

Proposed Conflict Sensitive Development Strategy Based on the Experiences from Soil Conservation and Watershed Management Component

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FOREWORD

This article was written while working with the Soil Conservation and Watershed Management Component of the Natural Resource Management Sectoral Assistance Programme (SCWMC-NARMSAP) – A joint venture between the Government of Nepal and Danida and the Moist Insurgency was going on. Therefore, the views expressed here are related with the situation of that time and some may not be relevant to the current situation.

The paper is mainly based on the experience and lessons learned from the SCWMC-NARMSAP. The programme was phased out in July 2005.

View expressed in this article is solely of the author and not of the SCWMC-NARMSAP and ICIMOD.

1. Introduction

Nepal is facing unprecedented crisis in implementing development programmes and projects due to the escalating armed conflict between the state and the radical Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) affecting the development process in the country. Therefore, effective implementation of the Tenth Plan/PRSP in the present situation to achieve the four pillars envisioned by the plan² is highly questionable³.

Due to conflict many of the well-off families have migrated to the district head quarter, or urban centres in Terai or Kathmandu leaving rural areas with a shortage of working force. Livelihoods of poor and disabled families, who cannot afford migration or go elsewhere, have miserable life caused by the country's prevailing conflict.

The paper is mainly based on the experience and lessons learned from the Soil Conservation and Watershed Management Component (SCWMC) of the Natural Resource Management Sector Assistance Programme (NARMSAP) implemented through the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation and its line departments and supported by Danida. Regional office of the NARMSAP was visited during first half of 2005 to discuss and gather views from the regional staff on the issue to prepare this paper.

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² They are broad-based economic growth, effective service delivery, social and economic inclusion of excluded and good governance.

³ Searching for new direction: Reorientation NARMSAP to work on the conflict situation in Nepal.

2. What is a conflict sensitive area?

In a conflict sensitive area the communities are socially and mentally threatened for their security by parties involved in conflict. Such as: -

- No outsiders (especially HMG's staff) are welcomed in the area.
- Demands illegal tax or donation by the Maoist,
- Demands registration of the community level development groups,
- Deems permission for entry to / exit from the area,
- Abduction by the Maoist is likely,
- Insignificant presence of the government development workers,
- Fight (including firing) between the parties involved in the conflict therefore trap between the cross-fire is likely, and
- Involvement of one party in the area is questioned and interrogated from other party involved with conflict.

No development is free from this conflict in the country. The on-going conflict not only affects the present development but also will affect the future development as it changes the socio-economic-cultural and political situation of the country. Therefore, it demands a conflict sensitive development strategy.

3. Why Conflict?

Conflict in Nepal is complex. It is basically a political issue fuelled by the socio-cultural-economic dynamics of the country. The paper does not deal with the political aspects. Following are some of the development arenas, which increase dissatisfaction fuelling the conflict but it is not an exhaustive list: -

- **Centralized planning and decision making** processes, which could not address the needs of the locals especially women, poor and disadvantaged groups (including Janajatis, Dalits) resulting in dissatisfaction among the locals.
- **Lack of decentralization and governance at local level:** Weakens the development opportunities of the locals especially women, poor and disadvantaged groups.
- **Social Exploitation:** Social exploitation of women, poor and disadvantaged households degrading their socio-economic status.
- **Social Exclusion:** Exclusion of the poor, marginalized and disadvantages groups from the development opportunities widen the gap between the poor and rich.
- **Elite dominance** in the development processes, decision-making and benefit sharing. In general, needs of women, poor and disadvantaged households are not adequately addressed.
- **Lack of transparency** in the support modality and development processes, which could not build trust between the development agencies and the target communities in empowering locals, especially women, poor and disadvantaged groups for development opportunities.
- **Administrative autocracy:** Government mechanism lacks service oriented attitude. Especially for poor and disadvantaged households access to the service is very difficult.
- **Biased Political Commitment:** Political parties focused its efforts for the party's benefits rather than for the public. Political separation / colouring became more prominent. While providing service, local institution differentiated based on the

political affiliation. For example, recommendation letters for different services are required from the local institutions such as ward and village development committee (VDC). If one party represents the local institution, people affiliated with other party have difficulty in getting such recommendation.

- **Lack of Output Oriented Development:** Lack of output oriented development could not alleviate the poverty and frustrated the rural population especially women, poor and disadvantaged groups.
- **Lack of Consideration of the Regional Needs:** Lack of regional development emphasis based on its needs unbalance the regional development. Unbalance regional development by the state develop a feeling of discrimination and dissatisfaction among the people.
- **Lack of integrated holistic development:** could not satisfy the community's needs for multi-sectoral holistic development service for the balance development.
- **Corruption:** Wide spread corruption in the bureaucratic and political system in the country and the status of the peoples with their resource, irrespective to how one has earned, have developed dissatisfaction among the people fuelling conflict.

4. Proposed Conflict Sensitive Development Strategies

Conflict sensitive development strategy is defined as the strategy, which enables the development stakeholders to implement the development programme in the conflict sensitive areas. It is as complex as the conflict itself. There is no simple set of strategies. The strategy described here is mainly within the scope of the development agencies and by no means complete. More could be added with experience and learning by doing.

The Main Motto of the conflict sensitive strategies is: "Community is to be made responsible for administering the development processes." **The Rationale behind** is "All parties involved in the conflict have common long term interest to improve livelihood in the country." Following are some of the proposed strategies to deal with the prevailing conflict but not an exhaustive list: -

1. **Recruitment of the Local Development Workers:** Local persons will be selected to recruit as local resource person following the decentralized democratic processes for service, which demands continuous presence in the field since external resource persons are not welcomed in the conflict area. This includes social mobilization and basic technical services. Local based agency may be used in the selection of the local resource persons. Such persons will be trained on social mobilization and vocational training on different technical fields such as veterinary, agriculture, health, civil engineering, etc. After the training, such persons will be recruited to work in the area. Training and recruitment of the local resource person will take 1 – 2 years and this period may be considered as preparatory phase. Continuous backstopping mechanism must be an integral part of the whole strategy so that local resource person can develop desired competitive knowledge and skill on continuous basis.

SCWMC widely practiced the local resource person especially women motivator for social mobilization.

Impacts: Recruitment of the local social mobilizer enhanced the rapport building with the community and organizing the community members into area based groups (see Box 1). It eased organizing regular meeting of the communities, and bridged the communication between community and development agencies. It also helped the technical staff to station in the field at least in the initial phase of the conflict. However, to stay in the field for longer period became difficult for the technical staff in the later phase of the conflict.

Box 1.

Nepal Denmark Watershed Management Project (July 1996 – July 2001) supported by Danida piloted three modality of group formation based in Nuwakot, Rasuwa and Dhading based on micro-watershed, ward and settlement respectively. Rationales behind were:

1. Groups formed on the basis of micro-watersheds are appropriate for integrated watershed management,
2. Groups formed on the basis of wards ease the process of integrating the group plan into the Village Development Committee's (VDC's) plan for decentralised planning process,
3. Groups formed on the basis of settlements are more practical because they will have common development interest to work together.

Lessons learned

Groups formed on micro-watershed basis, though functioning, demonstrated the following constraints. Common interest of the group generally does not follow the micro-watershed boundary. Also, micro-watershed is not the working unit for many other government line agencies. Therefore, the micro-watershed has not been an appropriate unit for forming natural groups and inter-line agencies co-ordination.

However, groups formed on the basis of a ward unit are too big and typically consists of a population of around 100 and more households from ridge top to valley bottom. If the people from the valley bottom reflect a need for irrigation, the people from the ridge top may demand a need for water source protection. Therefore, in Rasuwa district, due to difference in development interest, groups formed on the basis of wards could not develop common consensus in selecting activities to implement. Also, because of the large group-size, group members could not gather to conduct regular meetings for decision-making. Later the groups based on wards have split in to many groups based on settlement and have started functioning. Therefore, for decentralised development at grass root level it became imperative that smaller groups based on the common development interest need to be formed.

Generally, a settlement has a cultural cohesiveness and a common development interest. Also, the settlement is the "unit" that farmers themselves choose when asked to form a "natural group". Groups formed on settlement basis have been most accepted, successful and function properly in many other districts, including the Dhading-district. Experience has shown that a group formed on settlement basis is also an appropriate small development unit for holistic development. SCWMC formed up to 715 groups consisting of more than thirty thousands households based on the settlement criteria.

2. Building Working Environment

- **Through social mobilizers (SM):** The role of the social mobilizer will be awareness building in the communities, to organize the groups and networking / federation, and to assist the groups in their administration. Also SM will support the group to prepare vision based plans, where the group recognizes activities to fulfil the group's vision. However, vision based planning does not include technical feasibility and technical survey, design and implementation, which is more of the technical assistance component.
 - *Awareness building:* -
 - ☞ Build awareness on the need to work in the group
 - ☞ Group dynamics including social inclusion

- ☞ Need for networking
- ☞ Awareness building on working modality: Management modality (Funding modality, Fund channelling, Planning, Implementation and monitoring modalities, Benefit sharing, Accountability and responsibilities, Decision making authority, Public auditing), Basic operating guidelines, etc.
- ☞ Wide distribution of brochures in the community explaining working modality.
- *Group Formation / functioning:*
 - ☞ Group Formation: Divide the working area and form helmet based community development group for the holistic (multi-faceted) development of the area.
 - ☞ Assist in preparation of the group's constitution
 - ☞ Assist in regular meeting
 - ☞ Assist in account keeping
- *Networking and Federation of the Group:* Assist in networking of such groups. Networking of the group will empower and strengthen local organization to
 - ☞ Streamline the multi-disciplinary services in the area,
 - ☞ Implement common interest activities and cumulative action for seeking service from different line agencies
 - ☞ Share learning and experience
- *Assist in Community Holistic Plan Preparation*
 - ☞ Household information collection,
 - ☞ Assist in wealth ranking and community's development visioning,
 - ☞ Assist in resource identification including resource / social mapping using participatory rural appraisal (PRA) tools,
 - ☞ Assist in activity identification to fulfil the community's visions,
 - ☞ Assist in putting the planning information in the format,
 - ☞ Facilitate the group to seek technical services from different development agencies

SCWMC widely exercised social mobilizer for awareness building, group formation and functioning, establishing net working, federation and holistic planning.

Impacts: Community developed understanding on the importance of the group actions, community's involvement in every step in group formation, planning, and implementation, community's contribution to implement more activities with limited programme support and importance of net working of community groups for strong voice. Community start realising the importance of women involvement and equity aspects in development. Community developed "One village One group One Plan" concept for implementation of the holistic development plan of the community and discouraged multi group formation in the area.

- **Entry Point Activity:** To develop trust between the locals and the supporting agency is very essential while working in the conflict sensitive area. Therefore, entry point activity of the people's interest will be implemented. Entry point

activity will be implemented during the preparatory period. This became crucial when the entry to the area became more difficult in the recent years.

Importance of entry point activity was widely discussed but not exercised in the SCWMC.

- **Transparency on Working modality:** Press release at district and central levels on Management modality (Funding modality, Fund channelling, Planning, Implementation and monitoring modalities, Benefit sharing, Accountability and responsibilities, Decision making authority, Public auditing), Basic operating guidelines, etc. are very important to create awareness at different levels.

SCWMC widely exercised many transparency related working strategies. This was the key working strategy of the SCWMC. However, there was more room to improve especially the work plan (Who does what? What work staff did? What was a staff work plan? etc.) of the service providers i.e. to make service more efficient for the staff, to develop service oriented attitude, and build trust with community.

Impacts: Trust between the community and development agency was strongly developed, which eased the implementation of the programme. Development processes could speed up. Executive members with the intension to misuse the resource gradually left the executive body. Misuse of the resource in the community was greatly reduced.

3. **Management modality:**

- **Decentralized Management:** Local ownership is the key to the success of the programme under conflict sensitive areas. Decentralized management plays key role in developing ownership to steer the development under conflict sensitive areas. This includes: -
 - **Decentralized Budgeting:** Budget – a monetary resource is one of the key resources, which empower the community in a big way. Following the guideline budget will be channelled directly to the target groups i.e. grass root organization.

SCWMC provided a fixed yearly budget to each Community Development Group (CDG) based on the number of member households paying regular membership fee with a rationale that each household must be given equal development opportunity. SCWMC provides budget for physical and income generating activities for 5 years since it's formation. With this, CDG knows its physical and income generating activities (IGA) budget for five consecutive years.

Impacts: Trust between the community and development agency was strongly developed. Household budget built awareness on their individual right on the development resource. People developed interest to take part in the decision-

making in the resource use. Also, this guided them towards prioritising their real needs in a situation of definite, but limited resource (financial, human and local material).

- *Decentralized Planning:* All development programme, strategies will be developed by the beneficiaries following democratic and social norms.

SCWMC using local resource person such as social mobilizer and mid level technician assisted the community groups to prepare holistic vision based plans reflecting their needs of all sectors. SCWMC only implemented activities planned and selected by the community during vision based planning. The field based team of local motivator and mid-level technician was the main backstopping modality of the SCWMC.

Impacts: Decentralized vision based planning helped the community to assess the community's total needs irrespective of religion, caste, gender and wealth. This empowered the community to decide the activity of their needs for implementation and to address gender and equity issue. Selection of activities exercised more intensively showing more concerns of selecting activities fulfilling their needs.

- *Decentralized Fund Management:* Group will be made responsible and accountable for the decision making on the use of the fund channelled to the groups based on the decentralized planning, account keeping and auditing including public auditing.

SCWMC made community responsible and accountable for the CDG's budget. No CDG's expenditure is considered unless the bill / voucher were signed by CDG's authorised person. All expenditures of the CDG's budget must be publicly audited by the community members. Any misuse of the CDG's budget will stop further fund flow unless the misuse of fund is recovered.

Impacts: Because of community's accountability and transparency in resource decentralization and its use, individual community members developed ownership and responsibility feeling. This reduced the misuse of the fund by the committee executive members. Executive members expecting personal benefits from the development budget gradually left the committee leaving more development and service oriented members in the executive committee.

Even in insurgency period, field staff could work in the field to implement the programme when most of the other line agencies could not implement field activities except in Jumla district out of 20 districts. Jumla district did not have confirmed District Soil Conservation Officer for long time. The reason might be most likely the strong leadership. However, it must be accepted that at the later part of the SCWMC i.e. 2005, it became extremely difficult for the

external technical staff to station in the field to provide technical service as demanded by the community.

- *Decentralized Monitoring and Evaluation:* Local development groups will be made responsible and accountable for the monitoring and evaluation of the development process including fund management, planning, implementation, benefit sharing, etc.

SCWMC has made community responsible for planning, implementation and fund management and benefit sharing, but SCWMC adopted only public auditing as the main monitoring and evaluation tool. Public auditing was made mandatory for the formalising all expenditure budgeted for the group. This was mainly focussed on the financial aspects. Monitoring and evaluation of the processes, output, effects and impacts by the community were not adequately emphasized.

Impact: Public auditing empowered the community's right to decide on the use of the resources and developed ownership on the programme. Public auditing reduced misuse of the development resource. Even the executive members expecting personal benefits from the development budget gradually left the committee leaving more development and service oriented members in the executive committee.

- ***Flexibility:*** Key strategy includes: -

- *Revision of the Programme-Budget:* Rural community group has several constraints to organize group, plan and implement the programme. Therefore, community has to revise programme budget frequently to suit their local situation and capacities.

SCWMC has made community responsible for the planning, selection of activities, implementation, and expenditure. SCWMC allowed the community to revise the programme budget channelled to the communities based on the community's implementation capacity as frequently as demanded by the community. This was the main programme planning, fund management and implementation modality of the SCWMC.

- *Transfer of Budget:* Some portion of the unspent budget due to several unforeseen reasons (including security) will be allowed to transfer to the following years.

SCWMC allowed the community groups to transfer the unspent budget to the following year. This was the one of the key salient features of the fund management modality of the SCWMC. For the transfer of the unspent CDG's budget to following year, community development committee must have general assembly and all the expenditures of the CDG need to be publicly audited. Then only the CDG will be entitled for the budget transfer

Impact: This will allow the community to implement the activities as per its capacity and resource will be properly utilized. Flexibility (Revision of the Programme-Budget and Transfer of Budget) reduces the attitude of the group to spend the resource at the end of the financial year irrespective of its rationale. Rather they preferred to transfer the budget to the following year and utilize more sensibly.

- *Diverse Approach for Diverse Situation:* Holistic community development demands diversified service to fulfil its diverse development needs. No single agency could fulfil community's multitude development needs. Therefore, depending upon the situation, flexible approach to use different institutions such as Civil societies, Local NGOs, line agencies, etc. will be used to address the diversified services demanded by the community. Community group will be made responsible to seek services from the different service providers by using the development fund decentralized to the group.

SCWMC made an attempt to provide different services through District Coordination Committee. However due to weaker administrative status of the District Soil Conservation Office, the attempt could not arrange services successfully to the extent demanded by the community.

- *Multi-sectoral Development:* Farmers needs all services relevant to their daily rural life irrespective of the line agencies / donors. Rural needs are diverse therefore development support must be multi sectoral. The activities can range from humanitarian support to violently affected families (physical or psychological) to purely natural resource management. Decentralized development fund will be allowed for the multi Sectoral development as decided by the development group.

SCWMC having limited scope of implementation, and fund decentralized to the community was allowed to use only for the soil conservation activities. Although, SCWMC programme addresses several community's needs it could not fulfil multi-sectoral development needs of the community.

- ***Community groups are made responsible for***

- *Seeking Service from Line Agencies:* With the facilitation support from local resource persons, on case basis the community group will seek necessary service from the concerned development line agencies, including government, CBOs, NGOs, and or private consultants depending upon their competencies. While getting service from government line agencies, groups will be allowed to pay necessary administrative cost such as TADA from their development fund as necessary. If service from the government line agencies is not available, the development group will be allowed to buy such service from outside markets paying appropriate service fee from their development budget.

This was widely discussed but was not practiced under the **SCWMC** because of its sectoral nature of the programme.

- *Making local working environment:* Service from the government line agencies will be cheaper compared to seeking service from the other alternatives sources such as NGOs, consultants, etc. Therefore, community development groups will urge the government line agencies for providing services as well as it will be an incentive for the community groups to build working environment for the government line agencies to work in their areas as these service will be free of charge. Therefore, under the conflict sensitive environment the community have to build the communication with the conflict groups to allow the different service provider especially government line agencies to work in the area in providing service to the community.

SCWMC partly exercised the procedures. However, this needs to be exercised more making community as the force to build the working environment for the development line agencies.

- *Communicating* the development workers about seriousness of the security situation in the field. Therefore, community advises when their presence in the field is appropriate or not. Local resource persons could be media for communication.

SCWMC partly exercised the mechanism. This needs to be exercised more to avoid unpleasant situation for the development workers.

4. Others

- ***Neutral Representation:*** Staff working in the programme will only be devoted to the development. It must not play any role for any of the conflicting parties. Government with donors must develop common understanding that development workers will not be used in favour of any conflicting agencies at any cost. International agencies must act as strong pressure group to the conflicting parties and monitoring agencies of the conflicting parties to ease the environment for the development workers.
- ***Do No Harm Approach:*** Follow DO NO HARM APPROACH attitude while working with the communities. This is another especial chapter of the conflict management.
- ***Outcome Oriented Activity:*** Emphasize on the quick and direct benefiting activities affecting livelihood and generating employment for the poor and disadvantaged segment of the target groups rather than training and workshop. "SEED" concept of working modality could be adopted.

Box 2.

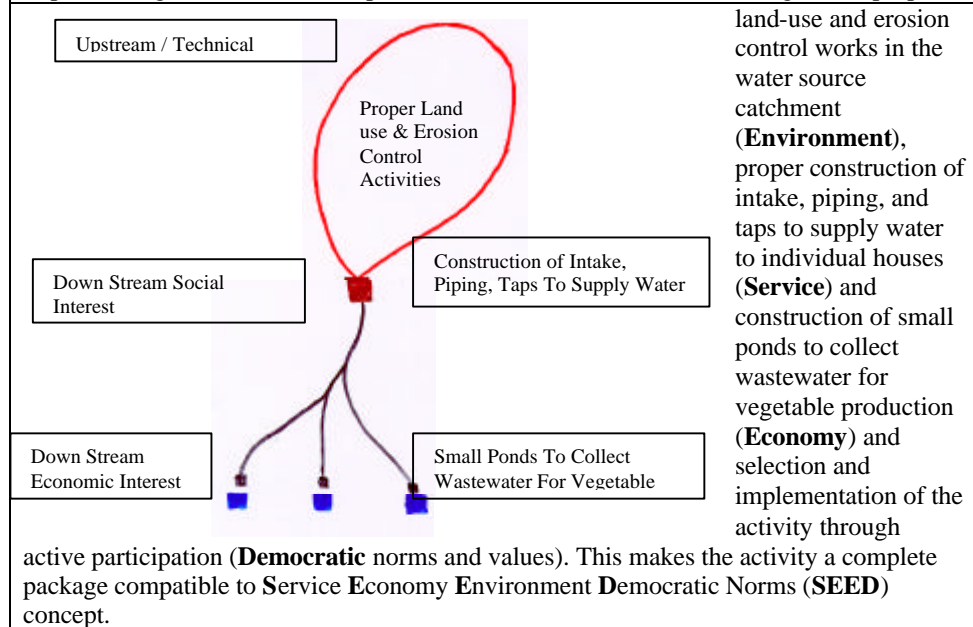
Balance development has four pillars: Service, Economy, Environment and Democratic (and social) norms and values (LDTA, 1997).

Activity providing service and economy (production), considering environment aspect and selected through following democratic norms and values and fulfilling social norms and values will be prioritized over the activity not considering all aspects of "**SEED**".

Activity will be design as a package to provide service, tied with the economy and consider environmental aspects.

For Example: Water Source Protection (Sthapit, 2003)

Water source protection aims to improve its hydrological regime through proper treatment of the catchment area of a water source. Usually the community, for whom the water source protection is intended to, takes interest in supplying water to their houses for the sake of drinking. Wastewater from the tap can then be collected in a small pond and utilized for generating economy through vegetable farming. While designing and implementing such water source protection activities attention should be given to proper



- **Pro-poor Budget:** Certain percentage of the development fund will be allocated to focus the activities related with the poor, women and disadvantage groups.

Box 3

Pro-poor Budget: could be used in contribution and implementing activities benefiting poor, women and disadvantaged group.

Contribution: Generally, group adapts equality as one of the guiding principles in the group functioning. Here each member is treated with equal right and responsibility including contribution for the implementation of the activities. Also contribution is the key driving force to implement more activities with less development budget. Generally, it is difficult to make contribution for poor, who have to work daily to earn the day's meals. Not contributing, generally the poor may not get benefit. To make the poor sector of the community benefit from the development, pro-poor budget may be used to make the contribution possible on behalf of the poor so that poor get the benefits from the development activities. Also, the poor could be involved in the activity but paying appropriate daily wage from the pro-poor budget.

Pro-poor activity:

Implementation of the special activity may be required to benefit the poor. Pro-poor budget may be used to implement such activity.

Use of the pro-poor budget could be democratically decided by the community group represented by the poor so that it could be efficiently and effectively used and also at the same time the poor could be involved in the activity.

- **Scholarship for women, poor and disadvantage group:** For the upliftment of women, poor and disadvantage group, scholarship will be provided in different skill oriented fields of local needs.
- **Conflict Sensitive Planning:** Planning and implementation of the development activity must be conflict sensitive. For example: The community demands school building. The school construction is a good activity but may be favourable for the households, who could afford sending children to the school. But for the households not able to send their children to school, school construction does not make any difference. Their children still need to collect the fodder for their livestock or so on. Therefore, school construction does not alleviate the livelihood of the poor and girls. Instead along with construction of school, programme must also help the poor and women to build the environment so that they could afford sending their children to school. This might include grass and fodder planting, subsidy for the poor to send their children to the school, etc.
- **Opportunity Tapping Environment:** Development creates opportunities. However, there may not be environment for the poor to tap the opportunities. Therefore, promote the environment enabling poor to tap the opportunities. This may include information sharing, awareness building, loan and subsidy to poor, networking, social mobilization, etc.
- **Insurance:** Working in the conflict situation, risk will always be high. Therefore, appropriate insurance policy of the staff must be adopted to encourage development workers to work under conflict sensitive areas.

5. Issues

5.1. Will not the conflict group (Maoist) take the decentralized Budget from the Communities?

This is likely. Since, the resource decentralized to the community must be audited by the public to be reimbursed from the projects / programme (funded by the Government and Non-Government including donors) such situation will come to public notice. This will build moral pressure on the Maoist and Maoist may develop different fund raising strategies. To reduce or avoid such situation, projects / programme either may add the condition that fund given to the Maoist will not be reimbursed or may stop funding till such fund are not refunded. Here, communities may adopt various tricks to hide the reality, which will be difficult for the executive committee because of public auditing. Whatsoever, communities will be losing the development resource just because of the Maoist taking their development fund. This will develop dissatisfaction among the communities and by the time the communities may refuse to pay. The networking / federation will empower the community groups to revolt for not paying from the decentralized development fund.

5.2. How can the group be formed, when the development agencies could not go to the village?

Awareness campaign on the working modality especially funding must be carried out extensively and intensively and must take advantage of the all available mass media such as radio, television, press conference, postering, etc., which will direct / motivate / facilitate the community members to organize and come forward for the funding. Recruitment of the local social mobilizer will play a crucial role in bringing the communities forward for the action. Presence of the local NGOs in the village will be beneficial to the processes.

5.3. Who should administer the processes?

Under the decentralized system, there will not be any better agency to administer the decentralized development than the local governments i.e. District Development Committee (DDC) and Village Development Committee (VDC). However, a strong monitoring system and many watchdogs to check any misuse in the system at all levels must be established. Public auditing must be made widely, effectively and efficiently adopted. Here, recruitment and administration of social mobilizer and basic technical service staff could also be brought under the supervision of the local government so that duplication of the social mobilization could also be avoided and there will be no need to appoint social mobilizer by every agency.

5.4. What should be the scale of the decentralized budget?

All development budget targeted to the rural development at the community level must be decentralized to the communities. However, the scale of such budget must be decided based on the national capacity so that the government could provide the budget at least for five consecutive years following national five year plan therefore communities can calculate their budget themselves. This will build the trust of the general public towards the government and also helps in transparency, which builds the ownership and reduces

the misuse. This also demands the basket funding, so that government could administer the funding.

5.5. How can national goals be achieved with decentralized budgeting?

Every government whether it is national or local will have its own goals set from the holistic vision, and it may differ from the community's goals. Based on the national goal, some budget must be set for the concerned line agencies. Some line agencies will have the objective to build national structures such as hydro-dams, roads, hospitals, etc. which will be implemented separately from the decentralized development, therefore separate budget need to be set aside for these programmes. Some other programmes such as forest, soil conservation, agriculture, livestock etc. will have national goals to achieve therefore separate budget must set for such programme to meet those national goals. These programmes could adopt an incentive strategy to achieve the goals. For example, Soil Conservation and Watershed Management (SCWM) Programme has the national goal to rehabilitate all degraded land in the country. Rehabilitation of the degradation land could also be an objective of the communities under the decentralized programme. Therefore, the SCWM programme adopts an incentive strategy that certain percentage of the implementation cost will be additionally subsidized to the communities whichever implement rehabilitation of the degraded land from the decentralized community budget. Communities, which see the activity as beneficial for them will decide to implement the activity from the decentralized development budget with getting some incentive fund from the SCWM programme. The trick here is to set the percentage of additional subsidy to a level that the community will be attracted to implement the activity. Also it will be a challenge for the programme to develop the rehabilitation package making it an attractive and beneficial for the communities so that national goals can be achieved. Such strategy could also be adopted by the local governments such as DDC and VDC and by all service oriented development line agencies to join hands with decentralized development processes.

6. Conclusion

Despite of all these good strategies, either party involved in the conflict may impose social, physical and mental threats to the stakeholders involved with the development processes. Also, either party might question and or interrogate suspiciously the development workers regarding their presence in the working areas. All development stakeholders including international agencies collectively must resist strongly against such actions / behaviour. Pursue the "Basic Operating Guidelines" to all concerned parties involved in the conflict. With all these precautions also, working in a conflict sensitive area will not be free of risks. Conflicts will be a part of life.

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