

October 21-24, 1984

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

Subject: Visit of CIDA Team comprising M/S John Martin (JM), Tom Schatzky (TS) and Nazeer Ladhani (NL).

Wrap-up Session

The team accompanied with SSK paid a courtesy call on Commissioner, Northern Areas. The Commissioner, Mr. Khalid Mahmood Ahmad thanked the CIDA Team for their generous contribution towards the development of Northern Areas and as a gesture of goodwill presented the three members with local woollen 'chughas'. The CIDA team greatly appreciated the Commissioner's gift and expressed satisfaction at the close collaboration between the Administration and the AKRSP. Both the Commissioner and the CIDA team commended the efforts of AKRSP towards the development of Gilgit district.

After SSK's introduction and expression of everyone's thanks and gratitude from AKRSP particularly to Nazeer Ladhani, the team participated in the Monthly Project Officers Workshop and discussed many issues with the participants including problems and difficulties brought out in the Manager's Conference of the previous day, women's programme and future of AKRSP. TH briefly explained the matters raised by the Managers and Presidents of the VOs pertaining to prompt payment of installments, initiation of new PPIs, delivery of fertilizer, village planning and land development, marketing, maintenance of projects, accounts and the savings, training of livestock specialists, use of weedicides, remuneration for Managers etc. In regard to women's programme, TH observed that after KN's inspiring and impassioned appeal to the office bearers of the VOs to help in formulation of a women's programme, the men appeared to be appreciative of the shift in approach and seemed ready to help. Compared to early conference, the attitude to make demands also seemed to have given way to a more realistic approach of partnership and collaboration.

KN briefly described the genesis of the women's programme and recounted the interventions so far undertaken in this behalf. On a specific query from the team whether separate organisations for women were necessary and desirable or an integrated decision making process, as indicated by the new approach, would be more pertinent. SSK observed that the conceptualization of women's programme was still evolving. There was no rigid policy to have or not to have separate WOs. The feeling was that there were certain activities such as sanitation, child and maternity care etc., around which separate organisations could be formed but activities pertaining to agriculture in which women are involved, may perhaps be best tackled through the assistance of integrated organisation of men and women.

JM attributed the success of AKRSP to its emphasis on organisation and commented that failure to do so resulted in non-participation of the community in the developmental effort and consequent non-attainment of the objectives of developmental programmes in many parts of the world. AKRSP in his view addressed the fundamental need of organising people right from the beginning which in his view proved the programme's greatest strength. Some people may ask as to why this capacity lay dormant for so long and how come that this "sleeping giant" was awakened by AKRSP. JM observed that the AKRSP experience clearly shows that a catalyst for change from outside is essential. The great need now is to keep the organisations alive. He commended AKRSP's approach requiring VOs to generate their own capital and to pay for services. He however, cautioned against spreading the programme too thinly in other areas. He expressed great satisfaction at the way donor funds were utilised by AKRSP and attributed its success to AKRSP addressing itself to the fundamental questions.

NL spoke of the tremendous hope and encouragement AKRSP has unleashed in the area through its developmental intervention. He also commended the great confidence that AKRSP has instilled in the people in their work and in themselves. Commenting on the credit given to him by SSK for securing substantial funds

for AKRSP, NL attributed it the intrinsic and inherent quality of work done by AKRSP on the ground. He hoped that AKRSP will excel itself in the future.

TS observed that this was the most interesting project CIDA is involved in and he would be greatly satisfied if half of the CIDA aid is expended as well as AKRSP is utilising it. He particularly commended the progress reports and pointing to the sixth progress report observed that such reports make it easier to sell the project. Referring to the film "Valleys in Transition", he said that it was being used by some experts in Canada with various audience such as university students etc., to initiate and evoke discussions on issues and approaches of development.

In a subsequent wrap-up session between the team and SSK, HWK and TH, SSK's proposal to convert part of the CIDA grant into a revolving fund, was discussed. The team agreed to the idea in principle provided this was done without inhibiting or jeopardizing the initial goals and targets of the grant and secondly the use of funds as a revolving fund was institutionalized. They saw no incompatibility in the funds being used for second stage development mostly for land development projects. The team suggested reviewing the grant incorporating such a principle during their next visit when the proposal would have attained some concretisation on the basis of the disbursements of the NDFC interest free loan of Rs. 5 million.

On the question of reporting requirements for the grant, NL observed that on the basis of financial information upto September furnished by TH, he would authorise the release of Canadian Dollars 700,000 immediately on his return to Canada around November 5, 1984. In early January, he would require the current financial situation telexed enabling him to release next instalment of the grant. This should be followed by a financial statement with a brief three-page descriptive report. It was agreed that the reports should be sent within 45 to 60 days of the termination of the quarter. NL requested that reports pertaining to this grant, should be referred as multi-year grant reports to distinguished it from the first tranche and the bridge funding grants.

The team accompanied with SSK , HWK and Commissioner, Northern Areas took off from Gilgit airport by Helicopter at 1330 hours and landed at Hanuchal channel site. The team climbed up to the source of the channel and walked along the 4,700 feet of the completed khul. Work is in progress from both ends and about 800 feet of the difficult rocky area remains to be blasted and excavated. The channel is an embodiment of the courage, determination, hard work and untiring zeal of the villagers. It defies all description and observed by TS was the fitting finale to the CIDA team's visit to the Northern Areas.

After visiting the channel, the MG along with the Commissioner disembarked from the helicopter near Shutai and returned to Gilgit by jeep at 1630 hours.