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**PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (PDP) a**  
**IN BHUTAN**  
**BHU/98/001'AND INT/92/104 ;~**

**EVALUATION REPORT**

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III

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Acronyms

1. Major Findings	1
2. Introduction	4
3. Observations	
„ 4. Sustainability of the Projects and Process	13
5. Recommendations for the Next Phase	14
6. Case Studies	16
7. Annexes	

IV

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Thank you all once again!

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## **Acronyms**

BCCI	Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industries
BSA	Bhutan Scouts Association
BYDA	Bhutan Youth Development Association
CBO	Community Based Organisation
LCDA	Laya Community Development Association
LUCDA	Lunana Community development association
NSC	National Steering Committee
NWAB	National Women's Association Bhutan,
PDP	Partners in Development Programme
RGOB	Royal Government of Bhutan
RSPN	Royal Society for Protection of Nature
TCWA	Tang Community Welfare Association
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

WWAWamrong Weavers' Association

YDF

Yarn Development Fund

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## 1. Major Findings

### Strengths

1. PDP has proven to be very commendable non-mainstream initiative of UNDP, which directly works with the people's organisations for their capacity building as well as poverty reduction of the community.
2. In terms of targeting, PDP has been able to reach to the right people, who need the most to be assisted in their efforts to improve their quality of life.
3. Its flexible broad approach has made it possible to reach into some very inaccessible and marginalised communities.
4. Remote communities in Laya and Lunana have been able to plan and implement different activities for the improvement of their quality of life. For the first time, the communities have been able to organise for their own cause. People in those communities have benefited socially as well as economically.
5. The Tang Community Welfare association has been able to set up a demonstration farm in the community. It has a very good scope of providing extension services to the community. It has a potential of being a model community managed integrated farm
6. The commitment and the enthusiasm demonstrated by the majority of the people in the partner organisations , as well as National Steering Committee indicate that PDP started its activities at the right time with right approach.
7. The Royal Government of Bhutan also seems to provide conducive environment for the activities to strengthen community organizations to take responsibility of their development process. Therefore, the frame conditions are quite favorable.
8. More and more international aid agencies are willing to support communities in their institutional strengthening for poverty reduction.
9. PDP can be model for such activities in demonstrating that community organizations are capable of taking up their development responsibilities, if they are given an opportunity
10. In the present context, where all the international aid agencies are .making their aid money linked to the good governance, a project like this has a great relevance.

### Scope of making a good programme even better

1. Targeting is being done on an ad hoc basis
2. Proposal writing is rather a complicated process. Therefore the communities will always require support from others in writing them. w
3. Social and community mobilization as well as institutional strengthening part is given

less priority in the projects. Except in the case of Tang Community, in all other cases, the project is very much only looking after the income generation part. If institutional strengthening part is not taken care of, the sustainability aspect becomes difficult, if not impossible. (objective 2 and 3 fall short in most of the cases)

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4. Reporting format emphasizes only the financial aspects. It has very little room for social and linkage/networking parts. Therefore, it takes care of only one part of the objective of PDP. That may be one of the reasons, why social part is falling short.
5. Monitoring system is rather weak, both internally and externally.
6. Except for TCWA, there is no permanent contact person for the communities to take care of the institutional development.
7. Remoteness of the working areas sometimes seem to create problems in timely supply of required inputs.
8. PDP has put much efforts till now, and in the next phase, it should be looking towards more achievements

### **Major recommendations**

1. In the next phase, the PDP should plan and programme more strategically. It should identify some focus areas for better demonstration effect and more visible impact at different levels.
2. Many international aid agencies seem to be willing to work similarly as PDP. It may be worthwhile to look for possibilities of creating a basket funding approach of all those interested agencies for a greater impact.
3. Institutional development of the partner organisations should be given topmost priority. This will ensure a more sustainable improvement in terms of poverty reduction as well as linkage to other agencies. Institutionally strengthened communities will have a better chance of continuing even after the end of the project support.
4. Social/Community mobilization should be started prior to or parallelly to the income generating to ensure self help development. In that way, communities will be able to extend even their area of work beyond the project activities. This will ensure a sustainable community development through their own organisations.
5. PDP should explore on possibilities of working through intermediaries for the capacity building of the community organisations. While going into partnership with those intermediaries, it should make sure that the vision and objective of those organisations match with those of the PDP.
6. Institutional development of the intermediary organisations (NGOs, Consulting firms etc.), both in their own resource base creation as well as in terms of organisation should also be part of the programme for the sustainability purpose. This will allow creation of a sound organisational infrastructure in the country. This will have a great relevance in the present context of country's democratization process and the good governance.
7. PDP should concentrate on the right mix of system development and process orientation for the sustainability. Sustainability does not come instantly. It requires institutional

strengthening of the communities.

8. PDP should coordinate with other international and national development agencies for synergy and greater impact. Many donors seem to have similar projects or are willing to launch similar projects. In this line, PDP should document its experiences for the purpose of wider dissemination.

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9. Timely planning of the input supply and training activities will gear the project towards greater efficiency and sustainability.
10. Saving schemes and other community activities should be started in the working communities. This will enhance community cohesiveness and continuity of the project activities.
11. The procedure of proposal writing and the reporting should be made more community friendly, as to develop self reliance of the communities in that regard also.
12. Explore on potential for developing the mid level intermediaries to support communities in the procedure: BYDA, NWAB, RSPN etc. Linking their agenda with the organizational development and income generation of the communities
13. Monitoring system should be improved in such a way that there is an in-built system of self monitoring and self reflection. The case of TCWA demonstrates that it is possible. Capacity building of the partners at different levels should be initiated.
14. A closer contact person to the community should be there at least for a limited period of time to ensure community cohesiveness and organizational building. More training with regard to social and organisational aspects should be conducted.

### **Lessons Learned**

1. Projects have to be planned really feeding the need and potential of the community. The potential of the community should be well assessed before implementing any activity. Otherwise it may lead to a failure and disappoint the community.
2. Process and system development for the cause of sustainability takes time.
3. Social mobilization should be started prior to the economic activities
4. Institutional strengthening or capacity building must be the first priority, without which no sustainability can be achieved.
5. At least for a certain period of time, the communities need a permanent contact person to develop the system and process for sustainability.

## **2. Introduction**

### **2.1. BACKGROUND**

The Partners in Development Programme (PDP) became operational in Bhutan in February 1993. A Country Strategy as well as a project selection criteria was set up by the National Steering Committee in the same year and have recently been revised.

The objectives of the programme are:

- support community-based self-help initiatives, including income-generating activities to alleviate poverty.
- strengthen the institutional capacity of local NGOs and community groups to respond effectively to critical development needs.
- promote networking with a view to strengthen dialogue among local NGOs and community groups, RGOB, UNDP and other donors.

In its first phase( 1993-1996), the PDP supported Laya Community Development Association, the Bhutan Youth Development Association and the Honey Bee Association. The total fund allocated for the first phase of the PDP was \$36,000.

In the second phase (1997-1999), the PDP had a total amount of \$100,000 and supported Laya Community Development Association, The Bhutan Youth Development Association, the Tang Community Association and the Thupay Lopneer Weaving Association. PDP is right now in the interim third phase (1999-2000) and is heading for a full-fledged third phase.

### **12.2. SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION**

This mission has been assigned to look into the operation of the second phase of the PDP and the task given to the mission is to

- 1) Assess the appropriateness of the programme's concept and design and the project's effectiveness in realizing its immediate objectives and the extent to which they have contributed towards strengthening the institutional, organizational and technical capability of the communities in achieving its long-term development objectives.
- 2) Review the efficiency and adequacy in implementation and management of the programme.
- 3) Review the execution modality of the programme.

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- 4) Review the PDP Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Tool Kit based on the sample test of 5 tools (out of 30) in the field (Wobthang and Wamrong) and provide comments on the soundness of these methods for the communities as well as programme staff.
- 5) To review the results of the programme based on efficiency, effectiveness, and significance through field observations (input, output, impact).

The main objective of the evaluation mission is to make workable recommendations for the forthcoming third phase of the PDP based on the experiences made and lessons learned from the first and second phases.

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### **3. Observations**

#### **3.1 Programme Concept and Design**

Given the situation in Bhutan where CBOs and NGOs are few and all in the very early stages of development, PDP Bhutan has been timely and effective in promoting and facilitating the formation of and strengthening CBOs and NGOs. This has been enabled by its very clear guidelines on selection and approval criteria for the award of PDP funds. In this way, the communities from Tang, Laya and Lunana formed associations to avail of the PDP grants.

Young associations like the BYDA and the Thupay Lopneer were funded, so that, in



addition to establishment of scout clubs in various schools, they could strengthen themselves and gain experience from implementing the PDP project.

The programme is responsive to changes in project and this has been built into the Progress Report Format where there is a section for "Amendments If Any". Through this provision, TWCP, BYDA and LUCDA have made small changes to their projects.

## **Statement of Objectives and Outputs**

The second phase of the Partners in Development Programme (PDP) clearly states its three main objectives:

Support community-based self-help initiatives, including income generating activities to alleviate poverty.

Strengthen the institutional capacity of local NGOs and community groups to respond effectively to critical development needs

Promote networking with a view to strengthen dialogue among local NGOs and community groups, RGOB, UNDP and other donors.

Also, it states clearly and precisely who its target beneficiaries are. Further, it has created mechanisms needed to ensure that these objectives and targets are achieved.

However, given the lack of CBOs and the lack of a policy framework in the country,' the PDP has, as its first stage been focusing on introduction and promotion of the programme. This was done, and is still being done by providing an activity for communities to rally around and gain exposure and experience in dealing with development.

This has meant that PDP has had to focus mainly on the first objective of the PDP, that is, to support community-based self-help initiatives, including income generating activities

to alleviate poverty. Four of the five PDP funded projects (Wamrong Weavers Association, TCWP, LCDP and the LUCD) are aimed at income generation. Only, the BYDA project falls under the category of strengthening the institutional capacity of local NGOs.

For this reason and because it was seen as too early, the community development aspect of the programme has generally taken a back seat. The result has been that even where opportunities existed, community development was not supported or monitored. For example, both the Wamrong and the TCWP projects have strong elements of institution

building which are not reflected in the project objectives or activities. As a result these are not reflected in the progress reports and there are no inputs to support, these activities.

## **Identification of beneficiaries**

The design of PDP, especially its selection criteria has facilitated it in reaching out to the poorest and the most underserved rural communities in Bhutan.

The guidelines specify that in the selection of beneficiaries, priority is to be given to remote rural communities. The identification and selection of the target beneficiaries in each of the five projects has been consistent with these guidelines. The target beneficiaries of each of the five projects are clearly identified and belong to some of the most isolated and underserved communities in the country. The communities of Lunana and Wamrong are one of the poorest and most backward in the country. In Laya and Tang, due to lack of roads, the communities have also been left behind in the development process. BYDA is a young NGO with much potential for developing into an intermediary NGO to work with the youth of Bhutan.

One consequence has been that PDP projects are scattered across the country in remote pockets. This makes communication and monitoring extremely difficult and expensive. The communities have had very little exposure to the development process or to outsiders.

## **Prioritization**

In awarding PDP support, priority is given to activities that

- Facilitate community participation in their design, implementation and evaluation
- Conserve the sustainable use of natural resources if used as an income generating asset
- Include local contributions and cost sharing by stakeholders
- Consider remote rural communities in selecting eligible grantees

- Expand community access to local sources of technical assistance and training
- Draw on indigenous knowledge, experience and traditional practices of communities and support their role as environment managers.

The second phase of PDP has adhered strictly to this prioritization in the award of its support. The prioritization also indicates outputs expected by the PDP.

## **Statement of Outputs and Verifiable Indicators**

The first and second phases of the PDP have operated without a project document and though the objectives have been clear, the outputs for the program are not stated in any of the guidelines. The guidelines for the prioritization of the awards provide some clue to the expected outputs. However, the guidelines for the proposals have a clear section on Outputs, and these are consistent with PDP objectives and priorities.

The LCDA and the LUCDA projects are aimed purely at poverty alleviation and income generation and the outputs are clearly stated and verifiable.

Under the WWA and the TCWP, the outputs related to income generation are stated precisely and in verifiable terms. However, due to the focus on income generation and poverty alleviation, the most important components of strengthening capacity building of community groups are not included under the output section.

However, this has already been remedied and as of 1999 the proposal format includes a section called "Plan To Ensure Community Participation". Prior to this, aside from participation as beneficiaries, community development was missing in all of the proposals. In the TWCP and WWA project they are given as annexes. More care needs to be given to ensuring that this section is completed because this component is the core objective of the PDP and is also the component that ensures that project benefits will be sustained even after the project is over.

## **Relationship Between Project Activities and Outputs**

Where reflected in the project document, all activities are linked to inputs which have led to definite outputs. For example in WWA, 60 women have been trained in improved weaving and have easy access to yarn. Activities related to the documentation of motifs is already underway. The weaving charges have tripled since the start of the project.

In the TCWP, a dairy has been established and is already generating income on a small scale. More importantly, the community has formed an association and each family provides labor for the farm in return for which he will receive a share in the ownership of the farm. The members have elected a committee with fixed duties and responsibilities to assist the farm manager.

The BYDA has been gaining valuable exposure in planning and implementing through implementation of the PDP project. This project has trained scout masters who have then

established scout clubs in a number of schools and also facilitated the establishment of the Bhutan Scout Association which is linked to the World Scout Movement.

In Laya and Lunana, the activities were mainly distribution of inputs and training in sheep husbandry and vegetable farming. And the outputs were more long term and therefore not verifiable during the life of the project. Community capacity building was mainly in the area of training in agriculture and sheep farming all of which have been achieved.

#### Workplan

The WWA project has a workplan for the trainings in weaving and this has been followed. There is no workplan on community development or the Yarn Development Fund.

The BYDA Workplan was also followed. The TCWP has a detailed workplan which has been generally followed, except for changes that were negotiated with PDP.

The Laya and Lunana projects had no Work Plan. However, all activities were conducted except for the Development of Yak Milk and Hair Products which were dropped as too early to take up. The supply of smokeless stoves was dropped from the project because the community requested it.

### **3.2 Management, Implementation and the Monitoring of the PDP**

A National Steering Committee (NSC) comprising of the representatives from different relevant government, non governmental as well donor institutions. This committee guides the project generally in terms of the concept, policy and consistency of the activities with regard to the national development agenda. The proposals submitted to the PDP have to be approved by the committee prior to going into an agreement. The committee reserves the right for disapproving any proposal that does not meet the criteria or it may ask for improvements of any proposal to meet the criteria. Representatives from the following offices are the members of the NSC

1. National Environment Commission (chair of the NSC)
2. Ministry of National Planning
3. Home Ministry
4. Ministry of Finance
5. UNDP
6. Helvetas
7. UNICEF
8. SNV
9. Royal Society for Protection of Nature
10. Bhutan Chambers of Commerce and Industries

The PDP coordinator looks after the day to day management and coordination of the activities at the PDP level. The coordinator also screens the proposals submitted to the PDP by different organizations first before sending them to the NSC. Proposals are generally written by the PDP coordinator or by the intermediary organizations or

facilitators after discussing with the communities.

### **Implementation Procedure**

PDP has clearly formulated criteria for the eligible activities to be funded. It has also produced guidelines for proposal writing. Based on those criteria, the proposals are submitted to the PDP. The proposals are written, either by the NGOs or the communities themselves or they get external support for preparing the proposals. The PDP coordinator may verify the relevance of the proposal for the communities as per the guidelines of the PDP in the field. The proposals are then screened by the PDP-coordinator. After the process of preliminary screening, the proposals are sent to the national steering committee. A memorandum of Agreement (MoA) is signed between the UNDP and the respective partner organization. The grant money is disbursed in two installments, the first one upon signing the MoA and the second one upon receipt of the progress reports. The funds are channeled through the ministry of finance, which may forward the fund directly to the intermediaries or to the community organizations through the Dzongkhags. This allows the transparency and proper monitoring of the funds by the responsible authorities.

^ At the level of implementation, the projects are managed, depending upon the nature of the project, either by the intermediaries or by the community organizations themselves. However, in many cases, external managers or facilitators facilitate the community organizations. The idea however is that, once the communities are capable, they will take over the task of management themselves. Therefore, the major task of the manager, besides managing the project initially, is to strengthen the management capacity of the community organizations.

The partner organizations or the project managers report quarterly to the PDP. There is a reporting format prepared by the PDP. This has been the only tool for monitoring the progress of the activities so far. The design of the reporting format as of now emphasizes, however more on financial aspects only. Social mobilization part and the institutional strengthening part are not very well taken care of.

In addition to that, the PDP coordinator and the national steering committee members make visits to the programme sites. This provides follow up and backstopping support

The level of skill acquired by each community in terms of monitoring changes and adjusting accordingly differs from community to community. In case of Tang, the community people are coping quite well with the changes that are occurring. They have for their own purpose well developed a system of monitoring changes and then adjusting accordingly. The committee meets regularly to discuss and decide upon the current burning issues. They are applying subsidiarity principle in the real sense.

In case of the Weaver's Association in Wamrong, the system of monitoring and reflection is not yet in place. They need more capacity building support in this regard.

The PDP target beneficiaries are the remote rural communities. In Bhutan, these form the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. They live in remote isolated villages and are still dependent on trails, mule tracks and ropeways for communication. The literacy rate of these communities is generally non-existent and subsistence agriculture or livestock farming are the only sources of livelihood. These communities are not located in one geographical region but are spread out in small pockets across the country.

The extreme isolation of such groups makes it imperative and yet much more difficult and expensive to monitor and guide activities. In such situations, the solution is to place a facilitator at the community level and/or train communities to self monitor and evaluate their own progress. PDP has already taken steps to address this weakness and a workshop was held in Bumthang in May 2000 to train community members in the use of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Tool Kit. This may need to be evaluated for effectiveness and amended and refreshers conducted frequently.

The Evaluation team tested five of these tools on the community. Only the income and expenditure tree, the evaluation wheel and the semi-structured interview could be used, these too only with an outside facilitator. As PDP project beneficiaries are the most backward and underserved groups, they are totally unfamiliar with such tools. Orientation and refresher training will be required before they can use these tools to evaluate themselves.

A section on Expected Outputs needs to be included in the next phase of the PDP. When evaluating the five projects on the basis of the stated objectives, the Laya and Lunana appear to fall short. However, if they are judged on the basis of the priority selection criteria, the projects can be considered successful. It is possible that the projects were designed with these criteria in mind.

## **Activities and Outputs**

The range of PDP supported activities varies as follows

- Organisational capacity building of the intermediaries like BYDA for youth mobilization and scouting development
- Weaving capacity development of the weavers for income generation 3
- Revolving fund for timely supply of quality yam
- Support to institutional strengthening and income generation in Laya and Lunana
- Support to establish a community owned dairy cooperative in tang

- Support for documentation of indigenous knowledge etc.
- Different trainings on farming as well as non-farming skill development.

12

PDP only supports the proposals, that are well discussed with the communities. Communities mostly define activities based on their problem identification and potential. Except for the case of sheep in Lunana, all other activities are doing quite well.

Income generation seems to be the only direct output in many cases. Except for TCWA, the institutional strengthening and linkage with other organisations have not taken place really. PDP should focus more on those parts in the next phase.

### **3.3 Efficiency and Effectiveness**

Working with the most remote and marginalised communities requires redefinition of the term efficiency. It cannot just be seen in terms of time and money. It should be defined in terms of as to whether or not the benefits are being distributed to the most marginalised groups. Another indicator for the efficiency would be whether the resources being used are contributing towards the capacity building of those communities in terms of improving their livelihood. Therefore, if the people in the working areas are experiencing positive changes in their living quality due to the activities of certain projects, the project should be viewed as efficient.

PDP has managed to bring the benefits to some of the most marginalised communities as well as it has been able to bring about positive changes in the people's life at least in terms of income in most cases.

While talking about the efficiency, one should also view from the point of enabling people's organisations to take over the responsibility on their own shoulder in a given period of time. This aspect is not guaranteed in many cases, except for Tang. Communities are not even aware that they will have to continue with certain activities on their own. In the coming phase, this part should be given more focus.

When the people, who have benefited from a project, are willing to support others, who are yet to benefit, the project or an activity can be termed effective. This is the only way to make the system and process of development a self-propelling sustainable process. In most of the cases, this has not yet been the case. Perhaps, it is still too early to assess on this. But in the case of Tang, they seem to be already making thoughts as to how they can render services to others, once their needs are catered. For this matter also, an ample emphasis on the social mobilization and the institutional strengthening should be given by the PDP.

In terms of efficiency of input supply and management, the projects seem to be doing quite well. In some cases, some problems were faced due to the remoteness of the area. Some activities could not be conducted on time. In the case of Lunana a problem in terms

of Sheep supply was reported. Most probably, the timing of sheep transport and training the community in improved sheep raising could not be synchronised causing almost a failure of the programme. This has probably facilitated in the learning process of the people involved. It will certainly have a learning impact at all levels.

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There will always be some factors beyond the control of PDP and the partners, which will cause some problems in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. But one will have to be reckoned with such situations, specially while working with the most marginalised communities in the remote areas. Better planning, programming and capacity building will certainly reduce those risks.

### **3.4 Impact of the Project**

It is obviously still too early to assess upon the impact of PDP. Looking at the outcomes and their positive trend, one can assume that it is going towards the right direction in terms of impact as well. There are already few visible impacts that can be directly attributed to the efforts of PDP. In Wamrong, for example,' the weavers reported that they have been able to send their children to the school because of the increased income.

Bhutan Youth Development Association (BYDA), a partner organisation of PDP, has been able to facilitate in the formation of another NGO: Bhutan Scouts Association. This can be taken as the direct impact of PDP in intermediary organization development. The BYDA has also been able to facilitate in reformation of the youth and juvenile judiciary, which they admit that they would not have been able to do without the support of PDP. Tang Community Welfare Association (TCWA), another partner organization of the PDP has been able to create linkage to many other organizations, national as well as international. They were able to draw Nu 600,000 from Geog Development Fund Activities (GDFA) and 800,000 from the Department of Roads for repairing the road to Wobthang.

Those can be taken as a few visible impact of the PDP. And the most important fact is that the project is heading towards the right trend. Added social mobilization will certainly accelerate the process of acquiring sustainable long term impact.

*Laya and Lunana projects could not be visited. Therefore, this evaluation mission is not in a position to judge on the impact of the projects in the people's lives there.*

## **4. Sustainability of the projects and Process**



Sustainability is a state of the art, when the external efforts are merged with the processes within the community. To be sustainable, benefits from external inputs are generated from changes in economic, social, political, environmental and other processes, which continue once external assistance withdraws. That would mean that the community organisations are empowered and equipped enough to carry on with the activities on their own and they are also involved in the process of wider dissemination. It would also mean that the continuity and the replication of the processes are ensured.

This requires of course capacity building of the partners, since we are dealing with the organizations at the lowest level. Capacity development is a process, in which partners empower each other mutually. They learn to realize and celebrate the full potential of their organisational expression. It is a process, through which organisations become able

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to mobilize, pull and manage internal as well as external resources for the overall development of the organisation as well as the community, they are working with. Organisational capacity building is therefore about capacity building of the people to craft organisations in such a way that they are able to celebrate realization of their full potential. Only then the sustainability of the processes and the activities can be ensured.

Organisational capacity building, though stated very clearly as one of the three major objectives of PDP, has not been materialised as of now. In case of TCWA, they themselves are very actively taking part in every aspect of the project, thus leading towards a more strengthened organisation. But in all other cases, this aspect is yet to be started. There are different trainings being conducted in terms of capacity building. But all the trainings tend to focus only on technical skills for income generation than on the organisation or leadership qualities. Therefore, continuation of the processes after the phase out of the PDP is not yet guaranteed.

In the next phase of the PDP, a greater focus should be given to the organisational capacity building. Once there is a well established organisation at the community level, the income generation as well as mobilizing and pulling of resources internally as well as externally will be ensured. That would mean that the sustainability will be ensured.

## **5. Recommendations for the Next Phase**

1. More systematic approach shall be taken for collecting the proposals. As of now, the communities having some kind of approach to the people or organizations, who know about the PDP have been able to receive funds. In the future, PDP should develop a strategy to make itself accessible to the marginalised communities without any

approach to such facilitators.

2. In the next phase, the PDP should plan and programme more strategically. It should identify some focus areas for better demonstration effect and more visible impact at different levels.
3. Proposal writing procedure should be made more simple and community friendly, so that the communities are not always dependant on others for that purpose.
4. While screening the project proposals, due attention should be given to check their consistency with all the three objectives of the PDP.
5. Institutional development of the partner organizations should be given topmost priority. This will ensure a more sustainable improvement in terms of poverty reduction as well as linkage to other agencies. Institutionally strengthened communities will have a better chance of continuing even after the end of the project support
6. Social/Community mobilization should be started prior to or parallelly to the income generating to ensure self help development. In that way, communities will be able to extend even their area of work beyond the project activities. This will ensure a sustainable community development through their own organisations.
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organisations match with those of the PDP. (*Explore on potential for developing the mid level intermediaries to support communities in the procedure: BYDA, NWAB, RSPN etc. Linking their agenda with the organizational development and income generation of the communities*)

8. Institutional development of the intermediary organizations, both in their own resource base creation as well as in terms of organisation should also be part of the programme for the sustainability purpose. This will allow creation of a sound organisational infrastructure in the country. This will have a great relevance in the present context of country's democratization process and the good governance.
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13. Monitoring system should be improved in such a way that there is an in-built system of self monitoring and self reflection. The case of TCWA demonstrates that it is possible. Capacity building of the partners at different

levels should be initiated.

### *A thought for the design of the next phase*

*It was expressed by many international aid agencies as well as the government agencies, that they would like to support similar processes and activities as the PDP. Most of them are even willing to join hands for a greater impact and synergy in terms of achievements and impact. A thought for the future design of the project could be that of a basket fund for a project like this. In such a case, the Project will have to be an independent entity with the funds possibly from UNDP/PDP, Helvetas, SAW and others. A team of local consultant and/or an NGO with a bit of capacity building could implement the project. In this way ownership could not only be guaranteed at local level but also at a higher level up to the level of the international as well as government agencies. If properly designed, such an approach will certainly have efficient and sustainable impacts*

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### **Only Money is not enough**

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## **6. Case Studies**

### **6.1 Wamrong Weavers Association**

The target beneficiaries in Wamrong are one of the poorest in the country and live at least six hours walk from the nearest roadhead. The villagers have no source of income beside weaving, However, as they have no other source of income, they do not have cash to buy

the raw materials needed for weaving. Also, as most of them have not been outside their district and some not even outside their dungkhag, they are not familiar with marketing trends and demands.

Given these problems, the project' s aim was to provide credit in the form of yarn, training to improve products, training in costing for better prices/wages and test and introduce some labor-saving low-cost technology. The project would also document the motifs and produce a video film on the life of one of the beneficiaries.

The project approach is sound. Provision of credit in the form of yarn; training in basic costing, introduction of labor saving technology and introduction and gearing products to

changing market needs, are appropriate for addressing the issues identified in the problem statement.

The weavers have improved their weaving skills and yarn is easily accessible. Due to introduction to new designs and color combinations, weavers are earning more money for their products and weaving rates have tripled. At the group meeting, the women said that one of the main benefits of this project was that they could now send their children to schools. Previously, they could not afford the uniforms and the small sums that they had to pay.

The major factor which has facilitated the project is a staff of the NWAB, who without pay' has been the force behind the project. The procurement of yarn and transport of the finished products to Thimphu are normally arranged by her. She has also been active in the formation of groups and guiding the Fund Manager.

All of the 60 beneficiaries have been trained in the basics of weaving and yarn selection and costing of their products. Much needs to be done in training in managing the fund and purchase and marketing. The trainings will not be highly specialized or academic but more in the way of familiarizing weavers with sources, qualities and prices. All the group leaders could participate in this as there are only 12 of them.

When viewed from the point of efficiency and significance, the impact of the project is very great. Yarn is accessible and with a little training, products have improved and wages tripled. These are major and almost incredible achievements in such a short time span. The weavers also consider the project as very beneficial because their major problems of cash for buying yarn, access to quality yarn and marketing have all been done away by the project and in addition, their weaving charges have tripled within a year.

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But viewing it from the point of sustainability, there is an over-dependence on the project for purchase of yarn and marketing of finished products. Though they been taught basic costing, they do not exercise this knowledge. Instead, once the product is ready, they deliver it to the Fund manager and are content to accept whatever is given to them. They do not seem to be able to calculate their earnings and the cuts made by the Fund Manager, though they were able to inform us of the increase in weaving charges which have tripled since the start of the project.

They need much more exposure to the sources of yarn and where these can be bought-and also much more exposure on costing and marketing. Without building these capacities, the WWA will be faced with the same problems of no access to quality yarn and inability to market once the project is over.

In fact, item k. of the YDF Guidelines annexed to the Prodoc is in direct contradiction of PDP objectives when it states "In case of non delivery of the end product, despite the Project Manager having provided yarn to the weaver, a penalty shall be established. The

group of weavers have to repay the amount of yarn given." This has the effect of discouraging the weavers from exploring markets and ideas and keeping them dependent on the project. This should be immediately deleted from the guidelines and the weavers notified immediately and encouraged and facilitated to purchase and market through groups or through their Committees as long as their monthly instalments are paid.

This also questions the sustainability of providing credit in the form of yarn. The sources, prices and quality of yarn also need to be added to the documentation on motifs to guide the weavers after the project is over. At least 12 members (one member from each group) should be taken on a guided tour. The guide should be experienced in weaving and purchasing quality yarn and familiar with centres from where yarn is bought. The tour should visit all these centres to inquire about different qualities and types and costs and procure the stock for the year. The group should be briefed sufficiently in advance and then told that they must select and purchase the yarn, but with the guide to point out mistakes in selection if any, whether it be related to the quality, consumer taste or price. In Thimphu, the weavers should sell their items for two days at the Sunday Market. The tour could finish up with a visit to the Thimphu handicraft stores to look at prices. These tours should eventually lead to a group of weavers being fully capable of purchasing yarn to set up a quality yarn shop/store to cater to the demand for yarn.

A second concern is the issue of the Revolving Fund. On completion of the project, the YDF is to be transferred to the WWA. To be able to manage the YDF, the weavers need on-the-job training in management of the on-going fund. The Prodoc mentions an annually elected Committee of six members to make the Fund totally accountable -%Pd transparent. The Committee, will be responsible for the smooth running of the association, follow the movements of the yarn development fund and work closely with the Fund Manager. To date, this does not appear to have happened.

This component of the project has great potential for ensuring sustainability of the benefits of the project and will greatly strengthen the institutional capacity of Thupay Lopneer. Unfortunately, this important activity which forms the core objective of the

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PDP is not reflected in the objectives nor in the sections on activities, inputs and outputs. As a result, this has not featured in the progress reports and it has not been possible to monitor the progress or lack of progress on this front. PDP needs to highlight and support this activity either through additional funds and or through interline budget transfer.

It is recommended that the project be amended to highlight and support this activity and part of the budget for training in weaving be transferred to training in fund management and exposure to procurement and marketing. As most of the participants have also participated in the PADSA project, training in weaving could be cut back to one week. The balance funds could be rechanneled as recommended but with additional funds for guided travel (all the group leaders ) to sources of yarn in India and marketing in Thimphu. For training in fund management, a trainer may be required for three weeks in the beginning to train the Committee members and then for two weeks every six months,

to check on understanding and guide their progress. If started immediately, this can be achieved by the end of the project.

The Project Proposal Content Outline contains a section called "Plan To Ensure Community Participation" which, aside from participation as beneficiaries, is missing in all of the proposals. In the WWA project, it is buried in the annexes and since it does not figure in the input or output section, it has been left unmonitored. The WWA progress report mentions that a committee of 10 elected members had been set up, but judging from the field visit, it does not seem to be functioning as none of the members had any ideas on fund status nor could they refer us to any woman in the village who could do so.

At the moment, though 12 groups of five each have been formed, these are only for access to yarn. There appear to be no group dynamics and the women interviewed did not appear to be used to group discussions. They remember meeting twice since the start of the project and only one recalled the training on costing.

The project is definitely in keeping with national plans and policies, of balanced regional development, preservation of culture, strengthening women's role in society and enhancement of income in the rural areas. The Government also recognises the importance of NGOs and CBOs and is expected to come out with an umbrella Cooperatives Act by June 2000. Most of the other PDP projects rely on the agriculture services and infrastructure which are spread throughout the country. The project facilitators have also been civil servants. This is the only PDP project which is not related to agriculture and therefore there were no government facilities that the project could tap into.

In conclusion, the project has, in only one year managed to achieve most of its objectives and already the results have had an impact on the livelihood of the beneficiaries. But for sustainability, the project needs to change its focus to capacity building of the beneficiaries to manage the YDF and purchase of raw materials and marketing of products.

The overall lesson to be drawn from this is that PDP has to ensure that the section related to ensuring community participation is completed. This should be further reflected in the

19

activity and output sections so as to draw attention during monitoring visits or review meetings. Or else, the reporting format should be amended to incorporate a section on how the CBO or NGO is being prepared for taking over the activities after completion of the project.

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## **6.2. Tang Community Welfare Association**

### **Background**

In the year 1997, His Majesty granted the Wobthang Sheep Breeding farm to the Communities of the Tang Geog. The community feels that they were granted the farm, because of the excellent record of their collective works for the cause of the whole community.

We repaired 5 temples in our Geog with our own initiative. Those temples required repairing the roofing every year and used to be quite a burden to the community. Every year, the community members had to contribute many days of labour. But with our own initiative, we were able to arrange for the funds for CGI roofing for those temples.

The above statements clearly indicate the community spirit of the People in Tang. They feel that His majesty must have been made aware of the excellent record of their community in the Dzongkhag. Therefore HM granted such a big farm to their community. They are very proud of this fact and they take it as a challenge. They are committed to make it a success in terms of improving the living standard of the communities in a sustainable way.

They added

We are always the first Cieog to complete the task given by the Dzongkhag on time

We had never any community disputes regarding any kind of collective works to be accomplished.

We have also been able to arrange funds for 3 suspension bridges in our area. Those bridges were causing a lot of troubles to the community. Every year, we had to arrange for wood to repair the bridges.

We are quite well known as the most cohesive community in the whole Dzonkhag

We will make this farm a success and all the Geog household will benefit from it. All of us will have better livestock breeds. Once the farm has supplied enough of better breeds to our community, we will supply to the other Geogs in our districts and then throughout the country. In that way, we can show our appreciation and gratitude to the HM for his generous grant.

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All this really shows the commitment and the motivation of the community to make this project a success. They decided to convert the sheep breeding farm into a dairy farm. In order to manage the farm, they got themselves organised into Tang Community Welfare Association. Each household (250 households) in Tang is a member of the association and they also formed one committee to manage the farm. Dasho Dzongdag (the District Governor) is the chairperson of the farm, Gup (Administrative Head of the Geog) is the secretary and Chimi (National Assembly Member from that area) is the assistant secretary of the farm. Chimi and the project manager look after the finances of the farm.

### **Community contribution to the farm**

Out of 250 households, 200 have contributed a total of 3346 days of labour, which is equivalent to Nu 334,600 as per the government rate. In addition to that, 4 tsogpas have been selected by the community who look after the day to day management of the farm together with the project manager. They also play a vital role in the community mobilisation. There are four attendants assisting the manager. All those four are from

the community and are earning less than the minimum government rate for the similar kind of job. On the top of that the community members are always ready to help the manager in the farm as per need.

### **PDP Support**

TCWA approached the PDP for an initial fund to start the farm. Based on the proposal submitted by the TCWA, granted a fund of S 26,048. This fund has played a very crucial part for the project in terms of both organisational strengthening as well as technical support for the start. With the help of this fund and the community labour contribution, the TCWA has been conducting different activities like pasture improvement, purchasing the jersey breeds from Darjeeling, cultivating different crops and medicinal plants and training the farmers in different aspects of the farm management and crop production. **Helvetas Support**

Helvetas has granted the farm an amount of Nu 289,000. TCWA used that amount for the salary of the Project manager. As the community members are not yet well trained in terms of all the technical aspects with regard to the farm, this has been a very crucial support. The manager is doing his best to manage the farm as well as community mobilisation in terms of their long term view to run this farm as a sustainable community owned farm. The Nu 289,000 has already been spent as they are also paying the attendants with the same amount. Now since October 1999, the TCWA is covering the costs of the manager and the attendants.

In addition, helvetas has also provided an amount of Nu 35,000 for hiring a mower and also recently, helvetas has purchased a mower. This will certainly help the TCWA in improving their pasture.

### **Long term Vision of the TCWA**

The members of the TCWA, together with the project manager, have worked out a longterm vision for the project. This project is the first kind of community managed livestock farm. In addition to that, it is going to be the first farm only of improved breeds. In many ways, it is going to be a **model farm**.

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Their long term vision is to develop the farm into a community managed diary co-operative. Based on the total number of labour days contributed by the community households, each household will get equal number of shares. Those households, which do not contribute any labour, will also not get any share. In this way, actually the community members are investing into the diary co-operative in the form of labour. The concept seems to be quite clear to the villagers.

### **General observations**

1. The Tang community has a long history of working collectively for the purpose of community.
2. The community and the leadership in the community are b very committed.



3. They want to express their appreciation and gratitude to H by making this project a success and later on serving a greater area in the country terms of improved breed supply.
4. Once well established, the farm will be in a position to provide extension service to the people of nearby Geogs also.
5. The farm has a potential of growing different high value medicinal plants as well. In this way, it will create an asset for the income generation of the community.
6. Running a community owned dairy co-operative is a quite innovative idea and all the community members and the leadership in the community, together with the project manager are working quite hard towards the realisation of this concept.
7. It will always remain a highly technical project and will have to depend on external technical expertise. If this project gets a support from any development agency for a period of about three years for the salary of the Project manager, a tractor and certain amount for the pasture improvement, the farm will be able to run on its own. They could even be able to pay for the external services.
8. The commitment and the confidence of all the community members to make this project a success is the most precious asset of the project. They are very proud to be gifted with the farm by HM and also proud to be the first kind of jersey farm in the whole country and also to be the first community managed farm. If worked out properly and strategically, this project will be a pride for all the parties involved.
9. The tractor can be hired out during off seasons in the farm. It will earn an extra amount of Nu 10,000 minimum according to the management.

## **Recommendations**

1. The project manager, together with the community members should work out a N strategic business plan for the sustainable management of the farm. The plan should clearly state the economic viability of the farm >in the long run.
2. The PDP/Helvetas support should be extended to another three years. The support should be extended in terms of the salary of the manager, on the job training for two persons, a tractor and certain amount for pasture improvement. After that the farm should be able to pay for the management and other inputs by itself.

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Social/community mobilisation should be a vital part of the project manager and the committee are doing their best. B systematically to make every one in the community aware project, as well as to strengthen the organisational capacity Since it is going to be a

very technical project, the community external technical expertise. By the end of the extended  
it should be able to pay for that purpose. The project management has calculations in this regard.

Two persons should be trained on the job; one in social and one in technical management part.  
They should be trained by the person who shall take over the farm.

The training of the community members and the Tschogpas This will enhance the  
continuity and sustainability aspects. The TCWA should explore linkage with other  
agencies for already doing, e.g. with SNV, ICIMOD etc. The timely arrangement of the  
inputs (tractor, fund for past for the project manager and the trainees) is very essential, if  
established within the proposed time period and handed over

project. Right now, the  
it should be done more of the concept of the farm the TCWA. It will always need  
a few years, the farm shall be developed preliminary

implementation and one in the project manager and they

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should be continued.

support, which it is

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improvement, salary of project is to be to the community.

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