

Briefing Note by the World Bank Mission, AP DAI (28th January to 4th February, 2008)

I. Current Status of Implementation

- There are 21 Different Pilot Initiatives. The mission visited pilots in 6 villages related to diversified farming systems, soil fertility improvement (composting), seed-banks, nurseries SRI- paddy cultivation, fodder production and fodder banks, activities taken up by single women such as castor seed production, nursery, management of common lands, groundwater management and sharing, poultry rearing,.
- The overall impression is that, good progress was made both in regard to the technical and institutional aspects of the pilots. The mission in particular appreciates that, in spite of delays with initiation of Phase II, the work in the field was continuing.
- The mission observes that the pilots are at different stage for their maturity. Such pilots as nurseries, composting, backyard chicken rearing (those relatively simple in technical and institutional terms) are progressing well and able to demonstrate some initial positive results in the livelihood perspectives of the people involved. More complex pilots (in particular, from the institutional point of view), such as groundwater sharing, diversified farming systems, common land management, fodder banks are still in the formative and initial testing stages. However, they are also making good progress.
- The mission also understood that progress was made in these particular villages due to the interest and readiness of the communities to test new approaches to drought adaptation. This factor needs to be taken into account when planning for the subsequent upscaling of the AP DAI initiatives.

II. Scaling - Up of AP DAI pilots

The mission also analyzed the requirements and opportunities of the AP DAI upscaling activities. In this context the mission got acquainted with the scaling up experiences of the NPM program. The mission understands that the scaling up is a gradual process comprising a number of logical steps:

1. Initiation of the pilot:
 - Technical verification needs to be assured;
 - The necessary administrative framework requirements are finalized and in place;
2. The pilot is *tested in the wider scale* throughout project area where close project monitoring is still possible;
3. Scaling-up outside of the project area. This requires the following:

- Identification and training of partner organizations (local NGOs, or others); this requires training-kits and materials prepared on the basis of the pilot's initial stage;
- Mobilization of resources for field level facilitation;
- Drought adaptation needs assessments at community levels
- Support to the communities and their representative organizations to the AP DAI scaling up through exposure visits, dissemination workshops, etc.
- Commitment of the local governments to support the AP DAI upscaling through the relevant government programs

Upscaling will be implemented, as in the NPM program, in incremental steps, gradually including increasing number of villages.

Some criteria of the readiness of the pilot to be scaled up are as follows:

- The initial piloting was carried out through at least two seasons and the institutional process proved to work well
- The pilot demonstrated economic viability from the farmers/interest groups point of view (lowering costs, increased income, etc)
- Evidence of the smooth convergence with the relevant government programs including processes and procedures
- Potential risks are small

At the time of the next mission, the Bank Team, in cooperation with Government and WASSAN, will assess which pilots will be ready for the next step in the upscaling process and to what extent the enabling environment for upscaling has been created.

III. Meeting with District Collector, Mahabubnagar

On January 31 2008, the mission met with the District Collector of Mahabubnagar and discussed the project results so far, and the steps forward. Specifically, the following main points were made by the Collector during the discussion:

- The efforts and results so far of the AP DAI are much appreciated by the District administration;
- The grass-root work of AP DAI is creating a link between the district level government departments and programs and local communities;
- In terms of the scaling up, the main recommendations to prepare include:
 - To focus on the most drought prone areas/Mandals
 - To assess needs in drought adaptation and identify priority interventions in the most drought prone communities;
 - To assist communities/villages to prepare drought adaptation action plans;
 - To provide continuous support to the implementation through local NGOs and farmer organizations, others
 - To have the district line departments involved in the scaling-up; their involvement to be defined through an open dialogue/discussion

between the project and the line departments (the first meeting held in November 2007 agreed on such a follow-up)

During the course of discussion with the District Collector, the Mission found that there is a window of opportunity to integrate promising initiatives generated under AP-DAI into the district level agricultural plans prepared under the Planning Commission's RKVY Program.

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