

OECD/DAC Developing Country Dialogues on National Strategies for Sustainable Development.

Mid-term review workshop, Thailand, 9-14 October 2000

Nepal Progress Report

Objectives and Focus:

As a continuum of development and implementation of sustainable development (SD) strategies for Nepal, which began in the early 1980's, the National Planning Commission (NPC) launched Sustainable Community Development Programme (SCDP) in 1996. Several initiatives relating to Forestry Master plan, Agricultural perspective plan and Five-year plan are underway with financial assistance from OECD-DAC countries. The nssd process in Nepal is expected to lead to the incorporation of the overarching principles of integrated and participatory development on sustainable basis.

The main objectives of the nssd dialogues in Nepal are:

- ◆ To identify strategic processes for sustainable development that have been successfully used in Nepal
- ◆ To assess elements that work well and not so well in Nepal, in order to:
 - a) Inform the development of the SD agenda in Nepal, and
 - b) Inform donors; eg.
 - OECD/DAC and other
 - Donors in Nepal

For achieving these objectives major documents on all national and local level strategies and plans will be reviewed. A series of workshops are planned at sub-national and national levels with major stakeholders, primarily the target beneficiaries at the community level.

Key Actors

National Planning Commission has constituted a nssd Steering Committee to provide overall policy guidance to the nssd process in Nepal. The committee is chaired by an NPC member with membership drawn from key ministries, UNDP, DFID, private sector and NGO's.

NPC has chosen IUCN Nepal as the independent organisation to work with IIED. IUCN will be responsible for overall technical and programmatic management of the project. A team leader has been identified to work full time with the nssd process. He will be assisted by a team of experts and support staff.

Overview of Approach and Activities

The Nepal nssd process will analyse the current 9th Five Year Plan, multi-stakeholder thematic strategies such as the National Conservation Strategy, Biodiversity Action Plan, Nepal Environmental Policy and Action Plan and Forestry Master Plan. A close examination of local level sustainable development programmes such as SCDP and community forestry will also be undertaken. In each case outcome, processes and links will be identified. This will be followed by sub-national and national workshops aimed at learning

about processes required to ensure optimum participation by all stakeholders for meeting the development needs and priorities of the poor and disadvantaged at community levels.

Completed and Ongoing Activities

A two-day regional workshop was organised in July to share experience of Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Thailand. Steve Bass of IIED and Pete Shelley of DFID also attended the workshop. This workshop set the stage for subsequent activities in Nepal. Since then the nssd steering committee has met several times to discuss appropriate strategies and approaches for Nepal. Following the signing of contract with IIED, a team leader has joined the work group. Some of the relevant documents have been collected and are being reviewed.

Results and Key Lessons

The July workshop came out with the following Principles of Effective nssds:

1. Agreed terminology/definition
2. Provides process for agreeing SD vision and goals
3. Focuses on agreed national priorities
4. Links local realities to these national priorities
5. Introduces mechanisms to ensure sustainability
 - ◆ HRD/Training
 - ◆ Experiments/Pilot projects
 - ◆ Participation/Social mobilisation
 - ◆ Intersectoral relations
 - ◆ Transparency
 - ◆ Governance/legislation
 - ◆ Avoidance of duplication
 - ◆ Finance and investment
 - ◆ Mechanisms for implementation (remove bottlenecks)
6. Understands changing context and forces for/against sustainability
7. Simple readable document is included in continuing communication programme
8. Encourages production/review of compatible sector strategies (nssd + sector strategies to learn from each other)
9. Steered by influential, high level, multisectoral body
10. Capitalises on existing systems, process and structures
11. Active and continuous processes of engaging stakeholders to build commitment and exercise responsibility
12. Based on principles of social justices, equity and gender sensitivity, special attention to involving marginalised groups
13. Mechanisms for defining criteria and indicators, bench marks monitoring and review are inbuilt
14. Continuous improvement approach

15. Donors should have long term commitment to local nssds

The Kathmandu Dialogue agreed that:

- a. These principles apply to all countries. Specific criteria and indicators could be developed for individual countries
- b. Any process that applies to these principles e.g. NCS, CDF etc could be recognised as an nssd
- c. Further thoughts are needed on possibility of devolution

Next Steps

Between the months of October and February 2001 an attempt will be made to complete all of the reviews, defining of SD success indicators, workshops, synthesis of the findings and preparation of a final report for the workshop scheduled to be held in Bolivia in February 2001.