

**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
PROJECT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

Project Budget Number: IND/03/043

Project Title: Social Mobilisation around Natural Resources Management for Poverty Alleviation

Project Short Title: Social Mobilisation for Poverty Alleviation.

Estimated start date: 1 December 2003

Estimated End Date: 31 December 2007

Executing Agents: Ministry of Rural Development (MORD)

Implementing Agent(s): NGOs and select PRIs in the states of Rajasthan, Orissa and Jharkhand.

Project Sites: **Rajasthan:** Ajmer, Udaipur, Baran;
Orissa: Balangir, Koraput, Nuapada;
Jharkhand: Godda, Gumla, Lohardaga, Ranchi, Dumka


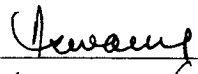

Approval Date: November 2003

Summary of UNDP and Cost Sharing: (as per attached budgets)		
UNDP	Approved Budget	Indicative (pls see Budget footnote 1)
TRAC (1 & 2)	\$ 3,100,000	6,000,000
TRAC (3)	\$ -	-
Other	\$ -	-
Cost Sharing:	\$	14,000,000
Government:	\$ -	-
Financial Institution	\$ -	-
Third Party	\$ -	-
Administrative and Operational Services:		
Stop		
SOF 03	\$ -	-
SOF 07	\$ -	-
Other	\$ -	-
Total	\$ 3,100,000	20,000,000

Classification Information:

ACC sector & sub-sector: Social Mobilisation & Poverty Alleviation	Primary type of intervention: Direct Support
Primary of Area Focus: Sustainable Livelihoods and Women's Empowerment	DCAS sector & sub-sector: Natural Resource Management
Primary target beneficiaries: Women from poor and marginalised communities	Secondary target beneficiaries: State & national government's poverty alleviation programmes & policy makers.

Brief Description: The project will support 5,000 women's groups in 11 districts across the states of Orissa, Rajasthan and Jharkhand to: (a) Demonstrate and replicate the social mobilisation approach for working with women and for poverty alleviation; (b) Promote and strengthen decentralised management of natural resources, on which the poor including women depend for livelihoods, through provisioning of resources and training to women's groups; (c) Strengthen partnerships between women's groups, civil society, PRIs and local government to facilitate greater cross learning, knowledge and information sharing, access to resources and technical capacities and wider dissemination of tested approaches; (d) Facilitate dialogue between women's groups, NGOs and policy makers for influencing relevant policies and programmes. The project will ensure leveraging of resources from government programmes and schemes and other donors. Presently, apart from USD 6 million committed by UNDP, the MORD (GOI) will ensure that an equal amount is available from SGSY for appropriate activities to be undertaken by women's groups.

<u>On behalf of:</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Name/Title</u>
Government		Dec 03	Mr. P. K. Deb, Joint Secretary Department of Economic Affairs
Executing Agency		Dec 03	Asha Swarup, Joint Secretary Ministry of Rural Development, GOI
UNDP		Dec 03	Dr. Maxine Olson Resident Representative, UNDP/India

United Nations official rate of exchange on the date of last signature of Sub-Programme Document: US\$ 1 = Rs.44.92

UNDP's Core Resources are allocated on the basis of three-year roll-forward frameworks, covering the current year plus the next two years. Project budgets covering a longer time frame are thus indicative only, and subject to confirmation. The same would apply to Cost-Sharing Contributions, which are indicative until confirmed by respective donors. (Project documents however provide detailed budget information for both the 'Approved' and 'Indicative' Budgets).

A. COUNTRY PROGRAMME CONTEXT

I. Background

The Tenth Five-year Plan proposes “a shift in the focus of planning from merely resources to the policy, procedural and institutional changes which are essential for every Indian to realise his or her potential”. This resonates with the overarching goals of the work of the United Nations system in India – to work towards the promotion of sustainable human development and the elimination of human poverty and inequalities – as well as the global mandate of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to establish ‘partnerships to fight poverty’. The Government of India (GoI)-UNDP Country Programme for 2003 to 2007 is aligned with these priorities, and is a reflection of the recognition that international co-operation can play a significant role in supporting GoI in addressing these issues.

With an average growth rate in the gross domestic product of 5.8 per cent during the first decade of reforms (1992-2001), India is among the 10 fastest growing economies in the world. India’s steady progress over the last decade towards meeting the goals of human development is reflected in the improvement of the country’s Human Development Index (HDI) from 0.406 in 1975 to 0.571 in 1999. Yet the challenges for human development remain formidable¹. Statistics on critical development indicators such as female literacy, life expectancy at birth, child mortality and incomes show that regional and interstate disparities are increasing². There is growing public consensus on the need for proactive measures to tackle the situation of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. The pressures on environmental and natural resources and the repercussions of their degradation on low-income livelihoods have become a source of increasing concern. In the context of rapid strides in decentralisation, there is an urgent need to strengthen the capacity of organs of local governance-rural and urban, as also to make public administration more efficient, open and accountable to the public.

Development co-operation in India is also being increasingly premised on human development goals and targets outlined by the Planning Commission, Government of India, in the 10th Five-Year Plan. Most of these are related to and are more ambitious than the Millennium Development Goals. The targets that can be monitored for the 10th plan and beyond are outlined below:³

- Reduction of poverty ratio by 5 percentage points by 2007 and by 15 percentage points by 2012;
- Providing gainful and high-quality employment to the labour force over the Tenth Plan period;
- All children in school by 2003; all children to complete 5 years of schooling by 2007;
- Reduction in gender gaps in literacy and wage rates by at least 50 per cent by 2007;
- Reduction in the decadal rate of population growth between 2001 and 2011 to 16.2 per cent;
- Increase in Literacy Rates to 75 per cent within the Tenth Plan period (2002-3 to 2006-7);
- Reduction of Infant mortality rate (IMR) to 45 per 1000 live births by 2007 and to 28 by 2012;
- Reduction of Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) to 2 per 1000 live births by 2007 and to 1 by 2012;
- Increase in forest and tree cover to 25 per cent by 2007 and 33 per cent by 2012;
- All villages to have sustained access to potable drinking water within the Plan period;
- Cleaning of all major polluted rivers by 2007 and other notified stretches by 2012.

¹ <http://planningcommission.nic.in/appdraft.pdf>

² [http://www.un.org.in/CCA2.htm#The state of human development](http://www.un.org.in/CCA2.htm#The%20state%20of%20human%20development)

³ Tenth Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Government of India, Vol. 1, Chapt. 1, p. 6.

II. The Country Programme (2003-07) and its Thematic Focus

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which is the document expressing the agreement on programme priorities between the United Nations System in India and the Government of India, has as its main focus the promotion of gender equality and the strengthening of decentralisation⁴. These two themes form the underlying thrust of the new Country Programme (2003-2007) and interventions as reflected in the following four inter-linked thematic areas:

Themes for the Country Programme (2003-2007)

<p>Promotion of human development and gender equality</p>	<p>In India, the state human development reports (SHDRs) have been a successful vehicle for promoting the concept of human development as a valid basis for development planning. It is now proposed to build on the credibility and experience-base established through the first CCF to create an interface at the state level between economic policy and social concerns such as gender equality, poverty eradication and people's participation. Strategies proposed include: partnerships with research institutions, civil society organisations and individual experts to support state governments in facilitating integration of social concerns; providing conceptual and methodological support to the process of engendering development; strengthening the state HDR process to make it more consultative and broad-based and; strengthening the involvement in the HDR process of various tiers of the Government and diverse stakeholders, including other members of the United Nations system and bilateral donors.</p>
<p>Capacity-building for decentralisation</p>	<p>Given the cross-cutting focus on decentralisation, strategies proposed include: Capacity-building of panchayati raj institutions (PRIs) in both rural and urban areas; continued support to civil service reform at various levels, with a focus on gender sensitivity, responsiveness, transparency and efficiency of administration; capacity-building for district and village-level planning; facilitating an enabling environment for integration of people living with HIV/AIDS through capacity-building of communities, civil society groups, voluntary organisations and local institutions; research on legal/ethical issues and building new partnerships, particularly with the Indian private sector.</p>
<p>Poverty eradication and sustainable livelihoods</p>	<p>This programme will intensify efforts piloted during the first CCF to facilitate action on human poverty and ensure their sustainability by rooting them within local institutions and mainstream government programmes. Strategies proposed include: strengthening partnerships between PRIs, women's groups, civil society organisations and government agencies to develop, test and disseminate innovative, gender-equitable and community-managed approaches to sustainable livelihoods and environmentally sustainable natural resource management; piloting and testing gender-responsive models of support for traditional artisan communities; supporting production of status reports on poverty in India and; evolving a coordinated strategy to share Indian best practices with other developing countries and accessing lessons from international experience.</p>
<p>Vulnerability reduction and environmental sustainability</p>	<p>This programme will comprise activities designed to reduce the vulnerability of communities to natural disasters and environmental degradation. Proposed strategies include: strengthening state-and regional-level systems for establishment of disaster-preparedness plans and systems for early warning and recovery; developing community capacities to plan and implement gender-equitable disaster-mitigation strategies and post-disaster reconstruction/sustainable recovery; strengthening national capacities for influencing global debates on environment and mainstreaming global environmental concerns (e.g., biodiversity areas, renewable energy, land degradation, desertification, climate change) into national projects, programmes and policies and; demonstrating technologies and approaches, to address linkages between global environment issues and national developmental challenges.</p>

⁴ <http://www.un.org.in/UNDAF/undafstatement.pdf>

Based on specific roles for UNDP development co-operation identified through a comprehensive review and stakeholder consultation process, all projects build on the following qualities:

- A perspective 'from below', of low-income households and marginalised communities - rural or urban, in order to strength their self-help and self-reliance capacities through innovative and catalytic, 'action-research' type of interventions.
- A common platform to bring a diverse set of development partners (Government agencies at the Central, State and district levels; PRIs, Non-Governmental Organizations {NGOs} and Community Based Organisations {CBOs}, and; other UN system and bilateral donor partners) together to devise innovative solutions to development challenges.
- Emphasis on addressing the multi-sectoral dimensions of development programming and when possible, integrating programming at selected geographical locations/districts.
- Comprehensive monitoring and documentation of development innovations from proven success stories and effective pilot initiatives, and dissemination of lessons of value for policy-makers with regard to the design and implementation of much larger public sector schemes.

The new Country Programme reflects a continued commitment to national direction and ownership. Partnerships with government agencies and civil society partners initiated under the first Country Cooperation Framework (CCF- I, 1997-2002) will be vigorously pursued and alliances with the Indian corporate sector and the voluntary sector built to draw on their experience and expertise.

B. PROJECT BACKGROUND

I. Development Context

The Approach Paper to the 10th Plan has set a target for reduction of poverty and creation of high quality gainful employment during the Plan period. The projected GDP growth rate of 8 percent for the period 2002-07, if achieved, would lead to reduction of incidence of poverty by 5 percentage points by 2007 and by 15 percentage points by 2011-12. Effective implementation of anti-poverty programmes would be central to achieving the planned reductions in poverty. The challenge before the State is to provide employment opportunities that provide enhanced incomes. In such a scenario, enlargement of self and wage employment programmes and their effective delivery becomes an imperative⁵.

The anti-poverty programmes, aimed at providing self-employment and supplementary wage employment, have been restructured periodically to improve their efficacy as instruments of poverty reduction. The 9th Five Year Plan further recognised the need to redesign and rationalise these programmes. The erstwhile Integrated Rural Development Programme and its several sub-schemes have been merged in a single self-employment programme called the Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY).

During the 10th Plan period, SGSY will be a process-oriented programme with a focus on social organisation and group formation in the first phase, thrift and credit amongst the members of the group augmented by a revolving fund in the second phase, and access to credit from micro-finance institutions in the third phase. Micro-enterprises would only be taken up when these groups acquire entrepreneurial abilities, know-how and market access in the fourth stage.

⁵ Government of India: Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07) Volume II, Chapter 3: The Social Net

So far, most states in the country as well as centrally sponsored and donor-funded programmes have promoted formation of self-help groups (refer section B III of this document for details). As a result, a large number of groups and mainly women's self-help groups have been formed under different schemes of different departments, apart from those formed by NGOs and under donor funded initiatives.

Closely linked to the self-help group focus of the Government of India and other development agencies for poverty alleviation is the issue of women's empowerment. It is well known that despite explicit Constitutional mandates that reflect the various dimensions of freedom and equality for women, gender inequality continues to be one of the defining features of Indian society. The current thrust on self-help group approach for women is being viewed by the government and non-governmental agencies as an opportunity and a strategy for addressing gender inequality and for promoting women's empowerment.

Experience of government, donor agencies and NGOs over the last decade has demonstrated that adopting a self-help group approach for working with women does help to address gender disparities in critical areas such as nutrition, literacy and health care. It also helps to make visible women's significant contribution in ensuring, food and livelihood security, enables them to demand equal wages for their work, enhances their capacity to participate in governance and decision-making positions, improves their access to land/resources and reduces violence against them, both at home and in public spaces. These results are seen primarily in areas where social mobilisation of women by an external agency goes beyond organising them into groups for mainly thrift and credit activities and seeks to address issues of participation, access and equity as well as creates opportunities for their engagement in productive activities.

Finally, there is the emerging issue of the relationship of SHGs with the PRIs. At local levels, SHGs interface with a large number of government and elected institutions, particularly the PRIs. As the space for development administration and political processes at the sub-district levels is limited, the PRIs are presently competing with SHGs for such space. There is an urgent need to work out mechanisms/systems that will allow SHGs and PRIs to work in tandem and establish a system of reinforcing each other's work. On the one hand, PRIs need to have a greater understanding of the constructive role that SHGs can play while on the other hand they need to configure a working relationship with the SHGs⁶.

In the current scenario, where the 10th Plan strongly recommends promotion of self-help groups and strengthening of PRIs for poverty alleviation, it provides an opportunity to foster partnerships between PRIs and SHGs and to demonstrate and replicate the social mobilisation approach as a 'means' to effectively address issues of sustainable livelihoods, of women's empowerment and of participation, access and equity, particularly with respect to the marginalized and vulnerable communities.

II. Issues to be Addressed

It is well known that the poor encounter severe difficulties in securing credit for productive purposes, building community assets and accessing technical knowledge in different areas like agriculture, livestock-rearing, forestry, sericulture, water management, health and availing benefits from poverty alleviation schemes and programmes. The functioning of local-level institutions and governmental personnel with their departmental hierarchies often does not make them responsive or accountable to local communities. In consequence, the poor do not get relevant information or new

⁶ D Bandhyopadhyay, BN Yugandhar and Amitava Mukherjee. Convergence of Programmes by Empowering SHGs and PRIs. Economic and Political Weekly, June 29, 2002.

knowledge or skills. All these difficulties result in shrinking the pool of opportunities for promoting sustainable livelihoods, thereby, perpetuating poverty.

In all the above instances, the absence of people's organisation stands in the way of deriving optimal results as it implies the absence of participation in articulating needs, in devising solutions and in implementing them. Without the building blocks of people's organisations, creating a network and federation of these bodies to give them size and strength to negotiate with local government officials becomes difficult.

In this context, the social mobilisation approach offers a lot of potential for encouraging effective participation of the poor - especially women amongst them - in their own development. Social mobilisation⁷ is based on the assumption that people, especially those who are poor, landless and asset-less, are willing and able to do much themselves to improve their situation. The main dimensions of the social mobilisation strategy are:

- **Social organisation**, which means bringing people together in groups to enable their active participation in grassroots development planning and implementation.
- **Investment planning**, which involves community participation in preparation of investment plans at household, group and village/community level and provision for training, credit, productive physical infrastructure and other resources identified during the planning process.
- **Human resource development**, which means upgrading people's skills (primarily management, productive and cooperative skills) to enable them to make best use of available resources.
- **Capital formation**, which means generation of a capital fund through savings, provision of seed capital as a revolving fund and at a later stage accessing funds from banks and other donors.
- **Establishing linkages** between the groups at the grassroots level and providers of services and other resources such as the government departments, NGOs, banks and development agencies.

The last two decades have seen the benefits of social mobilisation in terms of addressing the constraints that the poor face. The current thrust on social mobilisation and increased emphasis on formation and strengthening of self-help groups articulated in the 10th Plan recognises the advantages of using this approach for poverty alleviation. However, much of the emphasis so far has been on social organisation while micro-experience has demonstrated that the other dimensions are equally critical. As a result, future programme and policy formulation has to place emphasis on and provision for the other dimensions as well. These dimensions include, for instance, greater emphasis on education and health. Large numbers of children are working full time at the cost of education. Communities have to be assisted in getting children out of work and into school. Further, the experience of applying this approach has thrown up several lessons that have been summarized in section B IV.

III. Indicators of National Priority

- As mentioned earlier, the 10th Plan of the Government of India and specifically the Ministry of Rural Development has provided a broad policy framework and guidelines for all states in the country towards the operation of Self Help Groups (SHG) under the Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) scheme.

⁷ South Asia Poverty Alleviation Programme: Final Project Review Report Prepared by Dr Ruhi Saith, Dr Susana Franco and Professor Barbara Harris-White at Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford University, UK; Published by UNDP & UNOPS's; March 2003.

- The Tenth Plan also represents a distinct advance from earlier plans, in terms of articulating a strong and time-bound platform for action on gender equality. The key strategies recommended by it are: (a) Creation of an enabling environment through positive economic and social policies, for the development of women and the realisation of their full potential; (b) Enabling the *de jure* and *de facto* enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by women on par with men in the spheres of political, economic, social, cultural and civil rights; (c) Ensuring equal access of women to public services, public office and decision-making in the social, political and economic spheres; (d) Strengthening legal systems aimed at the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women; (e) Changing societal attitudes and community practices through the active participation and involvement of both men and women; (f) Mainstreaming a gender perspective into the development process; (g) Eliminating discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child; (h) Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organisations, corporate and private sector agencies.
- Different states such as Madhya Pradesh and Orissa have launched Mission Shakti to promote formation of SHGs on a large scale.
- NABARD and the Regional Rural Banks have emerged as leading financial institutions that promote linkages with SHGs.
- Several NGOs all over the country and multilateral and bilateral donors (such as the World Bank, DFID, UNDP, SIDA, AusAid, UNICEF) have been providing critical support to community-based organisations including SHGs.
- Interestingly, the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) now offers a course as part of its distance learning programme on Empowering Women through Self Help Groups to help potential trainers and others to develop knowledge, attitude and skills for imparting training on SHG processes.
- Major emphasis has been placed on universalisation of elementary education.

IV. Lessons Learnt from Previous Programmes

Social mobilisation initiatives have demonstrated the positive impact on women's empowerment. There is substantial evidence to show women members having embarked on non-traditional tasks like marketing and non-traditional enterprises; of improved control over their labour, savings, credit and income; enhanced mobility as well as confidence and skills to interface with government officials, banks and scientists; the bankability and viability of poor women's economic enterprises; greater and effective participation in PRIs and other local decision making bodies and greater visibility of their role and contribution to the socio-economic and political processes. Women's self-help groups have taken leadership in getting children out of work and into school, in making the formal school system more accountable to communities and in raising awareness on health issues.

Given the current thrust on social mobilisation process, it is important that the following lessons emerging from past experience⁸ are taken into account, particularly for formulation of new programmes and for creating an enabling policy environment:

⁸ Based on the experience of UNDP under CCF-I and a review of the following documents: (a) A review of the GOI-UNDP sub-programme on Social Mobilisation and Community Empowerment for Poverty Alleviation in Andhra Pradesh by Sarojini Ganju Thakur in 2001; (b) South Asia Poverty Alleviation Programme: Final Project Review Report Prepared by Dr Ruhi Saith, Dr Susana Franco and Professor Barbara Harris-White at Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford University, UK; Published by UNDP & UNOPS's; March 2003; (c) D Bandhyopadhyay, BN Yugandhar and Amitava Mukherjee. *Convergence of Programmes by Empowering SHGs and PRIs*. Economic and Political Weekly, June 29, 2002; (d) S.

- For effective implementation of the social mobilisation approach, it is critical to go beyond social organisation and incorporate all the other dimensions as well, namely, investment planning, human resource development, capital formation and establishing linkages. This will require incorporating these dimensions in programme design as well as provisioning resources at community and project management levels.
- Adequate time and efforts needs to be dedicated to the implementation of social mobilisation, including selection of appropriate staff. Accelerating implementation or inadequate attention to developing the social base will jeopardize this approach. It is essential that social organisations serve as a strong base with capacity building with savings, credit and productive physical infrastructure clearly serving as means for social mobilisation rather than becoming ends in themselves.
- Establishment of links with government from local to higher levels is essential so that government structures co-ordinate rather than compete with structures established by the social mobilisation approach.
- Closer collaboration of the women's groups with PRIs is necessary for wider sharing of capacities, knowledge and skills and for greater participation of women in decision-making and projects and schemes for the village.
- There is a need to support a critical number of women's groups in each district for wider demonstration-effect and to facilitate institutional building of women groups to operate effectively at cluster and federation levels and take up higher-level activities and an advocacy role.
- PRIs and district level government agencies need capacity building for effective governance and for promoting people's participation and legitimize social mobilisation as a developmental strategy. Agencies such as the District Rural Development Agencies (autonomous bodies set up to coordinate developmental assistance for anti-poverty programmes at the district level) and their personnel would benefit from training and sensitisation to bring a better awareness of the needs of the poor, particularly women.
- Even if successful social mobilisation strategies are put in place, it is necessary simultaneously to identify legal and regulatory frameworks that are not in the the interests of the poor - whether in relation to inheritance rights for women with respect to private agricultural land or secure rights to cultivation of leased land or forest management, so that efforts can be made to bring about changes..
- There are various social issues that have links with poverty: child and bonded labour, child marriage, the girl child and empowerment of women. Links are often not perceived in communities between low wages for adults and a high rate of child labour or between the education of girl children and women's empowerment. Since these issues have a direct bearing upon poverty and backwardness, they have to be dealt with as part of the strategy of mobilisation.

- Similarly social mobilization strategies have to build the link between denial of health facilities and its impact on poverty. Women's groups need to be supported to ensure that health facilities are made available to the poor and marginalized through forging linkages with health programmes.
- To reach the poorest among the poor and particularly the very vulnerable such as the destitute, elderly, disabled and seasonal migrants, additional programmes that incorporate elements of social security need to be implemented to complement the social mobilisation approach.

With respect to replication of the approach, the following features are crucial for it to succeed:

- Adequate funding is required to effectively implement the social mobilisation approach so that it moves beyond social organisation.
- The presence of NGOs at the grassroots is essential to assist the process of social organisation, to address location-specific social, technical, institutional and information barriers for the poor and to prevent political changes from interfering with the continuity of the programme.
- Select NGOs should be supported to perform a larger role (as support NGOs) in capacity building of other NGO partners and women's groups e.g., in participatory planning, advocacy, micro-enterprises, marketing of agro-produce and other products.
- A broader government policy that embraces the concept is likely to provide a more nurturing environment than single isolated initiatives.
- Flexibility is necessary to accommodate local conditions during replication.
- It is important to provide opportunities for greater cross learning between project partners and other stakeholders at different levels.
- Linkages need to be established with communities between lack of education and health and its impact on poverty.
- Systematic documentation and dissemination of learning, significant experiences and policy issues is necessary.

V. Reasons for UNDP's Development Cooperation

In 1994-95, UNDP piloted the South Asia Poverty Alleviation programme (SAPAP) in 6 countries in South Asia, including India, with the objective to demonstrate to governments in the region the feasibility of using the social mobilisation approach to combat rural poverty. In India, the programme was piloted in 3 districts of Andhra Pradesh and was solely with women's groups from socially and economically weaker sections in a village. It was hoped that the success of this exploration would encourage future replication on a larger scale both by the government and others concerned.

Within UNDP, the SAPAP approach was integrated with formulation of Community-based Pro-poor Initiatives (CBPPI) and Women in Agriculture/Food Security sub-programmes under CCF-I implemented as pilots in Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Chattisgarh, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. Outside UNDP, building on lessons learnt from SAPAP, the Government of Andhra Pradesh with support from the World Bank launched the DPIIP project in six districts of the states and recently launched (April 2003) the Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project to expand the Bank funded DPIIP project to cover the entire state and by adopting the group approach aims to reach approximately 2 million poor households.

With respect to CCF-II, this project fits in very well with the UNDAF (Refer section A.II) and particularly the thematic areas of Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Livelihoods. Additionally, this project will also establish linkages with other ongoing and planned projects within UNDP:

- (a) Women in Agriculture/Food Security Programme (ongoing from CCF-I in Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Orissa)
- (b) National Programme on Promoting Conservation of Medicinal Plants and Traditional Knowledge for Enhancing Health and Livelihood Security (planned under CCF-II)
- (c) Biodiversity Conservation – From Analysis to Action (planned under CCF-II)
- (d) Promoting Gender Equality (planned under CCF-II)
- (e) Vulnerability Reduction through Community Empowerment and Control of Water in the Marwar Region (planned under CCF II with funding from Italian Embassy)
- (f) Natural Disaster Risk Management Programme: Slow Disasters (planned under CCF-II) focusing on the "drought corridor" States, i.e. Rajasthan, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Jharkhand, Gujarat and Uttaranchal
- (g) ICT for Pro-poor Governance (planned under CCF-II)
- (h) India Biomass Energy for Rural India (ongoing programme funded by GEF, ICEF, GOI - MNES and Government of Karnataka)
- (i) Renewable Energy for Rural Livelihoods Project (planned under CCF-II)
- (j) Panchayati Raj Projects (planned under CCF-II)

UNDP has always recognised civil society organizations (CSOs) as a vital and critical constituency that complements its work with the government. A recent report of the UNDP CSO Advisory Committee⁹ reiterates this position and plans to engage effectively with CSOs in the Millennium Development Goal processes; community-driven sustainable management of local resources – land, water, forests and biodiversity; pro-poor trade and macro-economic policy initiatives; crisis prevention and recovery in conflict and post-conflict situations; and in its work on human rights, particularly of indigenous communities and minorities. This project provides an opportunity to support civil society organisations (CSOs), particularly NGOs for strengthening partnerships between civil society, community-based organizations and government linkages at all levels – national, state, district levels and village/PRI - for designing, implementing and monitoring community-led sustainable management of local resources development interventions.

C. THE PROJECT

The project is designed for implementation in three states of India – Orissa, Jharkhand and Rajasthan. The Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, will be the Executing Agency for the project and will be responsible for its overall management including achievement of planned results and for the use of UNDP funds.

The project will provide support to about 5,000 women's groups in nine districts across the three states and will be implemented through a network of Resource Groups (NGOs). **The project will focus on women groups covering a range such as self-help groups, women's samuhs or mandals at the village level and larger collectives such as federation of self-help groups or mandals, women's co-operatives.** In addition, the project also envisages linkages with other agencies and resource persons for technical support, perspective building, monitoring and review, carrying out research studies and advocacy.

⁹ Report of the Fourth Meeting of the UNDP CSO Advisory Committee to the Administrator, New York, 28-30 April 2003.

The total budget envisaged for effective implementation of the project is USD 26 million over a period of four years (November 2003 to December 2007). Of this total requirement, USD 6 million will be provided by UNDP under Country Cooperation Framework (CCF) – II (2003-07), of which USD 3.1 million have already been committed for the first three years (upto Dec 2005) of the project. Infact, the MORD (GOI) will ensure that an equal amount is available from SGSY for appropriate activities to be undertaken by women’s groups. The balance will be mobilised from other international agencies and primarily from the government sources such as the SGSY and NABARD, UN Agencies such as UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, ILO and FAO (for convergence on issues such as food and nutrition security, reproductive health, drinking water and sanitation, literacy) and other donor agencies such as SIDA and DFID who are supporting livelihoods and natural resource management programmes in some of the project states.

The table below presents the number of women’s groups that will be supported in each state, specific districts where the project will be located with additional details on previous association with UNDP projects and convergence with Planning Commission’s 25 districts short listed for immediate action out of the 100 most backward districts (under RSVY - Rashtriya Sama Vikas Yojna).

No. of women’s groups to be supported under the project ¹⁰	Project Districts	Districts Associated with GOI-UNDP Programmes under Country Cooperation Framework I (1997-2002)	Convergence with RSVY districts	Selected Locations for Convergence of UN initiatives for multi-sectoral approach
Rajasthan – 1,000 women’s groups	Initially, Ajmer, Udaipur & to be subsequently extended to Baran	-	-	Udaipur
Orissa – 1,500 women’s groups	Balangir, Koraput & Nuapada.	Nuapada	Balangir Koraput &	Balangir & Koraput
Jharkhand – 2,500 women’s groups	Godda, Gumla, Lohardaga, Ranchi, Dumka	Godda, Gumla, Lohardaga, Ranchi and Dumka	Gumla & Lohardaga	Ranchi

I. Project Context

A brief profile of the project area outlined below¹¹:

Rajasthan: In the project districts, agriculture and animal husbandry are the principal sources while wage labour and migration are important secondary sources of livelihood¹². Forests too constitute an important source of secondary income and food security particularly for the tribal communities in Udaipur (46%; mainly Sahariyas) and to some extent in Baran (21%)¹³. However, availability of water has strongly conditioned the nature of agriculture and farming practices in various parts of the state¹⁴. Further, about fifty percent of the total landholdings are marginal or small, measuring less than two hectares in size. The poor quality of land and scarcity of water resources for irrigation have led to below-subsistence farming, high dependence on wage labour and large-scale out-migration. Against

¹⁰ These numbers are tentative and there may be both an upward and downward revision, depending on the situation as the project progresses.

¹¹ Refer annex I, II and III for a detailed profile of the project states and state-specific strategy.

¹² A study on rural livelihoods in Rajasthan ‘*Ajevika*’ submitted by ARAVALI and Sudrak to HDRC, UNDP. 2003

¹³ Rajasthan Human Development Report - 2002. Published by Government of Rajasthan.

¹⁴ While Rajasthan has five percent of the country’s population and ten percent of the country’s land, it has only one percent of the country’s total water resources.

this backdrop, the people of the project districts are today facing the fifth successive year of drought¹⁵, which has severely affected agriculture, livestock rearing, sources of drinking water, regeneration of forests as well as increased the pressure on forests for meeting food security and livelihood needs. Together with the absence of public employment programmes covering the entire population for the drought period, recent years have witnessed chronic hunger, malnutrition and even death. Successive years of drought have put an enormous burden on the poor, particularly women, in the project districts. The maximum impact of the destruction of biomass is on women. The responsibility of grazing generally rests with women and girl children. Fuel gathering is almost entirely done by women and children. Both the tasks are extremely difficult because with tree and shrubs getting scarcer, the distances that women and children have to walk are increasing.

Orissa: The tribal belt of Orissa, primarily the Western part, presents an anomalous situation of a resource-rich region that is nevertheless characterised by underdevelopment and famine. The last few decades of 'development' in these regions have seen repeated droughts leading to famines, steady impoverishment of the bulk of the population, extreme hunger and starvation. All the project districts are classified as drought prone. The state as a whole is categorised as 'severely insecure' in the Food Insecurity Atlas of Rural India¹⁶. Much of the present state is due to the breakdown of traditional mechanisms of resource management, namely shifting cultivation, locally known as *bogodo* or *podu* that was designed to extract the maximum out of the soil without affecting its productivity. Moreover, the tribal economy was closely linked with the forests and the combination of shifting agriculture and forest products ensured food security in the past. Most of the above mechanisms have disappeared or weakened over the years. Several factors have contributed to this. First, all lands for which individuals did not possess legal rights were declared as government or public property, including forests and hills. This led to curtailment of tribal customary rights and drastic reduction in their area of operation. The system of shifting and fallowing in agriculture was affected, with the fallow period declining from 18-30 years to about 3 years, thus depleting the soil. Many of the traditional practices of sustainable agriculture in the forests and on hill slopes had to be abandoned, as survival became the main concern. While earlier, although women could not participate in formal bodies of decision-making, the practice of community resource ownership ensured access and control of men and women equally to every resource. Under the new regime, however, women's rights have suffered as small surviving plots of shifting cultivation lands became private property and began to be inherited by the male progeny. As a result, far-reaching changes, mainly, increasing soil erosion and deforestation, scarcity of water and fuel and increased out-migration by male members has led to a substantial increase in women's workloads and the responsibility of agriculture and allied activities falling primarily on women members, while depriving them of control over resources.

Jharkhand: With high concentration of tribal population and a majority of the population living in rural and forest areas, the project districts are among the most backward and poor regions in the state. In spite of rich natural resources, these districts suffer from widespread poverty. Agriculture is the main source of livelihood and a majority of the population own small parcels of land. As forests, an important secondary source of livelihoods especially for tribal communities, have been declining, there is an increasing pressure on agriculture. The state of Jharkhand along with Bihar is categorised as 'extremely insecure' in the Food Insecurity Atlas of Rural India. Moreover, with poor infrastructure and a majority of villages being inaccessible during the monsoons, public institutions in the region have had a limited reach. Inadequate livelihoods coupled with poor public health facilities and widespread illiteracy has led to frequent diseases. In this context, the key development issues are: degradation of both agriculture, forests and common lands, poor management and low productivity of natural resources, lack of access to credit and technology to enhance resource productivity and lack

¹⁵ Drought prone area as a percentage of the geographical area is the highest for Rajasthan – 56 percent. Along with Jharkhand, Rajasthan is among the three states in the country with 'low food availability' and along with Orissa and five other states in India, it is categorised as 'severely insecure'. Source: Food Insecurity Atlas of Rural India.

¹⁶ Published by the World Food Programme & MS Swaminathan Research Foundation, 2001

of access to basic services such as health and education. All these call for community-based approaches that develop people's capacity to manage their resources in a sustainable manner and to demand services from public institutions.

II. Project Strategy

The broad objectives and the framework within which the project will operate is outlined here. These have been based on consultations in New Delhi with participants from all three states and the Ministry of Rural Development (April 2003); in Rajasthan with key stakeholders including the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (March 2003) in Orissa (December 2002); discussions with the Ministry of Rural Development (GOI) and; review of UNDP's own work with women's groups, particularly under CCF-I and learnings available from review of other initiatives in the country and the Human Development Reports.

The process envisaged is as follows:

- a) State level multi-stakeholder consultations¹⁷ held by the respective state governments, Ministry of Rural Development and UNDP to share the programme framework, identify issues relevant for the project, review past and ongoing efforts, formulate the broad contours of the strategy for project districts and identify possible project partner NGOs and other agencies for implementation, research, advocacy and monitoring & evaluation.
- b) Setting up project management systems at state level.
- c) Identification and appraisal of partner NGOs.
- d) Commissioning gendered baseline studies.
- e) Preparation of district level plans through a consultative and participatory process and within the broad objectives of the project.
- f) Implementation of project activities.
- g) Monitoring and review at different levels.

The specific objectives of the Project are:

1. To demonstrate and replicate the social mobilisation approach for working with women towards poverty alleviation.
2. To promote and strengthen decentralised management of natural resources, on which the poor including women depend for livelihoods and survival, through provisioning of resources and training to women's groups.
3. To strengthen partnerships between women's groups, civil society, PRIs and local government to facilitate greater cross learning, knowledge and information sharing, access to resources and technical capacities and wider dissemination of tested approaches.
4. To facilitate dialogue between women's groups, NGOs and policy makers on critical issues (such as tribal land alienation, community control and management of natural resources, creation of sustainable livelihoods, migration and education) and for influencing relevant policies and programmes.

To meet the project objectives, the project will be implemented within the following framework:

Working with women's groups: The project's focus on working with and strengthening groups of poor women is based on the social mobilisation and empowerment approach that seeks

¹⁷ Multi-stakeholder consultations for Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Orissa were held between July and October 2003. Key issues raised at these meetings are highlighted in the enclosed Annexures on the three states.

enhancement of women's access to productive assets and their capacity to participate in social change processes and to negotiate with, influence, and hold accountable key institutions and decision-making structures that affect their lives. The project will focus on women groups covering a range such as self-help groups, women's *samuhs* or *mandals* at the village level and larger collectives such as federation of self-help groups or mandals, women's co-operatives.

Under the project, preference will be given to existing women's groups from the poor and marginalised communities such as tribals, scheduled castes and the landless. However, in exceptional cases where women's groups do not exist at all, the project will support newly formed women's groups. While the Below Poverty Line (BPL) criteria will be useful to select women's groups, care will be taken to back this up with participatory tools for identification of those sections of the poorest in a village who may have been inadvertently left out of the BPL category. Preference may also be given to supporting women's groups in backward blocks within identified districts and following a cluster approach for greater impact.

The project will seek to build the capacity of women's groups to network with other women's groups and form collectives at cluster/block levels and beyond to enable them to play a larger and more visible role in society, improve their negotiating skills and to access and implement development projects. Additionally, the project will strengthen leadership skills of women and explore and address factors that enable or constrain their ability to take leadership of social change processes.

In Rajasthan, the project will build on the organised strength of women's groups initiated by the Department of Rural development through the Swarnjayanti Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), NABARD and NGOs. It will also build on the experience of the Women's Development Programme initiated in 1984 and the current thrust on formation of self-help groups in the state¹⁸. The project will support 1,000 such groups across the three districts and explore partnerships with NGOs such as Sandhaan, Sankalp, Seva Mandir, Astha, Social Work Research Centre, Aravali, Bharat Agro-Industries Foundation, Sadguru Foundation, Society for Promotion of Wasteland Development, Foundation for Ecological Security and the National Tree-Growers Cooperative.

In Orissa, the project will explore partnerships with NGOs such as Lokadrushti, Agragamee, VIKALP, MSSRF, WIDA and support about 1,500 women's groups covering existing groups in project districts as well as new groups that need to be formed wherever necessary, particularly to reach those parts of a project district that have remained outside the ambit of social mobilisation. Those groups that are found to be strong will be strengthened further to take up higher-level activities at cluster and federation levels and for taking up leadership roles in social processes.

In Jharkhand, the project will follow the same approach as in Orissa with respect to the women's groups and will support 2,500 groups, covering existing women's groups, formation of new groups in parts of district where they have not been formed as yet and those supported under the CBPPI sub-programme during CCF-I for higher-level activities. Along with PRADAN which has strong linkages with the state government and is working in the project districts, partnerships with local NGOs will be also be explored.

Refer annex I, II and III for a detailed profile of the project states and state-specific strategy.

¹⁸In 2000, an experiment to form and strengthen women's self-help groups in district Ajmer was initiated by the district administration. By March 2001, it had covered 1,022 villages, formed 4,434 groups with membership of more than 57,555 women. Encouraged by the impact of this experiment, the state is promoting formation and strengthening of self-help groups on a large scale. Till October 2002, approximately 89,000 women's groups have been promoted by agencies, departments and different programmes such as NABARD, the Department of Women and Child, the Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana, the Rajasthan Cooperative Dairy Federation Ltd and by several NGOs.

Developing the natural resource base: The project seeks to organise and strengthen women's groups and build their capacities to identify and address issues of sustainable resource management covering water, forest and land resources. The project will support participatory planning processes for the women's groups to identify the resource development/management activities they wish to take up to enhance biomass productivity required for meeting basic needs related to food security, water and fuel-wood. Issues of access, equity and environmental conservation will be the governing principles of any planned intervention.

Agriculture along with animal husbandry and wage labour form the core of livelihood strategies of the poor, including women. With increasing feminisation of agriculture as well as recognition of the key role that women play in ensuring food and livelihood security, the project will provide resources and opportunities to women's groups to upgrade their private agricultural land, undertake collective farming where feasible and improve their access to sustainable farm practices, quality seed and inputs.

Given the centrality of water resource conservation to address resource degradation and for enhancing biomass productivity and foodgrain production, the project will support decentralisation of water resources management at the community level. Accordingly, support will be made available where women's groups wish to construct/revive/renovate water-harvesting systems including traditional structures and village ponds. The project will encourage viewing of water sources holistically to address needs related to agriculture, drinking water (for human and livestock), domestic use and development of common property resources.

Apart from water, common lands and public lands continue to play a significant and key role in the life and economy of rural communities, particularly for women and tribal communities. The project will seek to revive and reclaim the common property resources in the area including pasturelands, village forests and other wastelands for grass production, improving the tree cover and for cultivation of medicinal plants. Increase in biomass production as well as biodiversity conservation will drive field interventions, particularly in agriculture, and afforestation/plantations. Interventions such as horticulture, floriculture and apiculture will also be supported wherever feasible. Additionally, non-conventional energy sources such as solar and biomass will be another area of possible intervention.

Funds will be allocated for developing the natural resource base, for training and for exposure visits to other sites. Further, given the current thrust in the project states on strengthening the role of PRIs in development activities, natural resource management proposed under this project will be undertaken in partnership with PRIs. Linkages with relevant agencies/resource persons will be established for identifying appropriate interventions, discussing possible resource management practices based on indigenous knowledge of women and others in the village and sustainable practices that have worked in similar environments elsewhere.

Building capacity of women's groups: The project proposes to build on the community base and organisational strength of NGOs in order to facilitate and co-ordinate linkages of women's groups with the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj and other line departments and the flow of project inputs to women's groups. Preference will be given to NGOs who have successfully organised women's groups in project areas for direct implementation or for providing their support services in building the capacity of partner NGOs. These NGOs will be designated as district resource groups for women under the Project. Thus, rather than implementing a pre-determined package of interventions, they will facilitate a participatory and collective process of resource mapping, needs identification and intervention planning by women's groups. Given the experience gained under CCF-I, it is proposed that some NGOs with significant capacities to mobilise women's groups, facilitate planning and

designing of interventions at the grassroots level and in advocacy could be designated as 'support NGOs' and entrusted with responsibility for enhancing the capacity of other NGO partners and PRIs and for effective implementation of the project. Given the need to strengthen linkages between PRIs and women's groups, it is proposed to partner with PRI (instead of NGOs) in select sites, which can then support women's groups under the project. Documentation of this process, the strategy adopted and the lessons learnt will be crucial.

Capacity and perspective building will be a constant input to enable the women's groups, NGO partners, PRIs and project staff to undertake both technical as well as institutional interventions. Capacities will be built on issues such as the increasing the overall biomass productivity, bio-diverse, multi-crop and organic farming, environmental and nutritional value of traditional and drought resistant varieties, environment conservation, biodiversity conservation, sustainable practices, cultivation/conservation of medicinal plants and food security. For instance, on the issues of biodiversity conservation and medicinal plants, the project will foster linkages between the women's groups, NGO partners and organisations such as FRLHT (Bangalore), Vasundhara (Orissa), MSSRF (Chennai, Orissa), Kalpvriksha (Maharashtra), Deccan Development Society (Andhra Pradesh), SEWA (Gujarat) and Foundation for Ecological Security (Gujarat). Women and members of panchayats will have the opportunity to go on exposure visits to best practice sites such as Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (Gujarat) and Tarun Bharat Sangh (Rajasthan) to see and experience how other women have gone beyond the confines of their homes to play an important role in their community. Workshops on resource management, land rights, negotiation and decision making skills will also be held for those women who have been elected to *panchayats* and other bodies. Other women will also be encouraged to participate in these workshops to build their leadership capacity and create awareness among them on how to work with the government institutions and benefit from their schemes. The project will promote a more active role by women's groups in accessing and monitoring basic services related to health, nutrition, education, drinking water and sanitation. It will also encourage women's groups to take a lead in getting children out of work and into school. Efforts will be made to get women's collectives to take on the issue of girls' education with local authorities. Media and advocacy campaigns targeting the working child will be facilitated and supported. This could then be dovetailed with the district primary education programme and the national child labour programme and bridging arrangements provided for older children. Additional resources will be raised for running bridge camps for older children and for strengthening the formal school system. Exposure visits and perspective-building workshops will be organised on the issue of child labour and education for women's groups, PRIs and government departments.

Similarly in the area of health, efforts will be made to assist women to take on the role of para health workers. Linkages will be established with both government and multilateral agencies dealing with health, particularly reproductive health issues. Efforts will also be made to select National UN Volunteers at the district level who have both a health and education background so that the linkages with other programmes and technical support to NGOs, PRIs and women's groups can be assured.

Additionally, capacity building and gender training will also be undertaken for women's groups, district authorities and PRIs, especially men.

Improving access to resources and livelihoods: The project will seek to address the critical issue of access of women to land. Participatory resource mapping exercise to identify lands available for women for cultivation will be carried out. These may include privately owned fallows, village common lands, government or *panchayat* lands and even family-owned marginal holdings or homestead land. The women's collectives will negotiate the terms and process of land lease, with assistance from PRIs. Wherever family-owned holdings of women's group members are taken up under the project, provision of inputs will be conditional on re-registration of the land in the joint names of the

concerned woman and her husband. Wherever possible, attempts will be made to get *pattas* in the name of the women's collectives rather than in favour of individual women, or, if this is not possible, to get contiguous plots of land for women's collectives members.

The project will provide women's groups with micro-capital assistance (revolving fund) and infrastructure and implementation grants for those components that have not been funded by banks or SGSY to enable them to strengthen their resource base and purchase basic equipment required to improve produce from land and related activities. Through intensive training, the project will seek to equip women's groups with skills and knowledge to enhance productivity of their resources. In this regard, the project will also promote linkages with other local institutions such as PRIs, local government agencies, credit and other resource organisations. The project will support establishment of alternative public distribution systems in selected sites. With respect to cluster-level groups and federations, the project will provide them resources to develop and take up higher-level activities such as processing and marketing of non-timber forest produce, collection and marketing of vegetables/agricultural produce, cultivation, processing and marketing of medicinal plants.

With respect to water, common property resources and group cultivation of farm land, the women's groups will create institutional arrangements and norms for sustainable use and equitable distribution in partnership with PRIs.

Fostering partnerships: Partnerships between diverse stakeholders are increasingly being seen as an effective strategy to strengthen development co-operation, to take forward and sustain innovative interventions and to provide a basis for convergent programming. The project will seek to promote essentially four kinds of partnerships:

Between women's groups and local government at the block and district levels to access SGSY and resources available in other schemes, to bring women's concerns and issues in local project formulation and decision-making systems and to enhance capacities within government to address gender concerns in different sectors.

Between women's groups and PRIs to test and demonstrate mechanisms and systems that will allow women's groups and PRIs to work in tandem and establish a system of reinforcing each other's work and to enhance the capacity of women to participate effectively in PRIs.

Between different women's groups within the district and beyond to enable women to network, and learn from each other, build on collective strength to address issues of poverty, equity and access and participate effectively in social, economic and political processes.

Between women's groups, PRIs, civil society organisations and government agencies to develop, test and disseminate innovative, gender-equitable and community-managed approaches and to collectively explore issues such as rights of women and vulnerable groups to land and resources, equitable distribution of resources and benefits, food and nutrition security, sustainable resource utilization practices and norms, ways of improving the quality of development interventions and services, how to mobilise resources from different sources and influencing policy.

Supporting advocacy and policy influence: Finally, the project will proactively seek to inform and influence policy at district, state and national levels. At the local level, lessons from the project will be shared with other villages in the district/s not directly covered by the project and with other stakeholders. Research based on grassroots experience will be a significant component of the project so that lessons from below can feed into policy discussions. Support will be provided for review papers on policy implications emerging from project implementation and experience of other programmes and for workshops at state and national levels for dissemination of programme learning

and feeding into other policy making fora. Advisory structures set up under the project will involve senior policy-makers and decision-makers. The project will seek to constantly learn from and feed into other ongoing projects of UNDP and of other bilateral, multilateral and centrally state sponsored schemes of the GOI (also refer section E II & III).

III. Project Results

The matrix below outlines the four key project outcomes, baseline, targets and indicative activities.

Project Results Matrix

Project Outcome 1	Effective implementation of the social mobilisation approach strengthens the capacity of 5,000 women's groups from poor and marginalised communities to undertake natural resource management and thereby improve their access to natural resources and sustainable livelihoods.		
Baseline	Target	Intended Outputs	Some Indicative Activities
<p>Increasing vulnerability of poor women and households to degradation of natural resources, recurring droughts, and inequities in access and consequently to food, fuelwood, fodder and water scarcities.</p> <p>Low income and low productivity from resources are leading to increasing malnutrition, chronic hunger, high dependence on consumption loans for food, migration and indebtedness.</p> <p>Poor access of women farmers to technologies, credit, productive resources including land, skills and knowledge.</p>	<p>Increased impetus to formation and strengthening of organisations of the poor, particularly women.</p> <p>Poor communities, particularly women expand their resource and asset base to meet their requirements related to food grains, water, fuelwood and fodder.</p> <p>Reduced vulnerability of the poor households to resource degradation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key components of the social mobilisation approach tested, refined and widely demonstrated. ▪ Capacity of women enhanced to collectively address their vulnerability to resource degradation. ▪ Increased productivity and sustainability of natural resources and livelihood systems in the project areas. ▪ Women enabled to improve their access, skill and competence as farmers and managers of natural resources (land, water and forests). ▪ The benefits as well as approaches for integrating biodiversity conservation in natural resource development programmes effectively demonstrated and adopted by local communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training of women's groups and PRIs in participatory planning, implementing and monitoring natural resource management related interventions. ▪ Training, skill building, perspective building and exposure of women's groups to technologies/techniques of improving natural resource management covering land and crop productivity, sustainable agriculture practices (including the importance of traditional cereals and subsistence crops), fodder development, fuelwood plantations, animal husbandry, water harvesting, basic nutrition, storage (e.g., seed and grain banks) and primary processing activities, sustainable harvesting and processing of NTFPs and other income generating activities. ▪ Organising village-level workshops for preparation of action plan for each season by women's groups. ▪ Provision of micro-capital assistance, grants (implementation and infrastructure) to new women's groups to enable them to take up household and group-level activities. ▪ Implementation of action plans by women's groups with field support by Implementing Agencies (NGO partners), field functionaries of the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj and consultants. ▪ Capacity building of women's groups to access key district and block level development officials and line departments and, credit institutions. ▪ Facilitate access of women's groups to resources available from schemes and programmes of government and other agencies. ▪ Establishment of linkages with marketing agencies, agro-industries and commercial buyers for sale of produce. ▪ Facilitate dialogue with state government to transfer access and control over natural resources to communities. ▪ Networking with other women group's in the area to share experiences, plan development activities and address social issues.

Project Outcome 2		Improved partnerships between women's groups, government, PRIs, NGOs and donors result in effective participation of poor and marginalised communities, particularly women, in their own development and foster collective thinking and effort for poverty alleviation.	
Baseline	Target	Intended Outputs	Some Indicative Activities
<p>Inadequate capacities within the government and NGOs to interface with women and respond to their livelihood needs.</p> <p>Inadequate linkages between key actors to collectively address the vulnerability of poor communities, particularly women.</p> <p>Inadequate participation of women and marginalised communities in PRIs and other decision-making bodies.</p>	<p>Capacities of key actors enhanced to replicate the social mobilisation approach for poverty alleviation.</p> <p>Women's participation in key local institutions influences decision-making processes and issues and improves their access to sustainable livelihoods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access of women and poor communities to resources available with the government and other agencies improved. ▪ Linkages between key actors for greater cross learning, sharing of knowledge and information, improved access to resources and technical capacities and wider dissemination of tested approaches established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training support to Implementing Agency (NGOs and select PRIs), local government officials, other PRIs and NGOs on issues of gender and equity dimension of natural resource management, food and nutrition security, biodiversity conservation, child labour, participatory planning and monitoring. ▪ Promote and strengthen mechanisms at district and state level for greater cross learning. ▪ Training of women members in participation, project design and monitoring, decision-making, negotiation and leadership skills and, participation in democratic processes. ▪ Organisation of exchange visits for NGOs, PRIs, women's groups and local government officials to see best practices both within and outside the state. ▪ Facilitate multi-stakeholder workshops with NGO, local government, PRIs and women leaders to discuss community and women's access and rights over local resources, possible linkages with ongoing poverty alleviation schemes and programmes, need for increased attention to poor and vulnerable communities, collective strategy to address resource degradation. ▪ Organise meetings of government, NGOs and donor agencies to explore and facilitate convergence with programmes of other UN agencies and other donors in the project states. ▪ Capacity building of women leaders to take on leadership roles at different levels. ▪ Capacity building of NGOs and women's groups to demand information and ensure thereby that there is accountability and transparency in the use of public funds.

Project Outcome 3		Effective advocacy by project partners leads to wider demonstration and replication of social mobilization approach for poverty alleviation and for mainstreaming gender in poverty alleviation policies and programmes.	
Baseline	Target	Intended Outputs	Some Indicative Activities
<p>Need for demonstrating social mobilization approach for wider adaptation by stakeholders.</p> <p>Inadequate documentation and analysis of learnings and wider dissemination among key stakeholders.</p> <p>Ineffective mechanisms for critical review of programmes and policies and feedback, including from the gender perspective.</p>	<p>Participatory stakeholder fora at different levels recognised by government and development practitioners as repositories of experience and learning.</p> <p>Increased evidence of formulation of pro-poor and gender-sensitive policies and programmes on social mobilisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project's ability to contribute to policy and programme formulation/change at all levels –district, state and national – enhanced. ▪ Institutional mechanisms for exchanges and dialogues between policy makers, women and other concerned groups to influence government policies established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support to documentation and dissemination of lessons learnt from/impact of applying the social mobilization approach in a variety of socio-economic environments. ▪ Support mechanisms and processes at different levels, particularly the district and community level for ensuring cross learning and experience sharing among project participants and with other communities, PRIs and government agencies. ▪ Provide regular updates for state government and Ministry of rural development (GOI) on ways and means for wider replication of social mobilization for poverty alleviation. ▪ Commission research studies and papers (e.g., on laws and rules related to land, forests, processing and marketing of forest produce, land revenue, inheritance and other issues directly affecting tribal communities with particular emphasis on the rights of women. ▪ Support state level campaigns by women's groups on issues such as rights of women including land rights, forest rights, rights to access and control of natural resources and need for revival of natural resource economy. ▪ Facilitate linkage of women's groups and NGO partners with decentralization projects, right to information, right to food and access to justice projects/movements in the project states and the country. ▪ Facilitate participation/contribution in programme design and policy formulation fora.

Project Outcome 4	Enhanced capacity of women's groups to address issues of health and education to enable these issues to be mainstreamed in the poverty discussions		
Baseline	Target	Intended Outputs	Some Indicative Activities
<p>Need for integrating issues of health and education and getting children out of work and into school in the overall social mobilisation approach for poverty alleviation.</p> <p>Lack of understanding of the links between inadequate facilities for education and health on the poverty situation of communities.</p> <p>Insufficient data on the links between health, education and the impact on poverty.</p>	<p>Capacities of women's groups and communities enhanced to address issues of health and education.</p> <p>Better understanding achieved on the close link between health, education and poverty at all levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project is able to effectively contribute to a dialogue on the necessity of including health, education and child labour elimination into the poverty debate. ▪ Research studies, advocacy campaigns and grassroots implementation highlight the contribution of women and children in sustainable livelihoods. ▪ Research studies highlight the close link between health, education and poverty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organise perspective building workshops at the field level on the need for education, particularly girl's education. ▪ Launch and support media and advocacy campaigns to sensitise communities, women's groups, PRIs, government officials on the need to get children out of work and into school. ▪ Establish linkages with ongoing education and health programmes and schemes of the government, multilateral agencies and other development organisations and institutions. ▪ Facilitate mobilisation of funds from bilateral donors for running bridge camps (for accelerated learning so that they can catch up with their peers) for older children so that they can be mainstreamed into the formal school system. ▪ Commission research studies and papers (e.g., on the impact of work on children, the impact of health related problems on poverty, the contributions of women and children to the informal care economy, ▪ Support state level campaigns by women's groups on issues such as child labour elimination, education for women's empowerment, health and child care facilities.

IV. Sustainability

For ensuring lasting results, one of the major parameters for evaluating project outcomes will be the sustainability of the approaches practically demonstrated on the ground. The participatory monitoring and evaluation framework that will be developed for the project will incorporate assessments of the following dimensions of sustainability:

1. ***Institutional sustainability***, in that the project leads to the nurturing of democratic, gender equitable, self-governing, community-level institutional structures that can sustain the process beyond the life of the project. This will include individual institutions at the user and/or producer level and at the group or community levels and their networks at larger spatial levels for ensuring sustainable mechanisms of support. Developing mutually supportive linkages with institutions of local self-governance will be explored for mainstreaming local initiatives through existing structures for self-governance.
2. ***Ecological sustainability***, in that the ecosystem integrity and biodiversity attributes of the area are not damaged, but rather are enhanced and/or made more secure.
3. ***Socio-economic sustainability***, in that the processes that the project sets in motion lead to greater social and cultural cohesion, gender and socio-economic equity, development of effective dispute resolution mechanisms, and acceptability of changes if any. In addition, multi-dimensional approaches to poverty alleviation help mainstream education and health issues into poverty discussions.
4. ***Enhanced livelihood security***, amongst women and under-privileged sections and in the community as a whole that are identified in the planning phase or emerge subsequently.
5. ***Financial sustainability***, at the community level beyond the project period through a combination of self-sustaining income and livelihood generation activities and establishment of durable links with existing formal and informal support structures, particularly those available through the government. An important indicator of all the above aspects of sustainability will be the partner organisation's withdrawal strategy effectively making its inputs less necessary over time, in cases where the organisation is from outside the community.

Each of the above would need to be modified and developed into site-specific indicators and parameters, depending on the ecological, social, cultural and economic context of each area where the project is being implemented.

V. Gender Equality and Decentralisation

The Government of India has identified *promotion of gender equality and strengthening decentralization* as the two priority goals for coordinated action by the UN System in India under the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). As the UNDAF is a central pillar of the GOI/UNDP Country Programme (2003-2007), all UNDP-supported projects are required to mainstream strategies towards achieving these goals. The table below presents an overview of the underlying principles, policy framework and project cycle management strategies that must guide all stakeholders:

Project Cycle Management Strategies	UNDAF Goal: Promoting Gender Equality	UNDAF Goal: Strengthening Decentralization
Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal gender relations. • Equity in participation and benefit sharing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People's participation, their influence and control on matters important to their lives; equal access and fair representation for all social groups. • Responsive, open, transparent and accountable public mechanisms.
Policy Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National goal of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, and improvement in conditions of women through removal of barriers to their development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments on democratic decentralization. • Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act for self-governance by the tribal community.
Results Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transform unequal gender relations. • Strengthen equity in participation and benefit sharing (at least 50% share to women in employment opportunities created through the project). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen decentralization as an essential pre-requisite to people's-centered development. • Support <i>panchayati raj</i> institutions – both rural and urban – directly (building their capacity or working with them on specific issues such as natural resource management, sustainable livelihoods or disaster management) or indirectly strengthen the decentralization process by supporting social mobilisation and preparing communities or other civil society actors to actively participate in <i>panchayati raj</i> institutions.

Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve Women stakeholders and gender resource persons with sector-specific competence in project development, work planning and monitoring. • Provide at least 50% membership of women in all community organisations and local level management/ implementing committees, and a similar ratio in chairing of such committees. Minutes of community meetings to separately record attendance of women members. • Include at least one woman member (a representative of a local women's group, a woman academic or civil servant, or a woman community leader) in Project Advisory Committees at local level. • Ensure strict application of the principle of 'equal wages for equal work'. • Maintain separate muster rolls and payment records for women beneficiaries. • Ensure at least 50% participation of women in training/learning opportunities (skill training at grassroots level, study tours, exposure visits, issue-based workshops and specialized professional courses). Provide appropriate support towards this (training programmes for community representatives organized at local level, Crèche/childcare and health). • Ensure that at least 30% of project staff are women by instituting non-discriminatory recruitment procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create multi-stakeholder groups at appropriate levels to promote community management of services and resources. • Support effective social mobilisation, improved access to information and greater sensitivity among development administrators. • Support flexible and locally appropriate institutions and systems to address development concerns at different levels – within the community, at the district level and at the State level. • Evolve a structured mechanism that will allow community groups, Gram Sabha and the Panchayati Raj Institutions to complement the work of Government Departments at suitable levels. • Establish suitable mechanisms to facilitate participation of representatives from local government structures in project management. Similarly, facilitate solicitation of views from NGOs. • Ensure incorporation of decentralized assessment indicators in work planning processes. • Ensure that capacity building activities (structured training, exposure visits) include representatives of PRIs/CBOs/NGOs to strengthen their decision-making skills. • Implement measures for perspective building of Implementing Agencies and other project stakeholders in the philosophy of decentralization and implications of various decentralization amendments. • Ensure a democratic and decentralized decision-making process within the implementing organisations.
Project Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out a gendered baseline survey to benchmark basic indicators of women's development, including population, education, health status, work participation and issues/problems specific to the area. Use data from secondary sources such as the Census 2001, National Sample Surveys and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure benchmarking of the identified districts/specific regions with regard to the status of PRIs/CBOs/NGOs as part of the baseline survey. • Mid-term/final evaluation/any other final assessment should also assess the contribution of the project to the decentralization objective.

	<p>previous research studies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect data on women's situation through informant interviews, focus group discussions, and household sample surveys, and from local women's groups/NGOs working in the area. • Ensure 50% representation for women in appraisal and review teams. • Include gender specialist in all review teams. 	
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This has two implications:

- All UNDP-supported projects should contribute to the goal of promoting gender equality, either directly through actions to transform unequal gender relations, or indirectly through actions to empower women and/or creating an enabling environment for the transformation of unequal gender relations.
- Women should be equal participants, and should be able to claim an equal share of benefits and outcomes in all aspects of UNDP-supported projects.

Based on the framework this project will give special attention to ensuring sensitivity to and integration of gender, equity and decentralisation concerns in both the site based and state and national level activities. In addition, the monitoring and evaluation system of the project will track progress in mainstreaming gender, equity and decentralisation issues (refer section E for details).

VI. Risk Analysis

Risk	Risk Rating (high/medium/low)	Risk Minimisation Measures
■ Risk of outputs failing to translate into outcomes (e.g. complex policy environment, local ownership)		
GOI and partner State Governments are unable to fulfill its counterpart obligations.	Medium	Regular meetings with state and national level government officials and of the implementation committees responsible for steering the Project.
GOI and partner state governments are unable to introduce policy changes to enable wider replication of project approaches and results.	Medium	Regular meetings with the government to share project learnings and policy implications
■ Risk of outputs not being produced (e.g. constraints in partnership strategy, counterpart support, complex management arrangement)		
Government of India not supportive of NGOs	Low	
State Rural Development departments and the NGO partners are not effective in managing the Project's thrust areas.	Low	State Department of Rural Development and NGO partners strengthened to respond to Project needs.
Empowered women's groups are not in place.	Low	

Delays in fund release to women's groups.	Medium	Direct payment modality to be used wherever possible and constant follow-up with MORD and state governments for timely release of funds.
Women's groups and NGOs unwilling to become partners in the Project.	Low	

VII. Partnerships

This project aims to work with women's groups and all efforts will be made to empower them in all aspects of the project so that they are capable of sustaining these activities on their own in the long run. The partnerships established through the implementation of this project will also be very useful in ensuring this.

In the project states, the women's groups and NGO partners will work closely with relevant state and district departments, particularly the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj. With sustainable livelihoods, drought, water crisis and food security emerging as critical issues of debate and action in the government and the public domain, the project can contribute significantly to state and national-level discussions and responses. It will seek to share learnings and provide regular feedback to policy-making bodies and fora at the national, state and district levels.

A strong partnership between the women's groups, PRIs, NGOs, rural banks (e.g., NABARD) and the district and state government agencies and programmes (e.g., SGSY, JFM, drought proofing, watershed development and water harvesting) will be important for the success of the project. Additionally, the project will encourage and support partnerships between the field partners (in this case NGOs and women's groups) as well as with the larger civil society and advocacy and learning networks (such as on water, right to food). At the grassroots level, the Project will foster partnerships with women's groups supported under the project and the *Panchayati Raj* Institutions.

Given the multi-dimensional nature of the project interventions, it will seek to forge partnerships with international and national organisations working in the Project states covering the government (e.g., Department of Agriculture, Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Planning Commission, Ministry of Water Resources), donors (UNICEF, FAO, SIDA, DFID India, GTZ, Aga Khan Foundation), research institutions (e.g., IDS, Jaipur; CAZRI, Jodhpur; CWDS, New Delhi; ICRISAT, Hyderabad) and civil society organisations working on sustainable and community-driven sustainable natural resource management, enhancing women's participation, drought, water conservation and harvesting and food security (including the related 'Right to Food' & 'Right to Water' campaigns) issues.

D. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS AND ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROJECT PARTIES

I. Prior Obligations and Pre-requisites

- The Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, will closely monitor the implementation of the project and assist in linking this project with other externally and centrally sponsored women-in-natural resource management projects.
- The Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj of the State Governments will ensure that women's groups at the village level receive the facilities and support available under on-

going government programmes such as SGSY, agriculture and forestry, as well as under various programmes funded by bilateral and multilateral agencies.

- The State Governments will also ensure convergence with relevant schemes being implemented by various departments in the state.
- The State-level Steering Committee for stock taking, advice and policy guidance will be set up by the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj with members drawn from all the relevant line departments, GOI, UNDP and eminent subject experts.
- Local NGOs will identify established women's groups for partnering in the projects along with district officials. They will also identify areas where new groups could be supported.

UNDP assistance will be provided subject to the satisfactory fulfillment of the above pre-requisites. If anticipated fulfillment of one or more pre-requisites fails to materialise, UNDP may, at its discretion, either suspend or terminate its assistance.

II. Implementation Arrangements

National-level

Government Coordinating Agency: The Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) in the Ministry of Finance, the Government aid-coordinating agency will be responsible for the overall coordination of the Country Programme activities. In order to guide and support the Executing Agencies towards meeting the Country Programme goals, DEA will participate in the Project Management Board. DEA will also catalyse consultations on broader development cooperation issues emerging out of different programmes supported by UNDP as well as programmes assisted by other agencies. As a part of its overall mandate of resource mobilisation, DEA in collaboration with the concerned government departments and UNDP will also assist in raising additional resources to support project objectives.

National Executing Agency: In line with the National Execution Guidelines (July 1998) issued by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Ministry of Finance and the UNDP corporate procedures as outlined in its Programming Manual (May 2000), this project will be executed nationally. The Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India will be the Executing Agency for the project, and will be responsible for its overall management including achievement of planned results and for the use of UNDP funds. A Joint Secretary in the Department will be the National Project Director (NPD) and will co-ordinate project execution. The main institutional mechanisms for guiding the Project at this level would be the Programme Management Board (PMB) and an Empowered Project Standing Committee. In addition, workshops to review progress of the project may also be organised once or twice a year with participation from GOI, UNDP, all partners state governments and partner NGOs.

Programme Management Board (PMB): The PMB will be chaired by Secretary Ministry of Rural Development and with representation from UNDP, DEA, Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Environment and Forests, officials of the partner State Governments and other partners. The functions of PMB are described below:

- Identifying policy lessons from the project, which are replicable to other national initiatives including the need for review of laws, rules and regulations as well as guidelines for major national programmes.

- Linking organically broader human development strategy/ achievements and innovative approaches in multi-sectoral development programming at the grassroots.
- Reviewing progress of the project through participatory mechanisms and based on lessons from below on key indicators such as ownership, participation, equity and empowerment.

Empowered Standing Committee (ESC): The ESC will be headed by the NPD and will have as members, representatives from Rural Development Department of concerned State Governments, Finance Division of the MORD, DEA, CAPART, Planning Commission, Department of Women and Child Development, MoEF and UNDP. The functions of the Committee are described below:

- Exploring opportunities for flexible management, in tune with the ongoing rationalisation in governmental procedures and the fast-evolving UNDP reforms initiative will be fully harnessed.
- Implementing the monitoring, evaluation and research strategy. Particularly ensuring that participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) at the grassroots is the base on which the overall M&E superstructure is built.
- Assessing development outcomes vis-à-vis the planned targets.
- Identifying policy lessons from the Project, which are replicable to other national initiatives including the need for review of laws, rules and regulations as well as guidelines for major national programmes.
- Linking organically broader human development strategy/ achievements and innovative approaches in multi-sectoral development programming at the grassroots.

Special Coordination Arrangements: A State Coordination Committee (SCC) headed by the Chief Secretary of the state will be set-up to review progress of *all* UNDP-assisted projects in the state and facilitating capturing of lessons as well as their feedback into state-level policy discussions. The members would include: NPDs of all projects in the State, UNDP, State Revenue Commissioner/Development Commissioner, State Secretaries of Departments dealing with UNDP-assisted projects (e.g. Agriculture, Women and Child Development/Social Welfare, Environment, Disaster Management) Collectors from two of the districts covered (on rotational basis), the State-level Implementing Agencies, two of the participating NGOs (on rotational basis) and four representatives of project beneficiaries. The main functions of the SCC are described below:

- Facilitating co-ordination with other UNDP-assisted projects in the state, with the relevant government-funded initiatives and programmes supported by other development agencies including the UN System.
- Facilitating capturing of lessons and feeding them into state-level policy discussions/advocacy particularly in the context of State HDR findings and recommendations.
- Mapping human development concerns in the project context and guiding the implementation of the project research agenda relating to human development.
- Facilitating monitoring of progress in outcomes and impact.

State-level

At the State-level, NGOs and select PRIs will be the Implementing Agencies and will be under the guidance of the Secretary of the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj

The State-level Steering Committee will be set up by the State Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj. The members of the Committee will include officials of the

Departments of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Tribal Development, Social Welfare, Women's Welfare, Land Revenue, Irrigation, Finance and NGOs. Senior officers from other departments and eminent experts on subjects/areas relevant to the Project may also be co-opted into the Committee at the discretion of the Chairperson. This Committee will meet twice a year, and will guide the focus and direction of the Project as well as facilitate policy support for its successful implementation. The Committee will also set up mechanisms to ensure that learning and outcomes are fed back into the policy formulation process.

For the day-to-day and overall management of the project, support will be provided to the State Rural Development department by a team of National UN Volunteers (NUNVs). These NUNVs with experience and expertise in various aspects of natural resource management, agriculture, participatory rural appraisal, social mobilization, health, education, gender issues and documentation will monitor project activities. The state-level project team will be augmented as necessary by short-term consultants, who will be responsible for specific assignments. The tasks of the state-level project team will be as follows:

- Coordinate and monitor field activities in all the identified districts in each of the three States;
- Identify capacity development needs and organize training programmes;
- Network between government departments, NGOs, resource organisations and PRIs;
- Identify experts for undertaking state-level training programmes;
- Organise state-level steering committee meetings, state level workshops and meetings;
- Prepare progress reports for onward submission to MORD/UNDP;
- Prepare financial reports for submission to MORD/UNDP;
- Ensure convergence with ongoing government programmes;
- Develop a project data-base at the state-level and maintain the Information hub

The Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj will convene bimonthly meetings with all participating NGOs to review the progress of the project and identify new challenges.

District-level

At the district-level, select NGOs with proven track record for social mobilisation and women's empowerment around natural resource management for poverty eradication will be identified by MORD/State Governments and UNDP. In addition to NGOs, select PRIs would also be supported for implementing project activities at the grassroots level on the recommendation of the District Collector. Apart from implementing NGOs, support will also be provided to resource organisations who would provide expertise to local NGOs on specific issues identified during the course of project implementation. These could be local NGOs or NGOs with specific capabilities from outside the state.

Identified NGOs would have to prepare a plan of action for the duration of the project, specifying the activities that they would undertake in mobilizing and strengthening existing SHGs. They would also have to develop a plan of action of involving PRIs in their area of operation. These proposals would be sent to MORD/GOI and UNDP and once approved, MORD/GOI would enter into a contract with these NGOs/PRIs. Upon request from MORD/GOI, UNDP can also issue the contracts to NGOs/PRIs. Proposals for support to PRIs would have to come through the District Collector.

For each of the 11 districts, UNDP will facilitate the recruitment of 11 NUNVs, one for each district, who will be attached to the Collectorate and who will perform the following functions:

- Ensure coordination and partnership between NGOs, women's groups , PRIs and local government officials.
- Ensure that micro-plans are prepared by the women's collectives in a timely manner, that they are truly participatory and not imposed upon them and that funds are made available for the activities identified by the women in a timely manner.
- Monitor project activities on a continuous basis and ensure that work is done according to agreed workplans.
- Provide technical assistance to NGOs, PRIs and women's groups in the area of health, education, food security, marketing support as and when required.
- Assist NGOs and women's groups to prepare projects using the Special SGSY guidelines, monitor progress and prepare reports to be submitted to MORD.
- Ensure that the Special SGSY funds are made available on time once the proposals have been approved.
- Ensure that reports are prepared and submitted by NGO partners to the state government on time.
- Ensure that utilisation certificates are sent by NGOs to the state government for onward transmission to UNDP/GOI.
- Ensure timely release of funds by NGOs to women's groups.
- Convene meetings of the District Facilitation Committee
- Prepare and send to the state Department of Rural Development minutes of the meetings of the District Facilitation Committee and report on bottlenecks that need to be addressed.

A **District Facilitation Committee** will be set up to be chaired by the District Collector or the Project Director DRDA (as appropriate). The NUNV attached to the Collectorate/DRDA will be the Convenor. The District Social Welfare Officer, the District Manager of the State SC/ST Development Finance Corporation, District Forest Officer, Tribal Development Officer and the district banks will be members of the Committee. Participating NGOs and PRIs will also be members of this Committee and make a presentation of the work they have done. Officers from other relevant departments may be co-opted into the Committee at the discretion of the Chairperson. The District Facilitation Committee will meet quarterly, and will monitor and facilitate the implementation of the Project and will ensure the flow and convergence of inputs and resources to women's groups from ongoing programmes of the government such as Swarnajayanti Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY).

UNDP Collaboration: UNDP will support management of the project and towards this participate in various project committees. UNDP will support drawing and upscaling of development lessons. At the request of the Executing Agency, UNDP will also provide support (termed as UNDP Country Office support services) for sub-contracting the NGOs, PRIs, resource organizations, consultants for monitoring and evaluation, researchers, film-makers and any other institution required to support the project. Such support activities will be carried out in accordance with UNDP rules and regulations.

III. Funds Flow Arrangements and Financial Management

The Ministry of Rural Development, the Executing Agency, shall make suitable provision for UNDP funds in its annual budget. The Ministry of Rural Development will enter into Memorandum of Understanding with the implementing agencies. Based on the approved annual workplan, MORD will release quarterly advances to the implementing agencies. MORD will request UNDP to release to them quarterly advance funds for onward transmittal to implementing partners.

The implementing agencies (participating NGOs/PRIs) shall maintain a separate bank account in order to receive and disburse UNDP funds. Separate books of accounts on cash basis of accounting shall also be maintained in order to ensure accurate reporting of expenditures and providing a clear audit trail. In all cases, fund transfers will on the basis of MOUs/contracts between the implementing agency and MORD/GOI.

Request for release of funds by UNDP will be made as per the UNDP Financial Report format (See Attachment 4). The Financial Report will contain, in addition to the information on funds required, information on expenditure during the quarter and available balance. UNDP will release funds for the project in advance every three months based on the annual work-plan. The implementing agencies will send an annual work-plan and budget to the NPD. The NPD will place the annual work-plans and budget before the Empowered Standing Committee referred to earlier to approve the work-plans and budgets. The implementing agencies will report disbursement on a quarterly basis to the project team (National UN Volunteers based at the state Department of Rural Development) who in turn will consolidate the financial reports from all the implementing agencies in the state and forward the same to the NPD in the Financial Report format referred to earlier.

Direct payment procedures for payments to suppliers of goods and services and for payments to consultants, domestic or international, would be followed. In such cases, the Implementing Agency will request UNDP, through NPD, to make direct payments on their behalf. Similarly, as indicated earlier, Country office support services will be used at the request of the Executing Agency.

UNDP shall maintain accounts in respect of all disbursements made by them which will be audited by UNDP's legal auditors.

IV. Audit

As per the GOI NEX Guidelines, the project shall be subject to audit in accordance with UNDP procedures. In order to meet the UNDP requirement of covering 90% of the annual NEX expenditure under audit, an annual audit plan will be drawn up in consultation with DEA. The project shall be informed of the audit requirements by January of the following year. The audit covering annual calendar-year expenditure will focus on the following parameters: (a) financial accounting, documenting and reporting; (b) monitoring, evaluation and reporting; (c) use and control of non-expendable reporting; and (d) UNDP Country Office support.

The auditor shall be appointed in consultation with DEA. In line with the UN Audit Board requirements for submitting the final audit reports by 30th April, the auditors will carry out field visits during February/March. Detailed instructions on audit will be circulated by UNDP separately.

E. MONITORING & EVALUATION, RESEARCH, COMMUNICATIONS & ADVOCACY

I. Monitoring and Evaluation

The different committees discussed above will monitor the progress of the project. The PMB will give an emphasis to reviewing the activities of the project in a more holistic manner i.e., for its objectives, achievement of outputs and will also ensure a closer examination of substantive issues of the Project.

Systems for routine monitoring will be developed and streamlined by the Department of Rural Development in each state in consultation with partner NGOs and the District Facilitation Committee. This will enable reviewing the project in a holistic manner i.e., for its objectives, achievement of outputs as per the success indicators and for a closer examination of substantive issues. In terms of

processes, the project will encourage the use of participatory processes of monitoring and learning such as peer reviews, self-evaluation, social and development audit, event track and group feedback.

The project's monitoring and evaluation strategy will be built around the principles of mutual learning and stakeholder participation. Evaluations will be interpreted as "shared reflections" and the process of monitoring would also be of "revising" strategies in the light of freshly acquired knowledge through group reflection. These "evaluations" will look at both quantitative and qualitative dimensions and will adopt gender-sensitive and participatory tools and processes. While the project will have to 'deliver' on agreed objectives and outcomes, the activities would be broadly defined to suit women's practical and strategic needs.

A gendered baseline survey will be carried out before initiating project activities. Data from secondary sources such as the Census 2001, National Sample Surveys and previous research studies, will be supplemented with data from informant interviews, focus group discussions and household sample surveys. Data on women's situation will also be collected from local women's groups/NGOs working in the area.

Also, a mid-term review of the project will be undertaken to track progress and suggest mid-course corrections.

There will be an "external evaluation" at least once in two years, which will be carried out by development specialists engaged with the women's movement to understand the extent to which the envisaged strategy and the expected outcomes have been achieved and what changes need to be made. These "evaluations" will look at both quantitative and qualitative dimensions and will be undertaken in partnership with the Resource Groups and women's collectives so that they do not see this as a 'threat' but a positive learning experience. The evaluations under this project would be an opportunity for all those associated with it to examine their own experience, analyse and understand what is happening and identify their own areas of strengths and weaknesses.

A terminal evaluation including assessment of sustainability (refer C V), gender and decentralisation dimensions (refer C IV) will be carried out on completion of the project. The following broad parameters will be reviewed:

- Women's participation in planning and implementing project activities.
- Direct benefits accruing to women from the project, and resulting changes in women's material condition.
- Impact of the project on women's access to resources, access to information, autonomy within the family, ability to access public services, ability to participate in social/economic/political decision-making and vulnerability to violence.

Appropriate project-specific indicators will be evolved for measuring changes in women's situations along the above parameters.

II. Research Agenda

The project will have a strong research agenda that will be developed at the beginning of the project in consultation with women's collectives and the NGOs. Given the central focus of the project on women's empowerment, the project will commission a gender analysis to improve understanding of the local context and accordingly identify opportunities for strengthening the role of women and strategies for their empowerment. Some of the research studies will focus on ways to mainstream lessons from the field into the programmes of MORD.

A role for action and applied research with assistance from academic institutions such as Sandhan (Jaipur) IDS (Jaipur), Centre for Women Development Studies (Delhi), CAZRI (Jodhpur), Institute of Economic Growth (Delhi) ICRISAT (Hyderabad) as well as experts and researchers is envisaged, particularly for the gender and participation dimensions. Comprehensive and rigorous studies will be commissioned to review the impact of the social mobilisation approach and the project's key interventions aimed at strengthening the household and community level food security, improving access to water, fuelwood and fodder and enhancing the capacity of women for effective participation in development at the village level and beyond. Research studies will also be conducted on issues related to the contribution of women and children to the care economy through building up a database through primary research. These studies will then be discussed both in the formal review meetings as well as in workshops and seminars held for this purpose through the life of the project. NGOs will also be involved in action-research studies.

In addition, the project will seek to strengthen its contribution to policy advocacy at both state and national level. To this end, studies will be commissioned on issues such as the nature and depth of collaboration between women's groups, PRIs, local government and NGOs; the extent to which women leaders have been able to participate in local government and PRIs; how has the government responded to the livelihood needs of women at programme and policy level.

III. Communication and Advocacy, Lessons Learned, and Upscaling

A concrete action plan will be developed at the beginning of the project along with budgetary outlays, to document and disseminate best practices for greater cross learning between project partners as well as for wider learning. The roles of different agencies – GOI, State Governments, UNDP and partner NGOs - will be defined and the work-plans will reflect the different activities related to documentation (e.g. commissioning case studies, process documentation, issue-based studies, reviews, working papers) and wider dissemination through publications, inputs into websites, monographs and multi-mass media coverage on a regular basis.

The project will encourage effective communication that covers information gathering and sharing documentation with all project partners. It will encourage documentation of baseline as well as key milestones during the project period through use of video and print media; coverage of key events by journalists and others; training of project partners in communication tools and skills; commissioning success stories with a strong human element and; facilitating linkages, wherever possible, with communication staff of the government at district/block levels. It will proactively support design and creation of mechanisms such as workshops to share and review experiences and lessons learnt at different levels within the project as well as implications for programme and policy formulation.

The project will also seek to influence relevant policies such as the Agriculture Policy, Water Policy, Joint Forest Management Programme, National Policy & Action Plan for Empowerment of Women, formulation of 11th Five Year Plan) and programmes (particularly those relating to women's SHGs, rural livelihoods such as the SGSY) at both the state and national level. The project will support and facilitate interaction between policy makers, women's groups, NGOs, PRIs and experts on issues related to women in natural resource management and traditional agriculture through state and national level workshops. Discussions will also centre around the role and contribution of women and children in the informal care economy.

The project will encourage monitoring and evaluation of project processes and outcomes jointly with policy makers, implementing groups and subject specialists. The Project will facilitate the travel of independent journalists to see the work in the field. It will provide funds to local partners to video document the process in the field. UNDP will commission films for national and international TV,

organise annual thematic workshops on issues raised through the research studies. At the grassroots level, the project will encourage women's groups to participate in campaigns on issues and rights of women, including land rights, forest rights, rights to access and control of natural resources and need for revival of the natural resource economy.

F. PROJECT BUDGET

I. UNDP Contributions

The total budget envisaged for effective implementation of the project is USD 26 million over a period of four years (November 2003 to December 2007). Of this total requirement, USD 6 million will be provided by UNDP under Country Cooperation Framework (CCF) – II (2003-07), of which USD 3.1 million have already been committed for the first three years (upto Dec 2005) of the project. In fact, the MORD (GOI) will ensure that an equal amount is available from SGSY for appropriate activities to be undertaken by women's groups. The balance will be mobilised from other international agencies and primarily from the government sources such as the SGSY and NABARD. Under CCF-II, the budget break-up is as follows (refer Annexure IV for detailed budget):

Inputs	Budget in US\$
Personnel including UNVs (9.74%)	584,114
Monitoring and review, duty travel, audit, documentation, research, communication and advocacy, and workshops (5.93%)	356,095
Subcontracts for grassroots level activities to NGOs, women's groups, PRIs and specialised agencies (84%)	5,040,071
Miscellaneous (0.33%)	19,720
Total	6,000,000

- **Personnel:** Support will be required for salary and honoraria of all consultants recruited by the Project, particularly subject specialists. UNDP will also facilitate recruitment of a team of three National UN Volunteers per project state and one National UNV per project district.
- **Travel:** Funds will be required for travel for project personnel, consultants, NGOs, NUNVs, local government officials. Expenditures will be in accordance with TA/DA rules of the State Governments or the Government of India as applicable. However, if funds are insufficient, some flexibility would be provided.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** Funds will be required for gendered baseline survey, gender analysis, mid-term and final evaluations, gender assessments, and audits. UNDP travel for monitoring purposes will also be charged to the Project.
- **Training:** All the grassroots level, district level and national level training and capacity building will be supported. These will include costs of resource persons, hiring of space for training programmes, training materials and travel of participants. State Governments will ensure that wherever possible, government buildings will be made available for training.
- **Equipment:** UNDP will support the essential equipment and technology needs of women's groups, as identified through participatory processes facilitated by NGOs and PRIs. If necessary UNDP will provide basic support for the NUNVs.

All equipment procured under the Project will be in the name of 'Resident Representative, UNDP'. The title of the equipment will be transferred to the government and thereafter to the user groups at end of each year.

Sub-contract: UNDP will provide support through sub-contract to NGOs, PRIs and resource organisations and experts for specific activities. This may include:

(a) Capacity building (perspective building and training on gender, biodiversity conservation, elimination of child labour, nutrition and food security, participatory M&E);

(b) Field activities identified by women's groups such as land up-gradation, forest management, utilisation of NTFPs, development/restoration of water harvesting structures, pasture land development, woodlots, construction of seed bins, grain storage bins, cultivation of medicinal plants, off-farm income generation activities.

(c) Documentation and advocacy by NGOs, PRIs and women's groups.

- **Communication and advocacy:** Support will be given to agencies/resource persons for production of films on best practices, documentation of case studies, research studies, preparation of teaching/learning materials, workshops for dissemination of lessons learnt and advocacy.
- **Micro-capital assistance:** UNDP will provide micro-capital assistance to women's groups for all productive activities as identified by them wherever this is not available from financial institutions¹⁹. Micro-capital assistance will initially be disbursed at the rate of Rs.35,000/- for a group of about 20 women members. Any additional requirement may be considered on a case-to-case basis. Only strong and cohesive groups that have demonstrated an ability to handle funds independently will be eligible for micro-capital assistance. Criteria for determining eligibility of groups will be decided by the State-level Steering Committee or the District Facilitation Committee, which will also review the use of these funds at the end of the first year of implementation. Groups showing higher capacity for absorption of funds will be eligible for further assistance, in accordance with norms to be decided by the Committee.

The micro-capital fund will be administered in accordance with UNDP norms and will be supplemented by resources raised independently by women's groups.

- **Miscellaneous expenses:** Funds are available for miscellaneous expenses incurred for the project by the resource groups and UNDP such as telephone, fax, e-mail facility, postage and stationery.

II. Government Contributions

The Government of India's contribution will be in the form of time given by the National Programme Director and officials of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. MORD will also make available US\$ 6 million from its Special SGSY programme for projects developed by women's groups in the field. These funds will be disbursed through the established channels set up by GOI for this purpose. The NUNVs at the district level will monitor the use of these funds and report .

The State Governments will ensure the provision of support, inputs and facilities to women's groups by the DRDAs and other agencies.

¹⁹ The exact nature of the inputs required will emerge from the planning exercises taken up by women's groups at the grassroots-level.

G. LEGAL CONTEXT

This project document shall be the instrument envisaged in the Supplemental Provisions to the Project Document attached hereto.

The following types of revisions may be made to this document with the signature of the UNDP Resident Representative only, provided he or she is assured that the other signatories of the Project document have no objections to the proposed changes.

- Revisions in, or addition of, any of the Annexes of the project document (with the exception of a Standard Legal Text for non-SBAA countries which may not be altered and agreement to which is a pre-condition for UNDP assistance);
- Revisions which do not involve significant changes in the immediate objectives, outputs of activities of the Project but are caused by the re-arrangements of inputs already agreed to or by cost increases due to inflation; and
- Mandatory annual revisions, which rephrase the delivery of, agreed project inputs or increased experts or other costs due to inflation.