributions being made to the project by the VDB's it is difficult to assess the value of these contributions. The agreements indicate that the VDB's were to have contributed Rp 69.0 crores. The majority of this contribution has been in-kind through the provision of land, labour and food. The project has not assessed or reported on the value of these contributions. The VDB contributions may not have been equivalent to the original planned contribution level but they are judged to have been significant.

The field level activities account for the major project expenditure and accountability at the field level rests with the POU, DPT's and the field staff. The project has established a unique payment and verification systems which provides for transparent and verifiable financial controls for field operations. This system provides for assurances that all test plots have been established, visited, monitored and the work successfully completed. When the work is judged to be incomplete or inadequate payments are withheld.

Overall the level of accountability is judged to be very high and NEPED is judged to be in compliance with ICEF's policies. An average score of 5 was awarded for this criterion.

4.4.3 ICEF's Responsive Mechanism

"To what extent is ICEF actively involved in developing and assessing the sustainable outcomes or impact results that the organization is seeking to achieve?"

ICEF transferred many of the functions which they normally perform on other projects to the PCU. In particular the assessment of progress towards expected results and reviewing ongoing

project management and administration were largely assigned to the PCU. During the entire project ICEF staff visited the project on only three occasions, once to attend a PSC meeting, once by a project officer in November 1999 and during this performance assessment mission.

ICEF reporting requirements have apparently changed or been modified five times during the course of the project. Only limited training was been provided to the project staff to ensure that they understood and are able to comply with the reporting requirements. This task was to a large extent undertaken by the PCU.

It was felt that the indicator areas in the performance assessment guide could not be fully assessed since many of the ICEF functions were being undertaken by the PCU. It is important to note that should ICEF fund a second phase without a PCU they will have to very significantly increase their level of involvement and resources directed to this project in order to fulfill their mandate. An average rating of 3 was assigned to this assessment criterion.

4.4.4 PCU's Responsive Mechanism

"To what extent is the PCU actively involved in developing and assessing the sustainable outcomes or impact results that the organization is seeking to achieve?"

During the first two years of the project the PCU appears to have played more of a monitoring than a project coordinating role. As a result the PCU did not receive significant support from the POU in assessing progress towards expected results, support in decisions on policies, strategies and resources. From May 1997 to May 1998 the PCU did not have a full-time project director and the level of support was further reduced. In May 1998, this relationship changed significantly with the appointment of a new full-time Project Director.

Since May 1998, the PCU has provided a very high level of support and guidance to the POU and its partner organizations. The PCU has been instrumental in assisting the POU in a wide range of areas. These include but are not limited to the development of a strategic response to the mid-term review, in undertaking a survey (Klein Report, 1999) to assess the TP results and adjust project policies, the development and preparation of extension materials including a 200 page resource book, and assisting in the development of results based reporting. The support which the PCU provided the POU in the development and assessment of performance indicators has greatly strengthened the POU's ability to measure its achievements and thereby its strengths and weaknesses. Lastly, the PCU has input into the development of policies and strategies which will assist in shaping NEPED beyond the current project.

Based upon the very effective level of guidance which the PCU has provided to the POU the institutional capacity is judged to have been significantly increased. On this basis an average rating of 5 is awarded to this criterion.

4.5 Project Management

This assessment area, project management, assesses the extent to which the project is effectively and efficiently managed. It is made up of five assessment criteria, each of which is considered to be very important for sound project management.

4.5.1 Strategic Analysis and Planning

"To what extent does the organization utilize a well developed strategic plan which clearly articulates the development results being sought?"

Strategic project planning is often based upon an analysis of the key issues which define the project. In this case these would include an analysis of economic issues, a gender analysis, social and cultural dimensions such as community participation, and technical variables. There were no front-end studies undertaken and used in the development of a strategic plan for the project. Instead many of these analyses were done at various stages of project implementation when a specific need was identified. The project planners however were very cognizant of the key social and economic realities throughout Nagaland. The planning of the project was based upon their personal knowledge.

The midterm project review which was undertaken in May 1997 identified a number of weaknesses in project implementation. This review led the undertaking, by the implementing organizations of a number of studies and participatory workshops which began to fill in some of the gaps which were not addressed in the original project analysis and planning stages. These included gender workshops, a marketing study, and exchanges with the State Agricultural Research Station in the development of sound social and technical approaches to indigenous fallow management.

At the start of the project there were very few objective and verifiable indicators developed to demonstrate achievement of sustainable results, or progress towards them. Those that were developed focused only on the primary project outputs, such as the establishment of test plots. This issue was also addressed as the project progressed, first with the introduction by ICEF of results based management reporting and more recently by an IDRC supported self-assessment workshop. The workshop was attended by all of the POU members. It captured, from the perspective of the project team, the most important salient events (both positive and negative) in the accomplishments of the project and thereby provided an understanding of the factors contributing to the projects success. The workshop identified and measured performance indicators and the outcome challenges which need to be addressed.

In conclusion, while the project lacked initial strategic planning a broad range of activities have been undertaken and are ongoing to more clearly articulate the expected results and define the performance indicators required to measure the results being achieved. In assessing this criterion a moderated rating of 4, was awarded based largely on the recent activities undertaken to address

past shortfalls.

4.5.2 Project Design, Approval and Implementation

“To what extent do the organization and its partners have the procedures and capacity to develop, design, implement and monitor developmentally sound projects?”

Project design:

The project design did not provide for effective monitoring and for assistance in areas related to budgeting and financial management. This contributed to the deficiency in financial and progress reporting later on. As the project has progressed and particularly in the last two years many of these related weaknesses have been addressed.

Project implementation:

A circular dated January 20, 1995 had been issued to the VC's and VDB secretaries by the PSC chairman detailing the program. This had been followed by issuing 'Guidelines for implementation of the project - establishment of test plot'. And a Booklet No. 1 was issued on women's participation. These documents recommended procedures for establishing test plots and sound assessment criteria for approving activities regarding test plots, test plot farmers, verification and payment. These have been used in most cases to approve project activities.

The process of designing the test plots was participatory. The major initial activities involved designing a land use and trees identification and planting plan for each test plot jointly by the local community and DPT members assisted by POU. Most test plots have been well designed.

The POU, DPT and VCs/VDBs have worked together to manage effectively and efficiently the project activities. The responsibilities had been highly decentralized, for example, the villages were identified by the DPT and technical support was given by it, and the test plot farmer and test plot for each village were selected by the VC and VDB. The POU provided overall supervision.

The POU met on a weekly basis on Tuesdays for internally monitoring the progress. This has proved to be an effective monitoring mechanism. All field problems were discussed and resolved, and modifications as appropriate in project activities were made in this meeting. The POU members, based on the verification reports and payment requests made by the DPT, recommended to the Project Team Leader for payment to the DC. VDBs have internal auditing mechanisms and this is undertaken by the VC audit committee.

During the first five years of the project the project activities have been undertaken on a highly decentralized structure. The POU members work from their homes and meet on a regular basis to exchange information and participate in joint planning and implementation activities. This structure has worked well for the project. There is however an increasing need for a centralized

structure which would play a key role in disseminating project materials, providing a forum for training activities, and for collecting and housing information on lessons learnt such as a baseline survey. Not all activities should be centralized but it is recommended that a Resource Centre which provided a point of contact for the above noted functions would be highly beneficial.

In conclusion, the implementing organization and its partners have used sound assessment criteria to review and approve project activities, and have managed effectively and efficiently. On the efficiency side, the cost to establish one test plot is about Rp. 20,000. This includes all costs, administration and overheads. On the effectiveness side, the lessons learned have been widely replicated. The test plots are well designed. The village audit system and the verification done by the DPT have ensured that the funds were spent appropriately. While the original project design was weak, the ways by which the project activities have been designed and implemented has been excellent. A moderated score of 4 was awarded to this criterion.

4.5.3 Budgeting, Accounting, Financial Control and Disbursement

"To what extent does the organization have effective budgeting, accounting and financial procedures and controls, and maintain adequate and accessible audit trails in Head Office and in the field?"

The assessment against this criterion has been made at two levels, (1) Accounting, financial control and disbursement and (2) Budgeting as an effective management tool. The accounting aspects are the purview of the POU, whereas it is the PCU, which has largely taken care of the budgeting function.

At the project level, the expenditure towards the establishment of the test plots is initially shown as an advance to the Deputy Commissioner of the concerned District, and is released to the VDB for onward disbursement to the TP farmer. The DPT makes the release of funds only after verification. The process is generally stringent. The POU members do not physically handle the funds. The advance is adjusted once the information regarding expenditure is received from the districts. The funds thus flow directly to the VDB and the official machinery can remain immune to the pressure of handling funds in an extremely disturbed field situation. The mechanism for disbursement of funds to the field thus remains efficient and transparent.

The accounting permits the ICEF related costs to be tracked, even though there are no clearly defined systems for obtaining financial reports from the field. The expenditure is audited quarterly by external auditors and adequate and accessible audit trails can be found.

Efficient systems of monitoring the expenditure against targets do not, however, exist at the POU level. The POU members perform the account functions in addition to their field tasks. They have received hardly any training in this area and feel generally challenged in this field. It has not been possible, at the POU level to generate cash flow projections and reports. Disbursement flows have also not been projected but have been handled in a need-based manner, rather than being

based on budgetary projections.

The importance of the budgetary process has not been clearly understood at the POU level and the budget is hardly used as a tool for effective financial planning and monitoring. There has however, been marked improvement in this situation over the last two years. The contribution of the PCU has been significant in processing the financial data and translating it into prescribed reporting formats. The IDRC accountant has contributed significantly to streamlining accounting systems at the POU level. The Project Manager has provided considerable training inputs in this area.

Some savings are anticipated at the end of the project, assessment having been made of the total funds needed for the project. These would be approximately Rs.30 lacs. If a decision is taken to extend the project, these savings could provide useful bridging financing.

In conclusion it can be said that a high degree of accountability exists at the project level, but the absence of well-defined financial management systems makes it difficult to maintain effective budgeting, accounting and financial procedures and controls. This is compounded by repeated modifications in the reporting format, some of them coming as late as 1999. Skill up-grading on in this area, coupled with a cultural re-orientation to appreciate its importance would be absolutely essential in the context of any extension of the project. The inherent weaknesses in the financial systems as well as limited financial skills resulted in a moderated score of 3. It is interesting to note though that the POU scored their performance in this area as a 5, indicating that they feel they have made significant progress over the course of the project.

4.5.4 Project Reporting and Monitoring

"To what extent does the organization monitor field operations, provide constructive feedback to reports form the field and submit timely reports that meet ICEF's requirements?"

In this criterion the organization referred to are defined as the PCU and the POU.

As noted in section 4.6.1, in the original project management plan an external monitoring component was included. However during the inception mission this activity was removed from the project. As a result during the first two years of the project ICEF did not obtain sufficient information to meet their requirements.

As noted in section 4.4.3, the reporting requirements were modified or changed on five occasions during the project. Only limited training was been provided to the project staff to ensure that they understand and are able to comply with the reporting requirements. This made it difficult for the POU and the PCU to fully meet ICEF requirements.

During the last two years the PCU has provide a significant amount of training to the POU in report preparation. NEPED was one of the first ICEF projects to adopt results based management

reporting formats in early 1999. While the narrative and financial reporting has improved significantly and meets most of ICEF's requirements, additional training and capacity building is still required.

At the field level the POU through the DPT's and the field staff, is able to effectively monitor operations and has used the information collected to modify field activities (e.g. land shaping). The DPT's submit regular monthly reports to the POU which include verification of field operations and expenditures.

This criterion was awarded a moderated score of 4 based largely on the requirement for increased capacity building among POU members in reporting on all of the activities and functions undertaken by NEPED.

4.5.5 Human Resources and Personnel Management

"To what extent does the organization select, manage and utilize its human resources effectively and in line with its mission statement, objectives and strategy?"

The human resources that the project works with are the POU at the project level, the DPT at the district level and the VDB / VC at the village level. The VDB / VC is the existing village level institution used for delivering the project. The existing institution has been strategically selected and utilized, and has functioned as a valuable human resource. The DPT, although created specifically for the project, comprises of district level officers who work on the project in addition to their normal duties as field officers of the different line departments. Here again, this human resource has been used strategically. The multi - disciplinary nature of this team has brought together the skills of field officers from different departments and imparted a synergy beyond the individual contribution of the officers from diverse departments. Neither of these, however, involves selection of personnel. It is , rather, an efficient use of an existing structure.

It is only at the POU level that staff has been specifically selected for the project. The members of the POU have been drawn from different departments. They are attached full time to the project, while continuing to draw their salaries from their respective parent departments. All the members of the POU have a high degree of expertise in the myriad jobs they perform within the POU. They are highly motivated, and exhibit excellent teamwork. They have been extremely effective in pursuing the organization mission and in achieving its objectives.

The members of the POU have acquired a high degree of skills, in areas hitherto unknown in Nagaland. Their computer skills, for example, were practically non-existent before the start of the project. Even though the enormity of the task of establishing and verifying almost 1800 test plots has been a constraint in their being able to get away and avail of formal training opportunities, they have been exposed to training in a number of different fields at the POU level. Particularly in the last two years, training opportunities have been expanded, with the Project Director providing significant training inputs.

The POU members have functioned well beyond their job descriptions. They have exhibited high performance levels. Two POU members were dropped from the team in the early days of the project, but since then they have continued as an enthusiastic, result oriented team.

The POU members accord high respect to the project leadership. The Chairman of the Project Steering Committee and Chief Secretary Mr. A.M.Gokhale has taken deep and personal interest in the extraordinary human resource development which has come about through this project. The Team Leader and Secretary Agriculture has managed and utilized the project personnel very effectively, and with great sensitivity. He has succeeded in providing a very supportive working environment. The project leadership has empowered the staff to achieve significantly high levels of performance.

In conclusion, the selection and management of human resources has been a significant strength of the project, and was awarded a moderated score of 5 against this criterion.

4.6 Learning and Innovation

The three assessment criteria in this component are intended to assess the extent to which the implementing organization evaluates its performance to improve programming, explore new and better ways to achieve desired results, and foster an environment of continued collaborative learning.

4.6.1 Review and Evaluation

"To what extent does the organization conduct and use reviews and evaluations to develop its understanding of development processes and organizational issues and to improve its programming and projects?"

The initial project plan prescribed a formal external monitoring function. This function was however removed during the inception mission. In hindsight, if this monitoring function had been retained it would most likely have played a very instrumental role in providing the implementing organizations with feed back to make adjustments to the project as it evolved. This was a weakness in project design not attributable to the implementing organizations.

During the first two years of the project very limited monitoring was performed. In 1997, ICEF commissioned the Cairns report which was the first external review of the project. This was followed by the change in the PCU Project Manager and an external mid-term review (MTR). Both of the reviews identified many positive achievements as well as areas requiring increased attention. In total the MTR identified 16 issues requiring attention. The PCU and the POU responded to the mid-term review by developing a plan to address the weaknesses which had been identified. The majority of these issues have been fully and appropriately addressed however three key issues still require attention. These include the baseline survey, the development of a formal training plan and the development of closer linkages to the parallel research project. A

strategy to address these issues should be developed in the planning for the next phase of the project.

On the positive side, many improvements have been made based upon these reviews. They include modifications to the TP model, the inclusion of an indigenous fallow management component, the incorporation of lessons learnt into the production of a 200 page resource handbook, the inclusion of a gender component and improvements in project reporting.

A moderated score of 4 is assigned to this criterion based largely upon recent activities which clearly demonstrate the partners intentions to become a strong learning organization. However, a significant level of effort will need to be extended to ensure that the partners capture all lessons learnt and fully incorporate them into an ongoing project analysis and planning process.

4.6.2 Innovation

"To what extent is the organization, together with its partners, involved in developing and testing innovative development approaches and models which, when proved effective, are replicated?"

The POU:

The project operations unit is headed by a project team leader (PTL) who is a senior IAS officer in the rank of Secretary to government, and there are 14 members. The POU office is located besides the PTL's house and is housed in a very small building compared to the size of its operations - the project covers almost the entire state. It has one large room which is used for conducting meetings and another, which is a computer room. The POU members operate from their houses and meet once in a week at the office when the progress and problems are discussed and resolved. Each member has been given a Maruti gypsy and a computer. There is no "office" culture which fits into the nature of the project which is field oriented. The style of operation has made the project very much functional. This is why perhaps results are seen more in the field.

The POU is a multi-disciplinary team, with staff members drawn from varied departments like agriculture, horticulture, soil conservation, irrigation, cooperation, tourism etc. The entire expenses of the POU members which include their salaries and vehicle running/ maintenance cost (initially) are met by their respective departments. The administration and overheads are met by the GON.

The small team of officers who conceptualized the project and were involved in its designing continued with the project throughout its implementation phase in many ways. The chief architect - Mr. A. M. Gokhale - became the chairman, PSC. Mr. R. Kevichusa became the PTL. And other became POU members.

The test plot:

The entire energy of the implementing organization has been focused on developing innovative approaches to the problems caused by jhuming. This is why it has been called a "search and find" project, and the test plots are like an open school-cum-research station from which people will learn daily. Thus, although there were guidelines to establish test plots each test plot is unique.

Land to women:

Culturally, Naga women do not inherit land and do not own it. The allocation of test plots to women has led to women being able to own land.

In conclusion, the project has contributed three innovative approaches: (a) to project management; (b) to reducing the ill effects of jhuming; and (c) to obtaining land ownership to women. The lessons learned from the test plots are already being replicated *en masse*. A moderated rating of 5 was assigned to this criterion.

4.6.3 Documentation

"To what extent is the organization and its staff engaged in producing effective documentation particularly useful for the organization's local partners?"

The focus of the NEPED project, particularly in its early phase, was clearly on field level activity. The establishing of 1794 test plots in 854 villages was no mean task. It hardly afforded the project team any opportunity to document its activities. In the last two years more energy appears to have been focused on the work of documentation. Given the cultural orientation of not being particularly "paper friendly", it has involved a great deal of effort on the part of the POU members in producing some excellent documentation.

The richness of the experiences, the lessons learned, and the knowledge acquired would be lost if not accurately documented. It would also deprive many others who could benefit from this invaluable resource.

Under the leadership of the project Chairman and Chief Secretary of Nagaland, Mr. A.M. Gokhale, the members of the POU have developed considerable botanical skills and have put together a data base of botanical information covering almost 6000 plants.

The test plot which is fundamental to this project is in fact an important field experiment. The observations and results from this experiment must not be lost to the undeniably enormous task of establishing and verifying test plots. Little effort has so far been made in the direction of monitoring and documenting farmer management practices in both test plots and replications in a systematic manner. At the end of the day, there may not be sufficient data gathered to accurately analyze what happened on the field and formulate conclusions. NEPED has been remarkably successful in what it set out to achieve. Documenting the lessons learned and disseminating to a wider public would be essential for deriving the maximum benefit from this success.

The POU members have, particularly in the last two years, greatly improved upon the level of documentation in the project. Extension brochures have been prepared on various subjects relating to the project in clear and succinct language. Various papers have been presented by them at seminars and workshops both within and outside the country. Photographs and slides have added to the wealth of the documentation.

The singular contribution of the project, however, is the remarkable book on the traditional agriculture of Nagaland. The book, the outcome of a 2-week workshop, is a magnificent effort by the POU members, each of whom has contributed significantly. The book offers remarkable insights into the traditional agricultural practices in Nagaland and seeks to build upon them.

Much remains to be documented in this project - given the remarkable experiments that have been made in the social and governance aspects, in addition to the fundamental test plot activity. For the high quality of documentation already achieved, the project is graded at 5 against this criterion.

5.0 MODERATED ASSESSMENT GRID

As noted earlier, the assessment guidelines were used in a participatory process to assess project performance. The assessment findings were synthesized in a participatory workshop in which a moderated assessment grid was prepared covering all of the assessment areas with the exception of the area related to governance. The scores for the governance criteria are presented as average scores. Similarly, as noted in section 4.1.5, the workshop did not reach a moderated score for criterion 1.5, Technology Adoption, and therefore an average score is included in the grid for this criterion.

Performance areas	Very Weak	Weak	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
1. Support of ICEF'S mandate and objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Sustainable improvement of land/water/energy resources	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Environmental concerns addressed	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Women's participation	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Poverty reduction	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Technology adoption	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Micro-entreprise development	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Others	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
2. Capacity building	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Institutional strengthening	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Strategic selection of local partners (local NGO's..)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Partnership of local partners	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Increased participation and empowerment of target groups	1	2	3	4	4.5	5	
• Others	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
3. Sustainability	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Strategically focused	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Replication	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Resource mobilization	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Sustainability of the local village institutions	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Others	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A

Some of these areas can be considered critical.

[illegible]

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Assessment Process

As noted earlier in this report, NEPED was the first ICEF project to be assessed using the guidelines provided to the project assessment teams. The guidelines provided a clear framework which greatly facilitated and brought a high level of uniformity among the teams in undertaking the assessment. The following comments are based on the experience of the four assessment teams who used these guidelines to review the NEPED project. They are suggestions which are intended improve the application of the guidelines in the assessment of other ICEF projects.

6.1.1 Briefing Assessment Teams

In assessing the NEPED project the PCU and the External Team jointly met with ICEF prior to commencing the assessment process for a briefing on the application of the guidelines. While the guidelines appear to be simple and easy to apply they are in fact very complex. Having a common understanding with regard to the application of these guidelines resulted in a high degree of commonality in the assessment between the PCU and the external team. In some cases the POU interpreted some of the criterion slightly differently than the other assessment teams. Had they participated in the same briefing sessions provided to the PCU and External Assessment Team there would have been a higher degree of commonality in how the criteria were assessed.

It is suggested that future projects assessments begin with a one day briefing provided by ICEF to all the assessment teams participating in the project performance assessment.

6.1.2 Indicator Development

Performance indicators were not developed for the NEPED project during the planning stage. Each assessment team therefore prepared their own unique indicators which they used during this assessment. A common and agreed to set of indicators may have resulted in a higher degree of uniformity in the process, however, the unique perspectives of the four different teams would have been lost in the process.

For projects which have not been planned with a set of performance indicators it is suggested that each team identify their own indicators in addition to those provided in the ICEF guidelines. As with the NEPED assessment, this should enhance the assessment process.

6.1.3 Scientific and Technical Assessments

The ICEF guidelines do not contain any criteria which specifically and singularly focus on the soundness of the technical and scientific aspects of the project. A project which is weak technically might receive a high score since many non-technical issues are included within the

few criteria which touch upon technical aspects.

It is suggested that an additional criterion be added to the assessment area which addresses sustainability. It would address the technical soundness of the project design and implementation. It might be labeled "Appropriate Technology".

6.1.4 A Moderated Grid

The four assessment teams for the NEPED project undertook their assessments independently. After each team had completed the process a one day participatory workshop was held to review the various teams indicators, findings and comments and ratings. With the exception of those criteria related to governance, the workshop attempted to facilitate a moderated or consensus rating for each criterion.

This process was judged to be extremely beneficial for all of the organizations participating in the project. The exchange of findings and comments was particularly useful in bringing a wide range of ideas and new perspectives to the table. The implementing organizations expressed the opinion that this will strengthen their capacity to plan future project activities. The moderated grid however should not be read in isolation from the individual grids since where disparity exists between teams it often identifies areas requiring special attention.

It is suggested that the approach used to prepare a moderated grid be used in other ICEF assessments.

6.1.5 Assessment Scale

The ICEF grid has 6 rating levels of which three indicate an assessment of better than 50% and three less than 50%. In many instances the various assessment teams felt that a neutral or 50% rating would have been the most appropriate. A fifty percent or neutral rating would have also made it easier to reach a consensus rating in the preparation of the moderated grid.

It is suggested that ICEF give consideration to the use of a scale with either 5 or 7 rating levels in future assessments.

6.1.6 Criterion 5.2

Criterion 5.2, "Project design, approval and implementation", covers three distinct areas as defined in the definition. The guidelines provided do not deal with the approval stage and it is suggested that this be removed from the label for this criterion. Design and implementation are unique different aspects of the project. A project might be designed well and score high in this regard while it is implemented poorly and score low. An average score would indicate an acceptable performance when in fact a major weakness existed.

It is suggested that criterion 5.2 be split into two separate criteria, one dealing with project design the other with project implementation.

6.1.7 Criterion 5.3

Criterion 5.3, "Budgeting, accounting, financial control and disbursement deals with two unique areas. In the NEPED project the assessment teams rated the project high in regard to accounting and the related activities which ensure financial control . They rated much lower with regard to the extent which budgets were used as a managerial tool.

It is suggested that criterion 5.3 be split into two separate criteria, one dealing with financial control and accounting and the other with budgeting and the use of budgets as a management tool.

6.2 Project Findings

The following section identifies the key findings and recommendations for consideration in the planning of future support to NEPED. Specific findings and comments on the various assessment criteria for NEPED have been detailed in section four of this report.

6.2.1 A Successful Project

Nagaland is a very diverse state with a high range of variability in geography, environment, culture, land tenure and economic conditions. The delivery of development assistance is further complicated by the difficult political environment. It is within this complex environment that the project is judged to be very successful. It has resulted in an enormous expansion in tree cover in a short five year period, it has empowered the local farmers by providing them with opportunities to expand their economic potential and thereby have an impact on reducing poverty.

The most significant environmental issue by far, facing the people of Nagaland, is soil conservation and soil management as related to sustainable agriculture. NEPED is clearly focused to address this extremely critical environmental issue.

6.2.2 A Unique Project Structure

The project owes much of its success to a unique project structure, exemplified by the POU- a multi-disciplinary team of government officials, detached from their parent departments for the project duration. Their transformation from individual Government officials to a cohesive, focused, motivated and highly effective team has in itself been a unique and singularly successful experiment, the impact of which has transcended project boundaries. It has led the Government of Nagaland to form a multi-disciplinary Core Group, for effective delivery of Government programmes.

The co-opting of the knowledgeable and influential village elders into the project as local experts,

and the use of the VDB as a crucial component of the delivery mechanism are strategic features of the project.

The original and innovative management ideas of Mr. A.M. Gokhale, Chief Secretary of Nagaland have translated into a unique project structure, the impact of which goes far beyond the project itself.

6.2.3 Goal Level Indicators

The goal level indicators for this project address issues related to soil conservation, a reduction in the rate of deforestation and forest degradation, increased availability of fuelwood and positive impacts on water cycles. An assessment of performance with regard to these indicators can only be made within the context of the jhum cycle and the rotation age for the forest crops which is 10 years or longer. However, the assessment team feels that based upon the high level of appropriate and successful replication which is occurring and the increased environmental awareness at the village level, that the project is making significant positive progress with regard to the achievement of project goals.

6.2.4 Soil Conservation

The NEPED model of land shaping has only been replicated on a small scale (7% of farmers indicated that they intended to use the model again, Klein report). The same report found that 93% of the farmers use traditional methods of land shaping. The original NEPED model is not replicable on a large scale and the challenge for the project in the future will be to identify cost effective technologies to improve traditional land shaping methods.

6.2.5 Baseline Survey

The original project design called for a baseline survey to capture lessons learnt and to feed back into the internal project monitoring and review processes. In the first year of the project a format for the survey was established and agreed to and the POU and DPT's began to collect the baseline data. The POU members however found themselves on a steep learning curve with a very heavy workload and a decision was made by the PSC to put the baseline survey on hold.

To date no additional work has been undertaken in the collection of baseline data. The lack of survey data which provides the organizations with key information for project analysis and planning is judged to be a weakness in the project. It is recommended that the development and implementation of a baseline survey be a key component of any future project activities.

6.2.6 Research Linkages

The parallel research project sponsored by IDRC and implemented by the State Agriculture Research Station is attempting to identify and introduce alternative land use options. These include the introduction of crops which can be produced and harvested during the fallow period. The linkages between this project and NEPED are very weak.

When the research project was designed IDRC had a full scale regional office in New Delhi which was responsible for coordinating this project. Part way through the project the office in New Delhi was downsized and the responsibility for coordination was transferred to the IDRC office in Singapore. This transfer in responsibility is judged to have, in part, contributed to the weak linkages. The linkages between these two projects should be formalized and strengthened. This might best be done by having a single manager responsible for both projects.

6.2.7 A Training Plan

A very significant amount of training has been undertaken during the first five years of the project. This includes training at all levels from the POU to the village farmer. Training in technical aspects related to jhum cultivation, gender training, results based management, participatory rural appraisal systems, reporting, financial accounting and more. The majority of this training has been undertaken in the absence of a formal NEPED training plan. It is recommended that in planning future project activities a formal training plan be prepared which targets the specific needs and gaps of the various project participants.

6.2.8 Marketing

The development of markets for the forest products to be harvested from the jhum fields will be critical to sustaining the NEPED model. Some work has been undertaken in this regard but much more needs to be done especially in the development of non-timber forest products - an area which is becoming an increasingly important component of the project.

6.2.9 A Resource Centre

During the first five years project activities have been undertaken in a highly decentralized structure. The POU members work from their homes and meet on a regular basis to exchange information and participate in joint planning and implementation activities. This structure has worked well for the project. There is however an increasing need for a centralized structure which would play a key role in disseminating project materials, providing a forum for training activities, and for collecting and housing information on lessons learnt, such as a baseline survey. Not all activities should be centralized but it is recommended that a Resource Centre which provided a point of contact for the above noted functions would be highly beneficial.

6.2.10 A Need to Focus

The project was designed to support the establishment of TPs in all of the 1,000 Naga villages. While some have expressed the opinion that this approach lacked focus it was in fact very strategic in that it took away opportunities that might have otherwise resulted in political favoritism in the selection and delivery process. In addition 80% of the population and the majority of the poor live in rural villages which practice jhum cultivation. NEPED is directly focused on these farmers.

This approach has led to a high level of replication and built a strong foundation for future activities which can provide a high level of value added functions to these farmers rather than providing continued support to the development of test plots per se. These functions should include activities related to indigenous fallow management providing the farmer with increased income generating activities during the fallow period. Opportunities to develop linkages both internally in India and externally with other organizations that are developing and testing agroforestry models should be explored. These organizations should include the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF). As mentioned earlier increased attention should also be paid to the development of effective soil management and conservation technologies.

6.2.11 The Role of the Project Coordinating Unit

In the last two years of the project the PCU has provided a very high level of support and guidance to the POU and its partner organizations. The PCU has been instrumental in assisting the POU in a wide range of areas. These include but are not limited to the development of a strategic response to the mid-term review, in undertaking a survey to assess the TP results and adjust project policies, the development and preparation of extension materials including a 200 page resource book, and assisting in the development of results based reporting. The support which the PCU provided the POU in the development and assessment of performance indicators has greatly strengthened the POU's ability to measure its achievements and thereby its strengths and weaknesses. Lastly, the PCU has input into the development of policies and strategies which will assist in shaping NEPED beyond the current project.

While the POU's capacity has strengthened significantly they still require support in key project activities such as the development of a baseline survey, applied research, training and reporting. Should ICEF fund a second phase without a PCU, alternatives to addressing these continuing needs will have to be developed.

6.2.12 Support of ICEF's Mandate

ICEF's mandate focuses on the development of capacity in Indian institutions to address environmental issues. NEPED is clearly focused and supportive of ICEF's mandate.

Appendix 1
Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCES

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

NAGALAND ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PEOPLES' ACTION (NEPED)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nagaland Environment Protection and Economic Development through Peoples' action (NEPED) was launched on December 1, 1994 which will formally come to an end on June 30, 2000. The project is being implemented jointly by the South Asia Regional Office (SARO) of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), New Delhi and the State Government of Nagaland through a Project Operating Unit (POU). While the larger amount of project funding is obtained from India Canada Environment Facility (ICEF), the project implementing organization (SARO-IDRC) also contributes to the project.

Overall directions and policy guidelines for achieving the project objectives are provided by a Project Steering Committee formed for this purpose. ICEF Project Office (ICEFPO) is entrusted with the responsibility to ensure that the project is generating the results as outlined in the Project Proposal and the Project Management Plan (PMP)

1.1 Goal (Long term Objective)

The Goal of the project is to develop approaches to transform the existing practices of shifting cultivation into a sustainable practice through agro-forestry, thus achieving sustainable management of the natural resource base of the State of Nagaland for the benefit of the Nagaland people.

1.2 Purpose (Immediate Objective)

The purpose of this project is to develop and demonstrate new approaches, based on test plots which would improve the practice of shifting cultivation and transform it into agro forestry. The objectives are:

- ▶ Development of alternative approach for shifting cultivation;
- ▶ Increase in income of the people of Nagaland;
- ▶ Enhancement of the capabilities of local institutions (government and non-government) to undertake management of the resource base in partnership with and for the benefit of the Nagaland inhabitants.

A brief summary of the project background is included in Appendix A of this document.

2.0 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

2.1 Mission Objectives

The purpose of performance assessment is to undertake participatory assessment of the relative performance of the implementing organization and their partners in:

- ▶ Formulation, implementation and control of the project;
- ▶ Success in achieving results consistent with project objectives as defined in the Project Management Plan (PMP), sound development principles and ICEF's mandate.

The assessment will be made with regards to the following performance areas:

- ▶ Support of ICEF's mandate and objectives
- ▶ Capacity building
- ▶ Sustainability
- ▶ Governance
- ▶ Project management
- ▶ Learning and innovations.

Each of the performance areas cited above should further be broken down into relevant project specific sub-areas as illustrated in the following table.

Table 1 - Performance Area	
1. Support of ICEF's mandate and objectives	
1.1	Sustainable improvement of land/water/energy resources
1.2	Environmental concerns addressed
1.3	Women's participation
1.4	Poverty reduction
1.5	Technology adoption
1.6	Micro-enterprise development
1.7	Others
2. Capacity building	
2.1	Institutional strengthening
2.2	Strategic selection of local partners (local NGOs)
2.3	Partnership of local partners
2.4	Increased participation and empowerment of target groups
2.5	Others
3. Sustainability	
3.1	Strategically focused
3.2	Replication
3.3	Resource mobilization
3.4	Sustainability of the local village institutions
3.5	Others

4. Governance	
4.1	Effective direction and control of project steering committee
4.2	Accountability
4.3	ICEF's responsive mechanism
4.4	Other
5. Project management	
5.1	Strategic analysis and planning
5.2	Project design and approval
5.3	Budgeting, accounting, financial controls and disbursements
5.4	Project reporting and monitoring
5.5	Human resources and personnel management
5.6	Others
6. Learning and innovation	
6.1	Review and evaluation
6.2	Innovation
6.3	Documentation
6.4	Others

Note: The external evaluation team may have to prioritize the critical areas from amongst the list above in consultation with the project implementing organization.

While some of the above performance areas will be considered most critical, some others may have relatively less relevance to the specific context of the project. Please refer to ICEF's Performance Assessment Guidelines for definitions and guidance in regard to the basic performance areas, criteria of assessment and indicators.

2.2 Internal Assessment

In order to improve the fairness, quality and consistency of the judgements being made and as stipulated in ICEF's Performance Assessment Guidelines, the performance assessment will seek feedback from all the three major participants namely the external evaluation team, the implementing organization and ICEF. Since, the project implementing organization is comprised of two functional parts namely the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) at New Delhi and the Project Operating Unit (POU) at Kohima, the performance assessment grid of project implementing organization will be comprised of two performance assessment grids, to be prepared independently by each. The judgements will be guided by extended analysis of the performance assessment areas supported by the use of indicators. The ratings of the ICEFPO and those of the implementing organizations will be included in the draft and final report.

2.3 External Assessment

The team of external evaluators will be comprised of three members i.e one Canadian Team Leader and two Indian specialists. The team members amongst themselves should have expertise in the following areas.

- ▶ Agro forestry , farm forestry , soil and water conservation;
- ▶ Community participation, community based institutions, gender empowerment;
- ▶ Institutional arrangements (administrative structure, delivery mechanisms etc. of the village institutions/ state government / cooperatives).
- ▶ Marketing (marketing of timber, development of marketing infrastructure, controls, policy guidelines etc.).

The performance assessment will be conducted on the basis of analysis of the performance areas using suitable criteria and indicators. Indicators are to be developed by the external evaluators using ICEF's Performance Assessment Guidelines. The external evaluators will submit a narrative report including a ratings table on each performance area. The narrative part of the report will elaborate on the findings based on analysis of the selected performance areas and criteria together with highlighting the major lessons learnt and recommendations for future course of action. All the rating tables completed by the external evaluators, implementing organization (PCU & POU) and ICEFPO will be annexed to the final report.

Following persons have been short-listed to form the team of external evaluators:

- ▶ **Team Leader (TL)** : Richard H. Baerg, Ottawa, Canada.
- ▶ **Community Participation (CP)** : S.K. Vettivel, New Delhi.
- ▶ **Institutional Arrangements (IA)** : Ms. Dipa Singh Bagai, New Delhi

Responsibilities of each expert are stipulated in the following table.

Table 2 - Responsibilities of Experts		TL	CP	IA
1. Support of ICEF's mandate and objectives				
1.1	Sustainable improvement of land/water/energy resources	X		X
1.2	Environmental concerns addressed	X	X	
1.3	Women's participation	X		X
1.4	Poverty reduction	X	X	X
1.5	Technology adoption	X	X	X
1.6	Micro-enterprise development (marketing)	X		X
1.7	Others			
2. Capacity building				
2.1	Institutional strengthening	X	X	X
2.2	Strategic selection of local partners	X	X	X
2.3	Partnership of local partners	X	X	X
2.4	Increased participation and empowerment of target groups	X	X	
2.5	Others			
3. Sustainability				

3.1	Strategically focused	X		X
3.2	Replication	X	X	X
3.3	Resource mobilization	X	X	X
3.4	Sustainability of the local village institutions	X	X	X
3.5	Others			
4. Governance				
4.1	Effective direction and control of project steering committee	X		
4.2	Accountability	X		
4.3	ICEF's responsive mechanism	X		
4.4	Others			
5. Project management				
5.1	Strategic analysis and planning	X	X	X
5.2	Project design and approval	X	X	X
5.3	Budgeting, accounting, financial controls and disbursements	X	X	X
5.4	Project reporting and monitoring	X	X	X
5.5	Human resources and personnel management	X		X
5.6	Others			
6. Learning and innovation				
6.1	Review and evaluation	X		
6.2	Innovation	X	X	X
6.3	Documentation	X	X	X
6.4	Others			

2.4 Scope of Work

The team of external evaluators will be required to undertake the following broad activities towards meeting the objectives of the Mission.

- ▶ Review project documents;
- ▶ Finalize performance areas, criteria and indicators with IDRC/PCU and ICEFPO;
- ▶ Prepare a specific work plan for the Mission;
- ▶ Discuss with the POU staff at Kohima : review available records/data base and documents, to understand policies, procedures, practices related to planning, execution, monitoring, etc.;
- ▶ Visit representative sites selected from the lists of TPs as test cases. TPs may be selected as per the preference of the team members;
- ▶ Discuss with the TP beneficiaries, others;
- ▶ Seek additional clarifications from POU;
- ▶ Prepare draft report after receiving specific inputs;
- ▶ Submit a first draft report which include the four rating grids;
- ▶ IDRC, ICEF for discussions;
- ▶ Modification if necessary;
- ▶ Submit final report.

Appendix 2
Mission Itinerary

2.5 Suggested Time Schedule

The Mission will be for a period of 22 working days (days of rest are not included) as per the following schedule.

Table 3 : Time Schedule	
Day	Activities
January 10 Monday	Familiarization, collection of relevant project documents, discussions etc. Going through the reports etc.
January 11 Tuesday	Joint discussions/workshop with IDRC/PCU and ICEF to identify critical performance areas, criteria of assessment, selection of indicators etc.
January 12 Wednesday	Follow up on the above. Departure Delhi for Calcutta by evening flight. Night halt at Calcutta.
January 13, Thursday	Departure Calcutta for Dimapur and Dimapur for Kohima.
January 14, 15 Friday, Saturday	Discussions with POU. Collection of information and review of pertinent documents/records. Finalization of field program.
January 16, Sunday	Internal discussions amongst the external Team members.
January 17 - 22 Monday - Saturday	Field visits on physical status, discussion with farmers and others as per need.
January 23, Sunday	Rest day
January 24 -28 Monday - Friday	Additional field visits. Clarifications from POU staff on identified issues. Preparation of draft report at Kohima.
January 29, Saturday	Travel back to Delhi.
January 30, Sunday	Rest day
January 31 Monday	Comparison of performance assessment grids and presentation of major findings/recommendations to IDRC/PCU, POU and ICEF and receive feed back.
February 1, Tuesday	Fine tuning of the report
February 2, Wednesday	Submission of final report.

The Team Leader will collect and collate the materials from the team members and will submit three copies of the final report complete in all respects.

ITINERARY FOR THE REVIEW TEAM

DATE

13.1.2000 ARRIVAL KOHIMA
 14.1.2000 KOHIMA MEETING WITH POU
 15.1.2000 KOHIMA MEETING WITH POU
 16.1.2000 KOHIMA MEETING WITH POU

FIELD VISIT

GROUP-I

MR. RICHARD HUGO BAERG
 AMENBA
 QHOTOVI
 SANCHO
 P.KOZA

GROUP-II

DR. VETIVEL
 BENDANG
 PURAKHU
 GHUKHUI
 ZACHUNU

GROUP-III

MRS. *D.I.P.A. BHAGYA*
 CHOZHULE
 VIZONYU
 ACHARYYA

DATE	FROM	TO	FROM	TO	FROM	TO
17.1.2000	KOHIMA	TIZIT	KOHIMA	PHEK	KOHIMA	PEREN & BACK TO KOHIMA
18.1.2000	TIZIT	MON	FIELD VISIT PHEK DISTRICT		FIELD VISIT KOHIMA DISTRICT	
19.1.2000	FIELD VISIT IN MON DISTRICT		PHEK	ZUNHEBOTO	KOHIMA	ZUNHEBOTO
20.1.2000	MON	MOKOKCHUNG-VIA TAMLU	FIELD VISIT ZUNHEBOTO DISTRICT		FIELD VISIT ZUNHEBOTO DISTRICT	
21.1.2000	FIELD VIST IN TUENSANG DISTRICT		ZUNHEBOTO	MOKOKCHUNG	ZUNHEBOTO	MOKOKCHUNG
22.1.2000	MOKOKCHUNG	KOHIMA VIA WOKHA	MOKOKCHUNG	KOHIMA VIA WOKHA	MOKOKCHUNG	KOHIMA VIA WOKHA

#MR. ARI JAMIR WILL RECIEVE ALL THE 3 GROUPS IN MOKOCHUNG ON 20TH AND 21ST JAN, 2000
 #ALL THE GROUPS WILL LEAVE MOKOKCHUNG AFTER BREAKFAST ON 22.1.2000 FOR KOHIMA
 #ON THE WAY THEY WILL VISIT FEW TEST PLOT IN MOKOKCHUNG DISTRICT
 #MR. Z.KIKON WILL RECIEVE THE GROUP IN DOYANG BRIDGE AND VISIT THE WOKHA DISTRICT TEST PLOTS
 #LUNCH AT WOKHA AND PROCEED TO KOHIMA

Sd/-
 (R.KEVICHUSA)
 TEAM LEADER,
 POU(NEPED)

Appendix 3

Performance Assessment Guidelines for ICEF Projects

**PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES
FOR ICEF PROJECTS**

**ICEF
India Canada Environment Facility
October 1999**

Draft Document

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ICEF : India Canada Environment Facility

ICEFPO: India Canada Environment Facility Project Office

JPSC: Joint Project Steering Committee

PMP: Project Management Plan

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 **Purpose.** This paper describes the criteria and process that ICEF plans to use to conduct performance assessment of projects in a participatory manner. This process will improve partnership between the implementing organization, their partners and ICEF. Performance assessment consists of an assessment of the performance of the implementing organization, their partners and ICEF in the formulation, implementation and control of development projects, and their success in achieving results consistent with the indicators as defined in their Project Management Plans (PMP) and ICEF's objectives and mandate. Performance assessment is used to check and assess how an implementing organization, their partners and ICEF are performing in a number of key areas. This assessment enables judgments to be made about the extent to which an allocation in support of an ICEF project is likely to contribute to sustainable development.

1.2 **Performance areas.** The assessment is made in regard to the following six performance areas.

1. Support of ICEF's mandate and objectives
2. Capacity building
3. Sustainability
4. Governance
5. Project management
6. Learning and innovation

Note: some of these areas can be considered critical.

1.3 **Performance assessment grid, criteria and guidelines.** An assessment grid and rating scale have been developed for assessing the performance of each ICEF projects in relation to the above areas. Definitions, criteria and guidelines have also been developed to assist in the assessment process. The assessment grid, criteria and related guidelines are attached to this paper as Appendix A and B.

2.0 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

A common set of performance areas and criteria will be establish between the implementing organization and their partners, ICEFPO and the external evaluation team. Prior to the performance assessment, the three parties must agree with the performance assessment grid, criteria and indicators.

The performance assessment grid will be completed by :

Implementing organization and partners

ICEFPO
External Evaluation Team.

- 2.1 **Responsibilities of the implementing organization.** An Implementing organization will provide input into the assessment process, including the submission of a self-assessment using the same performance assessment grid as ICEFPO and the external evaluators. Information and argumentation supporting this self-assessment will be included in their report. In their discussions and in their reporting, the implementing organization should articulate and demonstrate what is being done and achieved in the various areas being assessed.

The implementing organization should provide information required by the ICEFPO and external evaluators to make a sound assessment. **The extent to which an implementing organization provides an honest and critical assessment of their projects should be treated as an important performance indicator.**

- 2.2 **Responsibilities of ICEFPO.** ICEFPO is responsible for making an assessment of the implementing organization's performance. A major responsibility of ICEFPO throughout the year is to gather and assess information regarding the performance of the implementation organizations. Particular attention should be given to those performance areas where **information is lacking** or where there have been **significant changes**. In making this assessment, ICEFPO is expected to draw upon its experience with the organization, consult with others who have knowledge of the organization including previous project officers and recent evaluators, consult with the organization, and to review the many other sources of information available such as: institutional evaluations; mid-term reviews; project submissions and reports; evaluations, assessments and reviews conducted by the organization; field trips; audits, financial statements, and financial viability assessments. ICEFPO will provide an assessment using the same performance assessment grid as the implementing organization and the external evaluators.
- 2.3 **Responsibilities of the external evaluators.** The external evaluators will be comprised of one Team Leader and one or two specialists. The team, amongst themselves, must have expertise in the project's field. The external evaluators will submit a narrative report including a ratings table on the specific performance area. The performance ratings will be done on the basis of analysis of each of the performance area using suitable indicators. The narrative part of the report will elaborate on the findings based on analysis of the selected performance areas together with highlighting the major lessons learnt and recommendations for future course of action.
- 2.4 **Challenge.** It is acknowledged that the process of making judgments regarding the performance of an organization is a sensitive and difficult one. Even with the provision of standard assessment, there are problems of subjectivity in those making judgments, different assessors applying different standards, and inadequate information. **The purpose of this proposed method is to improve the fairness, quality and consistency of the judgments being made.**

- 2.5 **ICEF's review.** The assessments and recommendations agreed to at the section level are presented to the ICEFPO where they are again subjected to review. This process is designed to ensure greater consistency among sections and serves as a final vetting of the assessment.
- 2.6 **Supporting documentation required.** ICEFPO must document the basis for the performance rating. This documentation serves as a record which can be referred to in future years. ICEFPO should review this documentation regarding the performance rating to ensure that the documentation has been prepared, and that the argumentation and evidence is sound. Presentation of this supporting documentation to ICEF's Joint Project Steering Committee (JPSC) is not required. Only the performance assessment grid must be circulated to the JPSC. The basis for the rating and recommendation can be reported orally to JPSC, however, the JPSC can ask to review the supporting documentation in order to establish the validity of the rating.
- 2.7 **Recommendation, record of decisions and issues raised.** The decisions taken at JPSC, and any related discussions, should be recorded. This record should be reviewed by those involved to ensure that it is accurate and complete. The final acceptance of the performance assessment is by the JPSC.
- 2.8 **Timing of assessments.**

Task

- The performance assessment exercise is launched
- ICEFPO prepares specific TOR using this guide
- Selection of external evaluators by ICEF
- Update and modification of the performance grid with the collaboration of the implementing organization and the external evaluators
- Implementing organization completes a self assessment using the performance grid based on how they rate their performance
- ICEFPO fills the same performance grid based on his long-term evaluation and understanding of the functioning of the organization
- Site visits of the external evaluators
- External evaluators fill the same performance grid based on their short visits, assessment, briefing, documentation and field visits
- All grids (ICEFPO, external evaluators and organizations) are combined in the performance assessment report which is prepared by external evaluators
- Deposit of first draft of the performance assessment report to ICEFPO for review
- Modification if required
- Deposit of the Final Performance Assessment Report

APPENDIX A

Performance Assessment Grid and Criteria

Assessment Grid The attached grid should be used to rate the performance of an organization in regard to the six basic assessment areas. For each assessment area, the organization should be assessed using the following six-point rating scale:

- 6 - Excellent outstanding
- 5 - Very good very capable or sound
- 4 - Good more than adequate
- 3 - Adequate weaknesses, but no major deficiencies
- 2 - Weak some major deficiencies
- 1 - Very Weak little or no activity or extremely poor result
- NA no activity/not applicable (Note: to be used only to rate the selected criteria as per the grid)

Assessment criteria: For each assessment area, critical criteria have been identified which should be used to rate performance in the area using the above six-point scale. The self assessment and assessment of the implementing organization against these criteria serves as the basis for making an overall rating for each of the assessment areas. Guidelines have been provided for explaining and applying the various criteria in making an overall rating for each assessment area (Appendix B).

Indicator areas: Attached to the definitions and guidelines for each assessment criteria is a column suggesting indicators areas. Most of these indicator areas are not specific measurements, but simply suggested areas or issues where measurable evidence should be sought when making a rating. The actual measurements or indicators, whether quantitative or qualitative, can be proposed by the implementing organization. Indicators that have been developed by an implementing organization which do not necessarily fit any of the listed areas should be examined for their validity, and used if valid. For some assessment areas, a distinction is made between support process indicators and result indicators. Priority should be given to evidence of performance results. However, credit can also be given to evidence that the processes employed by an organization support the criteria being assessed. Although several indicator areas may be listed for each assessment criterion, solid evidence from one or two indicator areas may often be sufficient. **It is not essential that indicators be obtained for each of the indicator areas listed.**

No Activity/Not Applicable: For certain sub-assessment areas/criteria, it is permissible to indicate that the implementing organization does not engage in any activities related to this criterion rather than providing a rating of "very weak" or "weak". The fact that the organization does not engage in programming in this area will not count against the organization when determining the overall rating for the area being assessed. For these selected criteria, an absence of activity in these areas does not mean that the performance of the organization is considered "very weak" or "weak". It is important to note that there are only a few assessment criteria where this is permitted. These criteria are indicated with the symbol NA in the No Activity/Not Applicable column.

Performance areas	Very Weak	Weak	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
◆1. Support of ICEF'S mandate and objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Sustainable improvement of land/water/energy resources	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Environmental concerns addressed	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Women's participation	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Poverty reduction	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Technology adoption	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
• Micro-entrepreneur development	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
• Others	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
◆2. Capacity building	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Institutional strengthening	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Strategic selection of local partners (local NGO's..)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Partnership of local partners	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Increased participation and empowerment of target groups	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Others	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
3. Sustainability	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Strategically focused	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Replication	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Resource mobilization	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Sustainability of the local village institutions	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Others	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
<i>Some of these areas can be considered critical.</i>							

Assessment areas and criteria	Very Weak	Weak	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
4. Governance	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Effective direction and controls of the project's steering committee	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Accountability	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• ICEF's responsive mechanism	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Others	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
5. Project management	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Strategic analysis & planning	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Project design and approval	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Budgeting, accounting, financial controls and disbursements	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Project reporting & monitoring	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Human resources and personnel management	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Others							N/A
6. Learning and innovation	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Review and evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Innovation	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Documentation	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Others	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
Some of these areas can be considered critical							

APPENDIX B - Criteria Guidelines

1. SUPPORT OF ICEF's MANDATE and OBJECTIVES

To what extent does the project contribute towards the achievement of ICEF's mandate and objectives?

Assessment Guidelines

- The six assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the organization's project is contributing to the achievement of ICEF's objectives and priorities. To the extent that the organizations has developed valid measures of the degree to which they are meeting these criteria, these indicators should be used. The indicator areas listed below are suggestions to assist with the assessment process and are not requirements. When making an overall assessment, one important criterion is the extent to which the organizations project is contributing to poverty reduction.

Assessment Criterion 1.1 Sustainable improvement of land/water/energy resources : To what extent is project effective in facilitating the sustainable delivery of environmentally-sound activities and services to poorer groups?	
Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmentally sound activities, services and policy dialogue (environmental education, cooperatives, self help groups, micro-entreprise, restoration and conservation) Small infrastructure consist of human-made physical systems which provide essential economic and social services, such as utilities (nurseries, erosion controls schemes, plantations, test plots, cookers, other small infrastructure works (such as check dams and canal works for irrigation and drainage). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the activities supported are operating on a sustainable basis. Evidence that the activities supported are contributing to poverty reduction, and that poor and marginalized groups have access to these services.
Assessment Criterion 1.2 Environmental concerns addressed : To what extent does the organization adequately address environmental concerns in its programming?	
Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important that all environmental concerns are integrated at the very initial phase of a project. As stipulated in the MOU agreement signed with the implementing organization and ICEF, the organization must conduct or ensure that an environmental assessment is conducted in accordance with the India Environment Protection Act (EPA) and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA) regulations before going ahead with any activities/projects subject to these regulations. The organization must obtain the necessary measures to determine that activities/projects are not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects. The implementing organization and its partners can also work together on activities aimed at: resolving immediate environmental concerns; increasing environment awareness; and strengthening capacities to deal with environmental issues. 	<p><u>Organizational arrangement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an effective environmental management structure access to capacities and skills in environment, relevant for the project procedures for the environmental assessment of projects, and for ensuring that environmental factors are taken into account at all planning stages (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation). <p><u>Policy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a clear environmental statement or policy and a strategy <p><u>Project</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> defined environmental objectives for the project and indicators for the assessment of results familiarity with the environmental issues specific to the project and capacity to adequately manage them knowledge of the needs and strengths of their partners in terms of the environmental management of the project activities are planned to build the capacity in environment of staff and partners

Assessment Criterion 1.3 Women's participation : To what extent does the organization ensure that women are full and equal partners in guiding and shaping the development process and are full beneficiaries of the process?

Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICEF is committed to ensuring that the development activities it supports benefit women as well as men. The lessons from years of experience is that women will not automatically benefit from development initiatives unless special attention is given to this issue. Gender analysis is crucial to good development practice. Numerous development failures can be traced to the assumption that the eventual beneficiaries were a homogeneous group, rather than men and women with different roles, needs and interests. An understanding of gender roles and gender division of labor must be part of all initial planning activities. Systemic discrimination and other barriers often mean that women are less able than men to take advantage of new opportunities. Implementing organizations and their partners need to make special effort to ensure that women are involved equitably in policy and programming activities and at all levels of decision making and implementation. 	<p><u>Support Process</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the implementing organization has clear policies and strategies on gender and development. Degree to which the implementing organization has effective management processes, structures, capacity and expertise which ensures that gender issues are addressed during strategic analysis, planning, project design, implementation, and evaluation. <p><u>Results</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which projects supported by the organization involve women as full and equal participants, and address the needs of women.

Assessment Criterion 1.4 Poverty reduction : To what extent does the organization's project contribute to poverty reduction? Does this project address the interrelationship between poverty and environmental degradation?

Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty reduction programming involves improving the human and productive capacities of the poor and removing barriers to their participation in society so that the poor are able to provide for themselves and avoid deprivation in a sustainable manner. It focuses on improving the Poor's access to, control of, and benefit from economic, social, and natural resources and decision-making. Poverty reduction is a process by which the causes of deprivation and inequity are addressed. Poverty reduction is distinct from poverty relief which involves a transfer of resources to address immediate needs and the effects of inequities. Poverty relief does not enable the poor to secure or sustain their livelihoods or to end the ongoing cycle of poverty. Poverty reduction activities can occur at various levels: 1) at the individual or community level working directly with the poor to improve their welfare; 2) at the institutional level by helping to strengthen organizations that contribute to poverty reduction; and 3) at the policy level by removing systemic constraints and creating an 	<p><u>Support Processes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the organization's project is based on a thorough analysis of the causes and/or consequences of poverty in the areas it is working, and has clear strategies for addressing one or more of these causes and/or consequences. <p><u>Results</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which targeted beneficiaries are increasingly able to provide for themselves and avoid different forms of deprivation in a sustainable manner. Degree to which the poverty reduction programming of partner organization and local institutions are stronger. Degree to which progress had been made in removing systemic barriers which contribute to poverty and the creation of a policy and institutional environment which is conducive to poverty reduction.

<p>environment which is conducive to poverty reduction. The assessment should allow for different strategies and focuses. The issue is not which approach is being used, but whether the approach is making an effective contribution to poverty reduction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debates should be avoided about whether the programming is aimed at the poorest of the poor. Reasonable judgments should be made about whether the targeted beneficiaries are experiencing a level of deprivation that would justify use of scarce resources devoted to poverty reduction. 	
<p>Assessment Criterion 1.5 Technology adoption : To what extent that adoption and dissemination of pollution abatement, energy conservation and renewable energy technologies are effective in facilitating the sustainable delivery of environmentally-sound technology.</p>	
<p>Guidelines</p>	<p>Indicator Areas</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unless an organization is involved in this type of programming in a significant way, the organization should <i>not</i> be assessed against this criteria, and the "not applicable" rating should be checked. Technology systems which provide new methods to reduce pollution and conserve energy such as utilities (biogas, sanitation and sewage systems, wastewater systems, soil and conservation, cookers...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which new technologies are operating on a sustainable basis . Degree to which new technologies are cost effective, user friendly and appropriate.
<p>Assessment Criterion 1.6 Micro enterprise development : To what extent is the implementing agency effective in supporting and strengthening sustainable income generating activities and fostering micro-entrepreneurship among the poor?</p>	
<p>Guidelines</p>	<p>Indicator Areas</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unless an organization is involved in this type of programming in a significant way, the organization should <i>not</i> be assessed against this criteria, and the "not applicable" rating should be checked. In assessing implementing organization's projects, it is useful to make a distinction between: 1) projects aimed directly at assisting individuals and communities to generate incomes, and 2) projects aimed at strengthening business support institutions which in turn support income generation and micro-entrepreneurship. The assessment should focus on the effectiveness and impact of the programming in this area, and not the scope and scale of programming. 	<p><u>For projects providing income generation and micro credit support</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which income and employment is increased among targeted beneficiaries. Degree to which dependency on income support projects is reduced. <p><u>For projects aimed at assisting business support, the following could be used</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased cost recoverability of projects Increased diversification of funding sources Increased access of micro-entrepreneurs to business support services (i.e., by increasing volume, type, proximity of services offered) Increased number of clients Increased quality of projects and/or services Reduced dependency on the organization's advice and support

2. CAPACITY BUILDING

To what extent does the project contribute to capacity development among the implementing organization's local partners and other institutions?

Assessment Guidelines

- The four assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the project is contributing to capacity development among itself and its local partners. Implementing organizations that have capacity building as a programming priority may have developed results indicators in this area. If these indicators are valid measures of the degree to which the organization is meeting these four criteria, these indicators should be used. The indicators areas listed below are simply suggested areas that may be considered if appropriate.
- Institutional strengthening** is the assessment criterion that should be given the greatest weight in providing an overall rating for this area. Nevertheless, the other three criteria are also considered to be very important.

<i>Assessment Criterion 2.1 Institutional strengthening : To what extent does the support provided by the implementing organization strengthen the capacity of local organizations and institutions to formulate, manage and sustain development processes?</i>	
Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity development is a process by which groups, institutions and individuals increase their ability to understand and address their development needs in a sustainable manner. Ultimately, development takes place through organizations and institutions. It is through organizations that individuals and society in general are able to carry out, manage and sustain their own development. Thus, strengthening the capacity of local organizations is critical and central to development. Capacity building at the organizational level involves processes through which organizations strengthen their abilities to recognize and analyze problems, formulate and develop appropriate policies and plans, mobilize the necessary internal and external commitment and resources, and effectively implement a set of activities to achieve specified objectives. Institutional capacity building by organizations can take place at many levels, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) strengthening of community-based organizations which serve their own members; 2) strengthening of intermediate local NGOs which provide services and capacity development support to the broader community; and 3) strengthening communications and linkages between various types of organizations necessary to build up overall capacity in the States. 	<p>Support Processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the organization supports and assists communities, societies and organizations to identify existing organizational capacities and areas in need of strengthening. Degree to which the organization provides support, either financial or technical, aimed at strengthening the capacity of local organizations. <u>Results</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which local organizations being supported are moving to greater self-management and organizational sustainability. Degree to which the governance of local organizations has improved. Degree to which the quality of analysis of the development context, and formulation of policies and plans conducted by local organizations has improved. Degree to which the mobilization of necessary skills, commitments and financial resources by local organizations has improved. Degree to which local organizations experiment, assess their effectiveness, learn and adapt, and effectively implement changes has increased. Degree to which the technical capability of local organizations to implement their projects has improved. Degree to which local organizations work together to address common objectives, including collaboration with government.

Assessment Criterion 2.2 Strategic selection of local partners (local NGO's...) : To what extent does the implementing organization select and work with local partners that are either making a significant and sustainable development impact or have the potential to make such an impact with support and strengthening?	
Guidelines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all local organizations either have the capacity or are well positioned to make a significant and sustainable impact with the right support and strengthening. Strategic choices should be made. • For those organization which have long-standing partnerships which can not be ended easily, or are part of international organizations or networks which may circumscribe the choice of partners, the issue is whether the existing relationships are being reviewed and, where necessary, restructured to ensure greater impact. 	Indicator Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree to which the organization has a process and sound developmental criteria for reviewing and choosing its partnerships. • Evidence that partnership relations are either ended if they are not proving fruitful, or steps are being taken to restructure the type of support provided to increase developmental impact.
Assessment Criterion 2.3 Partnership of local partners : To what extent is the organization's relationship with its local partners characterized by principles of partnership?	
Guidelines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership requires local ownership of and responsibility for their own development processes and projects, with implementing organization and their members in the field having a supportive role. This is essential for sustainable development. • Partnership requires systems of mutual accountability. These systems should be based on joint identification of and agreement on performance criteria, indicators and methods for assessing performance. However, implementing organizations must avoid the temptation of "hands-on" direction and control of local programming in the name of improved accountability. • Partnership requires good communication and dialogue, clarity regarding roles and responsibilities, and mutual respect. • Partnership implies a long-term programming relationship. 	Indicator Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree to which responsibility for project design, management and implementation increasingly resides with local partners. • Degree to which the role of implementing organization emphasizes capacity building and facilitation, rather than control and direction. • Degree to which accountability systems governing the relationship are being jointly developed and approved. • Degree to which written partnership agreements exist which clearly define the mutual roles and responsibilities of the partners. • Evidence of frequent, detailed and frank dialogue between the partners to ensure mutual understanding and knowledge of important developments. • Degree to which long-term partnerships and project relationships exist and are being developed. • Degree to which the views of local partners are being taken into account and influencing the analysis, policy and programming of the implementing organization.

Assessment Criterion 2.4 Increased participation and empowerment of target groups : To what extent is the development project of the organization and its partners contributing to increased participation of communities and groups in decision-making and guiding the development process?

Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building requires increased participation of communities and target groups in processes of analysis and self-management. An assessment should also be made of the extent to which women and marginalized groups are being included as full participants. 	<p><u>Support Processes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the implementing organizations and its partners have policies, processes and procedures for involving communities and target groups in the analysis of their situation, the development of solutions, the design of project and project interventions, and the implementation and evaluation of these development efforts. <p><u>Results</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which communities and target groups participate in analysis, solution development, project design, and implementation and evaluation. Degree to which communities and target groups participate in decision-making and guide and shape the development process after a specific project intervention. Degree to which women and marginalized groups participate as full and equal partners in developing and implement projects and in guiding and shaping the development process after the project intervention.

3. SUSTAINABILITY

To what extent is the implementing organization able to increase the impact of its programming through targeting its interventions at key points, or through coordination and cooperation, replication, and the mobilization of resources beyond ICEF.

Assessment Guidelines

- The three assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the implementing organization is able to use the ICEF contribution it receives. Sustainability is a concept being used by ICEF to describe its objective of maximizing the impact of its investments through encouraging its partners to increase the developmental impact of their activities and the amount of support the partners elicit from other sources.
- There is **no single or essential approach** which must be adopted to increase sustainability. **Nor do organizations have to use all the approaches listed below.** Thus, a weakness in one of the criteria does **not** mean that the whole assessment area of sustainability should be rated "weak". However, the extent to which an organization combines various approaches is likely to increase the leverage impact of its programming.

<i>Assessment Criterion 3.1 Strategically focused :</i> To what extent does the organization focus its efforts on particular strategic areas or sectors and direct its activities at root causes of impoverishment and key constraints to development?	
Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience indicates that strategically focused and targeted interventions are much more likely to have a greater impact than a collection of scattered projects. Interventions that are targeted at key points, either unlocking key constraints to development or focusing on actions that build on other existing capacities or projects to maximize impact, are much more likely to have a greater long-term and sustainable impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the organization is able to articulate and demonstrate how its project is more than a collection of activities, and is strategically focused to achieve greater impact. Degree to which the organization engages in strategic analysis which identifies key constraints to development that it and its partners can help address in an effective manner. Degree to which the organization identifies actions which build on and utilize other capacities and actions to achieve greater impact.
<i>Assessment Criterion 3.2 Replication :</i> To what extent does the organization and its partners expand and replicate successful development processes and models and foster and support the expansion or replication of these models by local organizations or governments?	
Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual projects, no matter how successful, often have a very limited impact. Unless these projects or activities can be replicated, the impact will be very limited. Replication usually does not happen automatically. Specific steps need to be taken to foster and facilitate replication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which specific lessons learned from successful models have been documented and disseminated to assist other projects and agencies in replicating these processes. Evidence that learning from successful models has been replicated and expanded by the organization or other agencies.

Assessment Criterion 3.3 Resource mobilization : To what extent is the organization able to increase the amount of support for development programming it mobilizes from sources other than ICEF?

• Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources can be in the form of cash or in-kind, including the value of volunteer services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ratio of resources mobilized from other sources compared to total ICEF support. Degree to which resources mobilized from other sources has been increasing, remaining stable or decreasing over previous levels? .

Assessment Criterion 3.4 Sustainability of the local village institutions : To what extent both organizational and financial sustainability are to be addressed.

• Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources can be in the form of cash or in-kind. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the developmental content of the organization's project is being maintained

4. GOVERNANCE

To what extent is the project effectively governed?

Assessment Guidelines

- The three assessment criteria and indicators provided in the table below should be used to help assess the extent to which a project is effectively governed.

Assessment Criterion 4.1 Effective direction and control of the project's steering committee : To what extent does the project's steering committee effectively direct and control the affairs of the project?	
Guidelines	Indicator Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which critical goals, values, policies, and strategic decisions on project as well as administrative matters are carefully reviewed and approved by the committee. The committee has sufficient access to varied sources of information to assist in decision making. Degree to which the committee ensures that adequate processes and procedures are in place to effectively advance the mission of the organization.
Assessment Criterion 4.2 Accountability : To what extent is the implementing organization able to demonstrate that adequate accountability is being exercised over the ICEF funded project.	
Guidelines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not necessary that all the key instruments of control and accountability reside with the implementing organization. Many of these instruments may be exercised by local partners or branches of international offices in India. The issue is whether the organization has the capacity to assess the adequacy of the control and accountability systems, and is able to ensure that they are in place and are being well managed in keeping with the obligations. This assessment is particularly relevant for organizations which work through international structures. However, it is also relevant for organization working directly with local partners. The fact that a project is being carried out by a local partner or international office does not absolve the implementing organization its accountability to ICEF for the way in which ICEF funds are being used. 	Indicator Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the organization complies with the terms of its contribution/grant agreement with ICEF. Degree to which systems and mechanisms are in place to meet ICEF's requirements regarding strategic analysis and planning, sound project design and implementation, timely reporting, monitoring and evaluation of results being achieved, effective financial and budgetary controls, and compliance with ICEF's gender and environmental policies.

Assessment Criterion 4.3 ICEF responsive mechanism : To what extent is ICEF actively involved in developing, documenting and assessing the sustainable development outcomes or impact results that the organization is seeking to achieve?	
Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICEF must bear responsibility not only for the organization's health and survival, but also for the effectiveness of its development programming. • This means that ICEF should not only ensure that project activities are being completed in an efficient and timely manner, and that activities produce expected outputs. It also means ICEF should ensure that higher level results are identified before projects begin, and that progress is monitored against these results and corresponding adjustments in programming made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree to which ICEF is involved in determining the major results expected in the areas of programming and organizational management and development, and in ensuring that more specific results are identified as part of ongoing project management and administration. • Degree to which ICEF assesses progress towards expected results, and makes decisions on policies, strategies, resources, etc., based on progress indicators in order to improve development results.

5. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

To what extent is the project effectively and efficiently managed ?

Assessment Guidelines

- The five assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which an organization's project is being effectively and efficiently managed. Indicator areas have been suggested to guide this assessment process. **Each of the assessment areas is considered very important for sound project management.**

Assessment Criterion 5.1 Strategic analysis & planning : To what extent does the organization utilize a well developed strategic plan which clearly articulates the development results being sought?	
Guidelines	Indicator Areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strategic plan exists and is used to guide programming development. Strategic thinking and planning is part of the culture of the organization. Degree to which the strategic plan and development project is based on sound analysis of development needs and problems, underlying structures and systems causing the problems, the policy, social and economic context, the types of interventions that will have a strategic impact, and the resources and capabilities that the organization and its partners can bring to the situation. Degree to which the results are expecting to achieve. Degree to which the organization has developed a set of objectives and verifiable (quantitative and/or qualitative) indicators that they will use to demonstrate achievement of sustainable results, or progress towards them.
Assessment Criterion 5.2 Project design, approval and implementation : To what extent do the organization and its partners have the procedures and capacity to develop design, assess, implement and monitor developmentally sound projects?	
Guidelines	Indicator Areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which processes exist and are used for reviewing and approving all activities, which involve clear and developmentally sound assessment criteria, and draw upon the necessary expertise to effectively review and assess projects. Degree to which the projects are well designed. Degree to which the organization and its partners are able to effectively and efficiently manage their project activities. Degree to which the organization and its partners have effective monitoring processes in place which ensure that the component projects are being managed effectively, funds are being spent appropriately, and modifications are being made as necessary to achieve the intended results.

Assessment Criterion 5.3 Budgeting, accounting, financial control and disbursement : To what extent does the organization have effective budgeting, accounting and financial procedures and controls, and maintain adequate and accessible audit trails in Head Office and in the field?

Guidelines	Indicator Areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization has comprehensive financial planning and budgeting processes, and the budgets prepared serve as a useful tool for managing the projects. • The ICEF component is clearly identified in budgets. • The accounting is linked to budgets to permit effective monitoring, and permits easy reporting of costs against budgets. • Accounting permits ICEF related costs to be tracked. • Systems are operating to obtain necessary financial information from field offices and local partners. • Financial management systems (FMS) are in place. • The organization is able to generate useful cash flow projections and reports. • Disbursement chart flows. • Cost of overheads/overhead structure. • Comparison of overall overhead costs to overheads being charged to ICEF component. • Financial reports are complete and transparent. • Adequate and accessible audit trail exists. • Assessment of total funds needed for the project. • Whether to down size or increase the total budget based on expenditure to date. • Final audit has been done, or procedure started along with the relevant terms of reference.

Assessment Criterion 5.4 Project reporting and monitoring : To what extent does the organization monitor field operations, provide constructive feedback to reports from the field and submit timely reports that meets ICEF requirements?

Guidelines	Indicator Areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the organization monitors field operations, activities and results, and takes initiatives to modify project activities, resource inputs and other strategic elements to improve project results. Degree to which financial and narrative reports to ICEF are submitted in prescribed format as scheduled in the agreement between ICEF and the organization. Degree to which reports contain the information requested and required by ICEF.

Assessment Criterion 5.5 Human resources and personnel management : To what extent does the organization select, manage and utilize its human resources effectively and in line with its mission statement, objectives and strategy?

Guidelines	Indicator Areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience and expertise of staff. Degree to which staff and volunteers are effective in pursuing the organization's mission and achieving its objectives. Degree to which job descriptions and performance standards are developed. Degree to which regular and objective assessments of staff performance are conducted. Degree and adequacy of training provided. Degree to which working environment motivates and empowers staff to achieve high levels of performance.

6. LEARNING AND INNOVATION

To what extent is the implementing organization evaluates its performance to improve programming, explores new and better ways to achieve desired results, and fosters an environment of continual collaborative learning?

Assessment Guidelines

- The three assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the organization is a learning organization. Developing, testing, learning from, and disseminating information about **innovative approaches** to development is an important role that organization can play, but **not essential** for every institution. To the extent that organizations are contributing to greater development impact through innovation, this should be reflected in the overall rating given. But the absence of such innovation should **not** necessarily be used to reduce the overall rating of an organization.

Assessment Criterion 6.1 <i>Review and evaluation</i> : To what extent does the organization conduct and use reviews and evaluations to develop its understanding of development processes and organizational issues and to improve its programming and projects?	
Guidelines	Indicator Areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which evaluation and reviews processes are built into the design of projects. Extent and quality of reviews and evaluations being conducted. Evidence that evaluation findings have led to improvements in the project.
Assessment Criterion 6.2 <i>Innovation</i> : To what extent is the organization together with its partners, involved in developing and testing innovative development approaches and models which, when proven effective, are replicated?	
Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization that are not engaged in developing innovative approaches, but focus their energies on replication of effective models and processes should not be rated as "weak". A rating of "no activity" may be more appropriate. Innovation that is not tested and replicated if proven cost- effective, is of little value. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources spent on developing innovative programming and alternative development approaches. Degree to which these innovations or new development models are tested to determine their utility. Degree to which successful approaches are disseminated and replicated. Achievements, successes, failures and mistakes are openly discussed, reported, reviewed, and treated as opportunities for learning.
Assessment Criterion 6.3 <i>Documentation</i> : To what extent is the organization and its staff engaged in producing effective documentation particularly useful for the organization's local partners?	
Guidelines	Indicator Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization that has documented various experiences and lessons learnt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that constant efforts are being made to product effective publications (reports, brochures, technical papers, video, news notes, training manuals, web sites). Evidence of documentation in local language.

Appendix 4

Assessment Grid - NEPED Project Operations Unit

POU's Version

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

WORKING DOCUMENT

PROJECT : NEPED

DATE: 27th January, 2000

NAME : NAGALAND ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
THROUGH PEOPLE'S ACTION

ICEF
India Canada Environment Facility

A : Performance Assessment Grid

Performance areas	Very Weak	Weak	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent	
1. Support of ICEF'S mandate and objectives							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable improvement of land/water/energy resources Environmental concerns addressed Women's participation Poverty reduction Technology adoption Micro-entreprise development 				4	5 5 5	6	S/T 25
2. Capacity building							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional strengthening Strategic selection of local partners (local NGO's..) Partnership of local partners Increased participation and empowerment of target groups 			3 4		5 5		S/T 17
3. Sustainability							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategically focused Replication Resource mobilization Sustainability of the local village institutions 				4	5 5 5		S/T 19
<i>Some of these areas can be considered critical.</i>							

Assessment areas and criteria	Very Weak	Weak	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent	
4. Governance							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective direction and controls of the project's steering committee Accountability ICEF's responsive mechanism IDRC's responsive mechanism 			3		5 5	6 S/T	19
5. Project management							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic analysis & planning Project design and approval Budgeting, accounting, financial controls and disbursements Project reporting & monitoring Human resources and personnel management 				4	5 5 5 5	S/T	24
6. Learning and innovation							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and evaluation Innovation Documentation 				4	5 5	S/T	14
Total							118
<i>Some of these areas can be considered critical.</i>							

1. SUPPORT OF ICEF's MANDATE and OBJECTIVES

To what extent does the project contribute towards the achievement of ICEF's mandate and objectives?

Assessment Guidelines

The six assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the organization's project is contributing to the achievement of ICEF's objectives and priorities. To the extent that the organizations has developed valid measures of the degree to which they are meeting these criteria, these indicators should be used. The indicator areas listed below are suggestions to assist with the assessment process and are not requirements. When making an overall assessment, one important criterion is the extent to which the organizations project is contributing to poverty reduction.

Assessment Criterion 1.1 Sustainable improvement of land/water/energy resources : To what extent is project effective in facilitating the sustainable delivery of environmentally-sound activities and services to poorer groups?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tree cover, bio-mass increased considering the replication ratio of 1:6 and the millions of trees planted in the Year of Tree Plantation - Reduced soil erosion in jhum fields through improved landshaping methods - Replication ratio estimated at 1:6 is indicative of the sustainability - The focal point of the project is small farmers with mixed plantation through out the state and not large-scale plantations - NEPED works extensively with the tribal rural community across the state. All those below the poverty line in Nagaland live in these rural areas. - NEPED has incorporated a separate component for rural women - NEPED has covered 854 Villages,1794 test plots covering 5379 Ha. covering all tribes across the state. - The project concept is being implemented by individuals and communities without NEPED support. (The 1:6 ratio) This implies sustainability. -The NEPED projection is that the first lot of Test Plot farmers from 1995 will harvest the trees for poles and fuelwood requirements between 2001 and 2003. - A market survey on NTFP's has been carried out in anticipation of this need 	

Assessment Criterion 1.2 Environmental concerns addressed : To what extent does the organization adequately address environmental concerns in its programming?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NEPED seeks to improve traditional agriculture (jhum system) - Through the increased tree cover soil erosion is being controlled and water conserved - Rural-based farmers are being trained at the grassroots and awareness created - There has been an increase in the capacity of government servants (DPT members, Field staff etc.) in addressing environmental concerns - NEPED has sought constant feedback from the field level, thus facilitating redesigning, monitoring and evaluation of project activities and needs - The recommendations of the Mid Term Evaluation report were adopted and specific items redesigned to address the project goal - Through this all activities have been strategised towards the project goal - Indicators and data from RBM, MIS and Self Assessment reports are consistent with the project objectives - NEPED has made extensive use of PRA (for the first time in Nagaland) at all levels of project implementation - Using PRA, NEPED has conducted intensive onsite training for DPT/ VC/ Field staff/ Farmer's/ women and other village groups on nursery raising, traditional technologies, best practices etc. - It is estimated that trees have been planted on at least 35,000 hectares of jhum land, by replicators, without any NEPED support. - NEPED has promoted polyculture over monoculture. - Through the mass awareness campaigns, village and tribal groups have become aware of the need for bio diversity conservation and some have passed resolutions/ laws in this regard. 	

Assessment Criterion 1.3 Women's participation : To what extent does the organization ensure that women are full and equal partners in guiding and shaping the development process and are full beneficiaries of the process?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- NEPED is the first project to specifically address gender issues in Nagaland, including appointment of Gender Coordinator in the POU- Through this it acknowledged the need to incorporate a separate gender component in the project activities- Women were allocated 93 independent test plots and all the 80 nurseries in the project.- Women were imparted training on all aspects of the project- These gender-focussed activities have been acknowledged and recognised by frontal state level NGO's like the NMA- Due to NEPED's mass awareness and empowerment training, women are increasingly being able to access their share of 25% of VDB funds- Some women groups have acquired ownership of land holdings, either on long-term lease or outright purchase. This is a major break through against the traditional land ownership patterns that existed- 213 women from 123 villages were imparted empowerment training using PRA	

Assessment Criterion 1.4 Poverty reduction : To what extent does the organization's project contribute to poverty reduction? Does this project address the interrelationship between poverty and environmental degradation?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NEPED activities are aimed at acquiring economic benefits from tree farming - Introduced the idea of planting fallow cash crops to enhance annual income - In order to be prepared for the future harvest from trees a market survey on NTFPs was conducted by hiring an external consultant - After NEPED's interventions the environmental degradation has been reduced, a natural outcome considering the number of trees being planted throughout the state - NEPED has been addressing environment and economic issues jointly - Several government departments have adopted the NEPED approach, an indicator of its efficacy - It is estimated that each farmer who applies the NEPED methodology on jhum land shall earn income from sale of fuelwood and poles from the 6th year of plantation. After the 10th year, some of the faster growing species can be harvested for timber. - Government survey reveals that almost 40% of the population in Nagaland lives below the poverty line, all in rural areas. NEPED's target group, jhum farmers, comprise a major chunk of this 40%. The approach to make jhum farming sustainable and economically beneficial provides a viable solution to arrest environmental degradation - Use of PRA has ensured that the opinion of poorer groups are also heard. 	

Assessment Criterion 1.5 Technology adoption : To what extent that adoption and dissemination of pollution abatement, energy conservation and renewable energy technologies are effective in facilitating the sustainable delivery of environmentally-sound technology.

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
NOT APPLICABLE	

Assessment Criterion 1.6 Micro enterprise development : To what extent is the implementing agency effective in supporting and strengthening sustainable income generating activities and fostering micro-entrepreneurship among the poor?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
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- Out of the 80 NEPED women nurseries that were initiated, about 50% are running on a self-sustaining basis
- NGOs and private entrepreneurs are replicating these women nurseries
- In a small village like Phesama there are altogether 22 private nurseries

Assessment Criterion 1.7 Others :

Indicator Areas

NOT APPLICABLE

Findings and comments

2. CAPACITY BUILDING

To what extent does the project contribute to capacity development among the implementing organization's local partners and other institutions?

Assessment Guidelines

- v The four assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the project is contributing to capacity development among itself and its local partners. Implementing organizations that have capacity building as a programming priority may have developed results indicators in this area. If these indicators are valid measures of the degree to which the organization is meeting these four criteria, these indicators should be used. The indicators areas listed below are simply suggested areas that may be considered if appropriate.
- v **Institutional strengthening** is the assessment criterion that should be given the **greatest weight** in providing an overall rating for this area. Nevertheless, the other three criteria are also considered to be very important.

Assessment Criterion 2.1 Institutional strengthening : To what extent does the support provided by the implementing organization strengthen the capacity of local organizations and institutions to formulate, manage and sustain development processes?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consequent to the interest in tree plantation being generated throughout the state, that was catalyzed by NEPED's activities, the state government declared 1999 as the Year of Tree Plantation. The government provided Rs. 25 million for this activity which was facilitated by the POU. Trees were planted all over the state. For the first time, even security forces like the army, Assam Rifles and police were provided funds in order to enable them to plant trees inside their vast cantonments - Some GoN departments have adopted the NEPED approach - The multi-disciplinary approach to formation of the POU has been replicated by the state government as is evidenced by the Core group. The core group comprises of 157 officers from 57 departments of the government. They sit in plenary once a month and discuss matters relating to various departmental functions. Cutting across water tight compartmentalization, this has provided transparency in governance. - Some apex tribal bodies and village councils have started addressing environmental concerns and have brought this under the purview of their mandate - POU of NEPED have been requisitioned by the GoN to impart training on computers/ Data base management to government staff. More than 100 government staff from various departments have been trained at this center - Some village councils have collaborated with other local NGOs and institutions in executing their own tree planting activities - NEPED has supported GoN/ Field staff/ and NGOs by sending them on exposure trips for experiential learning - NEPED was instrumental in introducing information technology in Nagaland. Each POU member was provided a computer from the project in 1995, and this led to awareness of the usefulness of computers in the government. 	

Assessment Criterion 2.2 Strategic selection of local partners (local NGO's...) : To what extent does the implementing organization select and work with local partners that are either making a significant and sustainable development impact or have the potential to make such an impact with support and strengthening?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a result of the mass motivation campaign by NEPED, the various local groups like the Naga Mothers Association, People's Group (NGO), Church institutions, Student bodies etc. have approached NEPED for support, both in kind and advisory - NEPED focuses on villages and not specific groups, hence there was limited interaction with local groups - In few cases TP owners were changed due to poor performance, or payments to them deferred/ reduced to commensurate with work performance and quality - The body of 'Local Experts', albeit paid by the project, were not only for indigenous knowledge, but also for political and social acceptance, in multi tribal Nagaland - The village councils, with their authority rooted in tradition, are key partners in the project - Formation of the DPTs and utilization of the VDBs ensured involvement of governmental machinery, adding to sustainability and inculcation of improved work culture and transparency 	<p>Atleast 35 villages were reached in mass motivation (groups, people, villages etc) during 1998-99</p> <p>- In 3 villages, TP owners were paid directly by POU, bypassing the VC/ VDB who had demanded pecuniary benefits from the TP owners. This is indicative of the flexibility of approach, being able to tide over local crisis, in the greater interest of sustainability of the project.</p>

Assessment Criterion 2.3 Partnership of local partners : To what extent is the organization's relationship with its local partners characterized by principles of partnership?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Due to the existing structure at the inception of the project, the initial approach was top-down oriented. But this has gradually transformed to a more participatory approach, as the capacity in the POU increased, in keeping with the project design - NEPED has established strong working relationship with the village functionaries for monitoring and evaluation of activities - Project needs were re-designed and constantly updated after getting feed-back from the village level - POU members have intensively visited most of the villages in the district under their charge and have interacted directly with the farmers and local institutions - POU were invited to deliver keynote addresses at various seminar's organised by local institutions 	

Assessment Criterion 2.4 Increased participation and empowerment of target groups : To what extent is the development project of the organization and its partners contributing to increased participation of communities and groups in decision-making and guiding the development process?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a result of NEPED activities, several local institutions have passed resolutions to plant trees - Project activities were re-designed after getting feed-back and advice from farmers - Separate gender component (WID) programme was incorporated in the project - Most nurseries are run by women groups, almost all of whom have organised themselves into formal societies - After NEPED's interventions, some villages/Public organisations passed resolutions pertaining to environmental issues - There is a participatory approach at all levels of the project - All over Nagaland, various independent groups in villages, like clans, khels, church groups, student bodies, and in one case the entire Chakhesang tribe, have become environmentally conscious. They have passed resolutions to undertake environmentally sound activities - Based on feedback recieved from farmers, several NEPED interventions were redesigned as this was found to be better. Eg. Planting materials, erosion control, land shaping 	
Assessment Criterion 2.5 Others	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
NOT APPLICABLE	

3. SUSTAINABILITY

To what extent is the implementing organization able to increase the impact of its programming through targeting its interventions at key points, or through coordination and cooperation, replication, and the mobilization of resources beyond ICEF.

Assessment Guidelines

v The three assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the implementing organization is able to use the ICEF contribution it receives. Sustainability is a concept being used by ICEF to describe its objective of maximizing the impact of its investments through encouraging its partners to increase the developmental impact of their activities and the amount of support the partners elicit from other sources.

v There is **no single or essential approach** which must be adopted to increase sustainability. **Nor do organizations have to use all the approaches listed below.** Thus, a weakness in one of the criteria does **not** mean that the whole assessment area of sustainability should be rated "weak". However, the extent to which an organization combines various approaches is likely to increase the leverage impact of its programming.

Assessment Criterion 3.1 Strategically focused : To what extent does the organization focus its efforts on particular strategic areas or sectors and direct its activities at root causes of impoverishment and key constraints to development?

Indicator Areas

- A participatory strategic planning workshop was conducted, in which objectives were reiterated and activities planned accordingly within specific time frames
- Participatory self-assessment and evaluation has been carried out realistically
- POU has been able to facilitate visit of external agencies/ consultants
- A participatory workshop with local experts was conducted to clarify and confirm data collected from the field from the standpoint of indigenous knowledge. This workshop also helped in gauging reactions and opinions of the rural populace on NEPED
- Field activities were directly focussed on the test plots only initially, but later diversified to other related need based activities like mass motivation, dissemination, capacity building, institutional strengthening etc.
- NEPED has covered more than 80% of the villages
- NEPED activities has opened vista's for down stream income and employment as farmers will harvest poles, fuel wood and later timber
- The introduction of fallow management has been accepted by farmers, some of whom have adopted it in their jhum, in order to earn income from fallow
- Survey data suggests that a feeling of 'ownership' over the project has been established

Findings and comments

Assessment Criterion 3.2 Replication : To what extent does the organization and its partners expand and replicate successful development processes and models and foster and support the expansion or replication of these models by local organizations or governments?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The 1:6 ratio of replication as per the sample survey report. By this approximation, about 12,000 farmers have replicated in 5 years, i.e. 38% of the total target group - The state govt. provided Rupees 2.5 crores towards Year of Tree Plantation 1999 for procurement of seed/ seedling, which was facilitated by NEPED - Several groups/ organisations were provided funding for tree plantation by GoI -GON mobilised resources for economic plantation in the jhum fields and aesthetic plantation in the urban areas. - There has been a marked increase in activities related to nursery raising of indigenous tree species. The NEPED nursery has been replicated by 22 nurseries in Phesama village alone. - Some state governments in the North East region are attempting to replicate the NEPED approach e.g. Mizoram, Manipur 	

Assessment Criterion 3.3 Resource mobilization : To what extent is the organization able to increase the amount of support for development programming it mobilizes from sources other than ICEF?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The test plot farmers contribution in term of labour inputs, if converted into monetary terms, works out to be more than the financial support given through NEPED - GoN has contributed more than 10 times the ICEF contribution - GON provided Rs. 2.5 crores for implementing Year of Tree Planting 1999 -Some of the nurseries have become self sustaining and are even diversifying to undertake other activities 	

Assessment Criterion 3.4 Sustainability of the local village institutions : To what extent both organizational and financial sustainability are to be addressed.

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NEPED works through the Village Councils and VDB's directly. These are traditionally sustainable and financially sound institutions - The GoI/ GoN provides direct funding to the VDBs - Most women test plots have organised themselves into formal groups or societies 	

Assessment Criterion 3.5 : Others

Indicator Areas

Findings and comments

NOT APPLICABLE

4. GOVERNANCE

To what extent is the project effectively governed?

Assessment Guidelines

- v The three assessment criteria and indicators provided in the table below should be used to help assess the extent to which a project is effectively governed.

Assessment Criterion 4.1 Effective direction and control of the project's steering committee : To what extent does the project's steering committee effectively direct and control the affairs of the project?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PSC meetings have become more regular over the last two years - The PSC has been instrumental in empowering POU to take micro management decisions - PSC has been providing valuable inputs in redesigning field activities and recasting the budget allotment - NEPED is meeting the reporting needs of donors 	
Assessment Criterion 4.2 Accountability : To what extent is the implementing organization able to demonstrate that adequate accountability is being exercised over the ICEF funded project.	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quarterly audits are being carried out regularly, which is more than ICEF's requirements - Planning/ strategy/ monitoring workshops have been conducted - The POU meets every Tuesday for feedback and monitoring sessions - NEPED has been instrumental in institutional development in Nagaland, especially with women groups - The project director and other management personnel are regularly monitoring the project activities - Sample survey has been conducted to assess the impact of the project - Self-assessment workshop, independently facilitated by a senior IDRC staff, was conducted - NEPED has developed data bases for most activities like TPs, nurseries and tree species - The 'ZZ' file, a computer driven botanical search key, has been acknowledged as being a unique tool by the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew, UK and the CSIR (Council for Science and Industrial Research) - Spot verification is intensive and payments released commensurating with work performed - The reporting has become timely as the project progressed 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -ICEF's logo and name is being endorsed on all publications and write ups -The first NEPED Booklet (No. 1) was issued to all the villages - NEPED has developed, inbuilt into the system, micro indicators to suit local conditions, ensuring accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Format for verification to suit localised needs, accounts by each POU member, seperate NEPED bank account for each village with the DC as a joint signatory being examples
Assessment Criterion 4.3 ICEF responsive mechanism : To what extent is ICEF actively involved in developing, documenting and assessing the sustainable development outcomes or impact results that the organization is seeking to achieve?	
Indicator Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initially, ICEF's response mechanism was found wanting. However, this has greatly improved over the last two years - As IDRC has been meeting most of the management needs, ICEF was not required to intervene too frequently - The constant changes in the reporting format caused some management problems in keeping up with reporting needs - During 1997 and the first half of 1998, cash flow from ICEF caused a severe hindrance to project activities, as field visits became limited, to the extent that the Chief Secretary had to bail out POU by meeting expenditures from his office, which is not part of the project. 	Findings and comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The CS assisted with at least Rs. 1.2 million to enable POU mobility, thus ensuring that the project managed to survive the crisis.
Assessment Criterion 4.4 IDRC responsive mechanism : To what extent is IDRC actively involved in developing, documenting and assessing the sustainable development outcomes or impact results that the organization is seeking to achieve?	
Indicator Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The 'crisis of 1997-98' was resulted by the departure of the Project Manager, which affected reporting and monitoring. Early appointment of a reliever would have helped. -The replacement, when it did come in the form of the present director, more than made up for the lost time. -The PCU, an IDRC component, has been able to coordinate activities with POU effectively since mid-1998. -The Research Unit of NEPED which is funded by IDRC has been of immense help in providing field inputs -IDRC has been instrumental in increasing the capacity of POU by arranging exposure for them in various fora, national and international. -The functioning in POU has become participatory, facilitated by the new director. -The current incumbent director has redesigned project activities after taking stock of the situation. What started as an agro forestry project has now diversified to address capacity building, governance, mass motivation. 	Findings and comments <p>After a low key start, NEPED has acquired visibility</p>

sustainable livelihood issues etc -Over the last year and a half PCU has effectively monitored the project with visits to Nagaland virtually every month. This has also helped in updating the management requirements and fulfilling the needs of donors. -PCU has handled logistics pertaining to POU effectively in the last 1 ½ year	
Assessment Criterion 4.5 Others	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
NOT APPLICABLE	

5. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

To what extent is the project effectively and efficiently managed ?

Assessment Guidelines

v The five assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which an organization's project is being effectively and efficiently managed. Indicator areas have been suggested to guide this assessment process. **Each of the assessment areas is considered very important for sound project management.**

Assessment Criterion 5.1 Strategic analysis & planning : To what extent does the organization utilize a well developed strategic plan which clearly articulates the development results being sought?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NEPED started with a very sound PMP - The recommendation of MTE posed major challenges to NEPED. Plans and strategies had to be redesigned in certain components to fulfil this requirement - Planning and strategy workshops were conducted - Self-assessment workshops helped to develop a realistic set of indicators and objectives - RBM format was adopted including quantitative markers every 6 months - Feedback from the field was facilitated to modify certain more viable activities - After the visit of Inception Team, the original project document was reviewed and modified to suit the local needs - Survey on marketing of NTFPs has been conducted to plan for the future - Sample survey by external consultant has been done to assess impacts - Consultant was hired to assess the impact of gender component 	<p>About 5 or 6 workshops were conducted. In some the intricacies (for POU) of reporting formats were demystified, plans threshed out and approaches startegised. Deficiencies and gaps and weaknesses are also identified and steps taken to address them through these workshops.</p>
Assessment Criterion 5.2 Project design, approval and implementation : To what extent do the organization and its partners have the procedures and capacity to develop design, assess, implement and monitor developmentally sound projects?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The structure of the delivery system has been designed to provide maximal inputs with no scope for leakages. Using the DC, DPT and VDB (inbuilt development machinery) in consonance with the Village Councils (traditional village leadership) provides for a more intense and sustainable approach, not only in implementation, but also monitoring and evaluation. - Each POU member is required to prepare a monthly work-plan - A well-regulated verification process was adopted to ensure as many details and checks as possible - The gender component is managing on its own - Womens empowerment issues, that are being addressed for the first time, have been having positive impacts - NEPED has well-developed data bases on test plots, tree species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 3 villages, TP owners were paid directly by POU, bypassing the VC/ VDB who had demanded pecuniary benefits from the TP owners. This is indicative of the flexibility of approach, being able to tide over local crisis, in the greater interest of sustainability of the project.

<p>and nurseries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Some POU members have been able to obtain funding for separate projects of their own, but related to NEPED work -Each POU member prepares his or her own monthly activity plan in line with the project activities, prepares reports, takes micro level decisions etc -All reports have been brought up to date, new activities have been taken up 	
<p>Assessment Criterion 5.3 Budgeting, accounting, financial control and disbursement : To what extent does the organization have effective budgeting, accounting and financial procedures and controls, and maintain adequate and accessible audit trails in Head Office and in the field?</p>	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 POU experienced members and one office staff are entrusted to deal with the project finance and accounting - Quarterly budgeting and auditing has been conducted regularly - Payments to test plots have been made as per recommendations of the DPT's, after due verification - The concerned POU members and DPT jointly verify test plots regularly for released of payment - Payments are released commensurating to the actual work performed - POU members maintain separate accounts pertaining to their respective districts, which are regularly updated and assimilated - ICEFs reporting format is strictly adhered to -In spite of the GON delay in the release of contribution to the project, the organisation could effectively managed the affairs - DPTs are required to submit regular reports - Most overhead expenditures are being met by IDRC - All ICEF funds are being credited to separate NEPED bank accounts in all the villages with the DC and VDB as joint signatories. 	
<p>Assessment Criterion 5.4 Project reporting and monitoring : To what extent does the organization monitor field operations, provide constructive feedback to reports from the field and submit timely reports that meets ICEF requirements?</p>	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payments are released commensurating to the actual work performed - DPTs are required to submit regular reports - Field verifications are conducted at least 3 times a year - Strategic adjustments were made after the MTE - The learning from the field have been well documented in the form of a resource book and several briefing papers - ICEFs financial reporting were adopted immediately on receipt 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The RBM format was adopted -Except for the intervening period of 1 ½ years in 1997-98 (in absence of PCU head), all reporting requirements have been met -Initially, 2½ years there was laxity in reporting and monitoring due to lack of proper guidance and training 	
Assessment Criterion 5.5 Human resources and personnel management : To what extent does the organization select, manage and utilize its human resources effectively and in line with its mission statement, objectives and strategy?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - POU members have been drawn out from 13 depts. from the GoN to provide for a multi-disciplinary cross-cutting approach, also keeping in mind the cultural sensitivity of Nagaland - A panel of local experts was formed to meet indigenous knowledge needs as well as socio-political affairs. -A gender coordinator was incorporated into the POU - Senior IAS officers i.e. the Chief Secretary of Nagaland, who is the Chairman of PSC and Team Leader of POU respectively were regularly monitoring project activities - 2 POU members from the original team were dropped on grounds of being ineffective in project implementation - High performance standards involving extensive field coverage have been adopted, positively impacting on the work culture of the team - Most POU members were provided training, collectively or individually, to meet project requirements, especially pertaining to their individual role within NEPED - Most POU members have acquired a high degree of proficiency in computers/ botanical knowledge/ photography and project management - Self-assessment workshop was conducted to identify the major achievements, strengths, weakness, and to identify gaps and to evaluate performance -Inter and intra state visits have been organised with farmers and staff in order to build capacity, awareness and technological exchange - NEPED utilised the existing village functionaries, churches, youth, students, women societies in line with ICEF mandate 	
Assessment Criterion 5.6 Others :	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
NOT APPLICABLE	

6. LEARNING AND INNOVATION

To what extent is the implementing organization evaluates its performance to improve programming, explores new and better ways to achieve desired results, and fosters an environment of continual collaborative learning?

Assessment Guidelines

v The three assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the organization is a learning organization. Developing, testing, learning from, and disseminating information about **innovative approaches** to development is an **important role that organization can play, but not essential** for every institution. To the extent that organizations are contributing to greater development impact through innovation, this should be reflected in the overall rating given. But the absence of such innovation should not necessarily be used to reduce the overall rating of an organization

Assessment Criterion 6.1 <i>Review and evaluation</i> : To what extent does the organization conduct and use reviews and evaluations to develop its understanding of development processes and organizational issues and to improve its programming and projects?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After the visit of Inception Team, the original project document was reviewed and modified to suit the local needs -MTE recommendations were accepted and necessary modifications incorporated - Participatory workshop on strategy planning and self-assessment were conducted - Participatory workshop with local experts and POU jointly was conducted to clarify field doubts and to obtain feed back from the village level - A senior person from the evaluation unit of IDRC CANADA facilitated the self- assessment workshop - After the strategy planning workshop certain aspects of the project were re-designed (e.g. Nurseries, gender component, land shaping methods and adoption of indigenous knowledge) -IDRC-ICIMOD Workshop on Ethnobotany held at Kohima in 1997 -ICEF sponsored workshop on PRA in 1995 -Consultant from Applied Environment Research Foundation, PUNE for natural resources documentation -CSIR for Inception Mission -John Stackhouse, Globe and Canada Mail visit to NEPED in 1997 	
Assessment Criterion 6.2 <i>Innovation</i> : To what extent is the organization together with its partners, involved in developing and testing innovative development approaches and models which, when proven effective, are replicated?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The NEPED land-shaping model was redesigned and adopted on the basis of suggestions received from farmers, which was based on traditional practices. This is being widely replicated - The idea of mixing trees with crops in jhum is being widely accepted - Introduction of cash crops in jhum fallow is fast catching up in certain pockets - Germplasm transfer of indigenous tree species across to other districts of Nagaland - Participatory approaches in development activities are being initiated - Gender issue are being addressed for the first time in Nagaland - The gradual shift of traditional agriculture from jhum to an agroforestry system is taking place - The idea of mixed tree species plantations are being replicated - NEPED landshaping was improved and replicated - The idea of preserving the "mother tree" and retention of natural regenerated saplings/ 'wildlings' is being accepted - The multidisciplinary approach of POU led to the creation of core group in GoN - The inculcation of computer literacy within POU led to introduction of computers within the working system of GoN - The transparent functioning style of NEPED has resulted in increased awareness and capacity of rural folk. This has led to better governance, as village functionaries are more accountable - Based on findings from the field, 2 POU members have been able to initiate their own research projects, funded by other sources, but based on NEPED activities 	
Assessment Criterion 6.3 Documentation : To what extent is the organization and its staff engaged in producing effective documentation particularly useful for the organization's local partners?	
Indicator Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Documentation of biodiversity -POU Booklet NO. 1 issued to all villages - 8 Briefing papers on various topics have been published - A documentary video film highlighting project activities - A training manual on field operations has been made - NEPED web site is available online - The "ZZ" botanical data base and search file has been widely acknowledged as unique - A comprehensive photo library of plants has been compiled and catalogued - Field manuals in several local languages has been made - Photographs from the NEPED collection have been exhibited in New 	Findings and comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16000 (8x2000) copies have been under distribution within and outside the state. - NEPED concept have been translated into 3 local languages/dialects and distributed - 1 folder on Tree planting methods was written in Tenyidie and distributed - ZZ-file Contains as many as 6000 plant species - The state agriculture department has been given 500 copies of POU Resource Book against their demand of 800.

<p>Delhi and Kohima</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A resource kit in the form of a book " Building upon traditional agriculture in Nagaland" has been published. This kit is for free distribution and is intended extension workers, village level workers, project implementers etc -An interactive environmental education kit for school children is under preparation. An NGO with expertise in EE has been commissioned for this. Based on the profile of this kit, the state education department has shown active interest in mass replicating this kit, which will be the first of its kind in Nagaland -POU Hand Book on Economic trees of Nagaland -POU Manual on botany 	
Assessment Criterion 6.4 Others :	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
NOT APPLICABLE	

Appendix 5

Assessment Grid - IDRC Project Coordination Unit

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

WORKING DOCUMENT

PROJECT : NEPED

DATE: January 21, 2000

EVALUATOR: Merle D. Faminow, NEPED Director



27/1/00

**NAME :NAGALAND ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
THROUGH PEOPLE'S ACTION**

**ICEF
India Canada Environment Facility**

A : Performance Assessment Grid

Performance areas	Very Weak	Weak	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent	
1. Support of ICEF'S mandate and objectives				4			
• Sustainable improvement of land/water/energy resources	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Environmental concerns addressed	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Women's participation	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Poverty reduction	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Technology adoption	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Micro-entreprise development	1	2	3	4	5	6	
•	1	2	3	4	5	6	S/T
2. Capacity building					5		
• Institutional strengthening	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Strategic selection of local partners (local NGO's...)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Partnership of local partners	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Increased participation and empowerment of target groups	1	2	3	4	5	6	
•	1	2	3	4	5	6	S/T
3. Sustainability					5		
• Strategically focused	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Replication	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Resource mobilization	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Sustainability of the local village institutions	1	2	3	4	5	6	
•	1	2	3	4	5	6	S/T
Some of these areas can be considered critical.							

Assessment areas and criteria	Very Weak	Weak	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent	
4. Governance				4			
• Effective direction and controls of the project's steering committee	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Accountability	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• ICEF's responsive mechanism	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• IDRC's responsive mechanism	1	2	3	4	5	6	
						S/T	
5. Project management				4-5			
• Strategic analysis & planning	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Project design and approval	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Budgeting, accounting, financial controls and disbursements	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Project reporting & monitoring	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Human resources and personnel management	1	2	3	4	5	6	
•						S/T	
6. Learning and innovation					5		
• Review and evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Innovation	1	2	3	4	5	6	
• Documentation	1	2	3	4	5	6	
•	1	2	3	4	5	6	
						S/T	
						Total	
Some of these areas can be considered critical.							

1. SUPPORT OF ICEF's MANDATE and OBJECTIVES

To what extent does the project contribute towards the achievement of ICEF's mandate and objectives?

Assessment Guidelines

The six assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the organization's project is contributing to the achievement of ICEF's objectives and priorities. To the extent that the organizations has developed valid measures of the degree to which they are meeting these criteria, these indicators should be used. The indicator areas listed below are suggestions to assist with the assessment process and are not requirements. When making an overall assessment, one important criterion is the extent to which the organizations project is contributing to poverty reduction.

Assessment Criterion 1.1 Sustainable improvement of land/water/energy resources : To what extent is project effective in facilitating the sustainable delivery of environmentally-sound activities and services to poorer groups?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEPED has established over 1800 test plots in over 900 villages. • The NEPED concept of farmer-led testing and dissemination was successful in stimulating farmers in Nagaland to replicate 6 ha for every 1 ha supported by the project, estimated in February, 1999. • The Government of Nagaland has contributed funds to support the plantation of up to 10 million trees subsequently in 1999 (The Year of Tree Plantation) • February, 1999 survey data indicate the replication to be widespread among small farmers across all 8 districts of Nagaland (38% of households). Since then the extent of replication has expanded considerable. • Reduced soil erosion in jhum fields through NEPED encouragement of traditional soil erosion control and landshaping methods, but NEPED does not have an accurate measurement of actual amounts. • Data indicate that NEPED concept of mixed plantation using local tree varieties is widely adopted in test plots and (to a slightly lesser extent) in replications. • Tree plantation is primarily in jhum fields and degraded land. Evidence shows very minor rates of use of primary forest for establishing tree farming. • Some large-scale plantations by high income people have been established outside of NEPED activities. • NEPED has stimulated and empowered rural women to take active roles in income generation. • NEPED has played a pivotal role in the establishment of a local small-scale tree nursery sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tree plantation will contribute to preservation of village water supplies, particularly as increase population pressure has resulted in the denuding of hill top in some areas. • Selective thinning of dense tree plantations will begin providing cash flow to farms from the sale of poles in years 5-8 and will also contribute firewood. • Increased plantation of alder trees, especially in high-altitude areas such as Zuhenboto, is contributing to soil nutrients and will provide firewood to villagers. • In the last 2 years of NEPED a slight shift in focus has occurred, from a strict emphasis on trees for timber to cash generating agro-forestry crops such as cardamon, ginger, tree tomatoes, passion fruit, etc., which can be intercropped with timber in the early stages of tree plantation.
Assessment Criterion 1.2 Environmental concerns addressed : To what extent does the organization adequately address environmental concerns in its programming?	

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEPED seeks to improve traditional agriculture (jhum system) which has reached a crisis situation due to population growth, with jhum cycles now on average at 9 years, which is unsustainable and causing declining food crop yields. • Increased tree cover, wider adoption of soil conservation methods (traditional methods and contour bunds) and better nutrient recycling reduces soil erosion, conserves water and improves soil fertility. • NEPED has used training and mass motivation programs to stimulate awareness and action for major environmental concerns. For example, the Chakhesang Public Organization measures to establish and manage village-level biodiversity preserves and control harvesting of flora and fauna. • Government capacity in field locations (DPT members, Field staff etc.) has been increased regarding environmental concerns. • NEPED has made extensive use of PRA (for the first time in Nagaland) at all levels of project implementation, resulting in environmental programming that is consistent with the livelihood needs of rural people. • Although not explicit in the original management plan, POU officers have become highly visible resource persons regarding environmental concerns, participating in a large number of meetings as speakers and encouraging community groups (student unions, church groups, etc.) to become proactive in environmental protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The critical and most broadly-based environmental issue encompassing land, water and energy in Nagaland is the jhum system. Over 80% of Nagas reside in rural areas and rely upon jhum for their livelihoods. More than 42% of the total land in Nagaland is subject to jhum, much of that now being farmed with inadequate fallow periods leading to degradation. • Current population growth is very high, with the prospect of Nagaland's population doubling within the next 20 years. Given the limited potential for permanent agriculture, tree plantation in jhum fields provides the best option for poverty alleviation of rural people in an environmentally sustainable manner.
<p>Assessment Criterion 1.3 Women's participation : To what extent does the organization ensure that women are full and equal partners in guiding and shaping the development process and are full beneficiaries of the process?</p>	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender issues have been introduced in the field through NEPED and the broadest-based NGO working on gender issues in Nagaland (Naga Mothers Association) has reported favourably on the impact of NEPED. • In 1996 and 1997, the gender dimension of NEPED provided basic empowerment training to 154 women from 92 villages, with advanced training for 35 of them, helping stimulate the formation of women's societies and strengthen existing ones, many of which have become effective organizations. • In 1998-99, basic empowerment training for 309 women was combined with technical training on nursery management. • Of the 93 women's groups allocated independent test plots, the report by Kavita Rai's documented that, with some limited exceptions, the test plots were established and women share (in varying degrees) with the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gender dimension was not originally included in NEPED and was only added 1996, with minimal training of the POU team (except for the gender coordinator herself) in gender issues and analysis. As a result, this was a learning experience for the implementing team as well as for rural Naga's. • Throughout the 5 years of NEPED, the gender dimension shows continual progression, and has evolved so program deliver has improved throughout. For example, the tree nursery program evolved from being ad hoc to one that incorporates empowerment training, with technical training and support, in a manner that better suits the aspirations and field-level realities of Naga women. • In order to build additional POU capacity in gender-related programming, IDRC funds have been utilized to provide gender training to a male POU officer.

<p>benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional land ownership patterns and traditions make tree plantation for long-term benefits like timber infeasible for many women in Nagaland, so NEPED shifted emphasis to supporting women's tree nurseries as the project progressed. • NEPED consciously used mass awareness and empowerment training to communicate to women their right to 25% of VDB funds and to encourage them to actively participate in the use of those funds. Women have been increasingly able to access their share of 25% of VDB funds. • Some women groups acquired ownership of land holdings for their tree plantation, either on long-term lease or outright purchase. This is a major breakthrough relative to traditional land ownership patterns. • Over 80 tree nurseries for women's groups have been established, many already generating revenues for members and encouraging replication from private sources. 	
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Assessment Criterion 1.4 Poverty reduction : To what extent does the organization's project contribute to poverty reduction? Does this project address the interrelationship between poverty and environmental degradation?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEPED activities are aimed at acquiring economic benefits and environmental sustainability from tree plantation in jhum fields, which will provide: soil conservation, stabilized food crop yields, cash value from poles, firewood and timber. • Fallow cash crops have been introduced which will provide annual income in the early years of tree plantation. This will help provide interim income while trees mature to market sizes. • The intervention provides a means to reduce environmental degradation and recover wastelands through tree plantation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEPED directly addresses the link between poverty and environmental degradation in several ways: by introducing higher-value crops within traditional production methods, without sacrificing food security; by introducing measures that will improve the land resources of farmers; and by targeting small farmers in all village in Nagaland.

Assessment Criterion 1.5 Technology adoption : To what extent that adoption and dissemination of pollution abatement, energy conservation and renewable energy technologies are effective in facilitating the sustainable delivery of environmentally-sound technology.

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEPED focuses on modifications of indigenous farming technologies, by adapting the Khonoma jhum concept to be more broadly adopted in Nagaland. By focusing on modifications to an indigenous concept and use of local tree species this technology is environmentally sound. • Additional technologies, such as introduction of fallow management, are designed to fit within the agro-forestry system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEPED does not introduce an external technology, per se, but attempts to manipulate indigenous technologies to be more productive, profitable and environmentally sound.

Assessment Criterion 1.6 Micro enterprise development : To what extent is the implementing agency effective in supporting and strengthening sustainable income generating activities and fostering micro-entrepreneurship among the poor?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initially, NEPED did not have a mandate to foster micro-enterprise development, but the opportunity to initiate and promote small-scale tree nurseries was recognized by the field team midway through the project. Currently, about 50% of the 80 NEPED women's nurseries are now running on a self-sustaining basis. 52 of the NEPED women's nurseries have reported proceeds from the sale of over 1.5 million saplings, amounting to over RS. 2.5 million. Some nurseries have yet to report and many are continuing, so the numbers will increase over time. NGOs and private entrepreneurs have replicated these women nurseries, heavily in Kohima District, but also elsewhere in Nagaland. NEPED provided additional assistance by encouraging and intermediating (on occasion) the purchase of saplings for "The Year of Tree Plantation" from NEPED women's nurseries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NEPED originally introduced district nurseries because of supply shortfalls in planting materials as the project progressed. Small-scale nurseries for women were then introduced because land ownership was less of a problem for women due to the shorter time frame from planting to harvest. This was then strengthened by improving training delivery and supporting additional women's groups to establish new nurseries. The orientation has also changed, with women being encouraged in training and follow-up visits to establish and manage nurseries for longer-term sustainability.
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
NOT APPLICABLE	

2. CAPACITY BUILDING

To what extent does the project contribute to capacity development among the implementing organization's local partners and other institutions?

Assessment Guidelines

✓ The four assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the project is contributing to capacity development among itself and its local partners. Implementing organizations that have capacity building as a programming priority may have developed results indicators in this area. If these indicators are valid measures of the degree to which the organization is meeting these four criteria, these indicators should be used. The indicators areas listed below are simply suggested areas that may be considered if appropriate.

✓ **Institutional strengthening** is the assessment criterion that should be given the **greatest weight** in providing an overall rating for this area. Nevertheless, the other three criteria are also considered to be very important.

Assessment Criterion 2.1 Institutional strengthening : To what extent does the support provided by the implementing organization strengthen the capacity of local organizations and institutions to formulate, manage and sustain development processes?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the first externally-funded project in Nagaland, NEPED introduced the GoN officers involved to the nuances of project budgeting, MIS, RBM, technical reporting, etc., necessary for international donors. Through POU, the GoN has an improved understanding and capacity to formulate, manage and sustain development processes using modern management tools. The GoN has increasingly adopted NEPED-initiated concepts, such as declaring 1999 as the Year of Tree Plantation. The GoN relied upon POU expertise to initiate and facilitate the initiative, as the only multi-disciplinary body in GoN capable of delivering these activities in a rapid and transparent manner. The multi-disciplinary approach and formation of the POU has been replicated by the state government in the Core Group, indicating dissemination of the POU concept within GoN. POU has been an agent for transmitting computer literacy and data base management to GoN. Increasingly, non-government collectives are becoming involved in sustainable development issues, as a result of NEPED mass motivation and intervention programs. Some broadbased organizations (such as apex tribal bodies), NGOs and local community groups have initiated environmental programs through NEPED, such as tree planting activities, biodiversity preservation, new income-generating schemes, etc. 	

Assessment Criterion 2.2 Strategic selection of local partners (local NGO's...): To what extent does the implementing organization select and work with local partners that are either making a significant and sustainable development impact or have the potential to make such an impact with support and strengthening?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The initial design of the project had the objective of covering all 1000 villages in Nagaland with VDB's in 1994. VDBs in each village were empowered, in turn, to select innovative and influential farmers to be allocated test plots. However, upon limited occasions POU intervened when test plots were poorly implemented and asked VDBs to select other farmers. Mass motivation activities required interaction with strategically chosen groups. Generally, POU worked with groups that were in a position to make significant impacts at the local level due to group size and/or effectiveness. 	

Assessment Criterion 2.3 Partnership of local partners : To what extent is the organization's relationship with its local partners characterized by principles of partnership?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initially NEPED had some elements that were highly participatory (e.g., participant selection, species selection) and other elements that were top-down oriented (e.g., land shaping). Over time this has become even more participatory as POU adopted more farmer-led innovations (e.g., traditional erosion control, local species propagation methods). NEPED utilized partnership principles in working with VC/VDBs, which are the authorities in villages. VC/VDB were responsible for the selection of site and test plot owner and contributed to verification, monitoring and evaluation of activities. NEPED utilized two-way communication in the field, where POU officers/local authorities were empowered and given flexibility design interventions at the village level. 	

Assessment Criterion 2.4 Increased participation and empowerment of target groups : To what extent is the development project of the organization and its partners contributing to increased participation of communities and groups in decision-making and guiding the development process?

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some local institutions have become increasing pro-active in developing local-based programs for sustainable development (e.g., village resolutions to plant trees). Through the gender component womens groups have been formed and become more active in decision-making and participation in development (e.g., see report by Kavita Rai). 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chakhesang Public Organization has adopted steps for village-level conservation, hunting restrictions, wildfire control, etc., which are sanctioned and enforced by village institutions. Discussions with villagers suggest that these steps are proving effective. • Community groups (especially student bodies) have become more active in establishing and monitoring biodiversity preservation across Nagaland (e.g., a now frequent observation is a posted restriction on harvesting flora and fauna from community forests organized by student groups). 	
Assessment Criterion 2.5 Others	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
NOT APPLICABLE	

3. SUSTAINABILITY

To what extent is the implementing organization able to increase the impact of its programming through targeting its interventions at key points, or through coordination and cooperation, replication, and the mobilization of resources beyond ICEF.

Assessment Guidelines

v The three assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the implementing organization is able to use the ICEF contribution it receives. Sustainability is a concept being used by ICEF to describe its objective of maximizing the impact of its investments through encouraging its partners to increase the developmental impact of their activities and the amount of support the partners elicit from other sources.

v There is no single or essential approach which must be adopted to increase sustainability. Nor do organizations have to use all the approaches listed below. Thus, a weakness in one of the criteria does not mean that the whole assessment area of sustainability should be rated "weak". However, the extent to which an organization combines various approaches is likely to increase the leverage impact of its programming.

Assessment Criterion 3.1 Strategically focused : To what extent does the organization focus its efforts on particular strategic areas or sectors and direct its activities at root causes of impoverishment and key constraints to development?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the initial design, NEPED focused on addressing the root cause of poverty and resource degradation in Nagaland (i.e., the 80% of population in rural areas, primarily dependent upon jhum). • Strategic planning exercises within POU identified specific needs in 1998 and NEPED activities were re-focused in the last 2 years to: direct additional resources to the gender component, implement programs for fallow management to increase income in agro-forestry, develop partnerships with NGOs (e.g. Eco-Waves), ensure 	

broader dissemination of key interventions (e.g., mass motivation activities).	
Assessment Criterion 3.2 Replication : To what extent does the organization and its partners expand and replicate successful development processes and models and foster and support the expansion or replication of these models by local organizations or governments?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey data from February, 1999, indicate a conservative estimate for replication of NEPED supported tree plantation amounting to at least 6 hectares for every 1 hectare that was supported. This amount has increased since then, perhaps substantially. Over 38% percent of farm households had planted trees in jhum fields since the implementation of NEPED in early 1999. Replication of land shaping has not been high, although some increased use is reported as planned by farmers and there is high use of traditional soil erosion methods. GoN expenditures for the Year of Tree Plantation in 1999 were Rs. 2.5 crores. In 1998-99 significant replication of small-scale tree nurseries for indigenous tree species was observed, conservatively estimated at 80 nurseries. In addition, many villages in remote areas have established small scale non-commercial nurseries to support village plantation. An increasing interest in the NEPED approach has been noted among other states in the Northeast. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rapid and extensive replication of tree plantation in Nagaland is notable. Some of the replication is supported from GoN programs, but survey data (see Klein report) and field observation indicate that a substantial share of tree plantation is done using local and/or private resources.
Assessment Criterion 3.3 Resource mobilization : To what extent is the organization able to increase the amount of support for development programming it mobilizes from sources other than ICEF?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers have contributed labour and land for test plots as per the initial management plan and contributed land, labour and cash for replication. GoN contributions, including Year of Tree Plantation 1999, have been large. Some contributions of VDB funds for replication was reported in survey data and field observation indicates amounts contributed are moderate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several POU officers have prepared proposals and even been successful in generating funding for small projects (e.g., V. Nakro, C. Kikhi). A concept paper for a follow-up project has been prepared and submitted to ICEF and EU for funding.
Assessment Criterion 3.4 Sustainability of the local village institutions : To what extent both organizational and financial sustainability are to be addressed.	

Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEPED works with Village Councils and VDB's directly, which are allocated operating funds within the GoN system. • Womens groups or societies were organized locally in order to participate in NEPED. The evidence presented in the report by K. Rai suggests that some of these are likely to become sustainable after NEPED ends. 	
Assessment Criterion 3.5 : Others	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
NOT APPLICABLE	

4. GOVERNANCE

To what extent is the project effectively governed?

Assessment Guidelines

- v The three assessment criteria and indicators provided in the table below should be used to help assess the extent to which a project is effectively governed.

Assessment Criterion 4.1 Effective direction and control of the project's steering committee : To what extent does the project's steering committee effectively direct and control the affairs of the project?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PSC only met 2 times during the initial 3 1/2 years of NEPED, but has met 3 times since November, 1998. • The PSC was utilized in November, 1998, to approve the key project changes followed for the remained of the project. • PSC direction and control has focussed on major programming issues and reallocation of budgets to different activities, while day-to day direction comes from the NEPED Director. 	
Assessment Criterion 4.2 Accountability : To what extent is the implementing organization able to demonstrate that adequate accountability is being exercised over the ICEF funded project.	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 1998, the external auditor has been conducting quarterly audits of POU, which is more frequently than required by ICEF. 	

<p>Comments and issues raised by the auditor during the period 1997-98 when there was not a NEPED Director were cleared up in a complete and timely manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCU is audited annually. • All ICEF funds are transferred to POU only upon receipt of complete and accurate financial reports and are deposited to a separate bank account outside of normal GoN financial transactions. When payments are approved by POU for test plots they are deposited to special NEPED bank accounts in all the villages. Field observation suggests some leakage, but at very low levels. • The NEPED Director and accounting staff from IDRC-SARO regularly travel to Nagaland monitoring project activities and financial management. • In addition to MIS reporting, POU has developed full data bases for test plots and tree nurseries to summarize data from the project files and permit monitoring of progress. These were implemented in 1999. • All payments to village accounts are subject to verification reports. POU officers oversee this process and actively participate in the physical verification. In cases where there is concern, POU verification is used as a check on field staff reports. 	
<p>Assessment Criterion 4.3 ICEF responsive mechanism : To what extent is ICEF actively involved in developing, documenting and assessing the sustainable development outcomes or impact results that the organization is seeking to achieve?</p>	
<p>Indicator Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICEF has not been active in developing, documenting, and assessing sustainable development outcomes because most of this responsibility was assigned to IDRC-SARO. • Requests by the NEPED for more active involvement by ICEF did not receive a positive response until the incumbent ICEF Director arrived. One of his first decisions upon assuming the position was to ensure that the ICEF Program Officer responsible for NEPED travelled to Nagaland for a much-needed first site visit in October, 1999. • New reporting formats introduced by ICEF in the last year of NEPED 	<p>Findings and comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The major difficulty occurred in 1997 through to mid-1998 when ICEF did not provide funds due to the failure of NEPED to report in a satisfactory fashion on technical and financial progress. • This was a problem which was resolved shortly after arrival of the incumbent NEPED Director and ICEF Program Officer, both in 1998, so that provision of funds has since been completed in a smooth and effective manner.

<p>required substantial adjustments in data management and reporting, especially for a project team involved in its first externally-funded project. However, the clear instructions from ICEF on financial and technical reporting have made reporting needs explicit after the adjustment phase and NEPED has reported as per requirements.</p>	
<p>Assessment Criterion 4.4 Others</p>	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCU management has changed substantially over the course of NEPED. The initial NEPED Director made a minimal number of short visits to Nagaland (7 visits, 35 days total) in the first 2 years and only brief field visits to review technical progress. During the period that PCU did not have a Director, site visits were limited to one by the SARO Regional Director. The current Director has visited frequently and for long durations (over 150 days in the field), and travelled to all 8 districts to view the project. • Upon arrival in May 1998, the current Director noted a (not unexpected) atmosphere of frustration and mistrust about the two NEPED donor agencies among POU. However, participation, communication and a positive working partnership have developed. POU officers have enthusiastically become involved in a broadened range of activities and reporting mechanisms, contributing significantly to the management of the project. • Upon introduction of the new ICEF financial reporting format, PCU arranged for IDRC-SARO accountants to visit Nagaland on a regular basis to coordinate report preparation. • PCU worked with POU to develop new and improved delivery mechanisms and activities over the past 2 years of the project in a participatory fashion. 	

5. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

To what extent is the project effectively and efficiently managed?

Assessment Guidelines

v The five assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which an organization's project is being effectively and efficiently managed. Indicator areas have been suggested to guide this assessment process. Each of the assessment areas is considered very important for sound project management.

Assessment Criterion 5.1 Strategic analysis & planning : To what extent does the organization utilize a well developed strategic plan which clearly articulates the development results being sought?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEPED was initiated with a detailed and effective-PMP, that has been maintained for the primary project activity of test plots. • After the MTE, a modified strategy was developed for the remainder of the project for certain components, utilizing two participatory planning and strategy workshops (held in July and November, 1998), including identification of objectives and success indicators. • Intermediate-term activities and indicators were established to meet RBM reporting format every 6 months. • A participatory self-evaluation workshop was held in November, 1999, in which a broader list of quantitative and qualitative markers were established for the NEPED vision statement. 	
Assessment Criterion 5.2 Project design, approval and implementation : To what extent do the organization and its partners have the procedures and capacity to develop design, assess, implement and monitor developmentally sound projects?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POU has developed strong skills in setting up and maintaining data bases. The data base for identification of tree species (zzfile) is a unique and advanced tool, which has drawn the attention of botanists in India and abroad. • POU has developed impressive knowledge and capability in terms of botanical knowledge, improvement of traditional agriculture, and participatory field work under exceeding difficult field conditions. • Through targeted training, workshops and experience-sharing visits POU officers have developed capacity that ranges between medium and excellent in computer applications, desk-top publishing, PRA, plant identification. • Evolving, but still not fully developed, skills have been achieved in project monitoring and reporting and gender analysis. • POU has developed the most comprehensive and rigorous set of procedures for assessing, implimenting and monitoring field projects thusfar used in Nagaland. 	

Assessment Criterion 5.3 Budgeting, accounting, financial control and disbursement : To what extent does the organization have effective budgeting, accounting and financial procedures and controls, and maintain adequate and accessible audit trails in Head Office and in the field?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> POU has allocated staff (2 team members and one office staff) to project finance and accounting. They have maintained the financial records in a manner that have satisfied the external auditor. Budgets are done semi-annually and auditing has been conducted quarterly. The adoption of ICEF new reporting formats has aided a better link between budget allocations and technical progress. Full and accurate records of project activity and payments have been maintained in the POU office. District accounts are managed by POU members responsible for respective districts, which are then summarized in project-wide data bases. 	<p>This is an area where POU has shown improvement over the life of the project, particularly in that last 2 years.</p>
Assessment Criterion 5.4 Project reporting and monitoring : To what extent does the organization monitor field operations, provide constructive feedback to reports from the field and submit timely reports that meets ICEF requirements?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payments to project participants are not released without verification in the field and POU has rigorously ensured that payments are made on the basis of actual work performed in the field (quality and quantity). DPTs are required to submit regular reports, with field verifications occurring regularly. ICEF requirements for financial and technical progress reporting were adopted and project reports have been submitted regularly, excluding the 1 ½ years where there was not a NEPED Director in PCU. NEPED was one of the first ICEF projects to adopt the RBM format required by ICEF beginning in 1999. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problems in reporting during 1997-98 clearly indicate the need for additional capacity building in POU. Since mid-1998, efforts have been made to better involve POU in financial and technical reporting in a participatory manner (during the first 2 years all project reporting was done in a non-participatory manner out of PCU). In order to help build this capacity, IDRC funds are being utilized this year to send 2 POU officers to a 3-week training course in participatory monitoring and reporting of projects. As a result, POU capacity will be further enhanced. POU still requires support and assistance in monitoring and timely reporting.
Assessment Criterion 5.5 Human resources and personnel management : To what extent does the organization select, manage and utilize its human resources effectively and in line with its mission statement, objectives and strategy?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> POU was drawn out from 13 departments of the GoN to provide for a multi-disciplinary cross-cutting approach. Team members were selected from the ranks of government officers showing high 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The workload and performance expected of POU officers has far exceeded the normal demands of GoN officers. POU has shown laudable enthusiasm and performance, especially in light of the difficult conditions that they had to work

<p>potential for career development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the first year of NEPED several poorly performing POU officers were dropped and new ones added. • Due to the cultural diversity of Nagaland, efforts were made to reflect as broad a mixture of tribal groups as was possible, given the technical requirements for POU team members. • A team of local experts was formed to ensure cooperation by community groups and help integrate indigenous knowledge into the project. • A gender coordinator was incorporated into the project when the gender dimension was added to NEPED. • High performance standards involving extensive field coverage have been adopted, positively impacting on the work culture of the team • POU was provided training, collectively or individually, to meet project requirements and have acquired proficiency in computers/ botanical knowledge/ photography and project management. • DPT/field staff participation and performance has been varied. In some districts very effective teams have operated, whereas in some districts POU officers have had to carry a heavier load due to a less effective district team. • The gender component was coordinated by a very effective officer. However, in retrospect, she should have received additional staff support in order to properly deliver the program, especially in remote areas. 	<p>under during the course of the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity development within POU has been significant.
<p><i>Assessment Criterion 5.6 Others :</i></p>	
<p>Indicator Areas</p>	<p>Findings and comments</p>
<p>NOT APPLICABLE</p>	

6. LEARNING AND INNOVATION

To what extent is the implementing organization evaluates its performance to improve programming, explores new and better ways to achieve desired results, and fosters an environment of continual collaborative learning?

Assessment Guidelines

v The three assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the organization is a learning organization. Developing, testing, learning from, and disseminating information about **innovative approaches** to development is an **important role that organization can play, but not essential** for every institution. To the extent that organizations are contributing to greater development impact through innovation, this should be reflected in the overall rating given. But the absence of such innovation should not necessarily be used to reduce the overall rating of an organization

Assessment Criterion 6.1 Review and evaluation : To what extent does the organization conduct and use reviews and evaluations to develop its understanding of development processes and organizational issues and to improve its programming and projects?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MTE recommendations were reviewed and many resulted in modifications to project implementation. • A subsequent review report by Cairns was quite insightful and served as a guide for specific implementation of the responses to the MTE. • Weekly POU meetings were adopted by the Team Leader as a method to compare field experiences and make modifications to operating practices. This has proven to be an extremely effective means of providing for improved delivery. • Beginning in 1998 regular participatory workshops (3 in total) on strategy planning and self-assessment were conducted by POU. These workshops have allowed POU to fine-tune project implementation. One POU officer was trained in workshop moderation and he played a pivotal role in all workshops. • A participatory workshop was held with local experts and POU to obtain feed back and better integrate local experts in project delivery. 	
Assessment Criterion 6.2 Innovation : To what extent is the organization together with its partners, involved in developing and testing innovative development approaches and models which, when proven effective, are replicated?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principle of NEPED is farmer-led testing, where the research team (SARS) and POU act as facilitators. • The land-shaping component proved to be highly labour-intensive and not well accepted by farmers. Field experience of POU suggested that traditional soil erosion methods were more likely to be disseminated and replicated 	

<p>so this component was redesigned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main NEPED intervention of introducing mixed tree plantation with crops in jhum fields has proven to be widely accepted by farmers, with extensive replication. In lower altitudes, a high proportion of teak and gomori can be observed. However, at higher altitudes a more varied mix, including a significant share of indigenous species, can be found. • NEPED began actively encouraging the adoption of fallow cash crops in jhum fallow in 1998 and field observation suggests that this is now spreading throughout Nagaland. • Some germplasm transfer of indigenous tree species across to other districts of Nagaland has been observed. • The introduction of a specific gender component was a highly innovative activity in Nagaland. Experience with this has helped spread awareness that women can and should be included in development processes. • NEPED has helped encourage the idea of preserving high quality "mother trees" for natural seed regeneration and tree quality improvement. In NEPED training, farmers were taught to recognize and retain natural regenerated seedlings. Survey data indicate that this has been adopted by farmers. • Due to supply problems and cost for planting materials in remote areas, NEPED developed techniques and information about direct sowing of seeds from local sources, which has proven very effective in some villages. It has been especially effective as a gap-filling measure. 	
<p>Assessment Criterion 6.3 Documentation : To what extent is the organization and its staff engaged in producing effective documentation particularly useful for the organization's local partners?</p>	
<p>Indicator Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 briefing papers have been published, each with a run of 2000 copies. Most have been distributed in Nagaland in conjunction with technical training and mass motivation programs. Several have been reprinted in local media and magazines. • A documentary video film highlighting project activities has 	<p>Findings and comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the cultural mosaic of Nagaland (16 major tribes and languages) selection of language for materials raises difficulties. • After considerable discussion and debate it was determined that English was the best "lingua franca" for use in Nagaland because: in all villages some of the key leaders will be literate; costs of translation to all 16 major language are prohibitive and exclusion of some of them is culturally unacceptable; the

<p>been prepared and a teaching module for schools utilizing the film as a way of teaching environmental issues is being developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A training manual on field operations was prepared and distributed throughout Nagaland. • A NEPED web site is available online through the IDRC site. • The computerized botanical data base and search file has been widely utilized to assist farmers in plant identification. • A comprehensive photo library of plants has been compiled, catalogued and a selection exhibited in New Delhi and Kohima. • Field manuals and several briefing papers have been translated to several local languages. • A comprehensive illustrated resource book has been published. This book provides a detailed catalogue of field experience, lessons learned and recommendations over the 5 years of NEPED. 500 copies have already been requested by the Department of Agriculture for distribution to officers for use as a field manual. 	<p>verbal "lingua franca of Nagamese" is generally not understood in written form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted translations have been made and will be made when necessary for deliver programs.
Assessment Criterion 6.4 Others :	
Indicator Areas	Findings and comments
NOT APPLICABLE	

Appendix 6

Assessment Grid - ICEF Project Office

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF NAGALAND ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (NEPED) - AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE AREAS

By: Dr. M.K.Maitra, Senior Project Officer, ICEF

Introduction

All ICEF funded projects are designed and developed essentially to address the objectives and mandate of ICEF. To this sense, all ICEF funded projects are expected to address one or more of the ICEF's Objectives. The present effort makes an attempt to assess to what extent the project serves ICEF's mandate and also to what extent the implementing organization has achieved the project objectives as stipulated in its project documents. This has been achieved by identifying a few important Performance Areas. In order to broad- base the assessment procedure, these important performance areas have further been divided into their constituting sub-areas which have then been assessed using appropriate Indicators.

Major activities of NEPED include a balanced mix of establishment of Test Plots, capacity building and promotional activities for replication. The major physical intervention of the project is the establishment of 1794 Test Plots (TPs) to an average size of 3 ha each, distributes in about 854 villages in all the eight districts of Nagaland. Major physical achievements have been consolidated in the table below.

Test Plots, no (hectares)	1794 (5382 ha)
Numbers of local farmers given on site orientation training in agro-forestry prior to allotment of TPs	2400
Number of training course in writing & communication skills for POU staff	8
Number of GoN and POU staff trained in computer skills	196
Number of POU staff trained in tree plantation	10
Basic women empowerment training @ 3 days each , no. (persons)	8 (213)
Advance women empowerment training @ 3 days each, no. (persons)	2 (30)
Nursery training for both men and women using PRA, no. (persons)	46 (339)
Mass motivation on tree plantation , no. (persons)	2 (83)
Training on fruit & vegetable preservation, no. (persons)	7 (266)
Seminar on environment, no. (persons)	4 (215)
Training in kitchen gardening and mushroom cultivation, no. (persons)	3 (90)

Training for women in Tea cultivation , no. (persons)	1 (9)
Exposure visit for POU within and in neighboring countries, no. (persons)	5 (27)
Number of briefing papers	8
Number of resource Hand books	2
Number of video films	2

Performance assessment of the project has been done within the premises of the following Performance Areas using a few relevant Indicator Areas (Ref. ICEF's Performance Assessment Guidelines).

Performance Area # 1.0 : Support of ICEF's Mandate and Objective

Assessment criterion # 1.1 Sustainable improvement of natural resources (land, water, energy)

: To what extent is project effective in facilitating the sustainable delivery of environmentally sound activities and services to poorer groups ?

Indicator Area #: *a) Degree to which the major physical interventions are operating on sustainable basis.*

According to the original proposal, the number of Test Plots (TPs) to be established were 2000. This was decided with the intent that each village in all the districts will have two TPs. The project steering committee, during the forth year of project implementation, however, suggested restricting the number of TPs to 1850 and use the available funds for consolidation and documentation of the experiences gathered so far.

The TPs were identified through the respective Village Development Boards (VDBs). The main criterion for selection was that the plot must be in its first year of Jhum cultivation. Given the terrain conditions and political scenario of Nagaland, it was obvious that close monitoring of the physical progresses in the TPs will not be an easy task. The main responsibility of monitoring the physical progress of the TPs was, therefore, transferred to the respective local District Project Teams (DPTs) and the local village expert under the overall supervision of two POU officers allocated for each district. This decentralized approach turned out to be very effective not only in making the project broad based but also in making the district teams responsible to this project through their involvements.

The major interventions in the TPs were land shaping, planting of trees, gap filling and maintenance. In some TPs (about 50%), tree were planted in the bunds and trenches together with Jhum crops (agro-forestry) while in the other, trees were planted all over (farm forestry). In the course of time, land shaping was given lesser priority as it was expensive, labour intensive and less likely to be replicated. In order to generate income in the short term, the TP farmers were advised and supported to plant shade loving cash crops in between standing trees (fallow management). Once the trees are established properly, the plots do not require much attention except protecting. The interventions in the TPs are, therefore, sustainable as long as the trees are maintained and managed by the TP

owners.

Indicator Area # b) *Evidence that the activities supported have generated awareness and enthusiasm amongst local communities to plant trees in Jhum lands.*

Establishment of the Test Plots alone was not expected to improve the environment of Nagaland substantially. These TPs have been considered to be the testing grounds for developing suitable models which will have the potential to be replicated throughout Nagaland which in turn will improve the natural resource base(environment) thus reducing poverty of the local people.

The view of standing trees in the TPs have generated great enthusiasm and hopes amongst the local farmers who could see a great potential for increased income through a TP. Since the project does not offer TPs any longer, enterprising farmers are going ahead with planting of trees in their available plots with whatever support they can derive from the project or from the State Government at this stage. Some farmers are believed to have planted of their own using their own resources.

Indicator Area # c) *To what extent the farmers have contributed in establishing the TPs.*

The project made payments to the farmers in instalments, after necessary verifications, for the cost of land shaping, supply of the planting materials (seeds and seedlings), cost of planting and gap filling etc. to the order of Rs.30,000 per TP i.e Rs. 10,000/ha. A large number of TPs were later brought under inter-cropping (fallow management) for which additional Rs. 20,000 were paid per TP. The TP farmers contributed in terms of their participation, willingness to experiment and in giving additional labour. The direct cost incurred per TP is considered high for agro-forestry model, normal for farm-forestry model and very economic for fallow management model, respectively.

Contribution of the farmers in cash towards cost of TP is nil. From the few sites visited, it is apparent that the farmers completed the land shaping and other planting activities well within the stipulated cash grant fixed by the project without having any need to contribute extra unpaid labour. To this sense, the farmers contribution to the TPs appears unsatisfactory. The question now is will it be possible to mobilise more contribution from the farmers in terms of labour for land shaping?

It may not be out of place to mention here that contribution from farmers are considered necessary, not only to ensure that the interventions become cost-effective but also to ensure that the created assets are properly utilised and maintained. In the case of this project, however, by the very nature of the intervention i.e plantation of trees, the assets will definitely be maintained and utilised by the beneficiaries, irrespective of whether these were cost-effective or whether appropriate contributions were made or not.

Score : 5

Assessment criterion # 1.2 Environmental concerns addressed : *To what extent does the organization adequately address environmental concerns in its programming ?*

Indicator Area # a) *Formation of an effective environmental management structure.*

It is the Chief secretary, Government of Nagaland (GoN) who had proposed this project in the first place out of their concern, amongst others, for the deteriorating condition of the forest cover in the State. The GoN was also quick enough to put in place a management structure under the project namely the Project Operating Unit (POU) with sufficient reach and control throughout the State making the structure broad based and effective.

The project management structure of NEPED in Nagaland consists of the POU at Kohima, the District Project Teams (DPTs) at district headquarters, the Village Development Boards (VDBs) and the local expert at village level. Although, the POU is an independent unit comprising of officers deputed from line departments under an unified command of the Team Leader, it is de facto an extended arm of the State Government.

Indicator Area # b) *Availability of a clear environmental policy and a strategy.*

To what extent the environmental policy and the strategy of the Ministry of Environment and Forest, GoI, are being implemented in the State may be studied separately to understand the status of the same in the State. However, it may be assumed that the policy guidelines for addressing the environmental concerns in the State are not receiving the priority it deserves due perhaps to the paucity of funds and the political scenario.

Control or improvement in the practices of Jhum cultivation for improved crop yield and conservation of top soil are considered the most important environmental concerns in Nagaland. The project, therefore, endeavours to address the most pertinent environmental issue in the State. Since, about 90% of the forests in Nagaland are owned by individuals and institutions other than the State Government, there is an urgent need to develop strategy to promote effective conservation and management of the land, water and forests through village institutions in collaboration with the communities.

Indicator Area # c) *Familiarity with the environmental issues specific to the project and capacity to adequately manage them.*

The POU staff comprises of technical officers from related technical line departments with adequate technical expertise at their disposal. The issues and problems associated with Jhum cultivation are ingrained in traditional agricultural practices and are well known to the people at large. The POU staff are well familiar with the issues and also have developed additional insights while implementing this project. The team is also sufficiently capable of managing these issues physically and technically. Development of policy guidelines, institutions etc. however, are beyond the scope of the POU staff and need to be addressed in the appropriate higher policy level within the GoN.

One of the visible consequences of the project is that it has generated a need for the development of marketing infrastructure for poles and timbers to be sold within and out side the State. The marketing of timber being a sensitive environmental issue will have to develop an effective control regime to maintain necessary checks and balances together with monitoring the state of bio-diversity and other environmental concerns. This will require development and implementation of appropriate policy guidelines by GoN.

Score : 5

Assessment criteria # 1.3 Women's participation : *To what extent does the organization ensure that women are full and equal partners in guiding and shaping the development process and are full beneficiaries of the process ?*

Indicator Area # a) *Degree to which the implementing agency has clear policies and strategies on gender and development.*

ICEF, as the project funding agency and IDRC, as the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) have clear policy guidelines on gender issue which encourages women's participation in a pro-active mode. The question of the policy on gender and development is to be seen in the cultural context of the State and operational culture of the State Government. Land ownership is common gender issue in Nagaland as it is in other parts of the country. Land ownership (lease titles etc.) is held by male head of the family which later on vests to his sons excluding the daughters. This had been a major constrain in identifying a large number of women headed TP owners while selecting the TPs.

The project team being a temporary entity put in place out of the State Government structure to take care of project implementation in the field is not expected to have a well developed gender policy of their own specially when the Gender component was not made an integral part of the initial project proposal. But down the line, as the project implementation continued, the project team seemed to understand the relationship between gender and development which is reflected in their eagerness to incorporate in the project additional activities to generate benefits for women in particular. Women's nursery, women's TPs and women's empowerment training are some of the examples.

Indicator Area # b) *Degree to which projects supported by the organization involve women as full and equal participants and address the needs of the women.*

Initial concerns of the project design and implementation were centered around successful completion of the TPs and their replication. As the POU was formed by drawing out from the existing technical staff from various line departments who were required to undertake extensive traveling, there were hardly any women staff in the POU. Later on the project team developed sufficient understanding about the needs of the women of the State. This led to the promotion of large number of women's nursery (80) and women headed TPs (93) giving the women direct benefit. One women staff was added to the POU. In a general sense, the gender divide is not very prominent in Nagaland. Women take part without constraints in a variety of in door and out door social and income generating activities.

Score : 4

Assessment criteria # 1.4 Poverty reduction : *To what extent does the organization's project contribute to poverty reduction ? Does this project address the interrelationship between poverty and environmental degradation ?*

Indicator Area # a) *To what extent does the project address interrelationship between poverty and*

environmental degradation.

The very reason for undertaking the project stemmed out from the understanding that degraded environment leads to increased poverty. The project results have demonstrated very successfully the way of increasing income through tree plantation while reducing environmental degradation. Land shaping alone is conducive enough in giving increased crop yield through reduced soil erosion. The standing tree crops particularly those preferred for pole and timber are potential source of substantial income in near future. Inter cropping brings in scope for additional income to a short run. However, since selection of TP farmers was not on the basis of poverty, the income generating opportunity through the project has been distributed throughout the cross section of the farming communities and not the poor alone.

Indicator Area # b) *Degree to which progress has been made in removing systematic barriers which contribute to poverty and the creation of a policy and institutional environment which is conducive to poverty reduction.*

The contribution of this project towards removing systematic barriers by design is limited to large scale replication of the project result throughout Nagaland. Consequently, much larger role was envisaged for the Village Development Boards (VDBs). The VDBs were expected to mobilise a part of their development budget in replicating the results demonstrated successfully by the project. Although the VDBs were involved in identifying the TP farmers, channelising payments to them and supporting tree plantation activities in general but were not able to actually fund similar activities of their own.

Score : 5

Assessment criteria # 1.5 Technology adoption : *To what extent the adoption and dissemination of the technologies are effective in facilitating the sustainable delivery of environmentally sound technology?*

Indicator Area # a) *How many replicable models have been evolved, identified and promoted by POUs based on their experiences of Tps.*

Technology in the context of this project applies to the various soil conservation and agro-forestry models tried and tested in the TPs, in conjunction with the traditional methods including identification and propagation of genetic material. As such the very idea of calling the plots Test Plots instead of demonstration plots is borne out of the intent that different experiments will be conducted in the TPs instead of applying some established model that could have been useful for the region.

Earlier, it was envisaged that the IDRC research centre at Mokokchung will be involved and provide the appropriate technology as per need. If the project could have identified technologies already developed at Mokokchung and applied those in the Test Plots, then the project would have been one step ahead in demonstration instead of starting all over from the beginning. In fact, one does not see any advantage in the justification that the project plots are called a Test plot rather than a demonstration plot, particularly when the technologies involved are simple and the risk to the

farmers were compensated adequately.

There is no clear evidence about how many replicable models have been identified, consolidated and replicated by other farmers. The replication plots (farm forestry) does not require much land shaping as opposed to the original agro-forestry model for Jhum fields. Soil erosion is usually arrested either through land shaping or vegetative cover. In a general sense land shaping appears less cost-effective and plantation of trees more cost-effective. Land shaping, although expensive and labour intensive must not be ignored while dealing with the Jhum plots, particularly in the lower slope range.

The POU in the process of promoting the Test Plots have gathered some new insights about the improved traditional technology applicable to land treatment, species response to slope and altitude, growth patterns, people's preference etc. which are yet to be documented with a focus. The available documents and briefing papers are useful but they are more general purpose and information sharing on NEPED. Only two review papers have dealt with technical aspects of tree plantation which are useful to common people. Emphasis in the project remained focused on traditional practices of land shaping without making much conscious attempt to improvise upon the traditional practices by bringing in additional technical inputs.

Score : 3

Assessment criteria # 1.6 Micro enterprise development : *To what extent is the implementing agency effective in supporting and strengthening sustainable income generating activities and fostering micro-entrepreneurship among the poor ?*

Indicator Area # a) Relationship between the micro enterprise and environment.

The original proposal as such did not include any specific activity on development of micro enterprise. But in the context of this assessment, the nursery raising has been considered as a micro enterprise. Nursery raising as micro enterprise not only has the potential to generate additional income but also has great significance in bringing larger area under tree cover and thus improving the environment.

Indicator Area # b) Increase in income and employment among targeted beneficiaries.

Nursery raising was an integral part of the project. Initially, the POU used the Government district nurseries for supplying planting materials. But, it was quick to promote a few women's nursery with support from local elders. Sufficient risk coverage in terms of advance, supply of materials, advice, guaranteed market and remunerative price etc. were provided. Nursery raising also provided employment to the poor women and supplementary occupation to other women. The income earned by the earlier nursery raising groups were sufficient motivation for many groups to undertake nursery raising which was considered safe and remunerative enterprise.

Indicator Area # c) Degree of dependency of the entrepreneurs on the organizations advice and support.

Nursery raising as a means of supplementary income generation and source of employment has

become highly visible. The nursery owners are happy as the nurseries have become the safest short term business venture without much risk. There is a direct relationship between the nurseries and the project. Nursery owners were paid about Rs. 20,000 and other necessary supports. The real reason for success of nursery is that the project has been procuring one year old poly-bags of timber species at a rate of Rs. 4=00 to 5=00 per bag. This has also led to the proliferation of a large number of private nurseries. The question is will there be so much demand for seedlings in the near future as it was during the project period including 1999 which was declared a year of tree plantation in Nagaland. The future market demand for seedlings will be the sole criteria for Sustainability of nursery as a micro enterprise.

Score : 4

Performance Area # 2.0 : Capacity Building

Capacity building is a process by which groups, institutions and individuals increase their ability to understand and address their development needs in a sustainable manner. While individual level capacity building remains restricted in training and skill development, ultimately development takes place through organizations and institutions. Institutional capacity building by organizations can take place at many levels including strengthening community based organizations and strengthening communications and linkages between various organizations.

Assessment criteria # 2.1 Institutional strengthening : *To what extent does the support provided by the implementing organization strengthen the capacity of local organizations and institutions to formulate, manage and sustain development process ?*

indicator Area # a) *Degree to which the support organization (IDRC) has provided support either financial or technical aimed at strengthening the capacity of the implementing organization (POU).*

The role of IDRC/PCU is more as a carrier organization. IDRC played the role in this project what ICEF is expected to play other project where funding is direct. It is believed that there was a need for a support organization like IDRC for more than one reasons. The most frequently quoted one is that the State Government of Nagaland would rather accept the leadership of a Canadian organization/individual than that of an Indian Institution/Individual. Validity of this assumption needs to be assessed.

The financial contribution of IDRC to the project is rather token in nature. The main support provided by the PCU to the project is the managerial support. IDRC has not played or made any attempt to provide technical support except providing linkages with Mokokchong research centre. There is no visible indication about the contribution of this research centre to this project.

IDRC however have played a very crucial role in preparing the POU in coping with ICEF's requirement on financial and progress reporting. The POU after initial faltering with report writing, development of financial systems and other need for documentation took an upswing in the later part of the project after the new expatriate project manager joined in May, 1998. The capacity building through training, exposure, workshops and actual implementation became sufficiently

visible in the later part of the project.

Score : 5

Assessment criteria # 2.2 Strategic selection of local partners : *To what extent does the implementing organization select and work with local partners that are either making a significant and sustainable development impact or have the potential to make such an impact with support and strengthening ?*

Indicator Area # a) Degree to which the organization has a process and sound development criteria for choosing its partnerships.

The POU has involved the respective Village Development Boards (VDBs) for identifying the TP farmers and also for disbursement of payments. The VDBs are sustainable and independent village institutions responsible for village development programmes. The POU has also identified a number of District Government officials and formed District Project Teams (DPTs) involving them in the verification of physical progress in the TPs in their district.

Score : 5

Assessment criteria # 2.3 Partnership of local partners : *To what extent the organization's relationship with the local partners characterised by principles of partnership?*

Indicator Area # a) Degree to which responsibility of project design, management and implementation increasingly resides with the local partners (POU).

Although, the GoN had basic ideas of the project intents and the expected results but had limited role in designing the project. Similarly, the responsibility, of planning, monitoring and reporting were left to PCU. The POU in the initial years concentrated on field level execution to achieve project targets (2000 Tps) within the allocated budget and time. The scope and need for increased responsibility started dawning upon the POU as the project was nearing its end and started showing some interesting results. The responsibility of the POU increased many folds when the POU started realising that the project needs to be continued to a second phase. The POU, in the later years, shared sufficient responsibilities in contributing to reporting, documentation , internal review and evaluation.

Score : 3

Assessment criteria # 2.4 Increased participation and empowerment of target groups : *To what extent is the development project of the organization and partners contributing to increased participation of communities and groups in decision making and guiding the development process ?*

Indicator Area # a) Degree to which the implementing organization and its partners have policies, process and procedures for involving the target groups.

In the context of this project, it is the VDB who should have been as much the target group as the TP farmers. The strategy was to demonstrate the approach through TPs in such a manner that this would cause sufficient demand from people resulting in VDB to use development fund towards replication of the effort. The project proposal had envisaged that the cumulative contribution by the VDB over 5 years would be to the order of Rs. 69 crores. This has not happened.

However, it must be mentioned that many VDBs have taken tree plantation in right earnest and have been encouraging farmers in tree plantation by drawing from the on going State Government programmes. The GoN has spent about Rs. 2.5 crores for programmes on tree plantation in the year 1999, the year of tree plantation in Nagaland.

Score : 4

Performance Area # 3.0 Sustainability

Sustainability is a concept being used by ICEF to describe its objective to maximising the impact of its investment through encouraging its partners to increase the development impact of their activities and the amount of support the partners elicit from other sources. Strategically focused and targeted interventions are much more likely to have a greater impact than a collection of scattered projects. Interventions that are targeted at key points, either unlocking key constraints to development or focusing on actions that build on other existing capacities or projects to maximise impacts, are much more likely to have a greater long term and sustainable impact.

Assessment criteria # 3.1 Strategically focused : *To what extent does the organization focus its efforts on particular strategic areas or sectors and direct its activities at root causes of impoverishment and key constraints to development ?*

Indicator Area # a) Degree to which the organization is geared to demonstrate how the project is more than a collection of activities and strategically focused to achieve greater impact.

The design of the project itself has a strategic focus incorporated in it. The project concept is more than just about planting trees for the sake of tree but aims to create impact on environment through development of institutions and demonstrating the future possibilities. To what extent the POU share this vision is a matter of conjecture. As far as institutional developments are concerned, all attention was focused on capacity building of the POU staff. The most important institution the VDB was given a small role which remained limited to identifying two TP farmers and receive payments on their behalf. Transfer of more responsibility and allocation of more active participation of the VDBs are called for.

Score : 4

Assessment criteria # 3.2 Replication : *To what extent does the organization and its partners expand and replicate successful development process and models and foster and support the expansion or replicate these models by local organizations or Governments ?*

Indicator Area # a) Degree to which specific lessons learnt from successful models have been

documented and disseminated to assist other projects and agencies in replicating these process.

During later part of project implementation, NEPED brought out quite a few documentation on the project. These include briefing papers, video films and resource books. These documents were mostly geared to propagate basic information on traditional practice of Jhum cultivation, description of common tree species and about what NEPED is doing in Nagaland. Many of the documentation were rather geared more towards image building than sharing of the actual experiences gathered from the TP experiences. Out of the 8 briefing papers only two deals with planting and nursery management techniques.

Indicator Area # b) *Evidence that learning from successful models has been replicated and expanded by the organization or other agencies.*

There is sufficient evidence that tree plantation in plots other than TPs have been taking place in a fairly large scale (estimated to be 6 times the area of TPs) from funds other than that of the project. The phenomenon of replication in NEPED, however, is not as spontaneous as engineered. This is because, replication was considered an important criteria for project success. This was kept in mind throughout the project period and the project implementation actively promoted efforts towards replication. In other words, replication became a part of the project implementation itself. In order to promote replication, the project supplied planting material and gave necessary supports. Therefore, although bringing additional area under tree cover is a highly desirable result but this result was not purely spontaneous. Moreover, most of the replication plots are that of farm forestry model and not those of agroforestry models which were tested in the TPs.

Score : 4

Assessment criteria # 3.3 Resource mobilisation : *To what extent is the organization is able to increase the amount of support for development programming it mobilises from sources other than ICEF ?*

Indicator Areas # a) *Proportion of resources mobilised from other sources compared to that of ICEF support*

The willingness of mobilising resources for the on going project and other similar future projects is a good indicator of how much priority is being attached to a project. The GoN has contributed substantially in project management and implementation through its POU. Although, initially, it was planned that operation and maintenance cost for the vehicles will also be borne by GoN but down the line this could not be followed due to administrative problems. Willingness to mobilise resources for the project by the project implementing agency and subsequently actualising this intent is also an indication of the ownership of a project by the implementing agency.

Although, the VDBs could not mobilise/use much of their funds for replication, the State Government is reported to have used a substantial amount (Rs. 2.5 crores) towards this cause in the year 1999 which was declared the year of tree plantation in Nagaland.

Score : 3

Assessment criteria # 3.4 Sustainability of the local village institutions : *To what extent both organizational and financial sustainability are to be addressed ?*

Indicator Area # a) Degree to which the development contents have been included and maintained within the local village institutions.

In NEPED project, however, the sustainability of the POU has rather become a greater concern than that of village institutions. The reason is obvious because NEPED was implemented by POU through existing networks like DPTs and VDBs. These Institutions are, by nature, self sufficient and sustainable by themselves. It was rather proper and very strategic in the part of POU that they did not create any additional community based institutions sustaining of which could have been a major issue. The entire development contents has primarily been contained within POU with very limited transfer of functions to village level institute like the VDBs.

The question of sustainability, therefore, applies more to the POU. The POU officers being drawn from various line departments can easily be reallocated back to their parent departments without causing any major damage. To this sense NEPED has not created many liabilities.

Score : 5

Performance Area # 4 : Governance

It is not necessary that all the key instruments of control and accountability reside with the implementing organization. Many of these instruments may be exercised by local communities or the project steering committee. Governance is also a factor that influences the return from the investment through strategic application of funds and in maintaining the cost norms , unit costs etc. Governance also include development and application of a transparent accounting system and procedure for fund utilisation.

Assessment criteria # 4.1 Effective decisions and control from the Project Steering Committee (PSC) : *To what extent does the project's steering committee effectively direct and control the affairs of the project ?*

Indicator Area # a) Attendance of the members in the PSC meetings

One major constrain in having regular PSC meeting with full attendance was that of logistical in nature. If the meeting is scheduled to be held in Kohima, the Delhi based members may not find it easy to attend the same. This applies to Kohima based members when the same takes place in Delhi.

Indicator Area # b) Type of directions and guidelines provided by the Committee

Although, the PSC did not meet as frequently as might have been necessary but whenever such meeting took place, the PSC members provided very useful directions and guidelines. In fact, whenever, the project implementation came to a cross road not being very clear how to proceed further, the PSC under all such situations provided directions.

Score : 4

Assessment criteria # 4.2 Accountability : *To what extent is the implementing organization able to demonstrate that adequate accountability is being exercised over the ICEF funded project ?*

Indicator Area # a) Degree to which the organization complies with the terms of its contribution agreement with ICEF (Budgeting, approvals, reporting, FMS etc.)

NEPED being one of the earliest ICEF funded project, an understanding about the respective roles of IDRC and ICEF was not very clear. Apart from providing full support to project management, the PCU was also responsible for ensuring submission of progress and financial reports to ICEF. By virtue of a small contribution budgeted in the project, IDRC also enjoyed the status of becoming a co-funder. ICEF's role in project management remained marginal but it stood by its requirements of reporting and providing directions etc. as stipulated in the contribution agreement. Since, in the initial years, the reporting systems at POU level was rather poor, the PCU had difficulties in compiling quality reports. The PCU, however, always appreciated the reporting needs and tried its best to make both ends meet.

Since, PCU played an active role in project management, the budgeting and approvals were affected by PCU almost unilaterally and directions in difficult matters were sought from the PSC rather than from ICEF. Initial level of accountability of the project was rather dismal particularly during the period when PCU did not have a full time project manager. Since, the appointment of a full time project manager with effect from May 1998, the reporting and level of documentation has improved substantially.

For some times, the area of financial accountability of the project was also of serious concern to ICEF as the POU took a stand somewhat in the line that "we are good in field work but bad in paper works". At the instance of ICEF, a full fledged chartered accounting firm was deployed. The chartered accounting firm now audits project account quarterly.

Return from investment in the project has wider implications. Irrespective of whether the land shaping in the TPs are cost-effective or not, the return in terms of tree cover is many fold. The extent of awareness and replication efforts the project have created far outweighs the entire cost of the project.

Score : 5

Assessment criteria # 4.3 Responsive mechanisms : *To what extent is ICEF actively involved in developing, documenting and assessing the sustainable development outcomes or impact results that the organization is seeking to achieve ?*

Indicator Area # a) Responsive mechanism of ICEF

Owing to the lack of clarity of roles between IDRC (PCU) and ICEF on matters related to implementation and monitoring of the project, a serious difference of opinion cropped up in no time. Such difference of opinion prevented ICEF from making frequent field visits to Nagaland. ICEF

therefore depended heavily on IDRC for information and reports etc. specially for the purpose of processing request for advance.

Grading : N/A

Indicator area # b) *Responsive mechanism of IDRC (PCU)*

Initial role of PCU was more of a project development and monitoring. During the absence of a full time PCU manager half way through the project, the POU had a lack of direction and went about in ways and manners considered appropriate. The new PCU manager appointed in the later part of the project execution played more a direct partnership role and provided direct support to the POU in preparing reports, documentation and capacity building.

Score : 5

Performance Area # 5.0 Project Management

Project management has been evaluated on the basis of project documents, reports, field visits and discussions with the POU staff.

Assessment criterion # 5.1 Strategic analysis & planning : *To what extent does the organization utilize a well developed strategic plan which clearly articulates the development results being sought ?*

Indicator Area # a) *Degree to which the results are expected to be achieved .*

The problems of environmental degradation associated with traditional Jhum cultivation is rather well known. The project, proposes to address this well known major environmental concern of Nagaland. The purpose and objectives of the project are a) develop alternate approach to shifting cultivation b) increase the income of the people of Nagaland and c) enhance the capabilities of the local institutions. The strategy was that the practice of an appropriate agro-forestry model in the Jhum plots will not only reduce soil erosion but will also give improved crop yield and income from trees.

While studying the outputs, it can be found that a large number of the Test plots have trees planted in the entire plot (more than 1000 plants/ha) following a farm forestry model contrary to the agro-forestry model envisaged initially. The farm forestry model has further been improved by promoting inter-cropping of short term cash crops and known to POU as "fallow management " model. The question that arise here is, in a few years time when a farmer will need the plot for Jhum cultivation, will he cut the standing tree crops to use the land for Jhum or let the trees grow to full size ? The answer most probably is that he will let the trees grow. If the plot is converted to a permanent farm forest, then the farmer will be short of one plot and has to use other available Jhum plots two years too early. The combined effect will be that while the farmer has brought one plot under permanent tree cover, he has reduced the Jhum cycle in another plot by two years. If a farmer has access to limited number of plots then conversion of one plot under permanent tree cover, may need opening up a new alternative plot for Jhum. This will lead to a growth of farm forestry but to the control of

Jhum cultivation . It is also to be seen if the farmers are accepting the agro-forestry model where trees are planted in limited numbers in trenches and bunds and are harvested when the plot is reclaimed for Jhum once again.

It may be mentioned here, that if the farmers can be made to Jhum a plot even by one extra year i.e from the usual two years to three years by applying intensive and improved land treatment measures, then the Jhum cycle of the farmer can be increased by the number of years equal to the total number of plots used by the farmer for Jhum.

Score : 4

Assessment criterion # 5.2 Project design and approval : *To what extent does the organization and its partners have the procedures and the capacity to develop, design, assess, implement and monitor developmentally sound projects ?*

Indicator Area # a) Degree to which the organization and its partners are able to effectively and efficiently manage their project activities.

Although, the identification of the basic problem of environmental degradation came from the GoN, the proposed solution, design and project management plan were developed jointly by IDRC, ICEF and GoN. The project proposal described in the original contribution agreement had twelve Outputs. The PCO during the project inception phase prepared a project LFA and considered quite a few Outputs either as "unachievable" or "contributing only marginally towards project Outcome". Consequently, the project intends were trimmed down to three broad Outputs which were achievable. The project subsequently, concentrated in implementing these broad areas together with additional components associated with capacity building and income generating activities for women.

Reduction of project Outputs no doubt makes a project more achievable but prevents the same from being broad based. Capacity in bringing suitable changes in project design is a clear indication that the organization and its partners have sufficient ability to manage a project but to what extent such changes are desirable is a question.

Score : 3

Assessment criterion # 5.3 Budgeting, accounting, financial control and disbursement : *To what extent does the organization have effective budgeting, accounting and financial procedures and controls and maintain adequate and accessible audit trails in Head office and in the field ?*

Indicator Area # a) The organization has comprehensive financial planning and budgeting process and the budget prepared serve as a useful tool for managing the project.

The project approach being simple and process oriented had some major difficulties in allocating budget under appropriate heads. Consequently, even after the project was approved, some re-allocations of budget heads were done. These fine tuning of budget heads was necessary since project Outputs were fine tuned and a few new Activities were included.

The POU had difficulties in coping with standards set by ICEF in the areas of project planning and reporting requirements. In fact, the responsibility of budgeting, financial planning, accounting, reporting etc. for the project was the primary responsibility of PCU which functioned to a great extent as a support organization. For this reason a budget provision of about 27 % of the total project cost as the management cost to PCU is considered justified.

Score : 4

Assessment criterion # 5.4 Project reporting and monitoring : *To what extent does the organization monitor field operations, provide constructive feedback to reports from the field and submit timely reports that meets ICEF requirements ?*

Indicator Area a) Degree to which the financial and narrative reports to ICEF are submitted in prescribed format as scheduled in the agreement between ICEF and the organization ?

In order to facilitate project planning and monitoring on regular basis, PCU, in the initial years proposed development of a Project Management Information System. Needless to mention that implementing the project as per this ambitious management system was far beyond the documentational capacity of the POU. In the early years the POU did not much appreciate the need for developing an improved reporting and accounting system which is different from the conventional system. Generation of actual results in the field was considered sufficient justification for project funding. This resulted in the generation simplistic project reports like " Target for TPs : X number and Target achieved in the year : Y number.

The quality and frequency of reporting suffered greatly as the expatriate project manger from IDRC resigned and the Director , IDRC took up charge as an additional responsibility. The quality and contents of reporting and documentation improved substantially after the full time expatriate project manager joined after a gap of about one and half years.

Score : 4

Assessment criterion # 5.5 Human resources and personal management : *To what extent does the organization select, manage and utilize its human resources effectively and in line with its mission statement, objectives and strategy ?*

Indicator Area # a) Degree to which working environment motivates and empower staff to achieve high level of performance ?

The capacity building and human resource management within the POU members were excellent under the leadership of the dynamic Team leader of the POU. The POU officers tasted a new sense of freedom and worked in the project with great enthusiasm and a sense of purpose. The enthusiasm was so great that the POU found it even difficult to consider and reconcile with any issue or question associated with accountability.

It is the POU which provided the technical know how to the farmers. The POU members in turn received traing through exposure visits to countries like China, Malayasia, Nepal etc. The training

Performance Assessment Grid

Assessment Grid : The attached grid should be used to rate the performance of an organization in regard to the six basic assessment areas. For each assessment area, the organization should be assessed using the following six-point rating scale:

- 6 : excellent, outstanding;
- 5 : very good, very capable or sound;
- 4 : good, more than adequate;
- 3 : adequate weaknesses, but no major deficiencies;
- 2 : weak some major deficiencies;
- 1 : very weak little or no activity or extremely poor result.

NA : no activity/not applicable (Note: to be used only to rate the selected criteria as per the grid)

Assessment criteria: For each assessment area, critical criteria have been identified which should be used to rate performance in the area using the above six-point scale. The self assessment and assessment of the implementing organization against these criteria serves as the basis for making an overall rating for each of the assessment areas. Guidelines have been provided for explaining and applying the various criteria in making an overall rating for each assessment area (Appendix B).

Indicator areas: Attached to the definitions and guidelines for each assessment criteria is a column suggesting indicators areas. Most of these indicator areas are not specific measurements, but simply suggested areas or issues where measurable evidence should be sought when making a rating. The actual measurements or indicators, whether quantitative or qualitative, can be proposed by the implementing organization. Indicators that have been developed by an implementing organization which do not necessarily fit any of the listed areas should be examined for their validity, and used if valid. For some assessment areas, a distinction is made between support process indicators and result indicators. Priority should be given to evidence of performance results. However, credit can also be given to evidence that the processes employed by an organization support the criteria being assessed. Although several indicator areas may be listed for each assessment criterion, solid evidence from one or two indicator areas may often be sufficient. **It is not essential that indicators be obtained for each of the indicator areas listed.**

No Activity/Not Applicable: For certain sub-assessment areas/criteria, it is permissible to indicate that the implementing organization does not engage in any activities related to this criterion rather than providing a rating of "very weak" or "weak". The fact that the organization does not engage in programming in this area will not count against the organization when determining the overall rating for the area being assessed. For these selected criteria, an absence of activity in these areas does not mean that the performance of the organization is considered "very weak" or "weak". It is important to note that there are only a few assessment criteria where this is permitted. These criteria are indicated with the symbol NA in the No Activity/Not Applicable column.

INDICATOR AREAS, FINDINGS AND COMMENTS

Performance areas	Very Weak	Weak	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent
1. Support of ICEF'S mandate and objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable improvement of land/water/energy resources Environmental concerns addressed Women's participation Poverty reduction Technology adoption Micro-entrepreneur development 	1 1 1 1 1 1	2 2 (2) 2 (2) 2	3 3 3 3 3 3	4 4 4 4 4 (4)	(5) 5 5 (5) 5 5	6 (6) 6 6 6 6
2. Capacity building						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional strengthening Strategic selection of local partners (local NGO's...) Partnership of local partners Increased participation and empowerment of target groups 	1 1 1 1	2 2 2 2	3 3 3 3	4 4 4 4	(5) 5 (5) (5)	6 (6) 6 6
3. Sustainability						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategically focused Replication Resource mobilization Sustainability of the local village institutions 	1 1 1 1	2 2 2 2	3 3 3 3	4 4 (4) 4	5 5 5 5	(6) (6) 6 (6)
Some of these areas can be considered critical						

Assessment areas and criteria	Very Weak	Weak	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent
4. Governance						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective direction and controls of the project's steering committee Accountability ICEF's responsive mechanism The PCU's responsive mechanism 	1 1 1 1	(2) 2 2 2	3 3 (3) 3	4 4 4 4	5 (5) 5 (5)	6 6 6 6
5. Project management						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic analysis & planning Project design and approval Budgeting, accounting, financial controls and disbursements Project reporting & monitoring Human resources and personnel management 	1 1 1 1 1	2 2 2 2 2	3 3 (3) 3 3	(4) (4) 4 (4) 4	5 5 5 5 (5)	6 6 6 6 6
6. Learning and innovation						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and evaluation Innovation Documentation 	1 1 1	2 2 2	3 3 3	(4) 4 4	5 5 (5)	6 (6) 6

Performance areas		Very Weak	Weak	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent
1. Support of ICEF'S mandate and objectives		1	2	3	4	5	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable improvement of land/water/energy resources Environmental concerns addressed Women's participation Poverty reduction Technology adoption Micro-entrepreneur development 		1	2	3	4	5	6
		1	2	3	4	5	6
		1	2	3	4	5	6
		1	2	3	4	5	6
		1	2	3	4	5	6
		1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Capacity building							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional strengthening Strategic selection of local partners (local NGOs) Partnership of local partners Increased participation and empowerment of target groups 		1	2	3	4	5	6
		1	2	3	4	5	6
		1	2	3	4	5	6
		1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Sustainability							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategically focused Replication Resource mobilization Sustainability of the local village institutions 		1	2	3	4	5	6
		1	2	3	4	5	6
		1	2	3	4	5	6
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Some of these areas can be considered critical.							

Assessment areas and criteria	Very Weak	Weak	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent
4. Governance						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective direction and controls of the project's steering committee Accountability ICEF's responsive mechanism The PCU's responsive mechanism 	1 1 1 1	2 2 2 2	3 3 3 3	4 4 4 4	5 5 5 5	6 6 6 6
5. Project management						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic analysis & planning Project design and approval Budgeting, accounting, financial controls and disbursements Project reporting & monitoring Human resources and personnel management 	1 1 1 1 1	2 2 2 2 2	3 3 3 3 3	4 4 4 4 4	5 5 5 5 5	6 6 6 6 6
6. Learning and innovation						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and evaluation Innovation Documentation 	1 1 1	2 2 2	3 3 3	4 4 4	5 5 5	6 6 6

INDICATOR AREAS, FINDINGS AND COMMENTS

1. SUPPORT OF ICEF's MANDATE and OBJECTIVES

To what extent does the project contribute towards the achievement of ICEF's mandate and objectives?

Assessment Guidelines

The six assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the organization's project is contributing to the achievement of ICEF's objectives and priorities. To the extent that the organizations has developed valid measures of the degree to which they are meeting these criteria, these indicators should be used. The indicator areas listed below are suggestions to assist with the assessment process and are not requirements. When making an overall assessment, one important criterion is the extent to which the organizations project is contributing to poverty reduction.

<i>Assessment Criterion 1.1 Sustainable improvement of land/water/energy resources : To what extent is project effective in facilitating the sustainable delivery of environmentally-sound activities and services to poorer groups?</i>	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the activities supported are operating on a sustainable basis. Evidence that the activities supported are contributing to poverty reduction, and that poor and marginalized groups have access to these services. Test plot successfully established Fuelwood availability increased Poorer groups have benefited Activities supported are replicated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has established 1,794 TP's in 854 villages covering 5,379 hectares. In early 1999 the Klein survey found that replication had occurred at the rate of 6 to 1. In 1999 this rate is judged to have increased even more since then. While many of the original TP recipients were not the poorest of the poor it is notable that the farmers who are replicating the NEPED model are from poorer groups in the community Products from these tree crops will help to diversify an augment the farmers income thereby improving his level of food security. While the land shaping activities may not have had a significant impact on reducing soil erosion the establishment of tree crops in degraded jhum fields had a positive impact. It is felt that the project has had a small but positive impact in reducing soil erosion. The increased level of tree planting will also have a positive impact on sustaining water cycles. In addition it will have a positive impact in increasing the availability of fuelwood and timber poles..
<i>Assessment Criterion 1.2 Environmental concerns addressed : To what extent does the organization adequately address environmental concerns in its programming?</i>	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<p><u>Policy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a clear environmental statement or policy and a strategy <p><u>Project</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> defined environmental objectives for the project and indicators for the assessment of results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most significant environmental issue by far, facing the people of Nagaland is soil conservation and soil management as related to sustainable agriculture. NEPED is clearly focused to address this extremely critical environmental issue.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> familiarity with the environmental issues specific to the project and capacity to adequately manage them activities are planned to build the capacity in environment of staff and partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental policies, strategies and objectives are reflected in the statements found in the majority of the documentation prepared by the project, both for internal use and external dissemination clearly identify environmental policies, strategies and objectives. Training activities similarly incorporate environmental issues and build capacity in the POU, DPT's and field staff. As a result environmental awareness has increased at all levels and in particular at the farmer level.
Assessment Criterion 1.3 Women's participation : To what extent does the organization ensure that women are full and equal partners in guiding and shaping the development process and are full beneficiaries of the process?	
Indicator Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of women's test plots established Training inputs for women provided Level of involvement in decision making process 	Findings and Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 93 women's test plots only out of 1,794 empowerment training to 213 women low level of participation in decision making no gender component in original project design women have no ownership or hereditary rights to land
Assessment Criterion 1.4 Poverty reduction : To what extent does the organization's project contribute to poverty reduction? Does this project address the interrelationship between poverty and environmental degradation?	
Indicator Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to contribute to enhanced income levels Environmental impact of project 	Findings and Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A substantial timber resource created: substantial income generating asset in the hands of beneficiaries Viewed as providing economic security for the future Tree planting on 1,794 TPs contributes to soil and moisture conservation
Assessment Criterion 1.5 Technology adoption : To what extent that adoption and dissemination of pollution abatement, energy conservation and renewable energy technologies are effective in facilitating the sustainable delivery of environmentally-sound technology.	
Indicator Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which new technologies are operating on a sustainable basis . Degree to which new technologies are cost effective, user friendly and appropriate. 	Findings and Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction of an agroforestry model, "the NEPED model", which included a major land shaping component is the most significant technology which the project attempted to introduce. The high cost of land shaping and the small window of time within which land shaping had to be completed made it very difficult for the farmers to successfully implement this component of the project. The NEPED model of land shaping has only been replicated on a small scale In Phek District the integration of alder trees into the jhum cycle has been

	<p>proven to be very effective in improving soil productivity while at the same time providing fuelwood and pole material to the farmer. The project has been able to transfer this technology to a number of villages but not on a large scale.</p> <p>- The linkages to the IDRC supported research activities need to be strengthened.</p>
Assessment Criterion 1.6 Micro enterprise development : To what extent is the implementing agency effective in supporting and strengthening sustainable income generating activities and fostering micro-entrepreneurship among the poor?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of nurseries established - Replication of nursery activity - Technical competence of nursery owners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 women's nurseries established • high replication of nursery activity • nursery owners lack adequate technical inputs – limited training provided • nursery activity niche area for women

2. CAPACITY BUILDING

To what extent does the project contribute to capacity development among the implementing organization's local partners and other institutions?

Assessment Guidelines

V The four assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the project is contributing to capacity development among itself and its local partners. Implementing organizations that have capacity building as a programming priority may have developed results indicators in this area. If these indicators are valid measures of the degree to which the organization is meeting these four criteria, these indicators should be used. The indicators areas listed below are simply suggested areas that may be considered if appropriate.

V Institutional strengthening is the assessment criterion that should be given the **greatest weight** in providing an overall rating for this area. Nevertheless, the other three criteria are also considered to be very important.

Assessment Criterion 2.1 Institutional strengthening : To what extent does the support provided by the implementing organization strengthen the capacity of local organizations and institutions to formulate, manage and sustain development processes?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
Results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree to which local organizations being supported are moving to greater self-management and organizational sustainability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The multi-disciplinary structure of both the POU and the DPT has significantly enhanced the mobilization of the necessary skills to deliver the project. - The level of collaboration between the local organizations such-as the VDB's and

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree to which the governance of local organizations has improved. • Degree to which the quality of analysis of the development context, and formulation of policies and plans conducted by local organizations has improved. • Degree to which the mobilization of necessary skills, commitments and financial resources by local organizations has improved. • Degree to which local organizations experiment, assess their effectiveness, learn and adapt, and effectively implement changes has increased. • Degree to which the technical capability of local organizations to implement their projects has improved. • Degree to which local organizations work together to address common objectives, including collaboration with government. 	<p>the DPT's is very high with frequent exchanges between the two on technical matters, and on-site training. This has led to a conducive environment in which the organizations experiment, learn and adapt.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The unique administrative structure which was created for NEPED has functioned very effectively. - The degree to which the implementing organizations and the local partners have increased, their capacity to formulate policies and plans has also increased however the scope for further growth is very significant.
<p>Assessment Criterion 2.2 Strategic selection of local partners (local NGO's...) : To what extent does the implementing organization select and work with local partners that are either making a significant and sustainable development impact or have the potential to make such an impact with support and strengthening?</p>	
<p>Indicator Areas</p> <p>The key indicator areas are (a) sound criteria for choosing partners and (b) continuity and fruitfulness of the partnership.</p>	<p>Findings and Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As the POU is a small team located at Kohima and the project is state-wide, a multidisciplinary project team, similar to POU, had been formed at the district level. - The village elders command enormous respect from the village community. Humming is linked to cultural activities. So it required knowledgeable persons who are widely respected in the local area to liaise between the POU/DPT and the local community. Thus the project worked through 'local experts' who could bring in the local wisdom and traditional knowledge. - VCs and VDBs are self-reliant and self-sustainable village institutions which have been functioning quite successfully since 1976. They were given the test plot farmer selection and financial responsibility. - Thus, their selection has been based on sound strategic criteria that without one of them the project could not have even been initiated much less it could have moved on to this level of achievement.
<p>Assessment Criterion 2.3 Partnership of local partners : To what extent is the organization's relationship with its local partners characterized by principles of partnership?</p>	
<p>Indicator Areas</p> <p>The key indicator areas identified are: (a) the extent the responsibility</p>	<p>Findings and Comments</p> <p>The responsibility to select the test plot has rested with the DPT and also to</p>

<p>resides with the local partners. (b) the extent the project relationships and long-term partnerships have existed, and (c) the views of the local partners have influenced the policy and programming.</p>	<p>verify the work undertaken by the test plot owners and recommend for payment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The responsibility to select the test plot owners and test plots were given to Vets and VDBs. - The local expert has played the role of invisible facilitator. - The partnership between the different local partners has continued and strengthened during the project period. This is because the roles and powers of each partner were well defined.
<p>Assessment Criterion 2.4 Increased participation and empowerment of target groups : To what extent is the development project of the organization and its partners contributing to increased participation of communities and groups in decision-making and guiding the development process?</p>	
<p>Indicator Areas</p> <p>The key indicator areas identified are: (a) the implementing organisations have policies, processes and procedures for involving local communities and women, and (b) the degree to which the local communities have actually participated in decision-making, feel that the project outputs are theirs, and are guiding and shaping the development process after the specific project intervention.</p>	<p>Findings and Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Τη λογαλ χομυντιεσ ησπε βεεν ινωλπεδ τηρουγη τηε εΧσ ανδ εΔΒσ. Αλλ τηε προφεχτσ φορ τηε πιλλαγε ανδ τηε βυδγρετ αρε πιλαχεδ βεφορε τηε ε Χ φορ ρεπιεω ανδ αππροσαλ. Τηεσε προφεχτσ αρε τηεν ιπιλεμεντεδ βψ τηε εΔΒ. Τηε τεστ πιλοτ ηασ βεχομε ονε συχη προφεχτ. - The funds went through the VDB and it supervised the test plot work. The village audit committee audited the accounts. - The women have been allocated 25% of the VDB funds. To implement these work women secretaries have been nominated. Women have been given test plots and nurseries. - Although test plot is a small project, it has become a very important project

3. SUSTAINABILITY

To what extent is the implementing organization able to increase the impact of its programming through targeting its interventions at key points, or through coordination and cooperation, replication, and the mobilization of resources beyond ICEF.

Assessment Guidelines

- v The three assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the implementing organization is able to use the ICEF contribution it receives. Sustainability is a concept being used by ICEF to describe its objective of maximizing the impact of its investments through encouraging its partners to increase the developmental impact of their activities and the amount of support the partners elicit from other sources.
- v There is no single or essential approach which must be adopted to increase sustainability. Nor do organizations have to use all the approaches listed below. Thus, a weakness in one of the criteria does not mean that the whole assessment area of sustainability should be rated "weak". However, the extent to which an organization combines various approaches is likely to increase the leverage impact of its programming.

Assessment Criterion 3.1 Strategically focused : To what extent does the organization focus its efforts on particular strategic areas or sectors and direct its activities at root causes of impoverishment and key constraints to development?

Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the organization is able to articulate and demonstrate how its project is more than a collection of activities, and is strategically focused to achieve greater impact. Degree to which the organization engages in strategic analysis which identifies key constraints to development that it and its partners can help address in an effective manner. Degree to which the organization identifies actions which build on and utilize other capacities and actions to achieve greater impact. 	<p>- The project was designed to support the establishment of TPs in all of the 1,000 Naga villages. This focus is very strategic in that it took away opportunities that might have otherwise resulted in political favoritism in the selection and delivery process.</p> <p>- A group of 12 elders, includes representation from the major tribal groups and provides expertise through their local and traditional knowledge in all aspects of project execution. They have also been very useful as mediators when local disagreements have arisen.</p> <p>- The lack of a baseline survey which provides the organizations with key information for project analysis and planning is judged to be a weakness in the project.</p> <p>- The project has supported a number of workshops, including a strategic analysis workshop, which was designed to more fully capture the lessons learnt and to provide input into the planning process for the period beyond the current project.</p>

Assessment Criterion 3.2 Replication : To what extent does the organization and its partners expand and replicate successful development processes and models and foster and support the expansion or replication of these models by local organizations or governments?

Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<p>The indicator areas are: (a) the degree to which lessons learned have been disseminated and (b) the degree to which the lessons learned from successful models have been replicated.</p>	<p>- Τη προφειχτ χονχεπτ οφ αδδινγ τρεεσ το φηυμ φιελδσ ηαδ διςσεμινατεδ ον ι τσ οων τηρουγητουτ τη στατε. Αλμοστ επερυβοδψ ιν τη στατε κνωωσ αβου τ ιτ. Δεχλαρατιον οφ 1999 ασ τη ψεαρ οφ τρεε πλαντινγ αλσο σπρεαδ τη μεσ σαγε.</p> <p>- The VCs passed a resolution that each family plant 100 saplings and instituted prices for those who planted maximum.</p> <p>- It is estimated that for one hectare of tree plantation undertaken under the project, people have planted 6 hectares.</p>

Assessment Criterion 3.3 Resource mobilization : To what extent is the organization able to increase the amount of support for development programming it mobilizes from sources other than ICF?

Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<p>The indicator areas are: (a) ratio of resources mobilised from other sources compared to ICF, and (b) the degree to which resources mobilised has been increasing, remaining stable or decreasing over</p>	<p>- IDRC contribution has been more than 50% than originally planned, and it has increased both qualitatively and quantitatively.</p> <p>- The GON contribution towards staff salaries and overheads have remained stable</p>

previous levels.	<p>except for vehicle running. At critical circumstances, GON provided funds to keep the POU moving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The GON contribution for planting trees have increased manifold as many departments have taken to tree planting. - VDBs have contributed more than the agreed 50. 50 for land shaping. More importantly, the local community has taken active part in providing labour. There is no data on the actual contribution by the VDBs for replication. - The test plot farmer contribution has remained stable. - Roughly, the total resources mobilised could be more than five times the ICEF contribution.
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Assessment Criterion 3.4 Sustainability of the local village institutions : To what extent both organizational and financial sustainability are to be addressed.

Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree to which the development content of the organisation's project is being maintained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The VCs and VDBs are permanent, existing institutions which the project has worked with. So they are already well established and are organisationally and financially sustainable. - This project has made them focus on adding trees to jhumming which was not on their agenda earlier. - This project has enhanced their awareness and capability to address environmental issues. - The VCs and VDBs are already promoting adding trees to the jhum lands and are taking part in similar programmes of other departments as well. - The VCs and the VDBs will definitely carry forward the project beyond the project period.

4. GOVERNANCE

To what extent is the project effectively governed?

Assessment Guidelines

- V The three assessment criteria and indicators provided in the table below should be used to help assess the extent to which a project is effectively governed.

Assessment Criterion 4.1 Effective direction and control of the project's steering committee effectively direct and control the affairs of the project?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree to which critical goals, values, policies, and strategic decisions on project as well as administrative matters are carefully reviewed and approved by the committee. • The committee has sufficient access to varied sources of information to assist in decision making. • Degree to which the committee ensures that adequate processes and procedures are in place to effectively advance the mission of the organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During the first 3½ years of the project the steering committee met formally on only two occasions, while during the last 1½ years they have met on three occasions. It appears that the main reason for these irregular meetings was largely based upon the limited availability of the members. - While the committee had full access to the varied sources of information to assist them in the decision making process the level of information and reporting was limited during the first half of the project. - A number of key decisions were taken over the course of the project which apparently were discussed and reviewed by the PSC but no record of these discussions are reflected in the minutes of committee meetings (e.g. decision to put the baseline survey on hold). -The irregularity of the meetings held up some decisions which had a negative effect on the project.
<p>Assessment Criterion 4.2 Accountability : To what extent is the implementing organization able to demonstrate that adequate accountability is being exercised over the ICEF funded project.</p>	
<p>Indicator Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree to which the organization complies with the terms of its contribution/grant agreement with ICEF. • Degree to which systems and mechanisms are in place to meet ICEF's requirements regarding strategic analysis and planning, sound project design and implementation, timely reporting, monitoring and evaluation of results being achieved, effective financial and budgetary controls, and compliance with ICEF's gender and environmental policies. 	<p>Findings and Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both the GoN and IDRC are respecting the approved work plans and as such they are judged to be in compliance with the contribution agreement. - During the first two years of the project ICEF reporting requirements were not understood by the implementing organization however with the support of the PCU the reporting to ICEF has during the last two years been both more timely and effective. - The VDB contributions may not have ben equivalent to the original planned contribution level but they are judged to have been significant. - The field level activities account for the major project expenditure and accountability at the field level rests with the POU, DPT's and the field staff. The project has established a unique payment and verification systems which provides for transparent and verifiable financial controls for field operations.

Assessment Criterion 4.3 ICEF responsive mechanism : To what extent is ICEF actively involved in developing, documenting and assessing the sustainable development outcomes or impact results that the organization is seeking to achieve?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which ICEF is involved in determining the major results expected in the areas of programming and organizational management and development, and in ensuring that more specific results are identified as part of ongoing project management and administration. Degree to which ICEF assesses progress towards expected results, and makes decisions on policies, strategies, resources, etc., based on progress indicators in order to improve development results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICEF reporting requirements have apparently changed or been modified five times during the course of the project. Only limited training was been provided to the project staff to ensure that they understood and are able to comply with the reporting requirements. This task was to a large extent undertaken by the PCU. It was felt that the indicator areas in the performance assessment guide could not be fully assessed since many of the ICEF functions were being undertaken by the PCU.

Assessment Criterion 4.4 PCU's responsive mechanism : To what extent is PCU actively involved in developing, documenting and assessing the sustainable development outcomes or impact results that the organization is seeking to achieve?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the PCU is involved in determining the major results expected in the areas of programming and organizational management and development, and in ensuring that more specific results are identified as part of ongoing project management and administration. Degree to which the PCU assesses progress towards expected results, and makes decisions on policies, strategies, resources, etc., based on progress indicators in order to improve development results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since May 1998, the PCU has provided a very high level of support and guidance to the POU and its partner organizations. The PCU has been instrumental in assisting the POU in a wide range of areas. These include but are not limited to the development of a strategic response to the mid-term review, in undertaking a survey (Klein Report, 1999) to assess the TP results and adjust project policies, the development and preparation of extension materials including a 200 page resource book, and assisting in the development of results based reporting. The support which the PCU provided the POU in the development and assessment of performance indicators has greatly strengthened the POU's ability to measure its achievements and thereby its strengths and weaknesses. Lastly, the PCU has input into the development of policies and strategies which will assist in shaping NEPED beyond the current project.

5. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

To what extent is the project effectively and efficiently managed ?

Assessment Guidelines

v The five assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which an organization's project is being effectively and efficiently managed. Indicator areas have been suggested to guide this assessment process. **Each of the assessment areas is considered very important for sound project management.**

<i>Assessment Criterion 5.1 Strategic analysis & planning : To what extent does the organization utilize a well developed strategic plan which clearly articulates the development results being sought?</i>	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strategic plan exists and is used to guide programming development. Strategic thinking and planning is part of the culture of the organization. Degree to which the strategic plan and development project is based on sound analysis of development needs and problems, underlying structures and systems causing the problems, the policy, social and economic context, the types of interventions that will have a strategic impact, and the resources and capabilities that the organization and its partners can bring to the situation. Degree to which the results are expecting to achieve. Degree to which the organization has developed a set of objectives and verifiable (quantitative and/or qualitative) indicators that they will use to demonstrate achievement of sustainable results, or progress towards them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There were no front-end studies undertaken and used in the development of a strategic plan for the project. Instead many of these analyses were done at various stages of project implementation when a specific need was identified. The project planners however were very cognizant of the key social and economic realities throughout Nagaland. The planning of the project was based upon their personal knowledge. - The midterm project review which was undertaken in May 1997 identified a number of weaknesses in project implementation. This review led the undertaking, by the implementing organizations of a number of studies and participatory workshops which began to fill in some of the gaps which were not addressed in the original project analysis and planning stages. - At the start of the project there were very few objective and verifiable indicators developed to demonstrate achievement of sustainable results, or progress towards them. Those that were developed focused only on the primary project outputs, such as the establishment of test plots. This issue was also addressed as the project progressed, first with the introduction by ICEF of results based management reporting and more recently by an IDRC supported self-assessment workshop.
<i>Assessment Criterion 5.2 Project design, approval and implementation : To what extent do the organization and its partners have the procedures and capacity to develop design, assess, implement and monitor developmentally sound projects?</i>	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
Degree to which (a) processes exist and sound assessment criteria are used for reviewing and approving all activities; (b) the projects are well designed; (c) project activities are effectively and efficiently managed; and (d) there are effective monitoring processes which ensure that component projects are being managed effectively, funds are being spent appropriately, and modifications are being made as necessary to achieve the intended results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project design did not fully address requirements for financial management and planning, internal monitoring and progress reporting The POU has prepared a number of documents which explain the project and set sound criteria for reviewing and appraising all activities The process of establishing TPs was participatory The POU, DPT, VC's and Vdb's have worked together to manage effectively and

	<p>efficiently the project activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The POU met on a regular basis each Tuesday to review and monitor the progress internally.
<p>Assessment Criterion 5.3 Budgeting, accounting, financial control and disbursement : To what extent does the organization have effective budgeting, accounting and financial procedures and controls, and maintain adequate and accessible audit trails in Head Office and in the field?</p>	<p>Findings and Comments</p> <p>Annual budgets prepared but not used as management tool</p> <p>ICEF component clearly identified in budgets</p> <p>Accounting permit ICEF related costs to be tracked</p> <p>Accounting system allow costs to be tracked</p> <p>Financial management system not effectively utilized</p> <p>Financial reports from field are complete and transparent</p> <p>A system of quarterly audit in place</p> <p>Some savings anticipated at the end of project</p>
<p>Assessment Criterion 5.4 Project reporting and monitoring : To what extent does the organization monitor field operations, provide constructive feedback to reports from the field and submit timely reports that meets ICEF requirements?</p>	
<p>Indicator Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the organization monitors field operations, activities and results, and takes initiatives to modify project activities, resource inputs and other strategic elements to improve project results. Degree to which financial and narrative reports to ICEF are submitted in prescribed format as scheduled in the agreement between ICEF and the organization. Degree to which reports contain the information requested and required by ICEF. 	<p>Findings and Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The original project management plan an external monitoring component was included. However during the inception mission this activity was removed from the project. As a result during the first two years of the project ICEF did not obtain sufficient information to meet their requirements. During the last two years the PCU has provide a significant amount of training to the POU in report preparation. NEPED was one of the first ICEF projects to adopt results based management reporting formats in early 1999. At the field level the POU through the DPT's and the field staff is able to effectively

	monitor operations and has used the information collected to modify field activities (e.g. land shaping).
<i>Assessment Criterion 5.5 Human resources and personnel management : To what extent does the organization select, manage and utilize its human resources effectively and in line with its mission statement, objectives and strategy?</i>	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experience and expertise of staff - Degree to which staff and volunteers effective in pursuing organization's mission and achieving its objectives - Degree and adequacy of training provided - Degree to which working environment motivates and empowers staff to achieve high level of performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project started with inexperienced staff who have now achieved a high level of expertise • Very effective in pursuing the mission and achieving the objectives • High degree of training, especially in last two years has contributed to capacity building • Very supportive working environment, high degree of motivation and excellent leadership has encouraged high levels of performance.

6. LEARNING AND INNOVATION

To what extent is the implementing organization evaluates its performance to improve programming, explores new and better ways to achieve desired results, and fosters an environment of continual collaborative learning?

Assessment Guidelines

- v The three assessment criteria provided in the table below should be used to assess the extent to which the organization is a learning organization. Developing, testing, learning from, and disseminating information about innovative approaches to development is an important role that organization can play, but not essential for every institution. To the extent that organizations are contributing to greater development impact through innovation, this should be reflected in the overall rating given. But the absence of such innovation should not necessarily be used to reduce the overall rating of an organization.

<i>Assessment Criterion 6.1 Review and evaluation : To what extent does the organization conduct and use reviews and evaluations to develop its understanding of development processes and organizational issues and to improve its programming and projects?</i>	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree to which evaluation and reviews processes are built into the design of projects. • Extent and quality of reviews and evaluations being conducted. • Evidence that evaluation findings have led to improvements in the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many improvements have been made based upon recent reviews. They include modifications to the TP model, the inclusion of an indigenous fallow management component, the incorporation of lessons learnt into the production of a 200 page resource handbook, the inclusion of a gender component and improvements in project reporting. - Recent activities which clearly demonstrate the partners intentions to become a strong learning organization. However, a significant level of effort will need to be extended to ensure that the partners capture all lessons

	learnt and fully incorporate them into an ongoing project analysis and planning process.
Assessment Criterion 6.2 Innovation : To what extent is the organization together with its partners, involved in developing and testing innovative development approaches and models which, when proven effective, are replicated?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
- The degree to which (a) new developments are tested and their utility and (b) successful approaches are disseminated and replicated?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of the POU is itself Innovative. It is a multi-disciplinary team drawn from various departments such as agriculture, forestry, irrigation, tourism, cooperation, etc. • The simplicity of the office is unique. It represents field culture rather than office culture. • All POU members have become computer literate and use them extensively • Various options to strengthen and sustain i.e. Adding trees to jhum land, have been tested for their utility • The concept of adding trees to jhum lands has been widely disseminated • In a cultural situation in which women do not have inheritance rights to land, through the allocation of TPs to women, women's groups have been able to own land
Assessment Criterion 6.3 Documentation : To what extent is the organization and its staff engaged in producing effective documentation particularly useful for the organization's local partners?	
Indicator Areas	Findings and Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective publications attempted by the project team - Seminar papers, brochures, booklets, slide shows prepared - Local knowledge and practices documented - Evidence of documentation in Local language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective materials (Brochures, booklets, slide shows) prepared for extension purposes • A 200 page book documenting traditional practices and building upon them prepared by the POU team • Lessons learned from the field – specially TP experiments required for the documentation • 13 different tribal dialects make english most effective language for documentation and dissemination