

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Principal Conclusions

The principal conclusions, regarding the impact of the project, the status of resource management systems prevalent in the area, and the role of institutional innovations, are as follows:

- o Despite the fact that irrigation works have been sponsored by the Project through the VOs, they are still managed by indigenous institutions. Project-sponsored institutions still do not have a role in managing these resources.
- o Institutional innovation has been adopted successfully in areas where it played a major part in management of financial resources. The VOs are more successful in areas where poverty and indebtedness are both prevalent and where indigenous institutions are strong. These VOs have emerged as viable institutions in financial management.
- o The most important social change is disintegration of the traditional tribal system. The centralised and authoritarian political organisation has almost vanished, although its kinship-based organisation is still prominent. The diminishing political authority of the *sardars* has resulted in increased power for lineage heads and village leaders who have emerged as 'local influentials'. Economic resources are also more widely distributed because of these changes which have been largely induced by the State.

The Project

The following are the conclusions pertaining to the Project in particular:

- o In the initial phase, the Project implemented development schemes presented by village project committees consisting of 'local influentials'. Three hundred and fifty-five were implemented and some of these were of little benefit to the community. Some schemes remained incomplete due to local disputes and some due to lack of supervision by project staff. This led to the revision of Project Strategy.

In the Orientation Phase, the Project solicited self-help contributions for schemes. In the case of physical infrastructure, contributions were provided by villagers in the form of free labour, and local leaders were able to mobilise villagers to work on these schemes. This perpetuated the traditional pattern of landlords exacting free labour from peasants. It was not an innovation as such and consequently the project did not succeed in organising broad-based self-help groups at the village level.

During the first implementation phase, from 1986 to 1988, project objectives were clearly defined and activities were systematically planned. Efforts were directed towards institution building at the village level and the LGD was made a partner in management and implementation. LGD was also required to provide 50 per cent of the finances to implement schemes and institution building was entrusted to LGD field staff and the Training Section of the Project. The project area was also extended to three more union councils, and one hundred and eighty one VOs were organised. The Project paid wages to VO members who worked on infrastructural schemes, and twenty five per cent of the wages were deposited in the joint savings' account of the VO. This helped to establish the VOs.

- o During the Second Implementation Phase, which began in 1988, great stress was laid on the training component. Whereas during the Orientation and First Implementation Phases, project activities were not very well planned, in the Second Implementation Phase, the Project organised its staff into different sections and units responsible for specific programmes. A Social Development Section was created and given responsibility for institution building.
- o Evolution of the Project in the Second Implementation Phase was characterised by learning from experience instead of initiating activities in a pre-planned manner. Some activities were started first and the staff recruited later. The Social Development Section has now been given the responsibility of assessing the existing VOs and improving their performance.

The Project Impact

The conclusions concerning the impact of the Project are as follows:

- o The Project has had an impact on the life of people throughout the project area, irrespective of the VO's status and the extent of its functioning. In the Orientation Phase, the Project approved 355 physical infrastructure schemes for water supply, irrigation, agriculture, land development, erosion control, school buildings, and road construction. Scarcity of water, which forced people to migrate, is no longer a problem in most of the project area as almost 59 per cent of all schemes were for improvement of water supply.

There have been changes in the livestock sector and in the traditional semi-nomadic life style. There are marked trends towards market production, and this has led to an increase in herd sizes. Establishment of "enclosures", on commonly owned rangeland, and scarcity of pastures had compelled large numbers of pastoralists to search for alternative livelihoods. They are now mostly wage labourers in towns and have started to build permanent houses. Until recently, their entire household assets were loaded on to donkeys or camels and they were obliged to travel with their herds in search of fuel and fodder.

- o The Project has assisted two such nomadic communities to acquire housing plots and construct houses in Killi Jumma Khan Musa Khan. The first community of landless labourers had been forced out of their villages due to scarcity of irrigation and drinking water and their winter camping grounds had been taken over by farmers. The second was a community of small landowners-cum-sheep breeders who abandoned the nomadic life because they were unable to find adequate pastureland or afford payments for fodder. The Project has been able to help communities to adjust to social and economic changes, accept wage labour, and exchange subsistence for market production.
- o The Project has made considerable efforts to develop human resources. A large number of education and training schemes, involving different socioeconomic groups, were implemented. They included training programmes in basic health, poultry farming, agriculture and horticulture, livestock, and training of Community Health Workers and VO leaders. The Project has also helped VOs to establish schools for their children and, gradually, villagers are beginning to send their children to school.
- o Integration of women in development activities has been undertaken in some villages of the project area. Income generating schemes, such as poultry raising and embroidery, have been successfully initiated, and the Project has helped village women to acquire improved breeds of poultry and has provided training in chicken vaccination. The Women's Section linked embroidery and crafts' production with the market through Threadlines Gallery in Quetta. It

also conducted health training in some areas. After successful completion of training, the trainees were provided with medical kits, which had been supplied by UNICEF, and some medicines and vitamins donated by the Project. The Women's Section also provided training in the construction of fuel saving stoves in the union councils of Mashkaf and Jalal Khan. The response to this was not as encouraging as in some other training programmes. A kitchen garden programme, that included training in the trickle irrigation technique with porous pitchers, was introduced into a few villages during the First Implementation Phase. Sociocultural constraints are greatest for the women's programme and it had to close down in Nichara in 1988. This has delayed the introduction of programmes in Baghao, Kenwari, and Panjpai. Renewed efforts will be necessary to overcome the constraints caused by lack of education and sociocultural prejudices.

Institution Building

The following conclusions have been drawn concerning institution building; particularly in regard to optimum resource and environmental management.

- o The Project is helping to strengthen popular participation by sponsoring community institutions. With the appropriate knowledge and skills, imparted through training programmes, these institutions may be able to achieve the sustainable management of local resources. In order to improve the implementation of its programmes, the Project has tried different approaches in succeeding phases, with the result that these changes have produced positive results and, in some areas, the Project has successfully nurtured responsible institutions.
- o The Project is trying to induce social change through institutional innovations and, therefore, incorporates the positive features of customs, conventions, values, and social organisations in rural communities. At the same time, it is strengthening the financial, technical, and organisational resources of the community so that it can use its resources in a sustainable manner.
- o Response to the institution building efforts of the Project has varied in different areas according to ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. The role of the LGD field staff, as extension agent, was crucial, because they were entrusted with the responsibility of mobilising organisational resources in the villages. The Project trained LGD field staff as extension agents and catalysts, but some of them failed to understand and internalise the concept of self-help and participation. They concentrated, instead, on saving and stressed that without saving, assistance would not be forthcoming. In terms of schemes, there was a heavy focus on infrastructural innovations. The interpretation of the community organisation concept was often imposed by the DO and as a result, in some villages, the project strategy did not work. In the first quarter of 1989, 55 per cent of the VOs failed to hold meetings while 25 per cent had not added to their savings during the same period. In response to this situation, the Social Development Section of the Project put in a great deal of effort to rectify the concept of self-help and participation propagated by the DOs.

Selected Cases from the Study Villages

In the union councils of Nisai and Sharigh, both *Pathan* areas, the village leaders mostly demand schemes for their private benefit. The VOs in both these union councils are dominated by 'local influentials'. The DO encourages them to save regularly in the hope of obtaining schemes from

the Project, but these VOs rarely seem to hold meetings. Some VOs in these union councils are very small, e.g. ten members. Among their members, some are government employees in other areas, shopkeepers, or migrant labourers who have little interest in cooperation at the village level.

In the first quarter of 1989, only one out of 17 VOs had held meetings in Nisai Union Council, and one VO had made regular savings during this period. Nichara Union Council, ethnically a *Brohi* area, has 40 VOs. None of them held meetings in the first quarter of 1989, and thirty-three of them had not made any additional savings either. In Panjpai, ethnically *Brohi* and *Pathan*, none of the nine VOs held meetings in the first quarter of 1989 but all saved regularly during the same period.

In terms of ethnicity, the *Pathans* and *Brohis* have not responded to project initiatives, although the DOs of these union councils are to be held partly responsible. *Pathan* and *Brohi* communities are based on segmentary lineages with fluid factional coalitions, and they can achieve consensus in matters crucial to their coexistence. Otherwise these communities, however small, are marred by factionalism.

Relative prosperity, through cultivation of cash crops in areas with perennial irrigation, emerges as an obstacle to institution building. In these areas, the 'local influentials' are rich landlords, whereas the other villagers are their tenants and under their control. These influentials demand improvement in irrigation or schemes, that are of limited benefit to the community at large, and organise VOs simply to obtain such schemes. These VOs are not broad-based, do not meet regularly, and, hence, are not effective. The union councils of Nisai, Nichara, and Sharigh are typical examples of places where there are such instances.

Jalambani village is in the union council of Mashkaf. It is a *Brohi* village which has recently achieved prosperity due to cash crop cultivation and improvement in transportation. Although there are no sharp class differences in this lineage-based community, village politics are tarnished by factionalism and the VO became inactive a few months after its establishment.

The majority of villages in Jalal Khan Union Council are inhabited by landless labourers and tenants who cultivate land as share-croppers. They have responded to the project initiatives with enthusiasm. Their landlords have not prevented them from joining the VO, and one obvious reason for this is the shortage of tenants in the area. A vast majority of tenants have contracts to cultivate large areas of land and this is outside their capacity at the present level of technology and services. In some villages, large landlords have also sold small plots of land to their tenants in order to keep them on the land.

Tenants in this area are very poor compared to other areas. However, this is not because they produce less than their needs but because of their dependence on the traditional financial market for loans. Money-lenders support their consumption needs as well as financing seed purchases in the sowing season. The interest rate is ten per cent per month and the lenders are notorious for inflating accounts. Their method of recovery is to some extent responsible for the perpetuation of this economic relationship. The seeds are purchased at a very high price, and, with interest, the account almost doubles by harvest time. By harvest time, the crop prices usually decline substantially (for example in 1988 the price of sorghum was five times higher during the sowing period than at harvest time). It is then that the money-lender recovers his debt and interest by appropriating a very substantial part of the produce. This means that, after clearing the debt, the tenant is left with little surplus, and he has to rely on further loans for his consumption needs.

Until recently, tenants were subject to other exactions, made by the landlord, known as *haboob* (taxes in addition to the crop-sharing agreement). These are over and above the normal contractual share. The term *haboob* covers different types of taxes used to support intermediaries who collect the landlord's share of the produce with which they pay artisans who work for the landlord and pay for *jirga* meetings. Tenants also have to provide a sheep or goat at the birth, marriage, or death of someone in the landlord's family. This form of oppression has, however, to some extent, diminished.

The VOs provided an institutional structure to mobilise savings and disburse loans, and one important factor contributing to their success appears to be the presence or absence of the institutional structure of *thala* or group tenancy. The *thala*, usually a group of several or more close kin tenants, enters into a joint contract with the landlord. It is also a labour cooperative which jointly uses its resources. A village can have several *thalas* and, where they exist, the VO has emerged as a mediating structure or a federation of these *thalas*. Because of the strong cooperative institutional base of the *thala*, the VOs in these villages are more efficient. This institutional structure can be built upon as is obvious by the success of the internal lending programme in two VOs with *thalas*.

The *thala* system is found throughout most of the flood irrigated areas of Kachhi District. The *thala* is a stable institution responsible for the management of land and irrigation resources, and is composed of close kin and headed by the eldest member. In some cases, kinship also contributes to the solidarity of the group.

Under this system, the landlord deals only with the head of the *thala*, or *raiece*, who is responsible for recruiting tenants for land preparation and cultivation. The *raiece* allocates different plots of land to each member and they work individually or even collectively when more labour is required. Every tenant pays a full share to the landlord, except the *raiece* who pays a reduced share since he manages the labour and cultivation. Chronic labour shortages in the area contribute to the perpetuation of the *thala*.

Economic conditions, predominated by want and perpetual indebtedness, in flood-irrigated areas with strong indigenous institutions, have responded to and adopted the VO as an institutional innovation. The majority of tenants in Jalal Khan are *Baluchis* who are not natives of what is now Baluchistan. They migrated to these areas from Dera Ghazi Khan and Dera Ismail Khan districts within the past two centuries.

This is an area where want and extreme poverty are prevalent. The people, who have recently been emancipated from the oppressive system, seek to improve their lot. They will risk the wrath of their landlords if the benefits, even in the long run, are greater than the losses (see village profile of Talhar Pathan). They appear content and confident in their own efforts and hard work.

Panjpai Union Council is a sharp contrast to Jalal Khan. Most of the inhabitants in the former are livestock farmers. Agricultural land is irrigated and landholdings are large. About ten per cent of the men are employed by the Public Works Department as labourers in construction and maintenance of roads and buildings. The population is equally distributed between the *Pathan* (*Mishwari*) and *Brohi* (*Samalani*) tribes. Politics are strictly factional. Mutual rivalry is not only endemic but is also sustained through considerable effort. Relative freedom from poverty and want is obvious both in attitudes and actions. The villages in this union council were disinterested in the Project, because, as they frankly admitted, they cannot cooperate with each other due to long standing factional rivalries.

Nine VOs were organised. According to the Supervisor of the union council, none of the VOs held meetings during the past few months although most make regular savings' contributions. In 1987, the Project sanctioned school buildings at the request of three VOs, but these schools were constructed by contractors who failed to complete the roofs of the buildings. The VOs demanded that the buildings be completed but, in the meantime, the roofs were extensively damaged by wind and rain. The contractor received full payment without completing the work, and the VOs have not shown any interest in caring for the three schools which are now in a condition of disrepair. Similarly, the Project provided one VO with a diesel engine for pumping water. When a minor part became broken, the VO did not arrange to have it repaired. Some VOs want to discontinue their savings' contributions and have asked to have their deposits returned.

The LGD field staff also experience difficulties in Panjpai. The DO is rarely able to visit the union council because he does not have a field vehicle. Although the Project provided vehicles for all the project DOs, the jeep for the Panjpai DO was requisitioned by the LGD Department in Quetta. Within the project area, the DOs are responsible for implementing schemes, and funds are disbursed through them. This means that the Panjpai DO was unable to fulfill this duty and, as a result, the Project invited contractors to do the job and funds were directly disbursed to them. The supervisor of the union council is also of the opinion that half of the union council is actually in Pishin District and is simply an added burden for Quetta District staff. Factors such as these have contributed to the lack of institution building in the union council. However, it is the sociocultural set-up of segmentary social organisation, characterised by perpetual conflicts, as well as the relative prosperity of the villagers, that is the most important factor for failure in institution building.

Seasonal migration and pastoral nomadism also have a bearing on project performance. In the temperate zone, some people migrate in winter to relatively warm areas. In the tropical zone, people migrate to relatively cooler places during the summer. Therefore, VO meetings and savings can not be organised for several months in some areas.

Role of the LGD

It is difficult to assess the impact of, and the role in, project management of the LGD. The Project introduced major policy changes from the First Implementation Phase onwards, and the involvement of LGD field staff became more important with the creation of the Self-help Unit. Without LGD assistance, the project staff would not have been able to cover a large number of villages.

It is also important to consider the role of LGD as the main agency responsible for rural development in the country. The LGD has its own style of work and its own priorities. Government agencies usually limit their contact with the public to the elite who, thus, have a significant impact on decision-making. The Project adopted a different strategy and tried to establish contact with the masses to build responsible and representative institutions. It tried to reduce the role of the rural elite by increasing popular participation. Many DOs either did not understand the project philosophy and approach or were reluctant to abandon their previous work style. They have, as yet, not fully succeeded in communicating the project's strategy to the villagers of Baluchistan.

The integration of the rural development project with local government institutions was intended to strengthen institution building and implementation. Integration of the Project with the "elected local government structure" is an important principle of rural development (Khan 1976,213). However, empirical evidence from the project area indicates that sharing

responsibilities with the LGD has not been completely successful even though the Project is being implemented in an autonomous manner.

The Project was initiated with autonomous management. Since the beginning of the First Implementation Phase, with progressive emphasis on the role of the LGD, the project management has become semi-autonomous. Yet, implementation through the Self- help Unit, within the LGD framework, did not work completely. This supports the findings of a World Bank Study that argue that "*institution building has suffered most when reliance on autonomous or semi-autonomous project management units has been substituted for line agencies*" (World Bank 1988,33). However, the fault may not lie in autonomy, as the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme is achieving considerable success in the Northern Areas of Pakistan with autonomous project management.

An important implication of the autonomy of the Project is lack of coordination among different agencies. Autonomous projects, according to the World Bank, "*have not proven very effective in inter-agency coordination*" (1988,34). This is a major problem in Baluchistan where a large number of foreign and international agencies have initiated development projects in different sectors. These projects do not coordinate their activities and the Government of Baluchistan does not insist upon them doing so.

Specific Recommendations

A few specific recommendations have emerged from the present study. The project management may wish to consider them for future implementation:

1. The Project is implemented in nine union councils which are not contiguous. The distance between Baghao Union Council, in Loralai, and Kenwari, in Lasbela, is about 700 miles, and both are far from Quetta. Project staff cannot visit these areas often enough because of the problem of transportation across rough rural roads, over long distances, and lack of accommodation in the field areas. This restricts the ability of project staff to monitor the VO programmes. The Project might have much more impact if it concentrated on a few contiguous districts.
2. The Project has started some of its activities in areas that are relatively prosperous. These are areas with perennial irrigation, such as the union councils of Sharigh, Nichara, and Panjpai. The communities there are segmentary and factional, and this, together with their prosperity, results in a poor response to project initiatives. The Project might want to consider withdrawing its cooperation from such areas if the VO assessment confirms this pattern.
3. Some problems in implementation of the Project can be attributed to the LGD field staff and the LGD Self-help Unit. Division of authority, between the Project Coordinator and the Project Manager, restricts the ability of the management to enforce discipline and supervise project staff. The presence of an autonomous project leader, empowered to supervise all project staff, may improve project implementation.
4. For physical infrastructure schemes, the Project pays daily wages at the rate of Rs 40 per day. In many parts of Baluchistan, even in Quetta, daily wages are much lower. One DO paid daily wages of Rs 50 per day. In one scheme, he employed more than 70 persons per day for construction of a lined water tank. The Project approved these higher daily wage rates to encourage capital formation, since 25 per cent of the wages are compulsorily

deposited in the VO's savings' account. However, in one scheme, VO members (most of whom were government employees) sub-hired labourers at the rate of Rs 30 per day. To avoid such abuses, it is recommended that the daily wage rate be negotiated individually for each development scheme.