

# PROCESS DOCUMENTATION FINAL REPORT

**P. G. SOMARATNE**

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# **PART ONE**

# **HURULUWEWA WATERSHED**

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## **Executive Summary**

SCOR is a conceptually very sound watershed management project for the implementation of which similarly sound strategies and approaches had been proposed in the project documents. Attempts were made by the project management to plan and implement the project as a participatory action research project for watershed management to learn lessons and test management and technological innovations for replication in watershed management projects in Sri-Lanka and elsewhere.

One major problem with regard to the project implementation was its too much emphasis on achieving certain production and protection targets. Project could be observed sacrificing many things, even the proposed participatory strategies and approaches for achieving these targets. Though project implementing in action research mode need to tolerate slow progress at the beginning, SCOR has been after achieving very unrealistic targets. Due to the very same reason, the project has not been able to develop plans and implement them with the interactive participation of resource users as well as line agency officials.

Failure in the part of the management to implement the project in action research mode to learn lessons from field implementation and to introduce corrective measures, policy interventions etc. For example, when committee systems like Sub WRMTs failed, alternatives could have been sought for internalization of the project activities through existing management apparatus like Divisional Secretary level committees, District Agricultural Committee (DSC) etc. However, the professional always tried to show the progress and achievements in the geographical areas or subject areas under their charge rather than critically evaluating the interventions implemented by them. This was mainly because project was implemented as a development project. In a project like SCOR which was supposed to be implemented in an action research mode need to have professionals with abilities and skills to test interventions and learn lessons. Tragedy of SCOR was that it lacked people with skills to translate project concepts into practice using strategies and approaches appropriate to a SCOR type of participatory action research project.

Less attention paid for institutional strengthening and capacity building of resource users and their organizations could be observed for the most part of the project. One major assumption of key project officials were that farmers would learn by working with catalysts and therefore training on institutional development is not much required. For example leadership training etc. were considered as conventional training for a project like SCOR and therefore emphasis was more on training on soil and water conservation. This was a serious problem for strengthening of RUOs. Catalysts played the role of the community leader towards the end of the project as leaders had not developed skills due to this reason. In case of government agencies, the constraints that they had in involving in the project activities were no carefully studied to take remedial action. Instead project paid incentive payments for the field level staff of agencies to participate in project activities.

Even though more emphasis was given to institutional strengthening towards the end of the project through various means such as training, workshops etc. impact on these interventions was not visible by the end of the project. The new project leader appointed towards the end of the project introduced some major changes to the management style of the project, giving more independence to the team for taking decisions and implementing the project activities in an integrated manner. In most cases he played the role of a facilitator and contributed more to create an environment for participatory dialogue among team members. However, this was not the desired role for the majority of team members who were used to a different kind of management style in which individuals made attempts to glorify themselves by implementing activities in their sub watersheds or giving priority to their activity areas by harming the holistic and integrated approach of the project.

The way the project operated for more than four years had serious consequences on redirecting the project. Officers wanted incentive payments for participation at meetings as well as in implementing some limited kind of activities. Farmer leaders heavily depended on catalysts for decisions on implementation of mini-project and other activities. They wanted financial and other assistance from the project for implementing each and every activity and blamed project officers for failing to keep the promises made to them initially. Leaders of most of the organizations had no capacity or acceptance in the community to implement the project themselves. Though officers participated at RUO activities on SCOR initiation to receive some payments, their willingness to implement watershed management interventions themselves could not be observed. However, this does not deny that SCOR had implemented watershed management activities and made awareness in the community on environmental degradation and also on soil and water conservation technologies. The problem was that SCOR did not adopt appropriate strategies and approaches to strengthen institutions to sustain the project efforts in the long run. The steps taken towards the end of the project are most unlikely to address many of these problems as they were too late.

There are several important issues raised by SCOR. One major issue common to many watershed management projects implemented in India too, is the lack of skills of the professional working in such projects to make them and their interventions those of people. This raises the necessity of providing orientation and other relevant training even to the professional staff before starting field implementation of the project.

A mode of project operation like that of SCOR in which project team planned and implemented interventions with a minimum or no involvement of line agencies in development and dissemination of project interventions need to be considered seriously by project with a vision for internalization of interventions. Technical committees at project level participated by higher level officers of agencies and field level staff, technical experts and other professionals of the project would be a better arrangement for technology development.

Appropriateness of starting the project with ready made institutional models is also questionable. Models need to be allowed to emerge through the institutional problems

encountered in the process of project implementation. In case that the hierarchical committees proposed under the project can not be made to sustain after the project through policy and other interventions, best alternative may be the use of existing hierarchical committees by enlarging its scope to undertake watershed management components too.

A package approach is very harmful for transfer of soil and water conservation technologies even when such technologies are proven one at research station. Socio-economic conditions of the farmers as well as the nature of the land management problems faced by the particular farmers under specific conditions of their lands need to be considered. SCOR adopted a package kind of an approach in soil and water conservation technology transfer at the beginning and this was not totally abandoned even by the end of the project.

Institutional capacity building at community level through training and other means is required to sustain interventions, procedures and practices introduced by projects like SCOR. It does not mean the capacity building of the leaders alone. Skills need to be developed at various sections of the community including that of women and youths.

Initiating resource user participation with financial incentives or promises would seriously hamper to cultivate attitude and behavior pattern required for managing resources by users themselves. It is appropriate to start projects with the available resources at community level rather than channeling funds from outside.

Projects like SCOR should tolerate slow progress and should not run after unrealistic targets. Resource users' adoption is influenced by various socio-economic factors for which projects can not offer immediate solutions. Therefore, project need to be long terms ones aiming at providing sustainable livelihood opportunities for people. Hasty programs like the tree planting program implemented during Phase II demonstrates that changes in land management can not be brought about within a season or two whatever the effort of the projects may be for brining about such changes.

**P.G.Somaratne**

## ABBREVIATIONS

1.	ASD	-	Agrarian Service Department
2.	AI	-	Agricultural Instructor
3.	AO	-	Agricultural Officer
4.	CCB	-	Coconut Cultivation Board
5.	CO	-	Colonization Officer
6.	CS	-	Conservation Specialist
7.	DCO	-	Distributary Canal Organization
8.	DO	-	Divisional Officer
9.	DOA	-	Department of Agriculturs
10.	DS	-	Divisional Secreary
11.	DTL	-	Deputy Team Leader
12.	FD	-	Forest Department
13.	GA	-	Government Agent
14.	FC	-	Field Channel
15.	FO	-	Farmer Organization
16.	HS	-	Horticultuarl Specialist
17.	ID	-	Irrigation Department
18.	IE	-	Irrigation Engineer
19.	IMD	-	rrigation Management Division
20.	IO	-	Institutional Organizer
21.	LDD	-	Livestock Development Department
22.	LDI	-	Livestock Development Inspector
23.	MEA	-	Mahaweli Economic Agency
24.	NGO	-	Non-Government Organizations
25.	RUG	-	Resource User Groups
26.	RUO	-	Resource User Organizations
27.	Sub WRMT	-	Sub Water Resorce Management Teams
28.	WRMT	-	Water Resource Management Teams
29.	TL	-	Team Leader
30.	WMC	-	Watershed Management Coordinator
31.	WYC	-	Youth and Women Development Coordinator
32.	PM	-	Project Manager



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **PROCESS DOCUMENTATION REPORT FOR HURULUWEWA WATERSHED**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

##### **1. INTRODUCTION AND TERM OF REFERENCE**

###### **1.1. Introduction**

This report is submitted as a partial fulfillment of a research contract, offered by the International Irrigation Management Institute (IIMI) in mid 1997 to conduct a process documentation research on the planning and implementation process of the Shared Control of Natural Resource Management (SCOR) Project. The project was implemented in two phases in Huruluwewa watershed in the North Central Province (NCP) and Upper Nilwala watershed in the Southern Province of Sri-Lanka. This study covers the second phase of the project extending from September 1997 to September 1998. Project Management decided to develop three sub watersheds in each watershed, as model sub watersheds during Phase II. In addition, it wanted to continue activities already planned for the other sub watersheds during Phase I. Project management further required researchers to document the planning and implementation process in three model sub watersheds, and provide a feedback to the implementation team, in order to introduce corrective or re-directive measures to the program where necessary. Though many other interventions such as farmer companies were implemented at higher level, the main concentration of process documentation (PD) activities was, therefore, on the field implementation process of SCOR during Phase II. However, based on the field data collected during Phase I, reference would be made to Phase I period too in case such references are required for the analysis in this report.

##### **2. Objectives**

The objective of PD research at the time of project implementation was to provide feedback to the members of the SCOR team on the field implementation process of SCOR interventions. It was expected to understand the attitude and reactions of the resource users and agency officials to the changes taking place due to the interventions through PD, in order to introduce corrective or re-directive measures to the field program when and where such changes were necessary. The purpose of this final report is learning from SCOR experience to plan and implement community development projects in general, and watershed development project in particular, in Sri Lanka and elsewhere. PD research expects to answer the following questions:

1. What is the conceptual model of SCOR watershed management project?
2. What are the strategies and approaches proposed for translating these concepts in to practice?

3. Could the same strategies and approaches proposed by SCOR be used in actual field implementation? If not to what extent the project deviated from the proposed strategies and approaches and what are the reasons for such deviations?

### **3. Organization of this report**

Chapter two of this report describes the method and techniques adopted in process documentation report while Chapter three provides information on SCOR conceptual framework and its strategies and approaches for project planning and implementation. After providing this initial information, this report is organized in to two Parts, Part I on Huruluwewa and Part II on Upper Nilwala.

Part I, Section one provides basic information on Huruluwewa watershed and the physical, socio-economic characteristics of the sample locations. Section two briefly describes the activities implemented in the sample locations during Phase I and farmers reaction to them with some information on the performance of resource user level institutions in them by the time SCOR started Phase II activities. Section three deals with the planning process during Phase II while section four describes the implementation process of interventions and the reaction of parties concerned to the interventions as well as to the strategies and approaches adopted in implementing them. Section five discusses the problems encountered in the planning and implementation process and the measures taken by the project management to address those problems. In section six attempts are made to answer the research questions raised in this study and also to list out the lessons learnt through SCOR experience in Huruluwewa.

Part II, Section one provides basic information on Nilwala watershed and the physical and socio economic characteristics of the three sample locations. Section two deals with the planning process of intervention during Phase II. Section three describes the implementation process of Phase II with the information on activities implemented, reactions of parties concerned to these interventions as well as to the strategies and approaches adopted in implementing them. Section four discusses the problems encountered in the planning and implementation process and the measures taken by the project management to address them. In section five attempts are made to answer the research questions raised in this study and also to list out the lessons learnt through SCOR experience in upper Nilwala watershed.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **METHOD AND TECHNIQUES ADOPTED FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

Number of methods was adopted in PD research. They included participant observation, formal and informal interviewing and also collection of secondary data and information available with catalysts as well as RUO leaders and line agency officials. For the collection of data and information five PD assistants were used in Huruluwewa. In addition to PD activities, they were heavily involved in data collection for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) activities as well as other researches carried out by number of researchers attached to SCOR. In Nilwala data collectors hired by the project was incapable of documenting the process, as they had no experience in PD activities. Therefore, a PD assistant was employed to work with the data collectors to provide guidance to them while attending meetings and important events in the field. The methods used are briefly discussed below in this chapter.

#### **2.2. Participant observation in selected samples**

PD Assistants who received training under the PD consultant to make participant observation were employed to collect data. They lived in the community or spent most of their time in the field to attend meetings, make observations and do formal and informal interviewing. PD consultant himself made field visit, attended meetings depending on the time he had to spend in each watershed. However, he attended monthly meetings of the SCOR project staff to provide a feedback to the staff and share their knowledge on planning and implementing project activities. PD consultant had regular interactions with the PD Assistants, carefully read their field notes and observations, and made clarification on them prior to each staff meeting held in watersheds. PD Assistants were provided training and guidance at monthly meetings held with them by the consultant and other researchers.

#### **2.3. Informal Interviewing**

PD Assistants were trained to do informal interviewing with the farmers in the selected sample sub watersheds in their daily field visits. This was a powerful instrument to understand their attitude and reaction to planning and implementation of SCOR activities in the field.

#### **2.4. Semi-structured Interviewing**

PDA's conducted semi-structured interviews in the field after receiving training on basic principles and method for interviewing people. They were provided training on interviewing and other data collection methods by the researchers from IIMI head

quarters. Also, they were provided with interview guides to collect information on specific issues.

## **2.5. Structured Interviewing**

In addition, PDAs carried out questionnaire surveys on certain aspects of project activities like conservation farming and institutions and organizations.

## **2.6. Sample selection**

Project Management wanted to document the planning and implementation process in the areas to be developed as model sub watersheds or micro watersheds. In Huruluwewa, they included Puwakpitiya in Palugaswewa Divisional Secretary's (DS) division, Padikaramaduwa and Garadiyaulpotha in Galenbidunuwewa DS division. In addition to these locations, another two sub watersheds representing SCOR Phase I and Phase II periods, were selected. They were Mahameegaswewa in Palugaswewa DS division and Kelenikawewa in Kahatagasdigiliya DS division.

In Nilwala watershed, the micro watershed studied included the Tanipita in Diyadawa Tanipita sub watershed, Vijayagama in Aninkanda watershed and Illukpitiya – Bovitiyadola in Horagala Sub watershed.

## **2.7. Limitation**

PD research requires persons with skill and experience to make participant observation work cooperatively with parties concerned and put what they heard and observed in to writing in an intelligent way. Because of resource problems, people with such skill could not be employed. Except for very few PD Assistants in Huruluwewa, others lacked knowledge and skill to document the process independently. In Nilwala, PD Assistant hired at the beginning had no commitment to make field observation and depended too much on implementing team for data and information. He was replaced towards the end of the project.

In addition to this, there was resistance from catalysts to PD activities in some areas. Sometimes there was open resistance in areas like Padikaramaduwa where the PD Assistant was threatened by an assistant catalyst for documenting what really happened in the field. However, in many areas the resistance was not open. There were instances in which PD Assistants provided false information on the number of plants purchased etc. on the influence of some catalysts. However, the project management took a keen interest on PD activities and helped overcome these problems to a certain extent.

In spite of such attempts, PD could not be used effectively due to the reason that implementers were always after achieving targets somehow or other. Though attempts were made to change this practice later by the project management, this continued till the end of the project. When the stress is too much on achieving targets rather than learning from field implementation, PD becomes less important in the eyes of implementers.

## CHAPTER THREE

### SCOR PROJECT, ITS CONCEPTS, STRATEGIES AND APPROCHES

#### 4.1. SCOR Project

The Shared Control of Natural Resource (SCOR) Project is a participatory action research project aiming at improving productivity in rural Sri-Lanka by linking conservation to new tenure rights in agricultural and forest lands. It was designed by the International Irrigation Management Institute (IIMI) with the participation of the Government of Sri-Lanka. SCOR emphasizes the sustainable productivity of the natural resource base in Sri-Lanka while improving the people's livelihood. The purpose of the project is to enhance the share of user control over natural resources like land and water through state-user partnership. The project had the following as its objectives:

1. To improve the incentive and institutional context in which agriculture and other commercial activities are undertaken in the selected sub watersheds
2. To internalize environmental considerations in decision making and implementation of activities related to land and water use
3. To enhance information and understanding at all levels of potential of and prospects for natural resources base for production and protection
4. Strengthen the capacity of the Provincial, divisional level government authorities in planning for land and water resource utilization in an integrated manner. A transformation from a "Project Mode" to a "Program Mode" is expected towards the end of the project.

To achieve these objectives, SCOR emphasizes the importance of organizations, resources, technologies and policy support for management of natural resources for sustainable development. SCOR's main role is to facilitate to establish and promote shared management institutional model and test various kind of technological and management interventions for replication. It is in this context that the process adopted in testing the watershed management interventions would be useful for future watershed development project in Sri-Lanka and elsewhere.

## **4.2. SCOR Approaches and Strategies**

### **4.2.1. SCOR approaches**

The following are the approaches and strategies proposed by the project to achieve its goals and objectives:

1. Making the watershed the basic planning and implementation unit
2. Enhancing State-User partnership for shared control of resources
3. Using participatory planning and implementation approach
4. Strengthening of resource user groups and organizations through creating economic opportunities, improving access to information, promoting legal recognition and powers, improving regulatory and legal mechanisms and establishment of effective links between private sector, NGOs and public sector organizations
5. Increasing the technical and organizational capacity of resource user groups and organizations to interact effectively with agencies and enterprises and increasing agency capacity to serve the users adequately
6. Improving the capability of government agencies for planning, coordination and implementation of land and water management programs in an integrated manner
7. A phased withdrawal of external assistance while ensuring a high degree of internalization of processes and practices which will have proven qualities of sustainability.
8. Replication of tested innovations in other watersheds

### **4.2.2. SCOR Strategies**

As reported in previous reports the following strategies had been adopted by the project to translate the concept in to practice. (Jinapala, K - PD Reports for Huruluwewa)

- a. A series of work shops with cross section of resource users, the government officials at National, provincial and divisional levels to explain the SCOR project, its concepts, objectives and strategies to be adopted to achieve the objectives of SCOR.
- b. Opening up of an office in Galenbidunuwewa to carry out field activities and appointing catalysts to the Sub-watersheds previously identified. Participatory mapping exercises in the area by catalysts with the resource users. Under this component of participatory mapping, the catalysts mapped out the existing condition of the different land use categories. The field level line agency officers such as DOs, AIs, GNs and the

teachers in the schools of the area, traditional village leaders and the leaders of the existing farmer organisations participated in these exercises. The land categories such as irrigated land, high land, forestry were marked on the maps.

The participatory mapping sessions were used to establish basic data set on the base line conditions of the land in the sub-watersheds. Two types of outputs were achieved at the mapping exercise; a map indicating the current condition of the resource use and another map on the expected land use situation to be created through SCOR interventions.

These two maps were repeatedly used to explain the SCOR project and its mission and objectives to the beneficiaries including resource users and government line agency officials.

- c. Mobilisation of resource users in to groups and organisations in locations where there were no resource user level institutions or strengthening of existing institutions and newly formed ones by initiating them to raise funds, obtain legal and institutional recognition and establish horizontal and vertical linkages.
- d. Development of Mini-Projects - Production and protection plans for the sub watershed areas (Mini-projects) were developed with RUOs. This was an incentive system to promote SCOR interventions in the field. To carry out activities under the mini-projects the involvement of the banks in the area was sought. It was expected to use the SCOR financial grants given under the Mini-projects to be used as collateral to generate loans. The SCOR activities such as planting trees, cultivation of seasonal crops and providing marketing facilities were to be carried out under the mini-project grants with the loans obtained from the banks. The grants including small grants and the grants to Mini-projects range from Rs. 4000.00 to 300,000.00. Under the user grant program of SCOR following amounts have been provided to the different resources user organisations.

Table No: 1, Grants made to RUOs

Year	Number of grants
1994	30
1995	10
1996	26
1997	18
1998	36
Total	120

- e. Establishment of Joint co-ordinating Committees - The joint committees was established in such a way to represent entire spectrum of the SCOR project from field to the national level. The committee system was used to obtain facilitation for the project implementation and also to learn from SCOR to improve policies in the country on land and water resources management. The following types of committees with certain roles were set up at different levels.

**Sub-Water Resource Management Team (SWRMT) –**

This committee is comprised of representatives of RUOs from each sub-water shed, the officials of line agencies at field level ( DOs from DAS, AIs from DOA, Samurdhi Niyamakas, Govi Niyamakas of AMA program, Range forest Officer from FD, Grama Niladharies, Technical officers of DAS, Colonisation Officers (COs), Assistant Director planning attached to The Divisional Secretaries' office and IOs, WMC,TL, and some other specialists attached to SCOR project. The committee was supposed to meet quarterly to discuss the progress of SCOR mini-project implementation including the future plans.

Water Resources Management Team (WRMT ); this committee was set up to work at watershed level to provide strategic guidance for implementing SCOR activities at Water shed level. It was expected this committee to meet once a year to review the progress and to provide directions for future activities. The members of this team include; DS, Land officer, Provincial director of DOA, AI, CO, IE, and DFO of FD and TL, DTL, WMCs, IOs, and specialists from SCOR.

**Provincial Steering committee –**

This committee was set up at provincial level to provide a forum for provincial level line agency officials to learn from SCOR and also to provide some strategic and policy guidance for SCOR activities.

**National Steering Committee –**

This was the highest committee set up at national level with the participation of top level executives of the Ministries and the Government Departments to provide guidance for SCOR project, and also in return to learn from SCOR to improve the land and water Resource management policies in the country.

Incentives were given for the members of all the committees mentioned above to encourage their participation and contribution.

The SCOR organisation structure discussed above is shown in the following figure for better explanation.





- f. In 1998 the project started giving outright grants to RUOs to distribute plants among the members free of charge to bring about vast changes in sub-watershed areas within a one single season. This is after realizing that it is difficult to have bank loans for perennials.

## **PART I – HURULUWEWA WATERSHED**

### **SECTION 1 - PHYSICAL AND SOCIO ECONOMIC FEATURES OF HURULUWEWA WATERSHED**

#### **1.1. Physical features**

"Huruluwewa watershed is a narrow elongated watershed bounded by the Ritigala Hill range to the West. Conventionally it is the upper part of "Yan Oya" river basin in the Dry-zone of Sri-Lanka. However, for special reasons it not only includes Huruluwewa catchment, command area and drainage area but also Hurulu Feeder Canal which is a trans basin supply canal from an adjoining watershed. In defining the Huruluwewa watershed, the total area that drains to Yan Oya at "Illukwewa" anicut, a point below the tail end land of the command area of Huruluwewa reservoir, has been considered as the key area of attention. "Illukwewa" anicut is situated at the tail end of the command area to pick up the drainage return flows of Huruluwewa command area. This area not only includes the catchment area, reservoir water spread area, highlands above the command area and drainage area, but also the adjoining areas of the Bowatanna Huruluwewa Feeder canal as well. (Fernando. N, 1995)

The annual average rainfall in Huruluwewa is about 1500 mm. Huruluwewa is the major tank in the area while there are large number of small tanks in the upstream and down stream areas of it. The extent of land area in the watershed is about 15000 ha which include different land classes like homesteads, forest, chena and paddy lands. Huruluwewa tank was built in 1950s by constructing an earthen dam across a natural river known as Yan Oya. Water scarcity has been a major problem in Huruluwewa settlement scheme from its establishment. As a solution to this problem, a feeder canal was constructed to provide supplementary irrigation from Mahaweli irrigation system to Huruluwewa command consisting of 5000 ha. Because of illegal tapping of water by the farmers cultivating in Feeder Canal area, Huruluwewa command area does not receive adequate water supply even after the construction of Feeder Canal.

#### **1.1.2. Characteristics of Resources in Huruluwewa Watershed**

The main resources relevant to SCOR are land and water and the people living in the watershed. In Huruluwewa watershed major sources of water are rainfall, ground water and surface water. The water received in Maha (wet) and Yala (dry) seasons are stored in Huruluwewa reservoir and about 200 small tank system scattered in the watershed. About 850 agro-wells in the watershed area extract ground water for agricultural use.

The main category of lands is forests, lands with surface irrigation water supply, ground water supply or totally depending on rain. The lands under forest cover includes forest reserves managed by the Department of Forest, degenerated forest areas where reforestation programs are being implemented by the Forest department either by the department itself or with the participation of the communities concerned. The main factor leading to the

degeneration of forest cover is the slash and burn cultivation, which is the main source of food supply and income to the majority of people. There are scrub jungle areas surrounding villages. These lands which are under Divisional Secretaries (DSs) are used by the villagers for chena cultivation.

The lands with surface irrigation supply are those in the command areas under small village tanks, minor tank systems, Huruluwewa Tank command area and those irrigated from Huruluwewa feeder canal. Land with ground water supply includes homestead or highland areas or water scarce lowlands within an irrigation system with agro-wells to provide them water. The lands totally dependent on rain are chena lands, homestead and highlands without surface or ground water for irrigation.

### **1.1.3. Characteristic of Resource users**

The characteristics of the resource users can be categorised in their relationship to land and water. There are farmers with free hold (sinnakkara) titles or holding land on long leases or temporary permits issued by the government. The settlers in colonisation schemes have different kind of titles, which restrict sale, and fragmentation of lands. There are squatters resident on government lands. In their access to irrigation water, there are farmers with rights over irrigation water or depending on agro-wells, rains or illegal tapping of water in irrigation canal systems. In addition to these categories the differences based on settlement patterns which make their interactions more complicate and unpredictable can also be observed in the communities in the watershed. There are traditional village communities whose members are bound by close kinship ties. Migrant communities who reside in the area only during cultivation seasons inhabit some areas like tail-end part of Hurulu Feeder canal. There are settlement communities and squatters among whom different kind of social interactions and social organisations can be observed. These characteristics of resource users have an impact on the management of natural resources like land and water.

### **1.1.4. Institutions and Organisations**

The government organisations involved in the resource management activities in the project area include the Department of Irrigation (ID), Mahaweli Economic Agency (MEA), Divisional Secretaries (DSS), Agrarian Service Department (ASD), Irrigation Management Division (IMD), Forest Department (FD) and the Department of Agriculture (DOA) and Livestock Development Department. There are supporting semi-government organisations like banks that provide credit and other inputs necessary for production and protection activities handled by the resource users in the area.

MEA is responsible for allocation of Mahaweli water diverted from Bowatanna to various sub systems like Kandalama, Kalawewa Hurulu Feeder Canal and Huruluwewa. It is also responsible for conveyance of water and upkeep of the system up to Kandalama bifurcation. Irrigation Department has the responsibility over water allocation, system maintenance and water distribution below Kandalama bifurcation in Hurulu Feeder Canal and acquisition, conveyance and distribution of water up to the DC turnout gates in Huruluwewa Irrigation System. It has similar responsibilities in some minor tank system within Huruluwewa

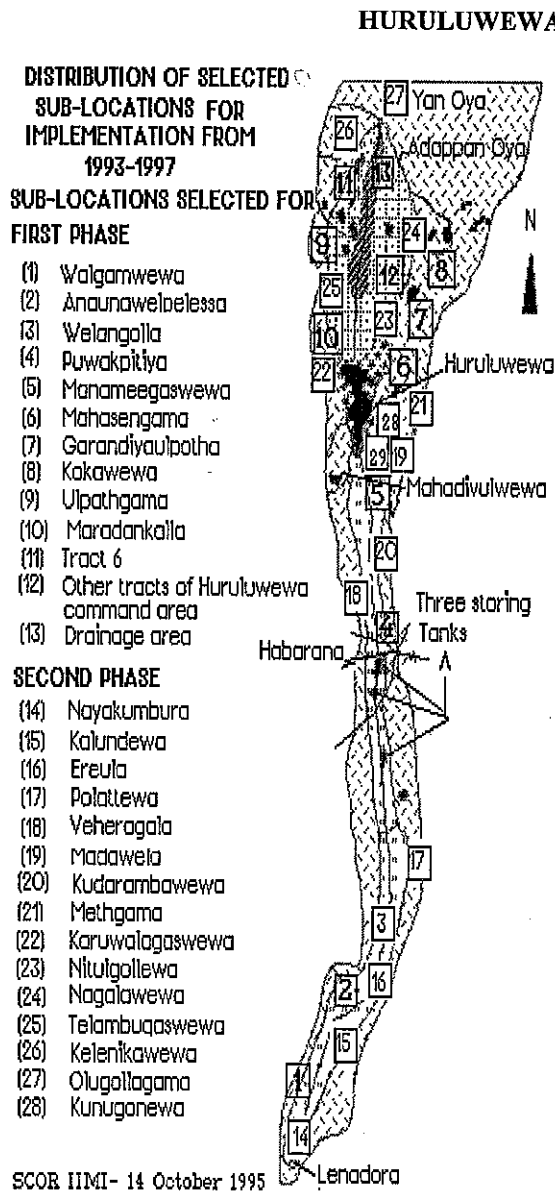
watershed too. The Divisional Secretaries have responsibilities on land matters, co-ordination of agricultural plan implementation within the division. Forest Department has responsibilities over management of forest reserves, reforestation activities in degraded forest areas in areas under its control. IMD plays the co-ordinating role in agricultural plan implementation in Hurulu Feeder Canal area, Hurulu command area and several other tanks coming under major irrigation schemes. It is also responsible initiating, organising and guiding the distributary canal level organisations formed for joint management of the irrigation system.

ASD is the responsible agency for registering farmer organisations, co-ordinating agricultural plan implementation activities in minor irrigation systems, co-ordinated acquisition of inputs like seed, fertiliser and agro-chemicals through agrarian service committees and issue of identity cards to farmers for their transactions with banks and credit institutions. DOA is the agency handling research, training and extension activities related to agricultural crop production.

The activities of these agencies are co-ordinated by number of committees at different levels of administrative hierarchy. At the irrigation project level there are two Project Committees, one for Hurulu Feeder Canal and the other for Hurulu Command area. These committees are represented by Technical Assistants (TAs) of ID, AIS of DOA, DOs of ASD, COs attached to Divisional Secretaries offices, bank representatives and farmer representatives representing DCOs in the project area. This committee chaired by the Project Manager (IMD) is responsible for decision making and agricultural plan implementation in the project.

At Divisional Secretary levels committees represented by line agency officials exist for agricultural plan implementation. Huruluwewa watershed crossing boundaries of five DS divisions, Galenbidunuwewa, Kahatagasdigiliya, Palugaswewa, Dambulla and Naula have five such committees, the activities of which have to be integrated and co-ordinated for watershed management. There is District Agricultural Committee and Provincial Agricultural committee represented by the district level and provincial levels officials of line agencies for integrated planning and co-ordination at district and provincial levels. However, none of these committees are based on watershed or watersheds for their plan implementation or have natural resource management for sustainable agriculture as their key themes.

**Figure 2. The Huruluwewa Watershed, Sri Lanka**



**SECTION 1.2. - PHYSICAL SOCIO ECONOMIC AND INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE SAMPLE WATERSHEDS**

The following section discusses the physical, socio economic environment in the sub watershed paying special attention to the development process of farmer level institutions in the area during Phase II of SCOR.

Table No.2, Land use pattern in the sub watersheds (Lands in acres)

Sub watershed	Paddy lands	Home Gardens	Highlands	Scrub Jungles	Forests (PFP and dense forests)	Waste lands
Puwakpitiya	51	65			38	
Mahameeaswewa	63	57	182	500		15
Padikaramaduwa						
Methgama	61	103.5	113	35	22	
Mahasengama	-	68.75	50.25	10	50	
Padikaramaduwa	116	92.5	4			10
Garadiyaulpotha	8.75	133	43	105	80	
Kelanikawewa	105	185	250	1565	15	

Table No.3, Water Resources in Sub watershed areas

Sub watershed	Tanks	Agora-wells
Puwakpitiya	1	11
Mahameeaswewa	2	0
Padikaramaduwa		
Methgama	1	26
Mahasengama		16
Padikaramaduwa	3	16
Garadiyaulpotha	1	39
Kelanikawewa	3	17

Table No.4, Employment pattern in Sample sub watersheds

Nature of Employment	Puwakpitiya	Meegaswewa	Methgama	Mahasengama	Padikaramaduwa	Garadiyaulpotha	Kelenikawewa
Farmer	106	60	143	102	182	115	120
Teacher	0	0	1	0	1	1	5
Minor Jobs (Govt.)	24	4	0	2	0	1	5
Security Forces	1	2	7	3	3	7	13
Garment Factories	2	5	12	8	14	11	6
Private Sector	0	0	3	3	2	6	4
Middle East	2	0	2	3	2	6	8
Pension	0	2	0	0	0	2	2
Timber sowing	4	8	10	0	3	8	20
self - employee	6	0	6	4	3	13	3

### Puwakpitiya

Puwakpitiya is a small tank village in Palugaswewa D.S. division, Anuradhapura. It can be accessed from Laksirigama junction on Habarana - Anuradhapura road. The distance from Habarana town to this village is about 6 km. There are about 84 families in the village. They make their living from farming. About 29 people in the village have full time employment in public and private sector organisations outside village. About 10 people are engaged in self-employment, which include carpentry, masonry, sawing etc.

Though the village is located close to Habarana where educational facilities are somewhat better people in the village are less educated. This was mainly due to discrimination based on caste. The villagers belong to the lowest caste in the North Central Province (NCP) in Sri-Lanka where traditional villages are still based on the principle of one caste one village. According to the villagers, they had a very limited kind of interactions with neighbouring villages until very recent time due to this caste problem.

The command area under the tank is 51 acres. The farmers cultivate paddy with water from tank in Maha seasons. Some farmers who cultivate paddy from tank have agro-wells too in their allotments to provide supplementary irrigation in case of water scarcity. Some farmers, whose irrigated allotments are located in the embankment of Yan Oya, use its water for supplementary irrigation. In Yala, farmers cultivate OFCs with water from agro-



wells. In addition, some farmers have lands in Habarana tank, which is water abundant as it receives Mahaweli water issued to Huruluwewa.

In addition to paddy cultivation, the main income source of farmers is chena and highland cultivation. The farmers in the area grow variety of vegetable crops, chillies, onions and different kind of grains in Maha season. They have contributed significantly to the reduction of forestlands in the area through this practice.

SCOR started its activities in this village in early part of 1994. The RUO in Puwakpitiya was formed by ASD in July 1994 on SCOR initiation. It was later registered in ASD under section 56 A. The major problem faced by this organisation too is division in the community based on politics.

### **Mahameegaswewa**

Mahameegaswewa village is located in Palugaswewa Divisional secretary's division in Anuradhapura. The village can be accessed from Palugaswewa junction on Anuradhapura - Habarana main highway. The motorable road from Palugaswewa to Padikaramaduwa links this village situated some 8 km away from Palugaswewa junction to neighbouring townships and administrative centres.

The number of household in the village is 58 with 61 families living in them. The total population in the village is 275. The members of this community belong to 'vedda variga', a sub caste in the caste hierarchy in the North Central province of Sri-Lanka. The whole village community is a kin-group. These types of social groups are generally characterised by group solidarity, inter-dependence and group cohesiveness. However, because of intrusion of politics and change in the agrarian economic structure, the village community has become less harmonious and less cohesive. When compared with the other neighbouring communities belonging to 'Govigama' and other castes, the community in Mahameegaswewa is less educated and socially and economically backward.

The village has two small tanks, Mahameegaswewa and Madugaswewa with a total irrigated land area of 52 acres and 11 acres respectively. The homestead area of the village is nearly about 57 acres. The main economic activities of the community is cultivation of paddy lands in Maha (wet) season and Yala (dry) season depending on the water availability in the tank and slash and burn cultivation in scrub jungle areas surrounding the village. In addition, hunting and collection of bee-honey in the surrounding jungles too form a part of their economic activities. The farmers sell their agricultural produce to the private traders in neighbouring townships like Kekirawa. However, with the decline of arable forests for chena cultivation, there is a tendency among some household heads and family members to migrate to more prosperous areas in Anuradhapura district during cultivation season to work as agricultural wage labourers. With the intensification of fights between LTTE and the Government of Sri Lanka, 2 young men in the village have joined armed forces and have become employees of government service. There are about five girls working in garment factories outside the

village. Another two young men are in government employment. One work in the village as a Samurdhi Niyamaka who is responsible to work with the families receiving assistance under government poverty alleviation program known as Samurdhi. More than 90% of the families live miserable lives due to extreme poverty.

The community is less exposed to formal organisation culture. Velvidane system was the main mechanism to deal with irrigation matters at tank level. The villagers deal with Divisional Secretaries through Grama Niladari over land and other administrative matters. The involvement of officers other than the Grama Niladari in matters related to agricultural and other development activities was marginal prior to SCOR interventions.

The Divisional Officer of the Department of Agrarian Services (DAS) initiated to form a Farmer Organisation in the village in 1990 and 25 farmers had even paid their membership fee to get membership. However, it had not been able to establish the organisation. When SCOR started its work in the village, there were no any organisations dealing directly with matters related to agriculture and agricultural production. Velvidane system, which is the institution responsible for the management of small village tank systems, too did not function properly even though a Velvidane had been appointed by the ASD.

### **Padikaramaduwa**

Land area in Padikaramaduwa sub watershed is under two Divisional Secretaries division, Palugaswewa and Galenbindunuwewa in Anuradhapura district. The main tank in this sub watershed is Padikaramaduwa tank. This sub-watershed area can be accessed from Huruluwewa Right Bank main canal road running through Padikaramaduwa settlement area. It is located some one and half miles away from Padikaramaduwa settlement area on the Right Bank of the canal. This sub watershed includes:

- Kawarakkulama
- Methgama
- Mahasengama, Ichchankottama
- Padikaramaduwa old village including Puwakpitiya

The tank cascade system in this sub watershed includes Padikaramaduwa tank and three other tanks, namely Puwakpitiya, Ichchankottama and Methgamawewa (Weerawewa). Padikaramaduwa tank area comes under Galenbindunuwewa while other three tanks come under Palugaswewa Divisional Secretary's division. Since SCOR interventions have been implemented only in Mahasengama, Methgama and Padikaramaduwa, a brief description on these locations will be presented here.

## **Mahasengama**

Mahasengama is a squatter settlement area on the immediate catchment of Padikaramaduwa tank. There are 45 families living in 45 homesteads in the village. Homestead area is 68 3/4 acres in extent. However, Only 45 families are resident in these lands in Mahasengama while the others still live in their original settlement in Padikaramaduwa. The total population in Mahasengama is 190. The villagers depend mainly on rain-fed farming using these lands and scrub jungle in the surrounding areas because they do not have their own irrigated lands. However, when water is issued to Huruluwewa command area, these farmers either lease in some lands there or cultivate their parent's lands on share cropping basis. There are 13 agro-wells used by farmers to provide supplementary irrigation to crops raised in highlands in Maha seasons. In Yala seasons, they cultivate small areas in highlands using agro-wells.

As for outside employment of villagers, there are three people employed in public sector, three in armed forces, and three in private sector employment while 8 girls work in garment factories in Free Trade Zone areas in the vicinity of Colombo. Three women have migrated to Middle East countries for employment as housemaids.

Originally, settlers in Padikaramaduwa cultivated chenas in the Mahasengama area, which was a thick jungle at that time. Later they became residential areas of their children when there were pressure in settlement areas for lands for the members of second and third generation of settler families. Unlike the old village farmers, Mahasengama farmers are land hungry people trying to make the encroached lands regularised. They have been exposed to the formal organisation culture in Huruluwewa settlement scheme where one finds a large number of organisations which include Distributary Canal Organisations (DCOs), Funeral Associations, Rural Development Societies and so on. Even prior to the intervention by SCOR, the families in Mahasengama had organised into four groups under the influence of Integrated Rural Development Project (IRDP) implemented in Anuradhapura district. These groups functioned mainly for reciprocal exchange of labour but started lending small amount of money to their members after raising group funds through their own effort. The criterion for selection of members for the groups has always been to people who work together, exchange labour etc. as members of the groups. However, after withdrawal of IRDP, two groups had become less functional. Mahasengama being a rain-fed and encroached area did not receive the attention of government agencies. There was no organisation to deal with village level agricultural planning when SCOR started its activities.

## **Methgama**

Methgama is a planned settlement under Dry Zone Agricultural Development Project. There are 63 households in the village with a total membership of 270. Extent of homestead is 130 1/2 acres. Acres of paddy land 113 acres of other highlands and 35 acres of scrub jungle. The paddy lands are under Methgama tank (50 acres) and Ichchantottama

(11) tanks. However, Methgama tank does not receive sufficient water to cultivate the entire extent under the command area of the tank.

Each farmer had been given three acres of highlands (homesteads) in this settlement area. They cultivate seasonal crops in Maha seasons. In Yala cultivation is restricted to the lands with agro-wells which are 26 in number. Also, the farmers do chena cultivation too using scrub jungle areas surrounding the village.

The main occupation in Methgama villagers is also farming. The number of people in outside employment are one clerk and 7 soldiers, 12 girls in garment factories, 3 men in private sector and 2 women serving as housemaids in Middle East countries. Some farmers work as agricultural wage labourers on part time basis.

There was a farmer organisation established in the village when the village was established under the Anuradhapura Dry zone Agricultural Project (ADZAP). The organisation was very weak by the time SCOR started its activities. As in many other villages intrusion of politics has brought about spilt in the community. SCOR catalyst mobilised this village community for conservation and various kinds of production programs and finally developed a Mini-Project for the area. Organisation was also registered at ASD in 1996 to have legal recognition.

#### **Padikaramaduwa Old Village**

Padikaramaduwa Old village is a traditional village in Padikaramaduwa sub watershed. There are 76 families living in 62 households in this village. Population in the village is 317. This village has three small tank systems named Padikaramaduwa old tank (65 acres), Dambagahawewa (26 acres) and Puwakpitiya (23 acres). The extent of homestead area under this village is 92 1/2 acres.

The main employment of the people in this village is farming. About 182 people make their living through farming activities. About 4 people are in public sector employment while 14 girls work in garment factories outside the village. Another 2 people are in private sector employment while two women have migrated to Middle East countries for employment as housemaids.

There is a farmer organisation initiated by ASD in Padikaramaduwa old village where SCOR initially started its activities. The main activities handled by the organisation are tank rehabilitation work under contract from the government. The organisation was very weak in both organisational and financial management aspects due to problems with leadership, internal conflicts within the village, characteristics of the community and village level politics. SCOR could not involve much in the village level activities until 1996 due to problems in this organisation and its leadership.

## **Garandiyaulpotha, Kubukwewa and Rathmalwatiya**

The RUO in Kubukwewa has been organised by bringing together three communities living in Rathmalwatiya, Kubukwewa and Garandiyaulpotha together. All the three locations are in No. 175, Kubukwewa Grama Niladari division. There are 116 families organised in 106 households. While Kubukwewa is an Old Village, the second and third generation members of settler families occupy both Rathmalwatiya and Garandiyaulpotha. Garandiyaulpotha is a squatter settlement area in the border of Nikawewa settlement. SCOR activities were intensively implemented in Garandiyaulpotha at the beginning and later expanded into other areas. After Garandiyaulpotha Swarnabhoomi FO formed for implementation of Participatory Forestry Program became defunct, Catalyst formed the new organisation in Kubukwewa.

The major portion of land area in this village is highland. There is only one tank named Pitiwewa with a command area of 5 acres. There are 133 acres of homestead lands, 43 acres of highland area used for highland cultivation in every Maha season, 105 acres of scrub jungle and 80 acres of forest. 39 agro-wells, which are being effectively used by farmers, can be found in this area.

As in many other villages in dry zone, villagers in Kubukwewa too live by farming. Only 9 people are in public sector employment. 6 people work in private sector while 11 girls are employed at Garment factories in urban centres. 6 women have migrated to Middle East countries for employment.

The majority of people are rain-fed farmers cultivating their lands in Maha using rain. In Yala the farmers cultivate different kind of crops depending on water availability in agro-wells. The agro-wells in some parts of this sub watershed are water rich.

## **Kelenikawewa**

Kelenikawewa is a small village tank system in Kahatagasdigiliya D.S. division. There are 110 families in 97 households in this village. Total population in the village is 371. Extent of homestead in the village is 185 acres. About 250 acres of other highland areas are also used by farmers for cultivation of different kind of crops. There are three tanks in this village, namely Mahawewa, Meegaskada and Weliwewa with command areas of 69 acres, 8 acres and 20 acres respectively. Out of the total 17 agro-wells in the village 15 are in homesteads. Farmers use the scrub jungle surrounding the village for slash and burn cultivation.

While the majority of villagers are dependent on farming, there are 23 people employed in public sector, 10 in private sector and 8 in Middle East countries.

Farmer organisation in the village had been formed by ASD in 1991. During the initial stage only 36 farmers who hold paddy land under the main tank held membership in the organisation. After SCOR started its activities 64 farmers joined the organisation with the

expectation of benefits such as credit for cultivation, animal husbandry and permanent crops etc. The organisation received a grant from SCOR recently to implement a mini-project. However, because of the political conflicts in the village, it is very difficult to implement any program with the participation of the majority of farmers.

## **PART I - HURULUWEWA WATERSHED**

### **SECTION 2 - SITUATION IN SAMPLE LOCATIONS PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF PHASE II ACTIVITIES**

The main strategy adopted by SCOR to implement production and protection activities in the field was planning and implementation of mini-projects (a production and conservation project for the sub watershed) by providing grants to RUOs. These Mini-projects had been prepared and implemented in all the five sub-watershed by the time these process documentation activities for Phase II commenced. The following main components had been included in these mini-projects prepared for initiating production and conservation activities in the sub watersheds:

1. Conservation (Home gardens and other highlands)
2. Seasonal crop cultivation (including paddy cultivation)
3. Perennials in home gardens
4. Animal husbandry (Goat and cattle)
5. Conservation of tank eco-systems and common reservations

Planning process of these mini-projects have been discussed in lengths in "SCOR Experience in Resource Mobilization through Mini-projects" and " Process Documentation Report" by K.Jinapala. Therefore, the process of organizational development and implementation of key interventions in the sample locations during Phase I and farmers views and ideas about the changes taking place in their socio economic environment is discussed here in this section as a prelude to Phase II.

#### **Activities Implemented in Puwakpitiya**

##### **Integrated Water Management**

The major activities implemented in Puwakpitiya, a small tank system in the up-stream area of Huruluwewa under integrated water management, was maximum use of rain-fall for land preparation, holding timely cultivation meetings, initiate farmers to adhere to cultivation calendar, cultivation of OFCs and kakulan (dry land paddy cultivation) and water management activities at tank level. To implement these programs catalyst needed to have a farmer organisation in the village. Though there was a farmer organisation, it was not functioning properly. It had not even been registered at ASD. Therefore, the catalyst had to set up farmer organisation and register it at ASD. At the same time catalyst started

to work with the community. Table below shows the activities implemented under Puwakkpitiya tank with the involvement of SCOR.

Table No.5, Area cultivated in Puwakkpitiya

Season	Crops Cultivated		Number of Farmers		SCOR Role
	Paddy	OFCs	Paddy	OFCs	
1994 Yala		13			1,2
1994/95 Maha	54	-	67	-	1,2
1995 Yala	-	16	-	-	1,2
1995/96 Maha	54	-	67	-	1,2
1996 Yala		15	-	25	-
1996/97 Maha	9	-	10	-	-

#### Key to the Table

1. Initiating Kanna meetings
2. Water Management activities
3. Assist in allocation of bethma lands
4. Making credit arrangements

Catalyst started to work with the community in Yala 1994 in which farmers had cultivated some chillies under the tank. The farmers were faced with a severe water scarcity for the crop as water level in the tank had dropped down by this time. The catalyst proposed mulching as a solution to the water scarcity problem and was able to increase the length of the irrigation interval by use of straw for mulching and save the crop. After this initial success, he mobilised farmers for kanna meetings and initiated farmers to do dry land ploughing and also took step to control water issues from the tank sluice. He played the role of community leader at times to implement these activities. The farmers tried to practice dry land ploughing in two seasons and later did not want to continue with it. In their point of view, weeds can not be easily controlled when they do dry land ploughing and establish the crop. When there is no sufficient water in the tank to be used later for weed controlling (they need water after spraying weedicide) the farmers who cultivate kakulan, can not control weed at all. Therefore, the farmers now tend to start cultivation when there is sufficient water in the tank at least to do ploughing and weed control activities with the use of tank water.

#### Other activities implemented in Puwakkpitiya

Activities in Puwakkpitiya were not supported through a Mini-project. However, at the time conservation activities were introduced to the community, farmer organisation was given a small grant of Rs. 19,530.00 to purchase seedlings for the farmers who put contour bunds and adopt various kind of conservation measures recommended by the project. Catalyst expected the organisation to use this money as a revolving fund by recovering the value of the plants distributed among the farmers.



Table No. 6, Other Activities Implemented in Puwakpitiya

Season	Activity	Farmers	Acres	Lots	SCOR Function
1994/95 Maha	Conservation in homesteads	23	17	23	1,3
1995/96 Maha	Conservation in homesteads	3	2	3	1
1995/96 Maha	Supply of 40 plants to each homestead from Forest Dept.	40	20	40	2
1996/97 Maha	-do-	50	25	50	2
1996/97 Maha	Conservation of chena	28	14	28	1,2

**Key to the Table**

1. Training
2. Co-ordination of CCB and FD
3. Credit for plants and seedlings

At the initial stage, the attempt to initiate farmers to adopt conservation practices did not show much success. In many cases it was limited to bunds and drains or buds alone. However, the farmers were provided with seedlings and plants through the small grants given to the RUO by SCOR as well as co-ordinating arrangements with CCB and FD that had their own programs in the area. This has contributed to increase the number of trees in the sub watershed. In 1996/97, the conservation specialist wanted to cover at least a limited area of the sub-watershed with a maximum number of possible conservation technologies (out of the ten technologies recommended by him). Therefore, 14 acres of chena land was allocated to farmers with the involvement of DS, Palugaswewa to develop them as homesteads. Adopting various conservation practices recommended by the project was a must for them to have ownership rights (deeds) for the lands. Also, farmers in these allotments were encouraged to raise maize for Thriposha Company by providing fertiliser and seed on credit basis through Huruluwewa Company. Because of the germination problems and insufficient rain, farmers could not get a better yield as expected by SCOR.

**Performance of RUO**

Even though SCOR had helped establish a RUO in this village, it was weak in all respects by the time SCOR started Phase II activities, as revealed through research on institutions and organisations (Somaratne, P.G. - 1997). However, the entire household in the village had become members of the organisations to become eligible to benefits from World Food Program under which the tank in the village was rehabilitated. Those who contributed labour for this work were entitled to food rations. In spite of this, participation of farmers

in meetings and resource management activities were very weak. The reason for the relative weaknesses of RUO are given below:

1. Lack of benefits from the organisation. RUO had no member benefiting activities other than holding cultivation meeting and distribution of plants provided by SCOR or other agencies.
2. RUO involvement in water management in the tank was weak. Vel Vidane handled it. Even though SCOR catalyst influenced him at times, RUO could not involve in this activity in an effective way.
3. Political factions in the village and selection of political leaders as RUO leaders
4. Proper kind of training on leadership and financial and other resource management had not been provided to the leaders. This was mainly because SCOR had no program for institutional strengthening at village level. SCOR formed organisation to implement its program and achieve its targets.
5. Resource mobilisation through fund raising etc. was not initiated.
6. Misappropriation and malpractices by RUO leaders.

As SCOR program did not address community needs such as credit, input, marketing etc. it had no much attraction for the community. However, the program had created awareness in the community of the environmental degradation and necessity of adopting soil and water conservation and other measures for environmental protection.

### **Activities Implemented in Mahameegaswewa**

SCOR started its activities in Mahameegaswewa in early part of 1994. Though ASD had tried to initiate a farmer organisation in the village previously, it has not been successful. The management activities in the tank was implemented by ASD through a Velvidane who himself was a farmer living in the village. SCOR catalysts that worked in the village formed a RUO to implement project activities. The organisation was registered under section 56 A and 56 B. For a period of one year, Mahameegaswewa was SCOR's most successful sub-watershed as far as implementation of its soil and water conservation technologies.

### **Integrated Water Management**

The activities implemented in Mahameegaswewa under integrated water management were land preparation with maximum use of rainfall, OFC cultivation in Yala and water short Maha seasons and adhering to the cultivation calendar agreed upon at kanna meetings. The area cultivated and the SCOR involvement in these activities are given below in Table No.7, Area Cultivated under Mahameegaswewa.

Table No.7, Area cultivated in Mahameegaswewa tank

Season	Crops Cultivated		Number of Farmers	SCOR Role
	Paddy Acres	OFCs Acres		
1994 Yala	-	6	30	1,2,3
1994/95 Maha	60	-	48	1,2,4
1995 Yala	22	8	52	1,2,3,4
1995/96 Maha	32	-	24	1,2,4
1996 Yala	-	-	-	-
1996/97 Maha	-	-	-	-
1997 Yala	-	3	17	1,2,4

Key to the Table

1. Initiating Kanna meetings
2. Water Management activities
3. Assist in allocation of bethma lands
4. Making credit arrangements

As seen in this table, the major activities of SCOR were to plan and implement seasonal activities, provide credit through banks, initiate water management activities and assist farmers to share land for bethma cultivation. The FO was able to arrange credit to farmers through banks using SCOR grant amounting to Rs. 326,500.00 for operationalizing Mini-Project.

Table No. 8, Credit Arrangements to Meegaswewa Farmers through SCOR Grant

Season	Purpose	Number of Farmers	Extent Acres	Amount
1994/95 Maha	Credit for paddy cultivation	48	60	11,3302.47
1994/95 Maha	Credit for seedlings	42		8,783.00
1995 Yala	Credit for OFC and Paddy	52	30	41,491.43
1995/96 Maha	Credit for Paddy	24	32	42,062.24
1995/96 Maha	Credit for seedlings	10		1,428.00
1996/97 Maha (late Maha)	Credit for OFCs	9	8	16,500.00
1997 Yala	No water for cultivation	-	-	-
1997 Yala	Credit for animal husbandry	10	-	50,000.00

However, dry weather conditions, crop failures etc. from 1995 Yala onward gradually reduced the number of farmers who could obtain loans from the organisation. RUO had to take legal action against those who failed to settle loans and this led to conflicts between some community members and the organisation office bearers. Membership of the organisation dropped down to 8 in early part of 1996 from 62 reported in 1994. After the second season, the organisations could not get loans from the banks and, therefore, had to withdraw money from the grant to provide credit to members in subsequent seasons. But towards the end of Yala 1997, the bank has agreed to provide loans equal to the amount in the fixed deposit. However, farmers are not prepared to take loans for animal husbandry on the conditions laid down by the banks for credit recovery. As a result catalysts had to withdraw money from the grant and issue loans to ten farmers to kindle hopes in farmers of the possible benefits from the organisation. It is after this move to issue loans for animal husbandry that the membership in the organisation began to grow from 8. The farmers are in the view that the failure of chilli cultivation undertaken by them on SCOR initiation in Yala 1995 made them defaulters. There is repentance in the community over this.

#### Other Activities implemented in Mahameegaswewa

Table No.9, Other Activities Implemented in Mahameegaswewa

Season	Activity	Farmers	Acres	Lots	SCOR Function
1994/95 Maha	Conservation bunds in homesteads	40	40	40	1
1994/95 Maha	Chena stabilisation	55	55	55	1
1995/96 Maha	Participatory Forestry Program	17	25	17	2

#### Key to the Table

1. Training and providing the service of AI for marking contour bunds
2. Co-ordination of Forest Department

Conservation of homesteads and chena stabilisation was one of the major interventions attempted in Mahameegaswewa at the beginning. For encouraging farmers to put bunds and drains in their lands, plants were given to them on credit basis by the farmer organisation, which has received a small grant from SCOR at the initial stage. Chena stabilisation was an intervention aimed at confining farmers to one piece of land in order to discourage farmers doing slash and burn cultivation, which contributes to deforestation. Farmers had been explained that by adopting all the technologies recommended by SCOR in these chena lands, they can go on cultivating the same piece of land over and over again without having problems like yield reduction. However, farmers could not be confined to the same piece of land. They went on practising slash and burn cultivation in the neighbouring scrub jungles. SCOR through its co-ordination provided seedlings and plants

for homesteads and other high lands from the Department of Forest and Coconut Cultivation Board. Number of trees in home-gardens increased due to these interventions. In 1996/97, participatory forestry programme implemented by FD was introduced to Mahameegaswewa with SCOR co-ordination. This provides both short term and long term benefits to the farmers. However, the benefit of the programme went only to those who hold membership in the organisation. Membership of the organisation was limited to a very few farmers during this period as majority of the members had left the organisation as a result of conflicts they had with the leadership as well as SCOR by this time.

The other major interventions attempted by SCOR in this location are the establishment of a market centre run by the organisation. The centre was financed through the SCOR grant given for the Mini-Project. The activities of the centre started on 27 January 1995 for which Rs. 79,227.00 was initially issued from the grant. Its main task at the beginning was to supply agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertiliser and agro-chemicals. But SCOR officials wanted to address many other farmer level problems like marketing of their agricultural produce, processing of some cereals like kurakkan etc. to have a better price for farmers. These activities were initially started at small scale by employing a manager for the centre that was paid a monthly allowance of Rs. 1,500.00. It purchased mustard and margoza seeds to be supplied to a Farmer Company named "Green Path" which too had been initiated by SCOR. The company did not purchase these seeds, as it did not start its operation for some unknown reason. The farmer organisation was at a loss due to these business activities. Also processing of grains etc. was given up as the farmer organisation could not find markets or facilities to process cereals. The centre was finally closed down to avoid further losses from grant. A loss and profit account has not yet been prepared to know exactly how much was lost due to the operation of the centre.

It was also attempted to grow some herbal of medicinal value (e.g. katuwalbatu) which are imported to the country annually by the government of Sri-Lanka. Farmers were issued seed free of charge and some farmers were ready to grow them. As the seed issued to them did not germinate, the farmers gave it up in the first season itself.

In addition, farmers had been assured support for construction of agro-wells with the funds from Mini-Project grant. This too could not materialise, as banks were not prepared to issue loans for agro-wells on their bitter experience in investing on them. This too created ill feeling in the community towards SCOR. The membership in the RUO reduced to 8 after this incidence. However, catalyst again organised members for the participatory forestry program. After this the membership rose again to 35. But a sharp division could be observed between the members and non-members in this community over the access to credit and other resources at the command of the members of the organisation.

### **Performance of RUO**

When compared with its performance at the beginning of the project, it had become weaker by 1997 when SCOR started its Phase II activities. An analysis on the performance of RUO is given below:

### **Weaknesses of RUO**

1. RUO had a limited membership (8) by 1997. Members of RUO did not like to have other villagers as members and impose various kind of restriction on them. This created a division in the community. Those who were not members had given up technologies they practiced in their lands on SCOR initiation
2. Credit recovery was a serious problem in this RUO. Most of the members had lost membership due to non-repayment of loans and failure to attend three consecutive meetings.
3. RUO had lost its money through providing credit and losses from the sale center. Out of Rs.326250.00 issued to RUO to be used as a revolving fund only Rs.176859.09 is in the savings account of RUO. RUO had not deposited its money in a fixed deposit account. RUO had to recover about Rs.100000.00 from the members.
4. Majority of farmers did not show any interest to continue soil and water conservation technologies even though they have understood that some of them are useful. They were heavily involved in chena cultivation and paddy cultivation in Maha seasons and did not find time to repair bunds and practice other conservation measures, which too had to be done at the same time.
5. Conflicts in the community over inequity in resource allocation. Non-members felt that benefits from the organizations were enjoyed by relatively wealthier sector in the village and blamed SCOR for creating a situation like this in their village They were specially critical about SCOR for not fulfilling promises such as providing credit for agro-wells

### **Strengths**

1. Organization had regular meetings with a limited number of members (about 30 in mid 1997) and their participation at meetings was at a satisfactory level.

### **Problems with strategies**

1. Question of inducing farmers through financial incentives alone arises in Meegaswewa. Farmers who have no access to credit and other assistance from SCOR have given up adoption of soil and water conservation technologies initiated by SCOR.
2. Program implemented in Mahameegaswewa was overloaded with conservation concerns forgetting about social and economic backwardness of this community. Program lacked benefits such as loans for rain-fed crop cultivation

to initiate them for conservation their highlands. RUO provided loans only to paddy farmers.

3. A policy adopted by RUO was to restrict membership to those who had lost membership through various reasons. They imposed heavy penalties on them and this made impossible for them to get the membership in the RUO even though they were willing to become members. Farmers understood that these restrictions had been proposed by SCOR catalyst. Whatever this strategy may be, it had brought about a division between members and non-members.
4. Starting business activities without proper plans and developing the skills in the community had led to financial losses to RUO through enterprises. Skill development as well as planning enterprises based on the existing knowledge on rural enterprise development is required to guide these type of communities to handle small scale enterprises successfully

#### **Activities Implemented in Padikaramaduwa**

Padikaramaduwa Sub watershed consists of several micro watersheds. SCOR interventions during Phase I was implemented mainly in Mahasengama. During Phase II activities were extended to Padikaramaduwa Old Village and Methgama. The activities implemented in three villages will be taken separately as each village has a separate farmer organisation.

#### **Activities implemented in Mahasengama**

SCOR interventions Started in Mahasengama in May 1994. There was no farmer organisation in the village. As IRDP had implemented its activities in the village previously, there were four small groups established by the project. Catalysts started his work with these groups. Initial activities implemented were conservation of homesteads and highlands. To encourage farmers to adopt soil and water conservation technologies, they were provided with a small grant of Rs. 21,000.00 and later 13608.00 to buy plants and seedling of perennial crops and also seeds for soya bean and banana seedlings to be planted in conserved lands. The activities implemented in Mahasengama are given below in Table No. 10.

Table No. 10, Activities implemented in Mahasengama

Season	Activity	Farmers	Acres	Lots	SCOR Function
1994/95 1995/96 1996/97 Maha	Conservation (homesteads and highlands)	55	75	55	1,2,3,4
1995/96 Maha	Participatory Forestry Program	50	50	50	3,4

Key to the Table

1. Training and providing the service of AI for marking contour bunds
2. Co-ordination of Coconut Cultivation Board
3. Co-ordination of Forest Department
4. Credit for plants and seedlings

In addition, production activities such as cultivation of soya, maize and chillies were initiated by SCOR in homesteads, chenas and lands under participatory forestry program in Mahasengama from 1994/95 Maha season onward. Most of these activities have been implemented with the involvement of small groups, which have been very effective during this period. However, after the formation of a new farmer organisation, SCOR activities have been implemented through the organisation to which SCOR made a grant of Rs. 285,500.00 for operationalization of Mini-Project. By depositing this money in the bank, credit arrangements were made to Mahasengama Organisation as shown in Table No. 11 below. Also the farmers attraction to this RUO grew as they had access to participatory forestry program which provide them short term and long term benefits.

Table No. 11, Credit Arrangements with Mini-Project Funds - Mahasengama

Season	Purpose	Number of Farmers	Extent Acres	Amount
1996 Yala	Chilli and B onion cultivation	21	-	42,000.00
1996/97 Maha	Chilli and black gram cultivation	37	-	79,000.00

There were problems in recovering the credit in 1996/97 because of poor yields due to drought condition. In order to recover credit provided to the farmers, the organisation purchased chillies produced by them at Rs. 75.00 per kilo with the anticipation of making a profit later. However, they had to sell it at a very low price after several months because chilly price had dropped down in the market. In addition to the loss through chilly business in 1997, the organisation had a loss of nearly about Rs. 38,000.00 in handling soya business with the Huruluwewa Farmer Federation in 1995 Yala. The RUO leaders



are in the opinion that they made a profit but the Federation deprived them of it. This has led the RUO to be suspicious about the company and its leading FRs. This moved them to handle chilly purchasing activities independently in 1997 without the involvement of the company.

In spite of SCOR's attempt to help this community through grants etc., farmers were not much satisfied with its work. This is mainly due to the fact that SCOR had failed to fulfil the promises made to farmers through mini-project. For example, the farmers had been waiting long to have loans from banks using SCOR grant as a revolving fund. Though this was discussed with farmers from 1994 onward, it could not be materialised. "Just like IIMI's milk cows" had become an idiomatic expression in the community for an unfulfilled promise.

### **Activities implemented in Padikaramaduwa Old Village**

SCOR started its activities in Padikaramaduwa old village in 1994/95 Maha season and attempted to initiate farmers for water management activities in the tank by organising cultivation meetings etc. This village had a RUO established and registered by ASD by this time. However, SCOR could not have the support of village level traditional leadership to implement its program. Also, SCOR could not offer many incentives to the farming community to get them to adopt recommended soil and water conservation technologies. Though the catalyst could initiate farmers to put up contour bunds in 46.5 acres and stabilise bunds in 5.25 acres of land in Padikaramaduwa, the community could not be initiated to adopt technologies in a successful manner.

Though the catalyst tried to intervene by organising cultivation meetings, getting farmers to cultivate OFCs etc. the majority of the community could not be won over to SCOR programme. There was resistance from some farmer leaders too. Due to these reasons, catalysts concentrated much on his activities in Mahasengama, an adjoining squatter settlement. In 1996/97 Maha he started to work with the organisation and provided Rs. 50,000.00 as credit to some farmers from Mahasengama FO to cultivate paddy. Because of this assistance, there was a good response from a section of the farming community. In the same season he could implement an integrated pest management program with the involvement of DOA in Padikaramaduwa tank command area.

### **Activities implemented in Methgama**

There was a farmer organisation in Methgama when SCOR started its activities. However, this had not been registered at ASD. The organisation was just a namesake one incapable in providing any service to the farming community. SCOR activities in Methgama started in 1996/97 Maha season with putting up of conservation bunds in 52 acres of land. SCOR has initiated farmers for homestead development under which 0.5 acres of land in each 3 acre allotment is to be planted with perennial, especially fruit trees like mango, oranges etc. in coming seasons. In 1996/97 Maha SCOR catalyst provided maize seed and

fertiliser from Hurulu Farmer Company on credit basis to encourage farmers to produce maize for Thripasha Company.

In 1996 the RUO on the village was registered at ASD on SCOR initiation. In 1997 a Mini-Project Report was developed for Methgama by SCOR catalyst with the involvement of the RUO. SCOR has by now made a grant amounting to Rs. 364,000.00 to this RUO.

#### **Performance of RUOs in three villages, Methgama, Mahasengama and Padikaramaduwa**

SCOR activities had not been implemented in Padikaramaduwa and Methgama by the time SCOR Phase II activities started in Padikaramaduwa sub watershed. However, Mahasengama RUO had become weak in all respects for reasons described above. By the time of Phase II it had the following weaknesses.

1. Poor participation of members in meetings and RUO activities
2. Problems in credit recovery and fund management
3. RUO meetings were not held in a systematic manner
4. Leadership of RUO was very weak
5. No fund raising activities by the members

Above all, majority of members had lost trust on SCOR, which had initiated RUO and provided a substantial amount as a grant to the organisation.

#### **Activities Implemented in Garandiyaulpotha**

When SCOR started its activities in Garandiyaulpotha, there were no farmer organisations in this area. SCOR catalyst organised new groups and also worked with the existing groups. Later, an organisation was formed in Garandiyaulpotha area to implement the Participatory Forestry program activities. Since this was a small group, it could not be registered at ASD. Therefore, catalyst formed a new organisation in the area with the involvement of some families in Rathmalwetiya, Garandiyaulpotha and Kubukwewa.

As in many other locations SCOR approached the community in Garandiyaulpotha with a package of conservation technologies. The conservation activities were implemented through groups. The conservation activities implemented in the project are given in Table No. 12, below.

Table No. 12, Conservation Activities in Garandiyaulpotha

Season	Activity	Farmers	Acres	Lots	SCOR Function
1994/95 Maha	Conservation of bunds in homesteads	66	94.25	66	1,2,3
1994/95 Maha	Conservation of newly established forest lands	26	25	26	1,2,3
1995/96 Maha	Conservation of newly established forest lands	25	25	25	1,2,3
1996/97 Maha	Conservation of homestead	59	44	59	1,2,3,

Key to the Table

1. Training and providing the service of AI for marking contour bunds
2. Co-ordination of FD and CCB
3. Small scale credit arrangements through RUOs

Garandiyaulpotha farmers could also be initiated to establish 350 plants along Garandiyaulpotha stream in 1994/95 Maha and later in 1996/97 Maha. They planted around 200 trees in common properties like graveyards and schools in 1995/96 Maha season. Garandiyaulpotha farmers were involved in the participatory forestry program and because of the benefits this program offered them, catalyst could get them to implement some conservation programs in their homesteads. Initial success of conservation activities in Garandiyaulpotha is largely due to the impact of linking farmers to the participatory forestry program. Number of beneficiaries of participatory forestry program is given below in Table No.13.

Table No. 13, Beneficiaries of the Participatory Forestry Program

Season	Activity	Farmers	Acres	Lots	SCOR Function
1994/95 Maha	Participatory Forestry program	26	25	26	1,2,3
1995/96 Maha	Participatory Forestry program	25	25	25	1,2,3

Key to the Table

1. Training and providing the service of AI for marking contour bunds
2. Co-ordination of FD
3. Small scale credit arrangements through RUOs

Also 10 ha of lands in Garandiyaulpotha hill had been conserved by FD with the involvement of farmers in Garandiyaulpotha. 13800 plants had been established in this reserved forest area.

In 1994/95 Maha soya was cultivated in forestlands by the farmers. Credit arrangements for soya cultivation was made to Garandiyaulpotha forestry groups through Nikawewa FO. In the same season Garandiyaulpotha Swarnabuhmi FO purchased some soya and sold it to Thripasha Company and made a profit of Rs. 25,000.00. This money was later divided among the members to settle the loan taken from Nikawewa FO for soya seed purchase. Pigeon pea too was cultivated in one acre of land in this season but the crop failed due to attacks by insects. However, production activities in these forestlands were not much successful mainly due to soil deterioration in many lands.

Maize was cultivated in the lands, which came under forestry programme in 1995/96 Maha. Seed requirements etc. was provided to the farmers on credit basis on SCOR initiation in this season. Maize was produced to be supplied to Thripasha through Huruluwewa Farmer Company. Majority of farmers who cultivated maize reported poor yields due to drought conditions, seed germination problems etc. Also, forestry programs in homesteads were implemented from 1994 to 1997 with the involvement of small groups scattered all over the sub watershed.

A Mini-project proposal was developed for Garandiyaulpotha in 1996 and the organisation received a Mini-Grant of Rs. 264,024.00 in 1997. It had not started activities using mini-project funds by end of June 1997.

### **Performance of RUO**

As this RUO was a recently formed one, its weaknesses and strengths could not be identified by the time SCOR Phase II activities started in this location. However, it was understood that RUO was formed mainly for the purpose of obtaining a grant from SCOR. Also, since RUO had been formed organising residents of three adjoining villages, Garandiyaulpotha, Kubukwewa and Rathmalwatiya, it-inherited elements for inter-organisational conflicts based on residential areas of members from the very beginning.

### **Activities Implemented in Kelanikawewa**

SCOR started its activities in Kelenikawewa area in mid 1995. By that time there was a farmer organisation in the village. It had been registered under 56 A in ASD. As in other sub watershed initial activities in Kelenikawewa too have been initiating farmers to conserve their lands. Also, participatory forestry programs were introduced. Table below shows the conservation activities implemented so far in this village by SCOR.

Table No. 14, Conservation activities in Kelenikawewa

Season	Activity	Farmers	Acres	Lots	SCOR Function
1994/95 Maha	Conservation in homesteads/highlands	30	52	30	1,2
1995/96 Maha	Conservation in homesteads/highlands	12	25	12	1,2
1996/97	Conservation in homesteads/highlands	8	16	8	1,2
1996/97 Maha	Participatory Forestry	17	25	14	3

**Key to the Table**

1. Training and providing the service of AI for marking contour bunds
2. Co-ordination of Coconut Cultivation Board
3. Co-ordination of Forest Department

Catalyst initiated planting of trees along roadside in 1996/97 Maha. Under this activity 400 trees were planted 1 1/2 k.m. distance along Kelenikawewa main road. Also trees were planted in school and temple premises under this program.

In 1996/97 Maha 22 farmers were initiated to cultivate paddy in old paddy field area of the tank. Since there was a water scarcity in this season, catalyst initiated farmers for water management activities. In the same season farmers in the area were provided with maize seed and fertiliser from Hurulu Farmer Company to produce maize for Thripasha Company. Though farmers cultivated about 170 acres of maize, they sold their produce to the private traders row.

A Mini-project proposal was developed for the area by the catalyst with the participation of farmers in 1995. This was finalised in 1996. A grant of Rs. 325,270.00 was made to the RUO by SCOR. No activity was implemented with the use of this fund up to the end of June 1997.

**Performance of RUO**

The performance of the RUO was very weak due to the following reasons:

1. Political rivalries in the community
2. Corrupt leadership
3. Poor participation of RUO members in organizational activities and meetings
4. Lack of benefits to the members even though RUO had received a grant from SCOR. Mini-project could not be operationalized mainly due to the weakness of RUO

In addition to these problems, catalyst could not win the confidence of farmers and mobilize them to implement SCOR activities with them. He worked with a very limited number of farmers in the village.

## **PART I - HURULUWEWA WATERSHED**

### **SECTION 3 - PLANNING PROCESS OF KEY INTERVENTIONS IN SAMPLE LOCATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS SELECTED FOR IMPLEMENTATION DURING PHASE II**

The idea of developing at least three sub watershed as models was put forward by the Project Leader of SCOR at a meeting held with the project staff at Huruluwewa project office on 10 September 1997. The Project leader pointed out at this meeting that even though some home-gardens, high lands with better land management practices can be observed in some small areas in sub watersheds, there are no areas where such practices are adopted by majority of land holders. He stressed the necessity of developing at least three areas as model sub watersheds by covering the total land area of the sub watersheds with production and conservation practices. He requested to select three sub watersheds to implement an intensive program to develop them as model sub watersheds. Views and ideas of the team members on selection of sites and interventions were sought. Team members pointed out that the sub watershed could not be developed as model sub watersheds due to problems encountered by them in implementing mini-projects, especially the unwillingness in the part of banks to provide loans for perennials and animal husbandry programs. Therefore, it was decided to provide outright grants for the purchase of plants to be distributed among the farmers in the model sub watersheds free of charge in order to develop them as model sub-watersheds.

After these initial discussions, field visits were made by the SCOR project leader as well as other team members to find three sub watersheds for the intensive program and it was finally decided to develop Puwakpitiya, Padikaramaduwa and Garadiyaulpotha sub watershed as model sub watersheds. Team members were asked by the project leader to prepare a comprehensive program with interventions and activities to be drawn up for the development of three model sub watersheds. It was also requested to name the persons responsible for each and every activity to make them implement the assigned task in a much more responsible way. Researchers were informed to prepare an activity-monitoring plan and also to document the planning and implementation process of key interventions.

The plan prepared by the team included some new interventions as well as those already included in the mini-project plans prepared previously. They are listed below:

1. Soil and water Conservation - Under Soil and Water Conservation, the following interventions had been proposed:
  1. Preparation of a watershed development plan
  2. Gully Reclamation

3. Restoration of tank Eco-system
  4. Restoration of common reservations
  5. Enrichment and protection of existing shrub/scrub jungles and dense forests
  6. Home-garden development
  7. Stabilization of high land farming
  8. Participatory Forestry project activities
2. Integrated water management - Under Integrated water Management, interventions in the following areas had been proposed.
1. Integrated water Management (Low land and High Land)
  2. Aquatic resource development in minor tanks
  3. Institutional Development activities
  4. M&E and Research activities
  5. Activities of Hurulu and Dambulu Janatha companies

These plans which were prepared in September were revised from time to time and the priorities over the activities too changed on the instruction from SCOR management in Colombo. For example, at the staff meeting held in October, the priorities of SCOR activities for Phase II was discussed Farmer Company received the first priority. Development of three sub-watersheds as model sub watershed, which was discussed in previous meetings, too was discussed at this meeting. Project Leader further told that a decision regarding supply of maize and soya had not been taken at Ministry level by the time of this meeting, even though a cabinet paper had been submitted some time back on this matter. However, he said that Mr. Sarath Wijesuriya and Mr. Sakalasooriya have been nominated as consultants of two companies. Approval of IIMI was yet to be obtained for these appointments, according to him. He said that three catalysts should work with these consultants who are actually doing the role of managers. They have been given consultant posts because of some other problems. They should be provided vehicles. If problems over too much travelling etc. occur, Janaka (Finacial Officer at Head Quarters) would look into those aspects, according to him. (Project Leader wanted to give freedom to the two consultants (company managers) to work more independently from the Team Leader, Huruluwewa. He made this reference to use of vehicles to stop Team Leader's intervening in the use of vehicles by the two company managers.



Also, it was suggested that company should appoint agents in places like Nacchaduwa to organize soya and maize production and purchasing activities. Members in the team pointed out that company director board is not active in implementing the program. Also problems related to the lack of participation of agency officials in company activities were stressed. Especially, some members reported that Divisional Secretary, Galenbidunuwewa and his assistant do not involve much in SCOR activities as well as those related to Hurulu farmer Company.

### **6.3.1. Planning Process**

Since the development of model sub watershed came up in September, planning of activities in them had to be completed prior to Maha rains, which begins in October. Activities like tree planting had to be done with the onset of rains. Therefore, planning had to be done in haste. This led catalysts to discuss the plan prepared at the office with the farmers and farmer leaders or plan activities without even consulting farmers.

#### **Planning Process in Garadiyaulpotha**

The main activity proposed for the development of sub watershed was tree planting in homestead and high land areas and initiating farmers to adopt conservation measures. According to the catalyst in the area, after initial discussion with the project leader in September, he made field visits to the lands of farmers in the area on 11, 12 and 13 of September with the team leader and had an estimation of the plant requirements. In his field visits he discussed with the small groups to know their preference for various kind of plant species.

In addition to this WLW too had meetings with the voluntary catalysts, catalyst, Grama Niladari and explained them the development plan for the sub watershed. The activities such as conservation of common properties like tank and road reservation, conservation of homestead and highlands too were discussed. It was also informed that farmers would be provided plant free of charge to initiate them to adopt conservation measures in their lands. Catalyst and the three assistant catalysts that had been hired for implementing sub watershed development activities worked from house to house in September to collect plant requirement of the farmers. This was done by making observation in farmers' lands. As the catalyst explained "SCOR project Management had an idea to develop three sub watersheds. It was proposed to issue plants free of charge to initiate farmers. So we had a plan. We wanted to make the plan successful. We got the farmers to implement the program." He further told that it would have been better if the project had sufficient time to plan the activities to get the real involvement of farmers. But this had to be done to achieve certain targets, which the project wanted.

### **Planning process in Puwakpitiya**

In Puwakpitiya, catalyst identified 84 homestead for development after he was informed by SCOR senior staff members that Puwakpitiya has been selected as a model sub watershed. He collected information on the plant requirements of the farmers with the newly elected president and the secretary of the farmer organization who too were hired by the catalyst as assistant catalysts to implement sub watershed development activities. At a meeting held on 9 October 1997, with the participation of 33 farmers, catalyst and WLW, farmers were explained by WLW of the program for development of their village as a model sub watershed. The importance of conserving common properties like tank and stream reservations; roadside and reclamation of gullies were explained by WLW at this meeting. SCOR program for development of home garden and high lands by planting fruit and various other tree species, adopting conservation measures were also informed to the farmers. SCOR plan for providing financial assistance to the Farmer Organization in Puwakpitiya to purchase plants to be distributed among the farmer free of charge.

The two conservation specialist (CSs), P. B. Darmasena (PBD) and W. Lionel Weerakoon (WLW) had discussed matters related to the development of a watershed plan with the catalysts in Garadiyaulpotha, Padikaramaduwa and Puwakpitiya area. This map was required for future planning purposes as well as monitoring of the progress. However, since catalysts had developed some maps through the participation of farmers as well as SCOR specialists, the purpose of this exercise was to add some more information such as drains, gullies and waterways etc. in the map. Two specialists had provided technical guidance on the preparation of the maps; however, catalysts wanted the service of PBD to prepare the maps. Since PBD had not been offered a contract even by October 1997, this activity could not be properly planned in October.

### **Planning process in Mahasengama**

Initially a meeting of the RUO of Mahasengama was held with the participation of 47 farmers, SCOR catalyst, DO and AI. This was organized by the farmer leaders of the RUO on the initiation of SCOR catalyst. The purpose of the meeting was to plan for Maha 1997/98 and also to discuss the activities to be implemented with the RUO on SCOR initiation.

DO addressing the meeting told farmers that Hurulu Farmer Company has plans to supply maize and soy to Thriposha Company on a forward contract agreement. Farmers can have Rs. 12.00 and Rs.18.00 per one kilo of maize and soy respectively, according to him. Therefore, he requested farmers to cultivate these crops in Maha season to have a better income.

SCOR catalyst that addressed this meeting told farmers that SCOR has a plan to provide plants valuing Rs. 1000.00 to each farmer in Mahasengama area. Only those who adopt SCOR recommended technologies like bunds and drains, mulching and recycling of crop

residues would be given the plants free of charge. He told the farmers that SCOR has already allocated Rs.270500.00 to the RUO for purchasing these plants. In addition, he told farmers that 42 farmers could obtain loans for the purchase of milk cows under the mini project. However he requested farmers to settle agricultural loans amounting to Rs.108000.00 which they had failed to settle in Maha 1997/98 if they want to be eligible to receive these loans. Also it was decided to appoint a credit committee to select suitable farmers to receive credit and also to monitor credit and make recoveries in time.

### **Methgama**

A similar kind of a planning process could be observed in Methgama too. SCOR catalyst and the committee member of the RUO met on 27 September 1997 to discuss the cultivation program for Maha. At this meeting catalyst told farmers about Hurulu Farmer Companies plan for supply of Soya and maize to the Thripasha Company and asked farmers to cultivate them to have a good income. It was also decided to issue Rs. 3000.00 to each farmer for cultivating these crops. In addition, SCOR catalyst told farmer leaders about the decision to issue plant free of charge to farmers who conserve their lands using SCOR recommended technologies. It was decided to issue teak plants for an extent of one acre and other plant species to the remaining two acres of the homesteads.

A general meeting of the farmers were held on 30 September 1997 to communicate the decision taken at the RUO committee meeting held on 27 September. 37 farmers participated at this meeting. However, there were no officers to discuss the plans with the general members. The decision to issue Rs. 3000.00 as loans to cultivate maize and soya was communicated to the farmers by their leaders at this meeting. Also, distribution of plants free of charge for initiation farmers to adopt conservation activities was also informed to them. A list of people willing to grow teaks in one acre of their lands were also obtained at this meeting. A credit committee was formed in this village too to monitor credit and take decisions on selection of creditworthy farmers. The purpose of the credit committee too was explained to the farmers at this meeting.

### **Padikaramaduwa Old Village**

In Padikaramaduwa Old Village, a meeting of the RUO was held on 23 September 1997 to take decisions regarding the cultivation under the two tanks, Padikaramaduwa and Dabagaswewa. SCOR catalyst, DO and 22 farmers participated in this meeting. As there was no water in any of the tanks, it was decided to start cultivation activities in Dabagaswewa tank in October after receiving Maha rains. RUO leaders were asked to organize a kanna meeting after rains in October. And also farmers were requested to start land preparation in Dabagaswewa with rains and to cultivate short-age paddy varieties to save tank water.

At this meeting SCOR catalyst explained farmers of his program to be implemented with the RUO. He told farmers that farmers would be provided loans from Mahasengama for cultivation under their tanks. He further told them that each farmer conserving his or her

land would receive plants worth Rs.700.00 – 800.00 free of charge. He especially mentioned that those who do not adopt SCOR recommended technologies would not be entitled to receive these plants.

### **Mahameegaswewa**

Planning activities in Mahameegaswewa were somewhat behind the schedule as there was no permanent catalyst in this sub watershed. It was because this sub watershed belongs to Phase I of SCOR from which SCOR catalysts have withdrawn. However, the catalyst that worked in the area had withdrawn to Madawala, an adjoining sub watershed coming under SCOR Phase II and was still involved in implementing SCOR activities to a certain extent. In addition he started acting as a Watershed Management Coordinator too during this period. Therefore, a meeting could not be organized in this village till 3 October 1997. There were many other reasons for this delay as discussed in the previous section on the organizational development in sample sub watersheds.

At the meeting held on 3 October 1998 SCOR catalyst explained the program to 28 farmers who attended it. The main activity was the distribution of plants worth of Rs.1000.00 to each out of the 30 farmers selected for implementing this program. To become eligible to receive these plants, the farmers should be members of the RUO and in addition they should conserve their lands according to him. WLW who attended this meeting explained them about the various kinds of conservation measures they should adopt on continued basis in their individuals as well as common resources such as tank and reservations.

Later when interviewed the catalyst told us about the program he intends to implement in this village. They include the following:

1. Issue of a package of 40 plants to each of the 50 households selected for implementing a program for tree planting. Both non-members and members of RUO in the village are entitled to the benefits of the program. The Department of Forest on catalyst's coordination provided plants.
2. Program to plant teaks in 10 ha of lands under Participatory Forestry Program (PFP) and initiating farmers to adopt conservation measures in those lands. The catalyst at field level coordinated this program implemented by FD.
3. Program for conserving 30 homesteads by issuing plants worth of Rs.1000.00 free of charge to each farmer selected for the program. Only members of RUO have benefits from this program.
4. Planting trees along Yan Oya reservation within the boundaries of the village in the same lands where trees planted in previous seasons have died due to damages by wild animals and due to droughts. Plants for FD too provided this activity.

5. Planting of trees in common properties like tank and road reservations. Plants for FD too provided this purpose.
6. Implementing cultivation activities in Maha 1997/98 by providing loans under the grant issued to RUOP for mini-project implementation.
7. Implementing an agro-well program in the village with loans from mini-project.

### **Kelenikawewa**

In Kelenikawewa too a tree-planting program for homestead development had been planned. The catalysts and WLW and PBD selected a micro watershed in September 1998 with the involvement of some farmers from Kelenikawewa sub watershed. Issuing plants free of charge 30 farmers in this micro watershed: the strategy adopted to initiate farmers to undertake soil conservation measures. Because of various problems in the RUO and approaches adopted by the catalyst it was very difficult to plan this activity with the participation of farmers.

## **PART I – HURULUWEWA WATERSHED**

### **SECTION 4 - IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF INTERVENTIONS**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

The main activity that received priority in these sub watersheds during Phase II was planting of trees and related tree management activities. In addition, activities planned through mini-projects too had to be implemented. For implementing these activities, RUO general meetings, committee meetings, Sub WRMT meetings, training and workshops etc. had to be held. Also, there were changes of personals, changes in approaches and strategies and also conflicts and contradictions resulting from these changes during this period. The progress of activities implemented was reviewed at monthly staff meeting held in Galenbidunuwewa office. The process followed in implementing the activities too was discussed at these meetings to provide a feedback to the members of the team. This section discusses the implementation process of these activities in sample locations with details on meetings, changes, conflicts and contradictions, which too are part and parcel of the implementation process. This report is based mainly on the data and information from the monthly reports submitted to the staff meetings in Galenbidunuwewa office.

The implementation process in the five sub-watersheds is discussed in section 4.2. -4.9. Sub WRMT meetings held during this period are discussed in 4.10 while 4.11. provides information on special efforts at institutional building by the team members themselves. 4.12. discusses changes, conflicts and contradictions during this period. 4.13. provides a summary on the implementation process of SCOR during Phase II.

#### **GARADIYAULPOTHA**

##### **4.2.1.1. Development of homesteads and highlands**

The main activity implemented in Garadiyaulpotha was planting of trees in home gardens and highlands. Based on the data collected from the farmers by the catalyst and the voluntary catalysts, a list of plant requirements had been prepared. This was further revised on the guidance of WLW taking bio-diversity aspects too into consideration. Meanwhile the farmers were informed that they needed to adopt conservation practices in their lands to be eligible to plants given free of charge.

The services of three assistant catalysts were obtained on full time basis to implement this massive program for tree planting. SCOR made a grant of Rs.313915.00 to RUO to purchase planting materials and also to pay the assistant catalysts. A service of an officer attached to the education office, Galenbidunuwewa was obtained to mark contour bunds in the farmers' lands in the area, as the service of the AI could not be obtained. He was paid by SCOR for this work. Bunds and drains were put up this way in 17 acres of land in October. As the catalyst in the area was formerly an AI of DOA, he provided technical

guidance to the farmers on various aspects of establishment of trees. Even Assistant catalysts that were given a basic training on some of these aspects were involved in providing necessary guidance to the farmers.

The necessary coordination for purchasing plants was done by the catalyst but he took some leaders to the nurseries and made purchasing with their consent. The establishment of plants in the field started on 21 October 1997 after giving field training on adopting soil and water conservation technologies for crop protection. Catalyst was able in this way to initiate farmers to repair bunds in 25.4 ha, to stabilize bunds in 27.32 ha, put up alleys in 2 ha during October 1997.

Because of the heavy involvement of the catalyst in all the aspect of tree planting, he was able to achieve the targets in time, irrespective of the delay in obtaining the cheque for purchasing plants from SCOR office, Galenbidunuwewa. There was a good response from the farmer community too for this program. They were in the view that these types of programs should have been implemented from the very beginning of SCOR. In that case SCOR would have been able to achieve some of their objectives such as covering the whole area with trees, according to them. Also, members as well as some non-members in the sub-watershed area were provided with plants in order to get their participation in watershed management activities.

In November, CS gave instructions to assistant catalysts to check the plant survival rate each month and report it to the president of RUO. Catalyst also asked assistant catalysts to submit a list indicating number of trees established and survived to claim their salary at the end of each month. In November, farmers engaged mainly in seasonal crop management activities in their highlands and chenas. Women engaged in seasonal crop management activities in homesteads. Towards the end of December 1997, catalyst had a meeting with the assistant catalysts and instructed them to inform farmers to clean weeds around the newly established plants and establish five gliricidia sticks around each plant. Also, they were told to guide farmers to use mulch after Maha rains were over. It was observed that a significant number of plants issued to the farmers by SCOR had died due to water logging after heavy rains in December. This had happened especially in water logging areas.

### **Tree management activities**

Catalyst gave instructions to assistant catalysts on mulching of the newly established trees. Catalysts and voluntary catalysts went to each and every home garden and initiated farmers to apply mulch to the young plants to save them from drought. A large number of trees had been mulched by the end of January even though this was not physically verified.

Almost all the perennials established in the watershed had been mulched by the end of February on the initiation of assistant catalysts, who were paid by the RUO using SCOR grant issued for the purchase of plants. WLW too made visits to the area from time to time to give technical advice to farmers on mulching. Though majority of farmers had used mulch, they were not up to the technical recommendations of WLW.

It could also be observed that most of the lands in which mulching had been practiced were home-gardens or homesteads. Even though plants had been issued to chena lands in which farm families were not permanently settled, mulching had not been widely practiced in them. It was because these farmers had their residence away from chena lands and they could not be initiated to come to these lands to do mulching at a time when there were no crops in the field.

In spite of the fact that most of the farmers had mulched their newly established permanent crops, Grama Niladari (Village headman) had not put up mulch at all in his land. According to this officer who himself was heavily involved in SCOR activities as well as in the RUO in this village, he had not been able to do mulching because of his engagement in other activities.

Voluntary catalysts too had their comments. They pointed out that they had to go to each and every piece of lands to initiate farmers and RUO leaders were not involved in monitoring or initiating farmers to do mulching and other conservation activities. Only thing done by the president of the RUO was to find fault with them over their work. They were not happy about the way the president tried to supervise their work (President made payment after supervising their work).

According to the data available with RUO, the total number of plants established in Garadiyaulpotha during Phase II was 18554. In spite of all the attempts of SCOR to protect plants established, survival rate was just a 30% by May 1998. This was mainly due to the dry weather condition prevailed in the area and issue of unmanageable number of plants to farmers within a single season. However, SCOR Team Leader, Huruluwewa requested researchers to study why so many plants died.

#### **4.2.1.2. Watershed development plan, gully reclamation and check-dams**

Preparation of a watershed development plan, Gully reclamation, and construction of check-dams were the other conservation activities proposed. Preparation of watershed development plan could not be implemented mainly due to the problems associated with offering a contract to PBD who was the resource person in this activity. Although this was included in the activity plan, catalysts felt that this was not much required as they had maps with them prepared previously. Therefore, this activity was removed from the activity plan towards the end of February 1998.

#### **Gully reclamation and checkdams**

Identification of gullies too had been done by PBD and WLW in their field visits to the three sub-watersheds in September for selecting three sub watershed for development. Catalysts had been made aware of the gully reclamation activities to include them in their plans for Phase II. Though assistant catalysts had organised gully reclamation activities in November, they could not be implemented as gullies were filled up with water. Therefore, they were postponed to 7, 8 and 12 December 1997 at the committee meeting of RUO held on 30 November 1997.



WLW made a field visit to the area on 7.12.1997 with the catalysts and assistant Catalysts to give instruction on gully reclamation activities. WLW showed farmers the location in which they should plant trees for gully reclamation.

Though gully reclamation activities had been planned to be implemented through community participation (self-help) in December 1998, it was decided later to distribute plants among the farmers living near gullies. Eleven farmers were provided with plants for this purpose by the catalyst. Gully reclamation activities were conducted in Ihalagama area too by distributing plants among 9 farmers living close to the canal. These activities could not be implemented in Garadiyaulpotha in December because gullies had been filled up with water after rains.

Management of 350 plants, which were established on gullies, had been targeted for March. However, this was not implemented. Reason for non-implementation was not explained clearly at the progress review meeting held in April. It was revealed at the field observation that about 50% of trees in gullies had died. Farmers gave first priority to manage trees in their home-gardens and this too had been difficult for them under the dry weather condition in the area. However, a training program on tree management (both in gullies and other areas of the land) was conducted by Horticultural Specialist (HS) on 21 March 1998. Three voluntary catalysts and five farmers attended this training. HS explained them the importance of mulching and requested to initiate farmers to have adequately thick and wide mulch for the newly established trees. In addition, he pointed out the importance of pruning trees from the early stage of its growth to have more sunshine for the plants.

The monitoring of gully reclamation activities towards the end of May showed that large number of trees established on gullies had died due to dry weather conditions.

### **Construction of check-dams**

It had been targeted to construct two check dams during February 1998. One check-dam was constructed on 20 February 1998 with the participation of WLW, catalyst and 12 farmers. Awareness creation to the farmers on the importance of check dams and gully reclamation activities was done by WLW at this meeting. It helps retaining soil moisture in the upper catchment area of the tank and stops sedimentation of the tank according to WLW. He explained different kind of check-dams such as those constructed with wood logs, metal etc. He pointed out that citronella should be established on earthen dams to strengthen them. This activity had been organized by the assistant catalysts working in the area and not by the organization. It could be observed that organization did not involve in this activity even though it involved in common property management activities like tank eco -system regeneration. Farmers constructed another small check dam after this initial awareness meeting by WLW. Management of 350 plants, which were established on gullies, had been targeted for March 1998. However, this was not implemented in March or in the subsequent months as trees established on gullies had died by this time.

#### **4.2.1.3. Tank eco-system regeneration**

Though activities related to tank eco-system regeneration had not been planned for Garadiyaulpotha, catalyst ad Grama Niladari (Field level officer representing DS and many other departments) selected one acre in the immediate catchment of Kubukwewa for conservation. 224 plants were established there through a self-help campaign organised by RUO on 27 October 1997. RUO members put up a barbed wire fence to protect trees from animals. These types of activities had increased mainly due to the benefits such as credit and plants issued free of charge to the members who engaged in such activities. The farmers were informed at a RUO meeting that their participation in these activities is a must for receiving the plants given free of charge and goats to be given later on credit basis.

150 kubuk plants were established in the immediate catchment of Kubukwewa tank on 4 February (Day of Independence). This was done through a self-help campaign organised by the RUO. The village level officers of line agencies and 65 farmers participated in this common resource management activity.

Hundred and fifty plants established on the Tank Eco-system had been scheduled for March. This was not implemented as most of the plants established in the tank eco-system had either damaged by animals or died due to dry weather conditions.

#### **4.2.1.4. Conservation of common reservation**

Under the conservation of common reservation 100 meters along Rathmalwatiya road in this sub watershed was conserved by planting 31 trees along roadside on 27 October 1997 through a self-help campaign organized by the catalyst through RUO. A large number of these trees too had died during dry period in April and May 1998.

#### **4.2.1.5. Model home-garden and women development activities**

Awareness creation on compost making, kitchen management and passion fruit cultivation were made to some women participants on three occasions during October 1997. These activities were implemented with the existing Janasawiya (Government poverty alleviation program) groups implemented in the area.

Later in October, WYC met a women leader and requested her to start homestead development activities, especially vegetable cultivation. She met her individually and a meeting with other women was not held. When she was interviewed the women leader told "I have grown chillies and sweet potato in my home-garden. When I asked others to grow vegetable etc. they say there is no sufficient space left in their home-gardens to raise vegetables as seasonal crops have been cultivated there. Some are not interested in this type of cultivation activities". However, about 15 women raised some vegetables in their home-gardens on WYC's initiation.

Women and Youth Development Co-ordinator had a meeting with 38 women in Rathmalwatiya area on 4 October 1997 to review the progress of her activities in the field. About 15 women had started small vegetable plots in their gardens using seeds provided by her. She had initiated 20 women in the area to cultivate passion fruit

### **Model home-gardens**

In January, WYC organised a VDO show and training to women on homestead development and use of organic matter and compost making. She worked with existing groups in the village and had initiated about 35 women to cultivate vegetables on small scale in their home-gardens. She started initiating women to grow passion fruit too in their homesteads. RUO leaders said that passion fruit cultivation was implemented without their involvement. They were in the view that it would have been better if it had been implemented with the involvement of RUO. Majority of farmers who started the cultivation complained that seed provided to them did not germinate. This was informed to HS and WYC in their field visits to the area.

Sixteen model home-gardens had been established out of 20 planned for this period. However there was no agreement among the team members over the development in them. Also, catalysts as well as the farmers in the area were not satisfied with the program or the way it was implemented. Catalyst was in the view that there should be a well-planned program for this activity. This program could not be successfully implemented till the end of the project.

### **Compost preparation**

Though a program for compost preparation had been planned for January 1998 under model home-garden development, it could not be implemented in Garadiyaulpotha due to excess rains and therefore, had to be rescheduled for February. This could not be implemented in February too. Finally, it was re-scheduled for March to be implemented with the involvement of 10 families even though the original targets for January, February and March were 10, 20 and 20 compost pits respectively. However, this activity was not implemented in March too. Various kind of explanations were offered by the catalyst as well as the Woman and Youth Development Coordinator (WYC). In WYC's point of view, this could not be done in January due to rains. In February and March, the earth was hard due to dry weather condition in the area. In addition, farmers were very busy with their harvesting and other agricultural activities. Catalyst pointed out the necessity of having an integrated program in the sub watershed instead of trying to implement one or two activities with farmers separately. WYC had not been able to implement this activity mainly because it was difficult to get the involvement of farmers for this type of a single activity. In addition, it was a separate program of WYC for which much support was not received from the catalysts as it was not implemented in an organized manner.

#### **4.2.6. Integrated water management**

##### **4.2.6.1. Highland systems**

800 pineapple plants and 1275 wood apple orange grafts were planted in highland areas of Garadiyaulpotha under this activity. Practices such as eyebrow bundling and pitcher irrigation were not introduced in October, as they can not be practiced in water abundant Maha seasons.

Eye-brow bundling was one main intervention under integrated water management. The total target of eye-brow bunds for this season was 8350 for Garadiyaulpotha. This target could not be achieved at all. Our field observations in Garadiyaulpotha substantiated that farmers could not be initiated for this activity because they were engaged in agricultural activities in January and February. Activity was not implemented in January because heavy rains during the period would bring more water into the root zones of the newly established plants and kill them. However, farmers found it difficult to construct eye-brow bunds in March too, as soil crust had become very hard after dry weather conditions. This activity was rescheduled for April but could not be implemented till the end of the project, as farmers could not be initiated for it.

##### **4.2.6.2. Lowland systems**

###### **Inland fisheries (Releasing fingerlings to ponds and small tanks)**

Though this activity had not been planned for this watershed, 600 fingerlings were released to ponds and a small tank of this watershed in February 1998. Fingerlings brought to the village by WLW and an officer of Inland Fisheries handed them over to a voluntary catalyst who distributed them among the other two voluntary catalysts. They distributed fingerlings among individual farmers. Also some fingerlings were released to the small tanks in the area.

In March WLW proposed a program to manage fish released to tanks. This was not included in the activity plan and was also not implemented in the field. In case of Garadiyaulpotha, fingerlings had been released to wells and ponds owned mainly by individual farmers. Farmers complained after several months that they could not still see the fingerlings put into these ponds and wells and felt that they had died. This was one main reason for lack of interest in their part for protecting fish in common resources like tanks. Also, the way program was implemented had created problems. Activity had been implemented by SCOR without the involvement of RUO and its leaders.

##### **4.2.7. Participatory Forestry and other forestry Programs**

Forest Department officers informed the farmers involved in PFP program to clean the lands under teak cultivation prior to the end of November to entitle to the food ration issued to them for the work. Majority of farmers in Garadiyaulpotha area could involve in PFP and had benefits under it through SCOR coordination in 1994//95 and in 1995/96

Maha seasons. Farmers received short-term benefits like food rations for about four years for establishment and maintenance of teak cultivation and loan term benefits such as entitlement to the timber after 25 years. It was through these benefits that SCOR catalysts could initiate farmers in Garadiyaulpotha to undertake soil and water conservation technologies in their homesteads during Phase I.

### **Other forestry programs**

WLW had planned a joint forestry management program for this month. It was expected to make 65 farmers aware of the objectives of the program, mainly of the importance of having a forest around their village. Demarcation of reservations and co-ordination of enrichment activities of 80.9 ha too had been scheduled to be completed during this month. The only activity implemented with this regard was to hold awareness meeting with 32 farmers by WLW. All other activities were rescheduled for next month, as the specialist concerned could not coordinate these activities in February.

The matters related to the demarcation of boundaries were discussed with the Provincial Land Commissioner who informed that budgetary provisions are required for this activity. Therefore, this activity had to be given up.

#### **4.2.8. Activities of RUO and mini-project**

On a decision taken at a meeting held on 28 August, 33 farmers were selected as suitable persons to receive loans through the RUO. A credit committee of RUO had been appointed to deal with the matters related to credit management. The decision to issue Rs. 1400000.00 to these farmers were further reviewed at a RUO meeting held on 1 October 1997.

In November, a Project Assistant (PA) was appointed to the RUO to help leaders in accounting keeping, credit management and similar kind of activities. PA said that he received training on account keeping on 7 November 1997. This had been organised by MA. Training was very useful to him to keep accounts of RUO, according to PA. At an RUO committee meeting held on 30 November 1997 PA presented his findings on credit utilisation by farmers who obtained loans from the RUO. According to his presentation all except one farmer had invested on agriculture while one had invested on a business activity. (RUO had issued Rs.140,000.00 to 33 members in this RUO and provided credit amounting to Rs.66,000.00 to RUO in Nitulgollawa from this RUO on a decision taken by RUO on 28.10.1998. Catalyst addressing this meeting told RUO representatives that PA had been entrusted with a lot of work and requested them to learn from him to keep accounts and manage credit so that they would be able to manage things by themselves after his withdrawal. He asked RUO leaders to get the involvement of DO to learn to keep accounts. "If DO works on a Saturday or Sunday, I would make arrangements to pay her", he told RUO leaders.

Project Assistant hired by SCOR for the Mini-Project implementation activities in Garadiyaulpotha had made the financial records of the organisation up to date by December.

Also he started to report progress of loan recovery etc. at the committee meetings and general meetings of the RUO.

Review of RUO activities in February showed that organization had provided credit amounting to Rs.140, 000.00 to 33 members of the organization for agricultural activities in Maha 1997/98. This amount had been recovered in full by the second week of March. In addition to this, FO had issued a loan of Rs.66, 000.00 to Rathmalgahawewa FO. This money had not been recovered in full by the end of February.

The credit issued by RUO to its members and Rathmalwewa RUO was recovered in full by March on the initiation of catalyst, project assistant and the RUO leaders. RUO provided a loan amounting to Rs.214, 500.00 to 35 members of RUO in April for cultivation activities in Yala 1998.

#### **4.2.9. Company activities**

Farmers in Garadiyaulpotha who had cultivated maize and Soya in small scale sold them to outside merchants at Rs.7.25 per kilo of maize and at Rs.20.00 per kilo of Soya. RUO did not involve in marketing of maize and Soya to Hurulu Farmer Company, as farmers had not cultivated Soya and maize in large scale in this area.

Garadiyaulpotha RUO purchased shares amounting to Rs.2, 000.00 from Hurulu Farmer Company on the initiation of catalyst in April 1998.

### **4.3. PUWAKPITIYA**

#### **4.3.1. Development of home-gardens and highlands**

The major activity in Puwakpitiya too was tree planting in home garden and highlands. Based on the data collected from farmers in previous months catalyst organized purchasing of plants from nurseries known to him by using the money allocated to RUO by SCOR. The amount allocated to this organization for purchasing plants was Rs. 358768.00. Catalyst took the president and the secretary of the RUO to the nurseries to bring plants to the village. However, sine catalysts hired these two key office bearers as assistant catalysts, they were more like SCOR field level officials rather than the representatives of farmers.

As in other areas, AI was hired to mark contour bunds and drains in the farmers' lands. However, since his service could not be obtained to mark locations for tree planting, WLW, catalyst and assistant catalysts had to give instructions themselves. In most cases catalyst himself had to give instruction and he was more like an extension officer during this period.

At a meeting held in October with the farmers, catalyst discussed with the farmers and asked them to pay half of the value of the plants to RUO. This was to raise RUO funds, as Puwakpitiya had not been provided with a grant by SCOR for implementing a mini-

project. Because of the inducement through supply of plants free of charge, farmers started putting up of bunds and also repairing bunds and drains constructed in previous seasons during October 1997. During this same period a Horticultural Specialist (HS) hired by the project started providing training to farmers on perennial crop cultivation as well as cultivation of pine apple and tree management by pruning, mulching and fertilizer application etc.

In November, catalyst as well as the two voluntary catalysts were very busy with the work associated with providing technical guidance for marking holes for planting trees, distribution of trees. On 21 November 1997, WLW and Horticulture Specialist (HS) had a meeting with 24 farmers in Puwakpitiya. The purpose of the meeting was to monitor the conservation technology adoption in homesteads and highland areas and discuss the activities to be implemented by the farmers in the field during this period. They were made aware that the bunds constructed in previous seasons need to be repaired, alleys should be established and bunds stabilized in conserved lands. It was also pointed out that work need to be completed before 30 November 1997. It was discussed to hire the secretary and the president who worked as voluntary catalysts to cut pavatta and gliricidia branches to be provided to farmers for this purpose. Also the catalyst said that the action would be taken to regularize lands in which farmers resided permanently. Conservation of lands is a main requirement for regularising lands according to the catalyst.

In December 1997, bund stabilisation activities were done in 9 1/2 acres of lands conserved in 1996/97. The number of farmers involved was 19. 12 farmers stabilised bunds in 10 1/2 acres of homesteads while 4 farmers stabilised bunds in 4 acres of chena lands. This too was done on the initiation of the catalyst.

Gliricidia twigs were put up round the trees planted during this season to provide shade to the trees and protect them. 12 farmers in conserved lands planted gliricidia around 108 trees. 3 farmers in homestead areas planted gliricidia around 34 plants.

Gliricidia and pavatta twigs required for this purpose was cut and brought to the village by the assistant catalysts that used hired labour for this activity. Rs.2, 900.00 was spent from the money allocated to FO by SCOR for providing planting materials to these farmers free of charge.

Field training on tree management was provided to farmers in the farmer's field by HCS on 12 December 1997. WLW made a field visit on 21 December with the catalyst and assistant catalysts to check newly established plants and check dams.

### **Tree Management activities**

Field observation in January 1998 revealed that the farmers had not cleaned the weeds and managed the newly established plants properly. Some farmers whom we met during this period reported that a significant number of plants died due to too much water. HS was informed that plants were dead when he made his field visit to this area with WLW on 17 January 1998. According to Pinto, reasons for the death of plants were; (1) Soil compaction

inside the polythene cover in which plants had been established at the nursery, (2). Too much rain and (3). Planting of trees too deep. He gave instruction to loosen the soil around the plant.

There were disagreements by the farmers over the number of plants issued to them when our data collectors started physical verification of plants. For example Mr. Wijepala, a farmer in Puwakpitiya complained that 13 plants were in excess for him in the list maintained by RUO. He said that both president and secretary of the organisations are crooks. When making physical verification, some community members told that some farmers sold the plants obtained from the RUO to outsiders. For example Mr. Gunasena who received 100 mango plants, 80 lemons and 75 orange plants had sold them to the villagers in adjoining villages. However, they reported that their plants died due to too much rain.

Extent of 5.13 ha has been mulched during February as a tree management activity even though the target was 5 ha. Mulching of permanent crops established in Maha 1997/98 started in the second week of February. Awareness creation on mulching was done on 20 February by CS in his visit to farmers' land in Puwakpitiya. Catalyst initiated farmers to do mulching and also provided technical guidance. He went from one allotment to the other to initiate farmers. He had to go to the same farmer several times to initiate him for this activity. 24 farmers had applied mulch to 450 trees by the end of this February. A significant number of farmers who used mulch told us that they did it mainly because they did not want to offend the catalyst. They told that they would not be able to have benefits through the organisation if he gets offended.

It should be noted however that farmers paid less attention to mulching not because they did not know its usefulness. They were fully involved in harvesting, preparing lands for OFC cultivation in Yala season ahead and keeping watch in paddy fields at night to protect the crop from wild elephants. Therefore, they did not find time to do mulching. Even the members of these families are busy with these activities.

Catalyst could be observed using following methods to initiate farmers to do mulching:

- Visits to each and every land and create awareness and provide technical know-how
- Remind farmers again and again whenever he met them at village boutique or on their way to chenas or paddy lands
- Scolding those who did not use mulch even after reminding them on several occasions

It was mainly due to the initiation of catalyst that majority of farmers used mulch at a time in which they had no time to spare because of their heavy involvement in harvesting and other cultivation activities. However, catalyst had no any assistance from assistant catalysts or the farmer organisation to initiate farmers for conservation activities. Catalyst did not seek the assistance of the president and the secretary for these activities after staff meeting



discussion on the disadvantage of hiring them for this type of activities. Catalyst had decided not to hire them and therefore he did not ask them to involve in these activities. They, in their part, did not participate, as the catalyst had told them that they would not be paid in future because of a recommendation by researchers (Catalyst denied this at the staff meeting held in March).

In the farmers' point of view, the advantages of mulching were moisture retention, which helped the plants to grow and sustain even during dry periods. Also, using mulch according to them extends the irrigation interval. They needed watering the newly established plants once in seven days because they had used mulch. Otherwise they would have to water them on daily basis to keep the plants alive, according to these farmers. The disadvantages of mulching as seen by the farmers were its attraction for white ants and snails, which destroys coconut and other seedlings. Since the land had been cleaned to find mulching materials (grass and weed slash were used as mulch), wild elephants can see the plants in the lands easily and they eat them up according to farmers. Also, cleaning of land to find mulching materials tended to dry up the land. This had serious consequences for newly established plants even when they were mulched. Non-availability of mulching materials to be used for a large number of trees was one main reason for not applying mulch, according to them.

The numbers of farmers who had applied mulch according to the technical specifications, were very few in number, according to the field observations made by us. They had used a very thin layer of mulch that would not help them much to retain soil moisture. However, catalysts hoped to mulch the trees in the whole village by the end of March and achieve his target.

Total number of plants that had been established in this sub watershed was 17994, according to the records available with RUO leaders. In addition to mulching, a tree management program had been proposed in the activity plan to ensure higher plant survival rates. Encircling trees with gliricidia branches to provide shade, pruning of trees, fertilizer application etc. had been proposed under this tree management program. These activities were implemented to some extent in the subsequent months on the initiation of catalysts and the HS and WLW who made frequent field visits. The plant survival rate in this sub watershed was . .% which was somewhat higher than in other sub watersheds. This was mainly due to comparatively higher rainfall to this area.

#### **4.3.2 Watershed development plan, gully reclamation and checkdam construction**

Activities related to the preparation of a watershed development plan could not be implemented due to the same reason given in the section on Garadiyaulpotha. However gullies to be reclaimed had been identified in September at the time of preparing the watershed development plan. The farmers were made aware of the activities like tank eco-system regeneration, common property management etc. at meetings held in Puwakpitiya in October 1997. The activities related to watershed development had been postponing since November and it was decided not to continue work on this activity at the progress review meeting held in February to review the progress for the month of January. The main purpose of this map was to identify the direction of water flows in order to

recommend interventions such as check-dams etc. Some of these activities had been completed without maps by January. According to WLW, there were delays in preparing these maps as PBD who was supposed to do this activity was not hired by the project. However, catalysts pointed out that they have maps for the watershed even though they had not prepared this particular types of maps showing drainage lines and water flow directions. It was decided not to continue this activity in Garadiyaulpotha and Puwakpitiya too due to same reason.

### **Gully reclamation**

Management of 300 trees established along gullies had been planned for March. However, this activity was not implemented in the field because trees planted on gullies had died by this time.

### **Check dams**

Two small check dams were constructed in Mr.K.Upasena's lands in December 1997 with labour from drought relief work-force (Those who attend this work was provided food stamps by the Divisional Secretary. The Ministry of Welfare to assist farmers affected due to prolonged droughts provides Money for this purpose). 30 bamboo plants were established on this check dam.

A small check dam was constructed in W.Wijepala's land too. The farmer on the request of the catalyst on 4th and 5th of December did this in haste. It was washed away after heavy rains during this month itself. S.Prema and K.Laksman too put up small check dams (one by each) in their lands during this month itself. "Savandara" was established on the check dam constructed by Prema. With the participation of 3 farmers, small check dams were constructed in K.Gunasena's land too in this month. 30 bamboo plants and 10 aricanut plants were established on the check dam constructed by K.Gunasena. All these activities were implemented on the initiation of the catalyst whose main aim was achieving targets. The interviews with the farmers showed that they constructed check-dams to satisfy the catalyst and not on any felt need or understanding to do so.

The check dams, which had been washed off due to heavy rains, were repaired on 19 January by the catalyst and assistant catalysts hired by the project. 80 Daba plants were established on 16th and 19th of this month on the three check dams in Mr.Upasena's land. The assistant catalysts had been instructed by the catalysts to work on completing conservation activities by 24 of January so that they could be shown to the members of PSC who would make a visit to the area on 24 January 1998. As farmers were very busy with their agricultural activities, catalyst said that he had to hire his assistant catalysts to do this work in farmers' land to show them to PSC members.

Provision of technical guidance and implementation of tree management activities in gullies, had been targeted for February. However, this activity was not implemented in the field and rescheduled for March.

#### **4.3.3. Tank eco system regeneration**

On the initiation of the catalyst the president and the secretary of the RUO who worked themselves as Assistant Catalysts in Puwakpitiya, planted 50 "kubuk" trees on the "kattakaduwa area" of the tank on 2 December 1992. The Department of Forest provided the plant requirement for this activity. The president and the catalyst working in this sub watershed planted 100 "vetake" plants in the Kattakaduwa area on 22 December 1997.

700 Daba plants were brought to the village by the catalyst in January to be planted in kattakaduwa and gasgommana areas of the tank and on small check dams constructed in farmers lands. Catalyst had plans to establish plants in kattakaduwa and gasgommana areas of the tank on 4<sup>th</sup> February, which is the day of independence of Sri-Lanka.

620 Daba plants obtained from Forest Department was established in "Katta kaduwa" and "Gasgommana" areas of the tank on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1998. This was done with the participation of 38 farmers who were organised by the assistant catalysts and catalyst for a self-help campaign. Target of the establishment of 200 plants had been exceeded in this case. Tree management activities could not be implemented as plant establishment was behind schedule (Plants management can be done only after establishing plants). Tree management activities in the tank eco-system could not be implemented even in June. Field observations substantiated that a large number of trees established in the tank area had died by this time.

#### **4.3.4. Common property management activities**

In November, on the initiation of SCOR catalyst, 4 youths planted trees in the land belonging to the temple, which is a common property of villagers. Also, Villagers planted trees along the main roadside to get drought relief assistance issued by the government. They needed to work to be entitled for this payment.

In December 1997, the president and the catalyst planted the cuttings of some bamboo trees in the Yan Oya reservation area along the boundary of the land owned by Mr. Buthsarana, a farmer in this village. They did this themselves, as the participation of the farmers could not be obtained for this activity. In the point of view of the catalyst, farmers failed to attend these activities because they were busy with cultivation activities during this period.

Tree management interventions (300 plants) in common reservations had been scheduled for March. This could not be implemented because farmers gave priority to the tree management activities in their home gardens and not in the common reservations. They had no time to spend on common property management activities as they were busy with their agriculture related work. Tree management activities could not be implemented till the end of the project even though training had been provided to the farmers by SCOR specialists.

#### **4.3.5. Model home-gardens and women development activities**

Women and Youth Co-ordinator (WYC) of SCOR provided vegetable seeds required for model homesteads in December 1997. 35 homesteads had been selected by WYC to implement her program in this village. No activity was implemented by WYC during January 1998 though she has selected sights and beneficiaries in previous occasions. At the progress review meeting she pointed out that she could not do some of these activities due to too much rain and her involvement in Thriposha program.

It had been proposed in the activity plan to develop 60 home-gardens in Puwakpitiya. The number of home-gardens to be established in February was 20. It was reported that twenty-three model home-gardens had been established in Puwakpitiya previously. However, this was a much-debated issue. What is actually meant by development of home garden was not clear. For WYC it was only establishment of some vegetable beds for household consumption. For others it meant different things.

WYC held a meeting with 26 women on 20 February to plan this activity. Two women out of 26 had involved themselves in this program last year. In spite of this meeting held for initiating women, home garden development activities did not show any progress by the end of February. As we could understand from our field inspection, reason for the drawbacks in this program were:

1. prevailing dry weather conditions in the area
2. Difficulties in watering the plants as there are no wells in many of the home-gardens. It is required to have a well in the home-garden to implement this type of an activity successfully
3. Lack of enthusiasm for cultivating vegetable by some farmers because they cultivate vegetable in chenas and lands on the embankment of Yan Oya throughout the year

Most of the women interviewed viewed this as a less useful activity. However, some women said that it is better to have their vegetable requirements from their own home-gardens. They further said that when this type of an activity is implemented in the home garden, there is a tendency to take care of the permanent tree crops established. The general observation made with regard to this activity was that it was not properly planned and implemented. After reviewing the progress of this activity, it was rescheduled for May 1998. However, this activity did not show any progress even at the end of the project.

#### **Compost preparation**

Under model home-garden development, a program for compost preparation had been planned for January 1998. It was not implemented due to excess rains and therefore, was rescheduled for February. It was not implemented during February too. Reason behind

this was not presented. However, a meeting was held on 20 February by WYC who informed farmers of the importance of using compost. At the field inspection by data collectors, it was revealed that farmers did not use compost for the following reasons:

1. Earth is very hard for farmers to dig compost pits to prepare compost
2. Lack of knowledge and technical skills (no proper training had been given to farmers on compost making)
3. Lack of enthusiasm by farmers
4. This activity had not been properly demonstrated to farmers to make them aware of its importance
5. No well planned program to initiate farmers for this activity

It could be observed that farmers used pits made by them for other purposes for compost making. They lack technical know how of this activity. When interviewed some women explained that they made these pits on the request of WYC mainly because they did not want to offend her. The activities related to compost making, did not show any progress even at the end of the project.

#### **4.3.6. Integrated water management**

##### **4.3.6.1. Highland systems**

8300 pineapple plants were brought to Puwakpitiya to be planted in highland systems as an intervention under this component. Also 433 pitchers had been brought to the village to be distributed among farmers who had planted mango trees in this season. It was to initiate farmers to do pitcher irrigation as an irrigation management intervention. This too was given free of charge for farmers to adopt this technology. Pitchers had been purchased by RUO at Rs.15.00 each with money allocated to RUO by SCOR.. However, majority of farmers could not be initiated to use pitchers even though pitchers were issued to farmers.

145 kg of Soya was brought to the village by acting WMC to be distributed among farmers. They had been brought from Hurulu People's farmer company to be provided to farmers on credit basis. 1 kg costs Rs.40.00. This Soya cultivation was encouraged by SCOR to produce Soya to be supplied to Triposha Company on a forward contract. In addition, this too was an irrigation management intervention in highland systems.

##### **Eye-brow bunds**

Constructions of 2500 eyebrow bunds had been targeted for February 1998. This could not be done mainly because farmers were very busy with harvesting of their Maha crops during this period. This could not be done even in March as scheduled due to the same reason. Some farmers told that they could not make eyebrow bunds because the earth had become hard after dry spell in February and March. It could also be understood that some

farmers had different views on eyebrow bunds. In the point of view of them eye brow bunding and use of mulch together would store more water in the root zone of the plants and kill them. This activity was rescheduled for April. Farmers had made 358 eyebrow bunds in May 1998.

#### 4.3.6.2. Lowland systems

As there was no water in Puwakpitiya tank decision regarding cultivation activities could not be made even in October 1997. Leak occurred through Puwakpitiya tank bund on 8 November 1997 and this alarmed the farmers in the village. Kanna meeting was held on 13 November 1997 with the participation of AI, catalyst and 12 farmers in the village.

We interviewed and listened to discussions among some farmers in the village during this period. These farmers were of the opinion that they did not require technical guidance of the officers to take decisions regarding the season. They said that they are able to take decisions based on their experience in previous season and cultivate a crop. They were not prepared to undertake cultivation without sufficient water in the tank. Several farmers had sprayed weedi-cide and had done land preparation. Non-availability of seed paddy was one major problem of these farmers. When inquired from the secretary of the RUO, he said that AI promised to provide some seed from Palwehera farm under DOA. He went twice but seed was not available. On one occasion he hired a van and went there to bring seed as AI had assured him. He had to pay Rs.300.00 from organisation fund as hire charges.

Some farmers in Puwakpitiya had started land preparation activities in Habarana tank at the beginning of November. They tended to give priority to cultivation activities in this tank mainly because it was a water abundant tank. They had no risk in cultivating lands in it even with a low reservoir as Mahaweli water issued to Huruluwewa gets filled up in this tank.

A cultivation meeting was held on 19 December for the lands in Purana Wela (Old Paddy field area) and Halabagaha Kotuwa paddy fields in Puwakpitiya. Total area to be cultivated as per this kanna meeting was 24 acres. The number of farmers attended this meeting was 13. The president, treasurer, secretary, catalyst and Govi Niyamaka attended this meeting. In addition to 24 acres in the old paddy field area, Kira, a farmer, cultivated 1/4 acres with water from the tank against the cultivation meeting decisions. The farmers started cultivation activities in this season without waiting for cultivation decisions.

Seven farmers in Akkarawela area had cultivated paddy in 4 1/4 acre of lands in the months of October and November while 2 farmers had cultivated 2 acres of paddy close to Yan Oya during the same month. Another 6 farmers had cultivated 5 acres in Akkaraweala with paddy. The farmers had done these activities without much involvement of RUO. They did not wait for pre-kanna or kanna meeting decisions.

When interviewed on 17 January, Nimal Ananda, Vel Vidane (water headman) said that other farmers scolded him in raw filth for not opening the tank sluice on their request. He further said that he closed the outlets (Vakkadas) of farmers' field and issued them water in their absence to turn water to their fields. This was done by him to save water in the tank. "I

take special efforts to save water because I have cultivated a lot of lands by spending a substantial amount of money. I can't allow them to go in to waste" was the explanation given by him over tight control of discharges from the tank. He also said that some farmers sent their wives or children to turn water to their fields when the tank sluice was open. They were unable to irrigate their fields, as it required skill to turn water here and there and irrigate the whole allotment, in his view.

"At about 12 mid night on 16 January, a farmer came and told me that somebody was taking water by opening the sluice gate. I went and closed the gate. I found that the land irrigated was that of RUO president." (Velvidane)

Another farmer whom we interviewed during this period said that the farmers in "Akkarawela" (newly developed areas of old tank systems were not entitled for water, as a cultivation meeting was not held for that area. A cultivation meeting was held only for the old paddy field areas, according to him. "Now the farmers in these lands fill their lands to the extent that water overflow bunds and drains in to Yan Oya. Even the farther of the President of RUO takes water illegally to irrigate his lands in Akkarawela. Why does not the RUO take legal action against the offenders? was the question raised by him.

When we inquired from the catalyst about this he said that it is very easy to take legal action against the offenders. However, he does not want to do it mainly because it is likely to create problems for the secretary and the president of the organisation, as they are the people who should complain to DO about offenders. He said that he would have a meeting of the RUO to take a decision on this matter. However, he specially mentioned to the data collector that RUO in Puwakpitiya is functioning very well at present than it did before.

The interviews with the farmers during this period revealed that RUO leadership had failed to intervene in water management activities in the tank. Also several farmers were in the view that it was unfair not to allow farmers to cultivate their lands in Akkarawela even in Maha seasons. Target of attack for exercising an authoritative role in the matters related to tank water issue was the catalyst.

Harvesting in newly developed area (akkarawela) in the command area under Puwakpitiya tank started in March. Farmers reported that yield in this season was good compared to previous seasons. It was mainly due to the commencement of seasonal activities with the onset of rain, according to them. A water issue from the tank was reduced after 22 March. Harvesting in the old (Purana) paddy field area under the tank started on 24 March. Water level in the tank had dropped down to 105 cm by this time. Farmers opposed the opening of tank during this period, as they wanted to save some water for bathing and domestic use.

There were conflicts and disagreements among farmers over non-attendance to watching the paddy fields on turn by some farmers. Farmers pointed out that some farmers do not attend to watching in their turn due to the following reasons:

- Harvesting activities in paddy fields under Habarana tank

- Threshing work in Habarana area at night on attam (reciprocal labor exchange) basis
- Farmers who do illicit felling of timber come home late in the afternoon and get drunk and forget about watching
- Farmers who have their land in the middle of the command area avoid watching purposely as those who have lands in the boundary of the command take extra effort to protect their crop. They do free riding because of the relative advantage of having their land in the middle of the command area

RUO or its leaders could not initiate free riders to attend to watch duties in paddy fields on their turns at night.

### **Planning Yala Crops**

It had been planned to organize 65 farmers for cultivation in Yala season in February. This could not be done because farmers were busy with harvesting their Maha crop. Also, there was no water in the tank to commence cultivation. Even though attempts were made even in May to cultivate some OFCs in Puwakpitiya tank command, it could not be done as the water level in the tank had dropped down to dead storage level.

### **Releasing Fingerlings**

Inland fisheries were also an intervention under integrated water management. Releasing fingerlings to this tank had been scheduled for January 1998 but could not be implemented. This activity was implemented in February. Three thousand fingerlings were released to Puwakpitiya tank on 5th February 1998. 35 farmers who were doing a self-help campaign in the tank on this day joined in this activity too. DO, AI, an Officer of the Inland Fisheries Department. and WLW from SCOR also took part in it.

When interviewed farmers told that this activity would not be much useful as there are farmers who do fishing at night against the villagers' customs. Also some were of the opinion that they won't be able to cultivate a crop in Yala because fingerlings would die if remaining water in the tank is used for a crop. They preferred to have a crop rather than having fish in the tank. They pointed out that this type of programs need to be implemented in larger tanks which do not run dry even in very dry periods. Puwakpitiya tank runs completely dry in dry periods, according to them.

There were serious conflicts and contradictions over catching fish in the tank. Some farmers used to catch fish at night against the wishes of the catalyst who wanted all the community members to join together and catch fish on an agreed upon day. He wanted RUO to take the written approval of DO to catch fish in the tank by the community. However, farmers did not wait for catalyst's or Do's approval. On one fine day some farmers got together and caught fish in the tank. RUO, which was very weak could not



attend to a common property management activity like protecting the fish in the village tank.

#### **4.3.7. Participatory Forestry Program**

In Puwakpitiya area 15 acres of land had been distributed among 30 farmers for the establishment of forest under PFP. SCOR catalyst coordinated this activity while RUO involved in the selection of beneficiaries. The land clearing activities started in these scrub jungle areas in August and September. AI in the area marked contours in this land on SCOR initiation and the farmers put up bunds and drains before planting trees. FD distributed 400 teak plants to each farmer and tree planting started in the field on 1st October 1997. SCOR initiated cultivation of Soya and maize in these lands and provided the seed requirements of the farmers through Hurulu Farmer Company on credit basis. However, farmers preferred to cultivate their traditional crops which have an assured market and less susceptible to risks. Some farmers who cultivated maize complained of germination problems and later used their own maize seeds for this cultivation.

Bunds constructed in some lands under PFP in Puwakpitiya had eroded due to heavy rains in November. Farmers complained of damages to crops cultivated in these lands as a result of heavy water flows. In November, thirty farmers got a payment from Forest Department for the work done by them in lands under PFP. Each farmer was entitled to Rs.3683.00 for work done within a month.

Rations for the farmers who work in PFP lands were distributed by the motivator of DOF on 30 January 1998. Twenty-seven male and three female farmers had attended this meeting. Each farmer received 7 stamps to the value of Rs.5, 207.00. The president of RUO collected Rs.20.00 from each farmer to give a present to the catalyst and the motivator for the service done to them by providing benefits under the PFP program. He blamed those who did not contribute to the fund collected for this purpose.

#### **Other Forestry programs**

Preparation of joint forest management program with 137 members of the community, launching awareness program among them, demarcation of reservations (191 ha) and co-ordination of Dept. of Forest for enrichment of this area had been planned for February. This could be implemented in June 1998 due to coordination problems. However, demarcation of boundaries could not be done as relevant line agencies required funds for that activity. Therefore, this program had to be abandoned towards the end of the project.

#### **4.3.8. RUO Participation in implementing activities**

Since the catalyst could not get the participation of RUO leaders in SCOR activities, he initiated members of the RUO to select two young men in the village as the secretary and the president of the RUO some time prior to the implementation of SCOR phase II. He hired two leaders as assistant catalysts to implement SCOR activities through the RUO. However, the same person who held the post of treasurer was selected again even though

he could not read and write and maintain records. In the point of view of the catalyst, farmers wanted to have him, as he was honest. In spite of his honesty, the RUO had a lot of problems related to fund management, as the treasurer could not attend to his duties properly. The former president took this as an opportunity to misappropriate RUO funds. The president and the secretary of the RUO at present were of the view that the treasurer of the organisation was not active and not capable in keeping RUO accounts. In secretary's point of view, some people suspected him (secretary) and made accusation over use of funds mainly because he maintained records on behalf of the treasurer. He said that he was paid by SCOR (through RUO) for the work he did and therefore he did not want to misappropriate organisation funds.

This RUO had not received SCOR grants for implementation of a mini-project. However, SCOR made an outright grant to the RUO during Phase II to purchase plant requirements of farmers, as mentioned earlier. The president and the secretary with the involvement of the catalyst handled fund management activities. After catalyst selected the nurseries for the purchase of plants, he took the president and the secretary (two assistant catalysts) to the nurseries to make the purchase. Though the money belonged to the RUO, the catalyst made all the decision making regarding the purchase of plants with some involvement of the two assistant catalysts. There were no at least committee meeting to discuss about the issues such as cost of plants, the nurseries where plants were available etc. to be more transparent with regard to the purchases of plants. The catalyst made the following remarks about the plant purchasing activities. " I selected nurseries where there were good quality plants. And also the owners were trustworthy people. I took the president and secretary to the nurseries and introduced them to the nursery owners for them to buy plants. Because I knew the owners of the nurseries, I could buy mango plants at Rs.50.00 and 65.00 when the normal price for a plant was between Rs.70.00 to 100.00. RUO was benefited because of this. It is a sin to misappropriate other people's money. It was catalyst Dayaratne who introduced farmers to the Pine apple nurseries and later I took one farmer there on my own expenses and he had a training too on crop establishment."

Similarly, against the accusation made by farmers for selecting a farmer for a paddy demonstration of ASD, he made the following remarks." DO asked me to select a farmer to do a paddy transplanting demonstration. I selected Jayatissa because he has more lands. He is hard working too. DO will give him Rs.3000.00 for the demonstration. RUO recovers this money from him after harvesting. It will be given to another farmer in the next season. It will be a revolving fund."

He had the following comments on the conservation of common properties.

" I planted trees along the road side using labor available under drought relief program (Government provides food rations etc. to villagers during drought periods under welfare programs. The villagers have to come and work for common property management activities or any other activity organized by the WS who supervise this work. In Puwakpitiya, it was the former president who supervised this work). I had a production target of 7 1/2 acres maize and 7 1/2 acres Soya for the company. Now I have been successful in getting farmers to cultivate 15 acres of maize and 7 1/2 acres of Soya. In

lands conserved in 1996/97 Maha, bunds would be stabilized and alleys and live fences too would be established prior to 30.11.1997. Also two gullies would be reclaimed and 49-homestead development demonstration would be set up during this season. By now we have purchased plants worth over Rs.250000.00. The plants would be distributed before 30.11.1997 and distribution list will be updated thereafter."

The catalyst followed a shortcut to get the involvement of RUO in implementing SCOR initiated activities in the field by hiring the secretary and the president of the RUO as assistant catalysts. The example given above shows that it is the catalyst that was the kin pin of field implementation and not the RUO. Also, there were many instances in which the community members criticized these two key office bearers for being just followers of catalyst or being biased towards the members of the United National Party (UNP), the political party to which the two leaders belonged. The former president, who was a leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), the party in power during this period, was very critical not only about the secretary and the president but also of the catalyst himself for being biased towards UNP members.

#### **Water Management Activities of the Tank**

It could be observed in Maha 1997/98 that water management activities in the tank was out of the control of RUO. Though the catalyst got the president and the secretary working as Assistant Catalysts for SCOR to put a padlock on the sluice gate to stop illegal water issues at night, some farmers broke padlock on 14 February. RUO leaders waited to get the instruction of catalyst to deal with this matter. On his instruction, a complain was made against five farmers whom they suspected as responsible for this offense. Farmers complained that there were water thefts as well as wasting of water during this season. Leaders told that they could not do anything because farmers did not listen to them.

Water level in Puwakpitiya tank had dropped down to 176 cm by the end of February. Paddy cultivation under this tank was still there by this time. Though watch huts had been made around the paddy field to do night watching to keep the wild elephants away, there were complains from farmers that their paddy lands in the middle of the command area for not attending to watch duties. Watching by turns was done on a decision taken at kanna meeting. However, FO leaders could not intervene in this matter to initiate farmers to do watching at night.

#### **Decision to stop payments to Farmer leaders working as Assistant Catalysts**

At the progress review meeting held in February, catalyst was informed by the researchers that the community does not recognize president and secretary of FO mainly because they implement SCOR activities on payment. This was based on interviews as well as our observations in the field. Catalyst used these two youths for cutting gliricidia branches and pavatta twigs for conservation activities in the farmers' fields and also got them to plant trees in common reservations to achieve targets. As a result, they degraded themselves to the position of laborers of SCOR among the community members.

However, members of research team did not make a recommendation to stop making payments to them.

Catalyst had informed the data collector that the recommendation to stop payment would have very serious consequences on the performance of the organization and also had asked him to document them. The idea that payment to RUO leaders would be stopped soon, on a recommendation already made by researchers, had reached the RUO leaders. Catalyst had stopped hiring them for SCOR activities after holding progress review meeting of SCOR staff at Galenbidunuwewa in February. And they to stopped their involvement in SCOR activities because they had heard that they would not be paid. The two RUO representatives were of the opinion that they should be paid for the work they do for the organization. They were prepared to resign allowing others to do a voluntary job for the organization. Catalyst had some other young people in his mind to have as the leaders of the FO.

It was explained to the catalyst that RUO could go on making payments to the president and secretary if the members wished. However, he was further explained that SCOR could not pay them after the money allocated for making payment was over.

The president and the secretary of the organization did not take much interest in RUO activities after catalyst stopped hiring them as assistant catalysts to implement SCOR activities in the field. The catalyst had organized a general meeting of RUO on 24 March by meeting RUO leaders and farmers individually. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss issues such as appointment of two voluntary catalysts, obtaining RUO approval to run a nursery using of RUO funds, mulching and other conservation activities which had been planned to be implemented in RUO area, record keeping of the RUO and cultivation program for Yala 1998. This meeting was not held as RUO leaders informed the catalyst the difficulty in getting farmer participation because of their involvement in harvesting activities in Habarana tank area.

Catalyst had taken action to select a man from the area to run a nursery in March 1998. He himself had selected this man and hoped to provide money from RUO funds (balance of the grant given to RUO for purchase of plants). He expected to announce this selection to RUO and got its approval for investing RUO money for this purpose. However, none of these things happened prior to the withdrawal of SCOR from this sub watershed.

#### **4.3.9. Company activities**

Consultant of Hurulu Farmer Company had a meeting with the FO on 9 February to discuss about the purchase of Soya bean produced by the farmers. Divisional Officer (DO) and Agricultural Instructor (AI) of Palugaswewa Agrarian Service Center participated at this meeting. Farmers were informed that Hurulu Farmer Company is prepared to purchase Soya bean at Rs.25.00 per kilo.

Also, the catalyst had informed RUO that Hurulu Company is prepared to provide Rs. 15, 000.00 to start purchasing maize. Since this money was not received even by 20

February, RUO could not start purchasing activities. Later catalyst provided Rs.8, 000.00 to the FO from the money issued to Weragala RUO by the Company for the purchase of maize. President and secretary purchased 1000 kg of maize using this money (at Rs.8.00 per kilo). RUO received Rs.15, 000.00 from the company on 26 February. It settled the money borrowed from Weheragal FO.

#### **4.4. MAHASENGAMA**

##### **4.4.1. Development of home gardens and highlands**

As farmers were informed of the decision of SCOR to provide plants free of charge to those who adopted conservation practices in the field, farmers started conservation activities in their lands. AI who was hired by the SCOR catalyst on weekends and other public holidays marked contour bunds in the land of Mahasengama farmers for them to put up bunds and drains. By the end of October AI had marked contour bunds in 12 allotment in an extent of 12 acres belonging to 12 farmers. During the month itself 10 farmers had put up bunds in an extent of 5 acres in 10 allotments. By the mean time catalyst had started purchasing plants for farmers using the money allocated to Padikaramaduwa Old Village and Methgama. However, the catalyst, assistant catalyst or RUO had not collected data on the plant requirements of the farmers even by the end of October in which he started purchasing plants from a plant nursery in Ipalogama. AI also had started marking places for the farmers to dig pits for planting trees during October. He had marked pits in 20 home-gardens in this village in October.

AI had not completed marking holes for tree planting in this village even by mid November as he had other duties to attend. Only a very limited number of trees had been brought to the village by this time. On catalyst's instruction, RUO brought some plants from Methgama RUO too. Plant distribution in this village started on 26 November 1997. The RUO had decided to issue plants even to non-resident farmers. Though the RUO had originally decided not to issue plants to defaulters, it changed the decision later and issued them plants.

##### **Plant management activities**

No conservation or plant management activities could be observed in Mahasengama during January 1998. However, FO leaders brought 1200 coconut seedlings on 11 January using about Rs.25, 000.00 from the grant of Rs.207, 226.00 made to RUO by SCOR. These plants were distributed among 67 farmers in the village. Also 47 orange plants brought from Padikaramaduwa old village too were distributed among 44 farmers. However, WLW said that he could not agree with the decision to purchase of coconuts in mid January with a severe drought ahead. Unlike in previous occasions, RUO leadership had made this purchase itself.

The plant management activities such as mulching were not implemented in Mahasengama even in March or April in a significant scale. More than 80% of the trees planted had died by May and June. Farmers pointed out that plants could not be established in time as they received them late and put the blame of catalyst for not providing plants in time with the on set of rain. However, in their part they too did not take effort to adopt conservation

measures. There was no commitment in the part of catalyst or assistant catalyst to initiate farmers for adopting them in their lands.

#### **4.4.2. Model home gardens and highlands**

A meeting initiated by WYC was held in Mahasengama on 5th January with the participation of 13 women and WYC. She explained to the members of the necessity of forming in to a group and then to start activities like vegetable cultivation in their home-gardens, bee-keeping and animal husbandry.

A group was formed on 11 January and 20 women became members. 18 women participated at the group meeting held on this day. It was decided to hold another meeting on 26 January to select women prepared to do bee keeping, homestead development activities etc. At the meeting held on 26 January 1998 with the participation of 21 women, 5 agreed to do bee keeping while 21 wanted to do homestead development activities.

Though WYC had a training program for 25 women in Mahasengama on 4th February to initiate them for home-garden development, there was no much progress in the implementation of these activities in Mahasengama. Though this activity started in 8 home-gardens in small scale in March, it was successful only in one home garden. That was also limited to the cultivation of few vegetable beds.

#### **4.4.3. Integrated water management**

##### **4.4.4.1. Highland systems**

As an intervention under integrated water management in highland systems, maize was cultivated in 21-½ acres land in Mahasengama.

Interventions like eyebrow bunding had been planned, they could not be implemented as farmers were busy with agriculture related work. Also, they had not understood it as an important activity even though SCOR tried to implement it with farmers. In addition, catalysts was not much involved in the activities of Mahasengama. He put more attention to Methgama area in Padikaramaduwa sub watershed coming under SCOR Phase II.

##### **4.4.4.2. Lowland systems**

Mahasengama farmers had no paddy lands of their own. However, they were heavily involved in paddy cultivation activities in the settlement areas of Padikaramaduwa where their parents have their own lands. Most of Mahasengama farmers cultivate their parents' lands or other settlers' land on share cropping or lease arrangements. In the point of view of catalyst tree planting activities in Mahasengama was delayed due to their involvement in paddy cultivation. However, in the point of view of farmers delay was due to problems of getting AI's service as well as plants in time. Though it was true that plants were received in the village late, failure in the part of farmers to adopt conservation measures in their lands was due to their involvement in paddy cultivation in Hurulu command area.

#### **4.4.3. Participatory Forestry Program**

Forest Department officers informed the farmers involved in PFP program to clean the lands under teak cultivation prior to the end of November to entitle to the food ration issued to them for the work. They attended to maintenance activities in forestlands thereafter. Majority of farmers in Mahasengama could involve in PFP and had benefits under it through SCOR coordination in 1995/96 Maha season.

#### **4.4.4. Activities of the RUO and mini-projects**

Credit committee of Mahasengama RUO met on 25th October 1997 with the participation of seven representatives and SCOR catalyst and decided to issue loan to each farmer requiring credit from the organization. Even those who had failed to settle loans taken in previous seasons were to receive loans on the condition that amount due from them would be settled out of the loan issued to them in this season.

On 27th October 1997, a general meeting of RUO was held with the participation of DO, Bank representatives, SCOR Enterprise Development Assistant (EDA), catalyst and 35 farmers. This was held mainly to make farmers aware of credit facilities and to discuss how to recover loans issued to the farmers by RUO. DO requested RUO leaders to report to him about those who had failed to settle loans.

After this meeting credit committee reconsidered its decision to lend Rs 5000/- to each member who had settled loans obtained in the previous season. It was also decided to issue Rs.4000.00 each to those who had settled at least a portion of the loans taken previously. In spite of this decision, some farmers had been issued with Rs 10,000.00 or so. When interviewed the president and the secretary of the RUO told that there was a balance left from the money (Rs. 1,15,000.00) brought from the bank to give loans to members for agricultural activities in this season. Therefore, the balance was paid to two members who asked for additional money, according to them. Credit committee decided to issue them additional loans because these particular farmers owned tractors, cattle etc. and therefore they were in a position to pay their loan back. The organization had issued Rs.1, 24,500.00 to 29 farmers as credit in this season. This amount includes Rs. 1,15,000.00 obtained from the bank as a loan and Rs.9, 500.00 in hand with the treasurer. In addition, RUO lent Rs. 103, 000.00 to RUO in Padikaramaduwa Old Village during this season on the initiation of catalyst.

Review of RUO activities in February showed that RUO had issued loans amounting to Rs.142, 500.00 to 29 farmers in Maha 1997/98. Three farmers had settled Rs.4, 000.00 by the end of February. RUO expected to recover the balance after harvesting in Hurulu Command area in which these farmers had cultivated paddy. Review of credit towards the end of May 1998 showed that only Rs.28, 060.00 (20%) had been recovered. It had failed to recover the amount given to Padikaramaduwa RUO.

#### **4.4.5. Company activities**

A meeting organised by the catalyst to promote Hurulu Farmer company was held on 3rd January 1998 with the participation of 20 members of RUO, Catalyst and Hurulu Company consultant. Achievements made by the company so far and benefit that the farmers have from the company were explained to the farmers by the consultant at this meeting. A director board member was selected from RUO to represent the RUO at the company, as it had shares (Rs.30, 000.00) in the company. The former member of director board representing this RUO had resigned to go outside the area to find employment.

Credit committee of Mahasengama FO met on 15th January with the participation of 7 committee members and 2 general members of the FO. FO leaders told the committee that Hurulu Farmer Company was prepared to purchase maize at Rs.12.00 per kilo and bad quality ones at Rs.8.00 per kilo. It was also informed that company was prepared to pay a commission of 25 cents for each kilo of maize purchased by RUO. One farmer said that Company people promised to pay Rs.10.50 for bad quality maize in a previous occasion. Committee members agreed not to make purchases, as it was not profitable to purchase for a small commission like 25 cents per kilo.

Another committee meeting of the credit committee was held with the participation of the catalyst on 19th January to initiate committee members to start maize purchasing activities for the company. It was decided to ask for Rs.13.00 per kilo of good quality maize and Rs.9.00 for bad quality ones. And also RUO needed a commission of 50 cents per kilo of maize purchased. Company did not agree to these requests and therefore RUO did not start purchasing activities.

#### **4.5. METHGAMA**

##### **4.5.1. Development of home-gardens and highlands**

In Methgama too the main activity was tree planting in home gardens and highlands. Though it had been originally decided to plant trees in the entire home-garden consisting of 3 acres, it was reduced to 2 acres by October. However, the reasons for this were not clear. In mid October AI who was hired by SCOR started marking locations for tree planting in farmers' lands and completed the work in 26 allotments.. Sixteen farmers had started digging pits in October. SCOR catalyst and FD field level officials brought plants to Methgama in October. Also farmers started putting up of new bunds and drains as well as repairing the old ones in October, as they had been informed that plants would be issued to those who put up bunds in their lands. A grant had been given by SCOR to purchase plants requirement of Methgama and Padikaramaduwa old village farmers. This money had been deposited in the bank account of Padikaramaduwa old village RUO.

The tree planting activities in Padikaramaduwa sub watershed was far behind the targets and time schedules. Though a very limited number of plants had been brought to the field, they too had not been distributed among the farmers. When inquired from the catalyst he said that there was a delay in marking the location for planting trees, as AI who provided



technical guidance was busy with his own work. He had not completed marking these locations in some allotments even by the first week of November. Though the plants were to be given to those who had at least put up contour bunds, there were instances in which this principle was not applied. When inquired from the assistant catalyst in Methgama, he told that it was due to a mistake. Plant distribution started in the field on 11th November 1997 and continued up to last week of November. AI trained 35 farmer on establishment of trees on the same day.

Plant distribution in Padikaramaduwa had not been completed even by 30th December 1997. Solely the catalyst and two voluntary catalysts (Methgama and Padikaramaduwa) handled purchase, transport, distribution and all the activities relevant to this. RUO was totally out of the scene and no attempt was made by the catalyst to get their involvement.

Assistant catalyst sent issue orders asking a farmer, who was entrusted with plant distribution by the assistant catalysts, to issue plants to certain individuals. He had even issued plants to non-members as well as his friends according to farmers and farmer representatives. Some farmers criticised the catalyst and the assistant catalyst for being very unjust in the distribution of plants.

The farmer representatives of this organisation were highly unsatisfied with the way catalyst and assistant catalyst handled this activity. Farmer representatives said, "They (Mihidiya) told us that all the activities related to planting of trees would be our responsibility. However, when it came to implementation, we were set aside". (Interviews with FRS of Methgama RUO.)

### **Tree management activities**

Attempts were made by WLW to plant gliricidia sticks around newly established plants to provide them shade. Only very few farmers had been informed of the necessity of planting gliricidia sticks around newly established trees to have shade over them by the end of December. A significant number of farmers had received these instructions from catalyst and assistant catalyst by 15th January. By 30th January 15 farmers had planted gliricidia sticks around 458 plants in Methgama village. However, in Padikaramaduwa and Mahasengama, this activity was not implemented. Other conservation activities proposed for Methgama could not be implemented, as the catalyst was busy with the Thripsha work as explained by him at the progress review meeting. Also, he pointed out that it was difficult for him to implement the program in three sub watershed (Methgama, Mahasengama and Padikaramaduwa Old Village) alone and asked for assistance.

Mulching for tree management did not show much progress in any of the villages in Padikaramaduwa sub watershed. Only 1.85 ha out of 12 ha planned was completed during February. About 7 farmers in Methgama had applied mulch to 250 plants. Farmers in Mahasengama was not observed applying mulch. The farmers who did not apply mulch said that they could not do it because they were busy with harvesting activities during this period.

According to available records, 18401 plants had been established in the watershed in 1997/98 Maha season. Tree management activities planned for this sub watershed did not include management of all the plants established. Though 10 training classes had been proposed in the plan only one training class was held in the sub watershed area during this period. HS gave this training at a RUO meeting held in Methgama on 21st March. 27 Farmers who attended this RUO meeting had the opportunity to undergo this training. HS gave the following technical advice on tree management at this meeting.

- The necessity of applying mulch for newly established plants
- To make a hole on the soil (3" away from the plant) before watering the plant
- Necessity of putting up eye brow bunds prior to Yala rains
- To take more care on pest attacks on newly established trees
- Removing excess branches of the plants
- Purchase of equipment required for tree management activities by RUO

The data collected towards the end of May showed that more than 80% of trees planted in Methgama had died in spite of the attempts of some farmers by using mulch etc. In the point of view of farmers the following were the main reasons for the death of plants.

1. Delay in providing plants to members
2. Delay in providing technical advice for tree planting
3. Shortage of water in wells for watering the newly established plants
4. Issue of unmanageable number of plants within a single season

#### **4.5.2. Watershed development plan, gully reclamation and check-dam construction**

WLW made a field visit to Methgama in the first week of November and instructed catalyst on gully reclamation activities as well as other conservation activities to be implemented in this village. However, these activities were not implemented in the field till the end of March 1998. The catalyst working in the area informed at staff meetings that he could not implement all these activities because he worked in three villages in Padikaramaduwa sub watershed.

During February, farmers put up five check dams across the gully running in to Padikaramaduwa tank on the initiation of catalyst. Farmers believed that water could be stored in gullies after rains to retain moisture in their lands. Six farmers whose lands were located close to this gully worked together to construct these check dams. Though plants were established on check-dams, they could not survive due to dry weather conditions during this period.

### **4.5.3. Tank eco system**

300 jack plants had been distributed by the catalyst among three farmers whose lands were located in the immediate catchment of Puwakpitiya tank in Methgama area. Two farmers had established 100 plants by the end of February 1998. All these plants died after several months due to dry weather condition.

### **4.5.4. Model home-gardens and women development**

#### **Compost preparation**

Compost preparation was an activity planned under model home-gardens by the WYC of SCOR. Though this activity had been planned for January 1998, it could not be implemented due to excess rains and therefore, was re-scheduled for March to be implemented with 10 families. It was not implemented in March too. There were many reasons for failure in implementing this program. The lack of awareness at farmer level was one main reason out of this. WYC had no well-set program for awareness creation and transfer of this technology to farmers.

### **4.5.5. Integrated water management**

#### **4.5.5.1. Highland systems**

Soya and maize were cultivated in 35 3/4 acres and 37 acres of lands respectively in Methgama, as an intervention in highland areas under this component. Maize cultivated in Methgama was harvested in November. They sold a portion of their yield row to private traders who purchased them at Rs.2.00 to 2.50 per cone. Soya cultivated by these farmers were at flowering stage in November. Soya and maize were sold to Hurulu Farmer Company as described below in the section on company activities.

Eye-brow bunding was also another intervention under integrated water management. This activity had been scheduled for February but it could not be implemented as scheduled, because farmers were busy with their cultivation activities during this period. This activity could not be implemented in March or in subsequent months too for the same reason.

Also, the farmers had not understood it as an important activity even though SCOR tried to implement it with farmers.

#### **4.5.5.2. Low land systems**

Farmers in Methgama tank cultivated 20 acres of paddy lands in Maha season 1997/98. RUO appointed a farmer to make water issues and manage water in the tank because of crop failures experienced by them in previous seasons.

### **Releasing fingerlings**

Releasing fingerlings to the tank, which was rescheduled for February was implemented in this village too on 5th February. 2800 fingerlings brought to the village by WLW were released to Methgama tank even though the target was 2500. RUO members were not aware of this activity and even Assistant Catalyst or Catalyst was not present on this occasion.

WLW had proposed a fish management program for this tank too. However, this was not implemented.

### **4.5.6. Activities of the RUO and mini-projects**

A meeting of Methgama RUO was held on 27 October 1997 with the participation of EDA, Bank representatives, catalysts and 23 farmers to discuss about making loan arrangement for the proposed Soya and maize cultivation initiated by SCOR on behalf of Hurulu Farmer Company. Issue of loans for Maha started on this day itself and RUO borrowed Rs. 150, 000.00 from the bank to be issued to its members. Rs. 146, 246.00 was given on credit to members. Hurulu Farmer Company provided fertilizer, Soya and maize seed for the cultivation on credit basis. RUO directly paid these loans back to the company after obtaining loans from the bank. 42 farmers could be observed getting ready to cultivate Soya and maize in 43 ½ acres of lands in October.

Review of RUO activities in February showed that RUO had issued Rs. 149,500.00 among 46 members as agricultural credits for Maha 1997/98. 41 Farmers had settled Rs.113, 913.00 during February after selling maize and Soya beans to the company. RUO had recovered money from the farmers at the time they sold their produce to the company through RUO. The leaders of the RUO were confident that they would be able to recover the balance. Capacity of the organization to manage credit had improved to a greater extent through interactions with farmers during this season. Review of credit in May 1998 showed that RUO had recovered the full amount given as credit to its members.

RUO had a committee meeting on 22nd February to discuss about the Soya and maize purchasing activities. Catalyst too participated at this meeting. Though RUO had come to an agreement with Hurulu Farmer Company to sell soy and maize collected by them to the company, committee members decided not to sell Soya to the company. They wanted to sell it at Rs.40.00 and not at the present price paid by the company. The following decisions were taken at this committee meeting:

1. to keep the soy beans (9,000 kg) purchased by the RUO with it to sell later at a higher price
2. to use the money recovered form farmers for Soya purchase activities ( This is to stop taking money from Hurulu Company to purchase Soya)
3. to take legal action against farmers who have failed to settle loans

4. to recover 5% interest for loans issued to farmers who sold out their produce to private traders against FO decision to sell them to the company through FO
5. to start an OFC cultivation (quarter acre to each farmer who has cultivated a crop in Maha) in Methgama tank

A general meeting of the RUO was held on 24th February, to ratify the decision taken at the committee meeting held on 22nd February.

#### **4.5.7. Company activities**

A meeting of Methgama FO was held on 23.12.1997. The purpose of the meeting was to educate farmers to produce good quality maize for Thripasha program. 23 farmers attended this meeting. The other participants were Ranjith (catalyst in Garadiyaulpotha), the catalyst and assistant catalyst working in the area.

- Ranjith educated the farmers to prepare good quality maize. Also he explained that Farmer Company was going to purchase good quality maize at Rs. 12.00. He further told that maize of low quality could be sold at Rs. 8.00.
- Sarath (catalyst) requested farmers to sell their produce to the company. He showed an instrument used for separating maize seed from corns and told farmers that it can be purchased at Rs.30.00.
- One farmer named Kapurubanda criticized the catalyst at this meeting for being very unjust in distribution of plants in this season. Catalyst (Sarath) apologized for his failure to get the farmers involvement in plant purchasing and distribution.

Though it was not seriously discussed at meetings held in Methgama previously, the RUO started maize purchasing activities for Thripasha program on an agreement with Hurulu Farmer Company. President, secretary, treasurer and the chairman of the credit committee of the FO were involved in this business activity. Farmer Company issued Rs.25, 000.00 to Methgama FO to start purchasing activities. FO purchased a weighing balance at Rs. 2,000.00 for this purpose and started purchasing on 16th January. Company had assured Rs.12.00 for good quality maize and Rs.8.00 for bad ones. Also, FO had been assured of a commission of 25 cents for each kilo of maize purchased. FO had purchased 19,176 kilos of maize by 30th January. It had also purchased 1,069 kilos of Soya, which it had decided to keep with the FO to sell it at a higher price as seeds for Yala Soya program in Hurulu command area. By the end of January Hurulu Company had given Rs. 1, 45,000.00 to FO for the purchase of maize. RUO had purchased maize valuing Rs. 27,800.00 on credit basis from the farmers by this time.

Methgama FO started purchasing of Soya bean and maize for Hurulu Farmer Company in February 1998. FO had obtained Rs. 410, 000.00 from Hurulu Farmer Company and

purchased 43,630 kilos of maize at Rs.8.00 per kilo and 8.936 kilos of soybean at RS.22.50 per kilo. FO officers told us that FO could earn a profit by these business activities. However, at a later stage FO refused to sell Soya bean purchased by them to the company. At a FO committee meeting held on 22 February, FO decided to sell soybean at RS.40.00 per kilo to the farmers in Hurulu command as seed. Finally, Hurulu Farmer Company had to pay a higher price to the RUO to buy Soya produced by Methgama farmers.

#### **4.6. PADIKARAMADUWA OLD VILLAGE**

##### **4.6.1. Development of home-gardens and highlands**

As in other two micro watersheds in Padikaramaduwa watersheds, AI marked locations for tree planting in farmers' lands in this area in October. He marked bunds in 15 allotments and 8 farmers had completed digging pits in their lands in October. Some farmers had hired wage laborers for digging pits on the basis of Rs. 75.00 per pit. This was because the farmers were busy with the cultivation activities in their paddy fields and highland areas.

SCOR made a grant of Rs. 371, 756.00 to Padikaramaduwa old village RUO to purchase plants for both Padikaramaduwa and Methgama. The RUO leaders withdrew Rs. 250, 000.00 on the request of the catalyst in October itself for purchasing plants even though data on plant requirements of the two villages had not been collected. Catalyst himself went to make purchases of plants without farmer leaders. The three assistant catalysts and the catalyst were the only people who involved in purchase of plants. Bills relevant to these purchases were not available with the RUO even after one or two months. The secretary and the treasurer of the RUO told that the bills were with the catalyst and they had no involvement in the purchase of plants. Catalyst provided bills to the RUO after these things were revealed at the staff meetings.

Tree planting activity in Padikaramaduwa too got late as in other villages. Though some plants had been brought to the village on 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of November, a decision had not been taken on plant distribution. Some farmers were very critical over this delay and told that all IIMI activities were like this. Some farmers who had hired wage labourers to dig holes said that if establishment of plants is delayed, plants would not survive in dry periods after Maha rains.

WLW trained some farmer leaders in Padikaramaduwa Old village on establishment of permanent crops, tress etc. on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1997. Plant distribution started on the same day and went up till 10<sup>th</sup> December 1997. The plants distributed included lemon, oranges, jack and mangoes. Some farmers had dug potholes (3'\*3') for planting coconut trees by hiring wage labourers. However they had not received plants even by 15.12.97.

Tree management activities

There were no conservation or tree management activities implemented in this village during January though a significant number of plants had been distributed among the

farmers. Catalyst put forward various kinds of excuses for non-implementation of these activities. There were serious allegation against him over the purchase of plants and SCOR management had to do an auditing on purchase of plants in all the three sub watersheds where tree-planting activities were implemented in large scale.

Mulching and other tree management activities did not show a much progress even up to the end of February or thereafter because catalyst was less involved in the activities in the sub watershed. He was distracted mainly from his work because of allegation against him for being dishonest in plant purchasing activities for RUOs.

#### **4.6.2. Model home-gardens and women development activities**

Women and youth co-ordinator (WYC) of SCOR had a meeting at Padikaramaduwa old village on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1997 with three small groups, two in Padikaramaduwa and one in Kawarakkulama. The number of Women participated were 32. At this meeting, WYC discussed about the cultivation of vegetables in home-gardens. One woman was asked to put up a vegetable nursery to distribute plants among the members. Also, they were told about the nutrition programme to be implemented in future. The objective of the programme was to help women to produce their vegetable and fruit requirements in their home garden themselves.

In January, WYC organised a training and a VDO show on the use of organic matter including compose making. WLW, HS, WYC and 60 women attended this. 26 women participants were given training on homestead development activities. Seven women participants started vegetable cultivation by 31st January. It was observed that vegetable cultivated in very small scale in these homesteads were successful only in one homesteads. It totally failed in others due to rains.

#### **4.6.3. Integrated water management**

##### **4.6.3.1. Highland systems**

Maize and Soya was cultivated in an extent of 8 acres in highland areas, as an intervention in highland systems under integrated water management in October 1997.

Though interventions like eyebrow bunding had been planned to be implemented in February and March, they could not be implemented. Farmers had not been made aware of the importance of this technology and also, assistant catalysts as well as catalyst did not take much interest in implementing these activities in the field during this period.

##### **4.6.3.2. Lowland systems**

Both pre-kanna and kanna meeting had been held in Padikaramaduwa tank by October 1998. At pre-kanna meeting, a decision had been taken to start land preparation activities in this tank on 15th October 1997. As the tank had no water by this time, this was postponed to 15<sup>th</sup> November at the kanna meeting. The farmers had started land preparation activities on

3rd November 1997. The tank started spilling on 12 November. By the end of November, farmers had completed land preparation in 50 acres out of 62. The catalyst through the RUO in Mahasengama had made credit arrangement for the farmers as this RUO had not been given a Mini-project grant.

As in Puwakpitiya, there were a lot of conflicts and contradictions over water issues and Velvidane handled this independently without the involvement of RUO. Some leaders were not much acceptable to farmers and therefore they could not involve in conflict resolution in common property management activities.

### **Planning for Yala**

In Padikaramaduwa too planning for Yala could not be done in February, as farmers were busy with harvesting. Also, there was no water in the tank to take cultivation decisions. However, farmers decided to cultivate on bethma basis in May after receiving some water in the tank after rains. All 45 farmers under the tank received 1/4 of land for cultivating OFCs. Cultivation meeting was held for this purpose on 19<sup>th</sup> May with the participation of DO, SCOR catalyst and AI. Crops to be cultivated were red onions, vegetables and green gram. Water issues for onion cultivation were to be made as and when required. It was decided to issue water for farmers cultivating green gram only after 1st June. Last date for crop establishment was 15<sup>th</sup> June.

Farmers had plans to cultivate green gram in an extent of 5 acres and chilies, black gram and onion in 6 acres. AI promised to provide seed for farmers cultivating green gram. Farmers who had completed land preparation by the end of May waited for green gram seed promised by AI. In addition to this, 3 farmers had cultivated paddy in 1 1/4 acres of land while 6 farmers had cultivated big onions in 1 1/2 acres.

#### **4.6.4. Participatory forestry and other forestry programs**

##### **Enrichment of scrub jungles surrounding villages**

Though awareness in the community had been created by WLW, this could not be implemented, as line agencies required funds for demarcating the boundaries of forest for this program.

#### **4.6.5. RUO activities**

At the meeting held on 20 October with the participation of SCOR catalyst and 23 farmers, farmers were informed by the catalyst that Mahasengama RUO was prepared to lend Rs. 110,000.00 for cultivation activities in Padikaramaduwa old village. The catalyst had made this arrangement himself without the involvement of Padikaramaduwa RUO to discuss terms and conditions etc. related to this transaction.

Rs.103, 000.00 were obtained by Padikaramaduwa Old village FO from Mahasengama FO on the coordination of the catalyst for Maha 1997/98. 45 farmers were benefited from



this activity. However, loan recoveries had not been made even by the end of February. The review of credit management activities in June showed that members had settled only Rs.37, 300.00 (36%) to the RUO. It was further revealed that RUO was not much concerned about settling this loan, as SCOR was to leave in September 1998. RUO had no any obligation to settle this loan to Mahasengama RUO , as it was the catalyst who obtained it from Manasengama RUO and not the RUO leaders of Padikaramaduwa RUO.

#### **4.7. MAHAMEEGASWEWA**

##### **4.7.1. Development of home-gardens and highlands**

Mahameegaswewa was not a model sub watershed. However, tree-planting activities in limited number of allotments was planned at the beginning of October 1997. For this purpose a grant of Rs. 33688.00 was made to the RUO by SCOR. SCOR catalyst in Puwakpitiya purchased plant requirement of Meegaswewa farmers and supplied them the plant through the catalyst attached to Meegaswewa and Madawala. AI marked contour bunds in some farmers' land for them to construct new bunds and drains. Several farmers put up bunds and drains in their land and repaired bunds constructed in previous seasons on the initiation of catalyst who told them that plants would be issued only to the members of RUO who adopted conservation measures in their lands. Though training on establishment of plants and plant management had been arranged for farmers during October, it was very difficult to get their participation for training, as they were busy with their agricultural activities. HS had therefore provide training to the secretary of the organization on these aspects to train others through him.

Activities in Mahameegaswewa could not be properly organized as the catalyst assigned to this location worked in adjoining sub watershed named Madawala and was also acting as Watershed Management Coordinator (WMC) after former WMCs left their position at the end of Phase I of SCOR. Due to this reason, necessary arrangement for planting trees with the on set of rain could not be made.

Digging holes for tree planting had been completed by the end of October in most of the lands. Plants had been issued to 28 allotments, temple premises and school premises. The office bearers of RUO initiated farmers for tree planting on 4th and 5th November. Catalyst too went from house to house on 7th November to initiate farmer for tree planting. WLW gave technical advice to farmers on tree planting and conservation measures on 8th November 1997. Plants had been established in 25 allotment by 24<sup>th</sup> November. However, distances between plants were very narrow (15 ft or less) in 9 allotments. Plants had been provided to RUO by the catalyst. RUO representatives told us that they had no time to go to nurseries to buy plants. They were grateful to catalyst for delivering plants to their doorstep.

By the end of November, contour bunds had been repaired in 15 homesteads and new bunds had been put up in one homestead. Total area conserved in this way was about 4 acres in extent. In 10 homesteads, bunds had been stabilised with pavatta while live fences had been made in 2 homesteads. All these farmers who were involved in conservation activities received plants free of charge from SCOR.

Any conservation activity could not be observed in Mahameegaswewa homesteads during December. Farmers of the 30 allotments selected for intensive conservation activities were issued 7 coconuts seedling each. Only 17 farmers had planted them in December. Rest of the farmers could not find time for planting them, as they were busy with work in their paddy fields. Farmers who owned paddy lands were very busy with land preparation and other related activities during this period.

There were no significant activities in Mahameegaswewa from December 1997 to June 1998 as the catalyst was engaged in Triposha program during this period. The effort of the members of Huruluwewa team was with the company and maize-purchasing activities related to it. They believed that SCOR activities could be institutionalised only by promoting the company. They worked during this period as if to protect the company from some enemies whom they felt working against the company.

#### **4.7.2. Conservation of common properties**

FD issued plants to 39 allotments along Yan Oya on the initiation of catalyst for stream reservation cultivation. Farmers planted most of these trees, mainly oranges, cashew by 24 November 1997.

Trees were planted in the temple premises, school premises and kattakaduwa area of the tank on 11th November 1997. FD had provided the plant requirements for this activity too.

#### **4.7.3. Model home-gardens and women development activities**

##### **Compost preparation**

Though a program had been planned for compost making under home-garden development, it could not be implemented in January and February due to the same reasons explained in the section on Puwakpitiya. These activities could not be implemented till the end of the project, as there was no catalyst in this village to initiate such activities. Also, the farmers had not been made aware of the usefulness of the activity.

#### **4.7.4. Integrated water management**

Kanna meeting was held in Mahameegaswewa tank on 11<sup>th</sup> November with the participation of DO and 34 farmers. It was decided to cultivate 12 acres of land in old paddy field area. The canal maintenance activities had been completed in November according to the decisions of cultivation meeting. Farmers were getting ready to do first ploughing in November. Vela Vidane (former president of RUO) implemented Kanna meeting decisions. RUO provided Rs.19, 000.00 to 10 farmers in old paddy field area for paddy cultivation as credit in this season. Farmers had difficulties in finding a tractor for ploughing, as there were no tractors in the village or in adjoining villages. Acquisition of seed paddy too was a serious problem for them.

Cultivation activities started in Mahameegaswewa tank in December. According to kanna meeting decision, only old paddy field area was to be cultivated with the limited water available at that time. However, when the tank water level went up with heavy rains received in the area, cultivation was extended to the areas beyond old paddy field. There was no much involvement of the RUO in the activities in the tank. This was mainly due to the fact that a significant number of farmers holding paddy land did not hold membership in the organisation. The RUO was not able to have a control on their behaviour. Non-availability of credit for majority of farmers for agriculture was a major problem in Mahameegaswewa in this season. This was because majority had failed to settle loans and had lost membership of RUO due to the same reason. This delayed land preparation activities to some extent. Cultivation activities in 44 1/2 acres of land under Mahameegaswewa had been completed by the end of December 1997.

### **Planning for Yala**

Plans for Meegaswewa under this component was monitoring of crop establishment, co-ordination of input supply for 24 ha etc. for this period. However, none of these activities were implemented in a planned way as the catalyst had left SCOR to find some other employment. Farmers in Meegaswewa held a cultivate meeting on 9th May to take a decision on Yala cultivation. It was decided to cultivate paddy in an extent of 12 acres under purana (old) paddy field area. The time allowed for crop establishment was a period of 24 days (from 12th May to 5th June). Farmers completed crop establishment by 29 May in this season. RUO involvement in management activities in the tank was at a satisfactory level. The president of the RUO had been appointed as Vel Vidane as the former Vel Vidane had resigned.

### **Releasing fingerlings**

Fingerlings were released to Meegaswewa tank by WLW in February with the involvement of some leader of RUO. RUO appointed three farmers to watch catching of fish in the tank by the farmers illegally. RUO leaders had plans to lease out the tank to an outsider for fishing. However, this was changed later and community members caught fish in the tank on RUO decision.

### **4.7.5. Participatory Forestry Program**

10 ha of land were distributed among 20 farmers in Mahameegaswewa under PFP on the initiation of SCOR in October 1998. These lands were allocated only to the members of RUO. The farmers had cleared the land as a team and thereafter divided the land among them on the basis of 1/2 ha to each. They had plans to cultivate their traditional crops like kurakkan (millet) but catalyst asked them to grow maize to be provided to Thripasha Company through Hurulu Farmer Company which had plan to supply maize on a forward contract arrangement. However, the maize seed provided to the farmers through Hurulu Farmer Company did not germinate and the farmers had to grow local varieties later.

Though catalyst wanted farmers to put up bunds and drains in these forestlands too, they could not be initiated because they had cultivated crops in the land by this time.

The farmers, who did not receive lands under PFP, criticized RUO leadership as well as the catalyst vehemently. The remarks made them are important to understand the situation in the village. " Nihal Mahattaya (catalyst) lived in this community for about four years. It seems that he did not understand our situation. He did not want to give PFP lands to non-members. So the members of the organization got PFP lands in both seasons, 1996/97 Maha and 1997/98 Maha. This was a great injustice to the poor people in this village". When we checked the records of the people who received lands under PFP in the two seasons it revealed that the president and the treasurer of the RUO have received lands in both seasons.

Farmer involved in PFP received planting materials (teak roots) on 2 November 1997. Each farmer was given 500 teak roots. Farmers completed plant establishment by 14 November. Farmers who were involved in PFP last year were asked by FD to clean teak lands prior to 30 November. 15 out of 17 farmers had cleaned the land by 30 November. Farmers expected to put up contour bunds in the lands under PFP. FD issued 1300 margosa plants to farmers to fill vacancies in PFP lands in which plants had been established in previous year. Farmers did not like to grow margosa along with teak

In December, farmers planted gliricidia on the boundaries of forestlands cultivated by them in 1997/98 under the Participatory Forestry Program. They cleaned the bushes, weeds etc. in the PFP lands cultivated by them in 1996/97. Though several farmers tried to put up bunds and drains too in PFP lands, they could not do it because of heavy rains. They were initiated to do these activities by Forest Department community mobilizers on the request of the catalyst.

Farmers engaged in PFP received rations for PFP activities during this period. They were satisfied with the program as it assured them both long term and short term benefits.

#### **4.7.6. Activities of RUO and mini-projects**

A meeting was held on 15th October to recover credit given to farmers in the previous season by the RUO. As majority of farmers had not settled loans taken in the previous season, RUO could not make decisions about credit arrangement in this season.

At the beginning of Maha 1997/98, eleven farmers who hold paddy lands in the old paddy field area was provided Rs.23, 250.00 as credit. When the cultivation was extended to other areas in the tank command, Rs.60.500.00 was provided as loans to 23 farmers. There were farmers who had obtained loans previously in this season for paddy cultivation in the old paddy field area among the 23 farmers who obtained loans. As decided at the cultivation meeting farmers needed to have fulfilled the following requirements to obtain loans:

1. Should be a member of the organisation

2. Should have paid the membership fee
3. Should have settled at least a portion of the loan taken in the previous season

However, some farmers paid a portion of the previous loan from the loan obtained in this season. Some who had not even paid a portion of the previous loan were issued loans in spite of the decision at the cultivation meeting.

Review of RUO activities in February revealed that FO had issued loans amounting to Rs.80, 500.00 in Maha 1997/98 to 23 farmers who had settled loans taken previously. Out of this only Rs. 32, 300.00 had been recovered by the end of May 1998. Organization had to recover another Rs.13, 568.28 from its members as balance amounts of loans issued in previous seasons. Membership in the organization was limited to 33 out of the total of 66 household heads living in the village by this time. Only 23 were eligible for credit from Mini-Project after implementation of Mini-project for about 4 years in this village.

#### **4.8. KELENIKAWEWA**

##### **4.8.1. Development of home-gardens and highlands**

As the catalyst working in Kelenikawewa spent 75% of his time on Hurulu Farmer Company activities related to the supply of maize to Thriposha Company on a forward contract arrangement, he could not attend to the activities in the sub watershed in an organized manner. An assistant catalyst who worked as an agent of an Insurance Company handled his work. Therefore, the program in Kelenikawewa had drawbacks from the very beginning. On realization of these drawbacks, a meeting was organized by the catalyst on 21st October to provide some training to the farmers on tree planting and other activities related to homestead development. 25 farmers attended the meeting. At this meeting farmers started criticizing the catalyst for not keeping many promises. The most recent promise was the supply of maize seed for Thriposha program initiated under Company activities. Also, farmers questioned the way the farmers were selected for tree planting program. Since the micro watershed had been selected for development without the involvement of RUO leaders or members, they were not aware of the basis for selection. They felt that catalyst was biased towards a certain area in the village. The catalyst addressing the meeting told farmers "It was because of my sin in a previous birth that I had to work in a village like this". However, WLW used this meeting to provide technical training on tree planting to farmers.

A catalyst working in an adjoining sub watershed purchased plant requirements of Kelenikawewa farmers using SCOR grant of Rs.38136.00 made to the RUO for purchasing plants. The plants were brought to the field on 24 October 1997 and distributed among the farmers. Even though the main purpose of providing plants was to initiate farmers to adopt soil and water conservation technologies in their lands, only three farmers had repaired their bunds by the end of October 1997. Even the office bearers of the RUO had not adopted conservation technologies in their lands. Farmers

whom we interviewed during this month informed us that they expected to put up bunds. However they had not been able to do this, as the AI's service could not be obtained in time for marking contour bunds in their lands. When AI came to the field farmers had established crops and they were not prepared to put up bunds damaging their crop.

The digging of holes for tree planting had been completed in the first week of November. WLW made field visit to the area on 4th November to provide technical guidance for tree planting. He gave instruction to farmers on conservation measures to be adopted. In some lands farmers had removed contour bunds put up in previous seasons, to cultivate tobacco in them in this season. WLW made farmers aware of the necessity of adopting conservation measures on such occasions. He had to ask some farmers to replant the trees which had already been established, as the distance between trees were not sufficient in some lands. It was understood that the involvement of assistant catalyst and catalyst in the field activities were not sufficient to make this type of a hasty program successful. Catalyst in the area had to spend most of his time outside the sub watershed to engage in Farmer Company related Soya and maize program activities while assistant catalyst too was busy with some other work. However, plants were distributed to the farmer on 17th November and 40% of plants had been established by 23 November.

Planting of trees continued even in December. Farmers complained that some of the plants died due to water logging. They stopped planting trees received in mid December because of heavy rains. Though farmers were informed to plant gliricidia sticks round the plants established in this season, none of the farmers did this. They had not been convinced of the usefulness of the practice.

### **Tree Management Activities**

Proposed tree management activities were not implemented in Kelenikawewa, as catalyst spent most of his time for maize purchasing activities for Thriposha program from December up to the end of March 1998. However, he started work in the sub watershed in April and initiated some farmers to apply mulch and put up eyebrow bunds. In spite of these attempts, most of the newly established trees (more than 80%) had died by the end of June 1998.

#### **4.8.2. Watershed development plan, gully reclamation and construction of check dams**

WLW constructed a check-dam in a farmer's land in February with the involvement of assistant catalyst.

#### **4.8.3. Integrated water management**

Though cultivation activities in Kelenikawewa started in November, there was no SCOR involvement in it. Farmers were not provided credit for agricultural activities or other activities proposed under mini-project, even though substantial amount had been given to RUO as a Mini-Project grant

#### **4.8.4. Activities of RUO and mini-project**

Though a grant had been issued to this RUO for implementing a mini-project, it could not put it to effective use, as the RUO was weak in every respect. The RUO leaders had conflict among themselves. In addition, the whole village was divided on factional politics. The catalyst too paid more attention to the Thiposha program activities implemented through Hurulu Farmer Company. He too had conflicts with some leaders. His attempt to change leaders in several occasions had been failed. Since his political identity was known to the villagers, his attempt to change leaders has been understood by the RUO leaders a coup to put his party men in to power. According to our field observations and data collected in this community, a distance between most of the farmer community members and SCOR could be observed in this sub watershed. Political fraction in the village harmfully affected RUO and its activities.

The grant that had been deposited so far in a savings account had been transferred to a fixed deposit account. It was done on 24 December. After this bank has agreed to issue loans worth of 85% of the deposit to the farmers. RUO had obtained Rs.29, 000.00 from the bank for issuing loans to the farmers. By the time the loan was issued, crop was about one month old. The delay was due to the disagreement between the farmers and catalyst and the farmer representatives. It had been decided at a committee meeting to issue a maximum Rs. 2000.00 to each farmer. However, RUO had no information or a register of the farmers that had taken these loans. The farmers as well as farmer representatives did not know the interest for the loan taken by them. Also some farmers did not know that RUO was providing loans to its members. This had been informed to farmers at the Funeral Association meeting and those who did not attend it were not aware of it.

A project assistant was appointed to the RUO at the beginning of 1998 to find solutions to management problems at RUO level. The treasurer, who attended training workshop for training Project Assistants, was well aware of the role of PA and expected him to do his duties. However, P.A. was an employee of an insurance company. This was brought to the notice of SCOR team at the team meeting held on 16 December through process documentation report. This had been informed to the farmer representatives and the project assistant by the catalyst. Project Assistant had not come to the field even on a single day throughout this period. Since the catalyst had appointed him, farmer representatives felt that they had no right to remove him. However, they wanted to get rid of him as he was of no service to the organisation. At a committee meeting held on 24th December, it was decided not to pay him his salary for December. It was also decided to select some other person for this job. After the appointment of Project Assistant, the farmer representatives started to think that he should do all the work of RUO including credit recovery. There were disputes between the farmer representatives and the PA on this matter. The lack of involvement of the catalyst in field activities, due to his involvement in Thriposha program, made this situation worse, as there was nobody to settle the disputes between the PA and the RUO leaders.

The review of organization activities in February revealed that RUO had failed to recover Rs.29000.00 issued to farmers as credit in Maha 1997/98. General meeting of FO was held on 22 February to discuss about Mini project activities, issue of credit for animal husbandry etc. Only 34 farmers out of 66 participated at this meeting. Later, on the initiation of catalyst, Rs.25,000.00 could be recovered. Also, leadership of RUO too was changed and action was taken towards the end of the project to implement mini-project activities using SCOR grant which had been lying idle in the bank for a period of more than one year.

#### 4.9. SUB WTRMTS

1. Palugaswewa Sub WRMT was held on 23 November 1997. The main theme of the meeting was to institutionalise SCOR interventions and activities through sub WRMT. Responsibility of carrying out certain SCOR activities were handed over to some line agency officers like DO, AI and DS at this meeting.
2. WRMT in Galenbidunuwewa met on 7 December. This was held at the office of the Divisional Secretary, Galenbidunuwewa with the participation of 7 government officers, 11 SCOR team members and one farmer representative. The FR was Mr.Mudiyanse, the chairman of the Farmer Company in Huruluwewa. DS who addressed this meeting told the members that all that attended this meeting had come by sacrificing some of their activities which they had planned for this day. Therefore, he wanted all to make contributions at the meeting to make it a useful one.
  1. Are there any shortcomings or problems related to the implementation of activities through the SCOR proposed institutional mechanism for project implementation and if so what are they?
  2. What is the role of WRMT after the withdrawal of SCOR?
  3. Should there be a change in the present progress monitoring by WRMT?

TL, SCOR was invited to address the meeting on these issues. He mentioned that the participation of Farmer representatives is very poor. He said that progress is reviewed on monthly basis at his office and it is not of relevance to this meeting. This is an external evaluation by the officials like AI, DO and DS. He mentioned that the participation of village level officers in implementation and planning at village level is very important. DOs pointed out that it would be better if SCOR catalysts participate at Amma and other committees held with the participation of farmer representatives and line agency officials. Nihal (WMC) addressing the meeting explained the process followed in implementing SCOR and the concept of Mini-Project s. He said that it is important if higher level officers like AI and DS participate at lower level committees like Amma. Ds in reply told that he has no time to attend such meetings. He also pointed out that it may not be possible to



get the participation of higher level officers to a meeting like Amma committee presided over by a farmer under the present hierarchical system and associated ideology. Officers who attended this meeting told that they are not aware of Mini-Projects implemented during Phase I. However, they all accepted that Phase II Mini-projects were planned with their participation. It was also discussed that SCOR activities should be planned and implemented within the existing institutional arrangements like DS level agricultural committee after withdrawal of SCOR. A meeting to discuss and make arrangements to hand over SCOR activities was scheduled for 7 January 1998.

3. Sub WRMT meeting was held in Dambulla on 23 February with the participation of 9 farmer leaders, SCOR team members and 11 officers from line agencies concerned. Also three officers from ODE (NGO) too participated. Issues discussed included the following:

- \* AI presented cultivation activities to be implemented by DOA in Yala - (mainly gingerly cultivation initiated by JICA project)
- \* Bee - Keeping activities being implemented by Kandalama hotel. Mr.Bandara (WMC) told the committee that SCOR too implement bee-keeping activities. AI told him that DOA is not aware of it.
- \* Bandara (Catalyst) informed members of Sub WRMT that banks are not prepared to issue loans for animal husbandry. It is a big problem encountered in implementation of Mini-Projects, according to him.
- \* Some farmer leaders told that they started coconut nurseries on SCOR initiation and they find it difficult to sell coconut seedlings at this stage. AI told them that he could purchase the plans. It appeared that there is no communication between agencies and RUOs to find solution to their problems. If nurseries had been established with the involvement of AIs, this type of problems would not have arisen.
- \* ODE officers explained their program to the committee. They said that they implement program to create awareness in farmer communities from Habarana to Talkotte on soil and water conservation and environmentally friendly farming practices. President of Feeder Canal Farmer Federation said " I went on ten occasion to meet you gentlemen in your office. Nobody was in the office". The officers said that they could not be at office during this period as they had some problems.
- \* Feeder Canal farmer representatives requested that they be issued water for Yala 98 from 22 March. They asked Mahaweli Engineer the day on which they would be able to enjoy the benefits that the other Mahaweli farmers enjoy. This was mainly about water rights. He said they would

receive them in future. Engineer said that activities to develop the area under Mahaweli would start from 25th February.

- DS said that he came to know that feeder canal farmers have purchased some 1000 pipes from Dambulla. This is for illegal tapping of water. He said that officers alone can not intervene to stop these activities. He further said that activities related to Dambulu Farmer Company are loaded on him. He requested others also to share the responsibilities related to company activities. He said that the Company has faced serious financial problems due to Thripasha activities. There is a loss of about Rs. 200,000.00 as cost of Soya seeds given to farmers on credit basis for cultivation, could not be recovered. AIs told that they were not informed when seeds were distributed among the farmers. He said "we were asked to train people on Soya and maize. We did it. We were not told about other arrangements such as issue of seeds etc. Same AI blamed WMC for contacting a higher level officer to get a moisture meter in his possession. " This is not correct. These things should be discussed at our level before contacting higher level officers" he said. He further asked not to try to show power and authority. (This is a kind of a warning to Bandara (catalyst) for contacting GA for everything).

- \* Chairman of the company told Sub WRMT members about the plan of the company to purchase 500,000 kg of paddy in this season.

TL finally said that he was very happy to see that officers of line agencies have taken over the responsibility of implementing SCOR activities as he could observe from the meeting held on this day. In reply DS requested SCOR to attend some shortcomings of the company to put it on a sustainable footing before SCOR leaves the area.

#### **4.10. ATTEMPTS AT INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING**

1. Training was conducted on 7 and 8 November 1997 for Project Assistants provided by SCOR to help RUOs to implement Mini-Projects. This is a new intervention to which organisational scientist should pay more attention.
2. Training to FRS of Mahasengama, Methgama and Padikaramaduwa.

Training was provided to the voluntary catalysts and FRS on account keeping on 18.12.1997. This was organised by Janaka Amarasinghe, Enterprise Development Assistant. Mr. Pinto (Horticultural Specialist) and catalyst working in the area participated at this training.

Participants for the training.

1. Secretary, Mahasengama FO

2. President, (Voluntary catalyst) Mahasengama FO
3. Treasurer, Methgama FO
4. President , - do -
5. Voluntary Catalyst (Padikaramaduwa old village)
6. Voluntary Catalyst (Methgama)

The participants were trained to keep accounts on the financial transactions related to the implementation of Mini-Project using SCOR revolving funds. The FRS told at this meeting that the organisations accounts are kept at present by SCOR catalyst, as they don't know account keeping.

EDS told FRS that the FO itself should keep their accounts in future as SCOR is going to withdraw in September 1997. The FRS told that they cannot keep accounts as they don't know account keeping which is rather complex when it comes to the operation of mini- projects which involves making credits and loan recovery etc. The idea of hiring a project Assistant was put forward by Janaka at this point. He said that FO could involve in business activities and earn profit. They can hire a project Assistant capable of handling FO business activities as well as its accounts according to Janaka. It was also decided to have a Project Assistant (PA) for the recently formed sub council of Padakaramaduwa Old village. Other decisions taken with regard to hiring a PA was:

- To pay him Rs. 1500 - 2000 initially
- To select a candidate from Padikaramaduwa sub-watershed itself
- To call application from those with General Certificate of Education (Advance level) with Commerce subjects.

#### 4. Training for Garadiyaulpotha RUO leaders

EDA, Mr.Janaka had organised a training on financial account keeping to farmer leaders of this RUO in February. They were in the view that it is very useful to them to keep their accounts.

3. RUO in Kubukwewa (Garadiyaulpotha) had a meeting on 27 January attended by 32 farmers, DO of ASD, Livestock Development Officer (LDO), WMC, catalyst and 2 Grama Niladaris (village level officer of DS). Issues related to credit recovery was discussed at this meeting. Leaders pointed out the necessity of recovering loans as soon as farmers sell their produce. Also, catalyst informed that 36 farmers could get goats on the basis of 3 for each with credit from FO. He stressed the necessity of making an arrangement for a fair distribution of benefits among the members. President of the FO informed that the plants established in common properties like reservations have died due to water logging etc.

WMC used this meeting to bring officers and farmers to prepare a join program to be implemented by them after the withdrawal of SCOR.

#### **4.11. CHANGES, CONFLICTS AND CONTRADICTIONS**

In November 1997, a significant change in the management of the project took place. Mr. Ian Makin replaced Dr. C. M. Wijayratna, who held the post of Project Leader, in November. Though change of personals working in projects is quite common, the way he was changed and the attachment that majority of project staff had towards him etc. had a real impact on the implementation of project activities for a period of several months. This brought conflicts and contradictions between team members over their allegiance to the former project leader. Many team members of Huruluwewa team were in the view that all the team members should influence IIMI management at head quarters to change its decision and reappoint Dr. C. M. Wijayaratra. They started writing petitions, initiating line agencies and farmers and farmer leaders.

The reason for the change, as understood by many team members, was the interest taken by the project leader to promote the concept of Farmer Company. Some members believed that project leader was changed because of the negative reports submitted by some researchers on the project activities and performance of the project. Leaflets and notices appeared in Huruluwewa office criticizing the role of researchers during this period. PD researchers too had been identified and discarded as elements serving the multi-nation interests, they had difficulties in interacting with some team members who were very harsh on researchers over the fate of Dr.C.M.Wijeratne.

There were attempts by some catalysts to initiate farmers as well as PD assistants to resist the change. Some catalysts had asked PD assistants to report that farmers were against the appointment of a foreigner as SCOR project leader. In Puwakpitiya, former president told that catalysts and acting WMC whom he met at Do's office asked him to influence the political leaders in the area against changing project leader. The former president of the RUO was an ardent supporter of the party in power and could influence the politicians. However, he told that he had no interest in the affairs of SCOR. He did not know Dr.C.M.Wijeratne. Above all, he was against the catalyst for the authoritative way he worked. In spite of catalyst's attempt, he could not do anything at field level to initiate farmers to influence IIMI management.

In Mahameegaswewa too some farmer leaders asked PD assistants about this change. A catalyst had asked them to oppose this change somehow or other. However, PD assistants in all these locations reported that farmers were less concerned with such changes. This was mainly because SCOR or its leaders had not been able to do things to improve their living conditions in a significant way.

However, the PD assistant in Garadiyaulpotha reported that farmers are very unhappy over removing Dr.C.M.W. from his position. He did not say anything of the number of farmers or the people who told them about it. Also, he did not mention how this information (removing from the post) had reached farmers. At a later stage, it was revealed that PD assistant had

misreported many things on the influence of some team members including catalysts. He later resigned from the post and received a Project Assistant post in the company on the influence of some SCOR team members. There was more evidence to substantiate that some team members rewarded him for his allegiance to them.

### **Other problems**

In addition to this change of leadership, there were many more incidents at field level that led to conflicts and contradictions between some team members and researchers. For example, there were problems related to misappropriations, corruptions etc. in purchase of plants by catalysts for the RUOs. Catalysts played an authoritative role in affairs of RUOs, specially handling of RUO funds. These were highlighted at staff meetings through PD reports. In places like Padikaramaduwa, PD assistants were threatened by assistant catalysts on the initiation of catalyst for reporting what really happened in the field. Even the team leader, Huruluwewa, did not take any action against catalysts over their unprofessional conduct and the project management had to intervene to have a check on their behaviour.

### **4.12. SUMMARY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS**

The common features of the implementation process of key interventions during the final Phase of SCOR was as follows:

1. SCOR specialists and catalysts planned activities like tree planting and other conservation measures at the SCOR office. The line agency officers participated for certain activities like demarcation of contours for bund construction etc. for which SCOR paid them. They were informed of the progress of SCOR activities at Sub WRMT meetings and when SCOR wanted to have approval for mini-projects, proposals were submitted to WRMT for obtaining the approval of officers.
2. Mini-project was not planned during the final Phase of SCOR. Those that were planned later were more participatory than those planned at the very beginning. However, catalysts had an upper hand in implementing mini-projects and even had been controlling mini-project funds by the time SCOR leadership changed in November 1997. This led some RUO leaders as well as members to feel and think that money given to RUO belong to SCOR. SCOR new management changed this style of operation and RUO leaders were made aware that funds belonged to RUOs and they should take responsibility over fund management.
3. RUO participation for planning or implementation of activities like massive tree planting program was marginal. In some locations, farmers were consulted to know the number of plants required, plants species etc. but their knowledge was not properly tapped to know exactly the number of plants that a farmer can manage within a season to make the program a success. Due to this reason, farmers were provided unmanageable number of trees within a season and most of the plants died during Yala (dry period) in 1998.

4. For implementation of activities in model sub watersheds, catalysts were provided with the services of assistant catalysts, who were paid by RUO using SCOR funds. In some locations like Puwakpitiya and Mahasengama, leaders of RUO were hired as assistant catalysts in order to get RUO participation in SCOR activities. These kinds of tactics were required even after SCOR made outright grants to RUO for distribution of plants free of charge. Even in Garadiyaulpotha former group leaders were employed as assistant catalysts to implement and monitor tree planting and tree management activities. The interactive participation of RUO leaders could not be obtained to the program in any of these locations mainly because tree-planting program (though the plants were established in farmers' lands) could not be made a program of RUO. Decision making over plant purchase, selection of nurseries etc. were done by SCOR catalysts without obtaining the participation of RUOs in a significant way. In the point of view of catalysts, this operation style was adopted, as it had to be done in haste to establish plants with Maha rains.
5. Activities like model home-garden development and compost making became total failures because they had been planned at SCOR office by WMC without identifying the real requirement of women and also the climatic and socio-economic factors in those communities. In addition, it was implemented as a separate program of WYC and had not been integrated into the programs implemented by catalysts in sub watersheds. Due to this reason, it did not have the required support from some catalysts in some areas.
6. In spite of the fact that banks refused to fund for mini-project activities by providing an amount equal to four time of SCOR grants as expected by SCOR, attempts were still made to operationalize mini-projects based on the same assumption. Animal husbandry programs under mini-projects could not be implemented in many sub watersheds due to this reason. Catalyst were not prepared to withdraw grant money and spent it for the purchase of animals as it would affect agricultural credit programs implemented by RUOs using the grant as a collateral. However, through the intervention of SCOR management animal husbandry program was implemented towards the end of the season, in some location by using the grant money and in others with loans from banks. However, 100% of the target could not be achieved, as banks were not prepared to issue the amounts expected as loans by RUOs.
7. The conservation technology transfer in locations like Garadiyaulpotha was successful to some extent mainly because SCOR catalyst working there was an AI of DOA who had been seconded to SCOR. He played the role of extension officer and provided technical advice too in addition to mobilizing the community. The other catalysts without such training previously, were faced with real difficulties in providing technical guidance for tree planting and management. Even though AIs were hired on weekends it was not sufficient to meet the demands of farmers. SCOR specialist could not do this alone as there

were 17 sub watersheds in which production and conservation activities were implemented during the same period. This had serious problems for programs in Padikaramaduwa and also to some extent for the programs in Mahameegaswewa, Kelenikawewa and Puwakpitiya.

8. In some locations like Garadiyaulpotha and Kelenikawewa Catalysts showed an interest in institutional strengthening activities towards the end of the project as the new management emphasized on such efforts. In Puwakpitiya, the catalyst sought RUO participation in SCOR activities by hiring the president and the secretary of RUO using SCOR funds. He hired the FO leaders as a substitute for farmer participation for implementing common property management activities like planting trees in tank bund and the immediate surroundings of the tank.
9. Priority over other things were given to the company activities and SCOR team members' had an emotional kind of attachment to the company. This had an adverse impact on the implementation of activities in sub watersheds like Kelenikawewa and Meegaswewa in sample locations.
10. Towards the end of the project, some catalysts in areas like Meegaswewa did not involve much in field implementation activities. They were looking for new jobs. Only those who had been seconded could be seen working even during the last few months of the project.
11. Resentment over the change of former project leader could be observed in most of the SCOR team members to the end of the project. This resentment rose in revolt in their subconscious mind as could be observed at team meetings and discussions of importance.
12. New project leader did not emphasize on achieving unrealistic targets, even though the project had agreed upon targets to the Government and the USAID. He gave more independence to team members to plan and implement the proposed activities and worked in a facilitative mode.

## **PART I - HURULUWEWA WATERSHED**

### **SECTION 5 - PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS AND ACTION BY THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT TO ADDRESS THEM**

#### **5.1. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED**

This section discusses the problems encountered in the planning and implementation process of SCOR Phase II and the action taken by the project management to address them. The planning process adopted in Phase II was very simple. The project management wanted to develop three sub watersheds as model sub watersheds. The specialists proposed interventions for the development of them. The main activity in Huruluwewa three sub watersheds was tree planting and introducing conservation measures to retain soil moisture and fertility in lands where plants were established. Catalysts and voluntary catalysts collected data on plant requirements in some sub watersheds while in areas like Padikaramaduwa, it was done in an ad-hoc way. This was the case with other interventions like gully reclamation, check dam construction. SCOR catalysts and specialists identified locations, proposed interventions by themselves without the involvement of beneficiaries. At times they were consulted to know the number of plants required or kind of plant species required. Their involvement was limited to a consultation. It was mainly because the idea of development of sub watershed came somewhere in September and the planning had to be done in haste to implement them with Maha rains in October, as it was the last Maha season for SCOR to implement its activities. SCOR project was to end in September 1998.

However, in mini-project proposals prepared previously with the participation of farmers, some interventions like animal husbandry, agricultural credit etc. had been included by the people. Though many project were overburdened with conservation, the concerns of people too appeared in them as farmer groups and leaders involved in planning of them. The problem in implementing them had been identified during Phase I itself, even though action had not been taken to address them. The same problems emerged during Phase II also. Problems related to the implementation of mini-project activities as well as activities designed for Phase II will be briefly discussed below:



### **5.1.1. Relative weaknesses of RUOs to implement resource management activities**

There were a number of reasons for the weaknesses of RUOs to do resource management activities effectively. They are:

1. **Weak leadership** – Many leaders had no leadership qualities to take participatory decisions or settle disputes among the community members. They were not committed and worked for certain benefits from the project. Some had been hired as assistant catalysts by the catalysts. They were more accountable to SCOR catalyst or to agency officials rather than to the members of the RUOs. Honesty of many of RUO leaders was questionable. In addition, they lacked skill to get the participation of members in resource management activities.
2. **Lack of skill in leaders to manage funds and attend to other resource management activities** – Though funds had been provided to RUOs, leaders had not been provided training on keeping accounts and management of funds. Decisions over funds were taken by leaders without the involvement of members or sometimes even without committee members, as revealed on many instances such as purchase of plants to be distributed among members. This led to serious problems in managing funds.
3. **Tight control that catalysts had on fund management activities of RUOs which had received SCOR grants** - Catalysts wanted RUOs to spend money on the activities for which mini-projects had been designed. Therefore, they had a tight control on funds. This led RUO leaders and farmers to think that grant money belong to SCOR and not to the RUOs. Due to this reason farmers were less involved in fund management activities and also avoided settling loans taken from RUO. Also, there were serious allegation against some catalysts for their direct involvement in purchasing plants on behalf of RUOs and SCOR management had to audit RUO accounts and do investigations on certain transactions. These investigations too revealed discrepancies with regard to the purchase of plants.
4. **Contradictions and conflicts within RUOs for resource allocations among members** as in the case of Mahameegaswewa RUO, political rivalries within communities as in Kelenikawewa and Puwakpitiya. In Mahameegaswewa a large number of RUO members had lost their membership due to failure in their part to settle loans, membership fees and attend RUO meetings. Many farmers had become defaulters as a result of poor yield from chili cultivation implemented by the DOA with farmers through SCOR coordination. This was the first time they cultivated chili under irrigation condition. At the beginning of the season crop was affected due to too much rain while water scarcity had an adverse impact on yield towards the end of the season. In spite of this fact, RUO insisted on farmers to settle loans taken for the cultivation. Many who lost membership was rain-fed farmers who received lands in the irrigated

command on an arrangement made by SCOR. RUO took legal action against the farmers who failed to settle loans and recovered the money. The membership of RUO was limited to 8 members who were better off farmers. Thereafter, SCOR catalyst promised benefit through participatory Forestry program and also provided goats to 10 farmers using SCOR grant deposited at the bank and was successful in increasing the membership to 38 members. RUO started providing benefit only to members after these incidents. All the members of RUO by this time were only those who had land under tank. Most of the rain-fed farmers were not provided the benefits. Non-members accused SCOR catalyst for initiating RUO to have a restrictive policy on non-members. Those who lost membership were asked to pay the entire membership fee for the years during which they did not held membership. They were asked to pay the fee in one installment at the rate of Rs.100.00 per year and some had to pay more than Rs.400.00 to get the membership again. Some farmers though wanted to become members again could not get the membership as they had no money to pay the membership fee. In the part of members who obtained membership, they wanted to have limited number of villagers as members because they could share the benefits among few members. Similarly, members of Kubukwewa (Garadiyaulpotha) RUO too did not extend membership to non-members, as they too were not prepared to share benefit with all the villagers. In their point of view, the funds were limited because banks did not provide four times of the grant as loans as SCOR originally expected.

In places like Puwakpitiya and Kelenikawewa, political factions among the community members was a serious problem for getting the members participation in RUOs. This led catalysts to plan and implement activities with limited number of users with whom they had developed close interactions. In Puwakpitiya, catalyst hired the president and secretary of the RUO as assistant catalysts to implement SCOE activities and tried to show that activities were implemented by RUO. However, when payment was stopped to these leaders, they did not participate in implementing SCOR activities and the catalyst had to organize everything himself. Also, some members like the former president who was a local leader of Sri-Lanka Freedom Party (main party in the coalition government in power now) accused catalyst for supporting United National Party (UNP) and help selecting UNP members as RUO leaders.

In Kelenikawewa too political factions was a serious problem for organizing community for resource management activities. All the leaders were UNP supporters and there was no much involvement of SLFP members in RUO activities. Some SLFP supporters complained that the leaders refused to give them membership in RUO. Catalyst tried to change leadership to overcome this problem but this was seen by the leaders as an attempt to bring SLFP members in to power in the RUO. This was mainly because they had known the political identity of the catalyst. In addition, to bring about a change in leadership in a village community like Kelenikawewa knit in kinship relations, it is required for the catalysts to build up strong mutual relationship with farmers and win

their confidence. As the catalysts was heavily involved in maize and soya program implemented on behalf of Hurulu Farmer Company and spent most of his time outside village, he could not do this.

5. Poor participation in the part of members in RUOs due to lack of benefits from RUOs. RUO had no programs to provide benefits to members even when SCOR had provided significant amount as grants (e.g. Kelenikawewa RUO). Also, many RUOs could not provide benefits such as agricultural loans for all the community members due to lack of funds. This was mainly due to the fact that banks were not prepared to give loans equal to four times of SCOR grant deposited in the bank even though SCOR expected banks to do so. Banks were prepared to provide loans equal to 85% of the grant deposited in the bank.

### 5.1.2. Other reasons

In addition to these problems at RUO level, the following factors harmfully affected achieving project goals and objectives:

1. Lack of knowledge and skill in the part of catalysts as well as many project officials to implement SCOR type of project requiring specific knowledge and skill to introduce and manage change. The section on implementation of interventions highlights the magnitude of this problem. Though some catalysts had worked as Institutional Organizers at ASD and IMD previously, they had not been well exposed to concept and strategies of social mobilization programs aimed at bringing about attitudinal and other behavioral changes in them. Some of them were direct from DOA with conventional type of knowledge in agricultural extension activities. They were not provided sufficient training to implement the program after they were recruited.

In addition, many officers including those who held senior positions at watershed level have never worked in action research project like SCOR which required developing and testing interventions with farmer and agency participation. Many of them had ready-made answers and packages as solutions to many of the resource management problems of the farmers. They wanted farmer participation for implementing their interventions and achieve targets set by the project. It was only an extension or another rural development project for them. Research activities were started later on the activities implemented by the implementing team. Though many attempts were made later to implement the project in an action research mode by both project leaders, this mode of operation could not be changed. Many professionals in the team lacked skill and knowledge to turn the project implemented as a development project into an action research mode.

2. Relative weakness of joint management committees likes Sub WRMT-

Though Sub WRMT at divisional secretary level was supposed to provide necessary institutional support in planning, implementing and monitoring of the project, this too did not happen as expected. However, this was not due to a fault in the part of officers. It was mainly due to the approaches adopted by the project in planning and implementing SCOR. The project activities were always planned and implemented by the SCOR team members. At WRMT meetings held once in two or three months, the activities planned and implemented with resource users and the progress made were presented to the Sub WRMT by SCOR team members. When technical or other assistance of the line agency officers were required they were personally contacted and hired on weekends and holidays for field activities. The officials were initiated mainly with financial incentives. However, short-term study tours to India were also one main incentive, which made officers to participate in SCOR activities actively.

The officer involvement in SCOR activities was not satisfactory for many reasons. First of all, the officers had their own programs and targets to be achieved. Secondly, SCOR activities were not implemented as a part of line agency programs or attempts were not there to integrate them with agency programs in a comprehensive manner. Thirdly, SCOR activities were concentrated in small pockets while agency programs were implemented in a larger area. Finally, the field level officers of line agencies were not initiated by their superiors to involve in SCOR activities. In some cases, there was resistance from above for involvement.

In spite of all these facts, SCOR members responsible for coordinating activities with Sub WRMTs never highlighted these problems. Watershed Management Coordinators (WMCs) even prepared the letter themselves to be sent by DSs calling Sub WRMT members for meeting and got the signature of DSs and posted the letters. However, in places like Dambulla, involvement of officers in SCOR was somewhat better as the District Secretary as well as DSs who worked during this period contributed to the program with some understanding. Nevertheless, there was no commitment by SCOR for policy initiation to make these management bodies sustainable or test alternative management bodies to continue watershed management efforts.

3. Change of leadership of the project and associated conflicts and problems

One major change during Phase II was the change of project leader. Mr. Ian Makin replaced Dr.C. M. Wijyaratna who held the position of project leader on the decision of IIMI management. Majority of the project staff had a very high regard and also very intimate kind of relationship with the former project leader. Because of this reason, catalysts as well as some senior members of the

project staff resisted this change. Writing petitions to higher authorities, initiating farmers as well as officers to oppose change became the main activities of majority of catalysts and some senior staff members for a period of two month. Though this resistance could not be observed at surface level later, it was there till the end of the project.

In addition to this resistance, those who did not support these activities were treated as traitors and reactionaries. The former project leader was depicted as a martyr, who lost his position for initiating farmer companies, which is a threat to multi-national interest. Based on these arguments, those who did not support the agendas and activities to bring him back to his former position could be labeled as reactionaries. Conflicts and contradictions based on this issue could be observed to the end of the project.

4. Priority given to the activities of Hurulu Farmer company which engaged in maize purchasing activities during this period

One major intervention of SCOR was establishment of farmer companies. It was hypothesized that company is a must for creating a sustainable production environment. Since this was an activity for which former project leader gave priority, project staff felt that company should be protected at any cost. It was also conceived by many that IIMI is against the company. Since some had been convinced that former project leader sacrificed everything including his position for the concept of Farmer Company, they felt it their moral obligation to promote company. Therefore, supply of maize and soya on a forward contract to Thriposha Company became the main activity of SCOR team in Huruluwewa from October 1997 to mid March 1998. In areas like Mahameegaswewa, Kelenikawewa and Padikaramaduwa in our sample, the target activities of the project could not be successfully implemented as catalysts stayed out of the sub watershed for maize purchasing and related activities during this period.

## **5.2. ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS PROBLEMS**

### **5.2.1. Workshops for institutionalization of SCOR activities**

#### **Huruluwewa watershed**

At the PSC meeting held in December 1997 institutionalization and replication of SCOR activities were discussed in detail. At this PSC meeting it was proposed to have a workshop to get the views, ideas and suggestions of DS level and provincial level officers on these aspects. It was also decided that workshop participants should make field visits prior to this workshop to have a better understanding on SCOR achievements and problems etc.

The workshop was held in Dambulla on 7 and 8 February 1998 as proposed to formulate strategies to continue the activities implemented by SCOR. Field visits were also made to several sub watersheds where SCOR had implemented activities. The main topics discussed included the role of line agencies to continue the implementation of interventions after withdrawal of SCOR and appropriate committees to plan, implement and monitor them. Many line agencies pointed out difficulties in their part to continue these activities due to resource problems. They further pointed out that PSC and Sub WRMTs would not be functioned without an officer to co-ordinate the activities relevant to watershed management. Therefore, appointment of an officer who attends the divisional level agricultural committee meetings was proposed as an alternative arrangement. The present Sub WRMT activities were proposed to be handled by a sub committee formed under DS level agricultural committee.

In spite of these suggestions no further action was taken by line agencies to establish those committees or to implement these activities. It could be observed through out the workshop that only a very few officers were keen on continuing SCOR type activities even though many of them knew what SCOR was doing in Huruluwewa watershed.

#### **5.2.2. Workshops for the Farmer Leaders of Huruluwewa**

After realizing the relative weaknesses of RUOs, a workshop was held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1998 for farmer leaders representing 17 Farmer Organizations in Huruluwewa watershed. Forty-three farmer leaders attended the workshop held at Eden Garden Hotel at Inamaluwa, Dambulla. SCOR had provided grants to these 17 organizations for mini-project activities or plant purchasing activities.

Dr. Senaka Arachchi and Mr. P.Mutukumarana represented SCOR from the Head Office. Messrs K. Jinapala, L.R. Perera from SLNP and P.G. Somarathna from SCOR were invited as resource persons to conduct the workshop. Dr. Senaka Arachchi explained the objective of the workshop to the Farmer Leaders present.

#### **Objective**

The objective of the workshop was to list out the organizational constraints experienced by the Farmer Leaders (i.e., President, Secretary & Treasurer) on three aspects of organizations including organizational development, resource mobilization and resource.

Only the farmer leaders comprising of President, Secretary and the Treasurer of the 16 mini-projects were invited to ensure that they would be free to discuss their problems in a friendly and a bias free environment. To ensure impartiality in conducting the workshop, resource persons were drawn from Sri Lanka National Program of IIMI.

**The workshop included three sessions; first one on organizational development, the second one on resource mobilization and third one on the role of catalysts.**

First the resource persons explained that it was timely that SCOR and the Resource User Organizations to look back at their performance during the past 4 years and make an evaluation on both SCOR and RUOs themselves based on their contributions to achieve changes envisioned by SCOR to improve the living conditions of the resource users in the Huruluwewa Watershed. Resource persons further said that it is natural for RUOs to face constraints in implementing various kinds of activities and requested RUO leaders to make this workshop a forum to identify those constraints and also suggest solutions to address them.

Thereafter leaders of each Farmer Organization were asked to work together as a team during this exercise. They were supplied with pen and sufficient slips of paper to write down their opinions on some aspects relevant to three themes mentioned above. Each participant in the group could provide several opinions but they had to write down each problem in a separate slip of paper. They were also asked to write down the name of their RUO on top of the paper. They were allowed 20 minutes to discuss and write down their opinions and views.

In the first session on organizational development following questions were put forward to the leaders and they were asked to identify problems and make suggestions to solve them.

**1. Membership**

What are the problems faced by the Farmer Leaders with regard to attracting resource users to join the Resource User Groups?

**2. Leadership**

What are the constraints that affect the performance of a leader in the Resource User Group?

**3. Farmer Participation**

What were the constraints experienced when involving resource users for meetings and other organizational functions?

**4. Keeping Records & Minutes**

What were the difficulties experienced in maintaining regular records of RUO meetings?

**In Session 2 the following questions were asked from the leaders of RUOs.**

**1. Resource Mobilization.**

What are the constraints experienced by the User Organization in mobilizing financial resources for its activities?

**2. Resource Utilization**

What are the constraints experienced by the User Organizations in utilizing its financial resources?

**In Session 3** each RUO was requested to provide Yes/No answers to the following two questions

1. Do you like to pay for the Mini Project Assistant out of your organization's budget?
2. Do you agree to RUO office bearers' working as Project Assistants or Assistant Catalysts?

In the same session, they were requested to write down any other problem that they thought important. They were not expected to write down the name of the RUOs or their names.

Lastly the RUO leaders were handed over each with a paper to write down whether they get the expected support from (1) SCOR catalyst (2) Voluntary Catalyst.

**Conclusions**

It should be noted however that RUO leaders could not be expected to identify the problems and weaknesses of RUOs resulting from their own weaknesses. According to the evidence from areas like Mahasengama and Padikaramaduwa, catalysts had understood that workshop was held to inquire about their financial transactions with regard to the purchase of plants. This was mainly because there were serious allegation against catalysts for using organizations fund for their advantage when purchasing plants for RUOs. Because of this reason, RUO leaders had been opinionated and they had been asked to praise catalysts as well as their work. There had been training to RUO leaders by some catalysts on what and what things they should tell at the workshop. For e.g. treasurer of Mahasengama RUO praised SCOR catalyst and his work even though he had lost trust among the members of RUO as revealed through data collection during this period. Similar tendencies to praise catalysts were seen in many other locations. It should be borne in mind that many leaders had benefits from their associations through catalysts and were dependent upon them. All these things set limits to the findings in this



workshop. However the comments made by the participants threw some light on major constraints really affecting the leadership.

Most frequently stated problems under Organizational Development were as follows :

- Lack of awareness of the benefits from RUOs
- Too many organizations operating in the village. Difficult to pay fees for all
- Lack of confidence in leadership
- Poverty of the farmers.
- Dishonest practices of the leadership
- In-efficient leadership
- Absence of unity especially among the leaders due to political rivalry
- Farmers dependency on leadership
- Differences in interests of the highland and irrigated landowners
- Absence of support from line agencies
- Negative attitudes of the leadership
- Too lengthy farmer meetings
- Unreliable service from line agencies
- Poor participation of farmers at meetings and activities
- False promises of the line agencies
- Keeping the general membership in the dark.
- Absence of transparency in the part of leaders on financial and other transactions of
- Records are not kept properly.

Most frequently stated problems under Resource Mobilization were as follows :

- Membership contributions to funds were marginal.
- Unnecessary expenditure on functions.
- Unstable economic conditions of the farmer.
- Leaders not accountable to members.
- Poor market opportunities.
- Poor profit margins.
- Absence of proper internal mechanism to collect loans granted.
- Outside organizations distributing funds without any set plans.
- Existence of large number of organizations in villages.
- Receiving NGO Funds leading to low membership fee collection.
- Auditing problems.
- Misappropriation of RUO funds.

Most frequently stated problems under Resource Utilization were as follows :

- Lack of trust towards the leadership.
- RUO accounts not audited properly.
- Financial responsibilities concentrated among one or two leaders.
- Lack of experience in managing funds.
- Poor loan recoveries.

Constitutional reforms are required to address certain problems.  
Lack of proper monitoring on funds.  
Low profits.  
Crop failures and poor yields.  
No proper credit management practices.

### Responses to session 3

<u>No</u>	<u>Name of F.O</u>	<u>Do you like to pay for the Mini Project Assistant out of your organization's budget</u>	<u>Do you agree on office bearers of FOO working as Project Assistant or Catalyst</u>
1.	Tract 6 D.C Colony 2	Yes	Yes
2.	Kelenikawewa	No	Yes
3.	Mahasengama	Yes	Yes
4.	Hurulugama	No	Yes
5.	Gerandiyaulpotha	No	Yes
6.	Maithreegama	Yes	Yes, if members agree
7.	Dhatusena - Weragala	No	Yes
8.	Ekamuthu, Puwakpitiya	Yes	Yes
9.	Kokawewa	No	No
10.	Walgamwewa-Lenadora	Yes	Yes
11.	Kumbukwewa	Yes	Yes
12.	Mahasen Aluthgama	Yes	Yes
13.	Kashyapa- Polattawa	Yes	Yes
14.	Mahameegaswewa	No	No
15.	Namal - Namal Pura	No	Yes
16.	Walagamba - Lower Araula	No	Yes
17.	Padikaramaduwa- Peranigama	No	Yes

### Problems of RUOs as perceived by leaders

The following are the general comments made by the Farmer Officials during the workshop when they were asked to write their problems freely. They have been presented as they were told by the leaders give the readers an idea of the type of understanding each one has about their own problems:

1. SCOR Mini-Project Assistants have not been paid their allowance for the last 3 months. What are the alternatives suggested?
2. It is difficult to market the products produced by the Farmers. Is it possible to find Markets?
3. Awareness must be created among the farmers to have a group feeling when cultivating.
4. Absence of rainfall and scarcity of water had a negative impact on the efforts of SCOR in improving the weak farmer organizations, providing resources to the farmers and developing of degenerated land in the area.
5. The three officials of the RUO must be paid an incentive to keep the organization going.
6. SCOR together with the F.O has arranged to purchase products at a higher price. This has become an unbearable problem to the unscrupulous traders. If the SCOR does not continue this process in the future, the farmers will have to finally give in to those unscrupulous traders.
7. SCOR money is spent more largely on unnecessary work than on the necessary work.

8. If farmer leaders were at-least paid Rs. 500.00 as an incentive, RUO performance would improve.
9. If such allowance is paid, the farmer leaders will be able to create more awareness among the farmers.
10. D.O Kahatagasdigiliya does not respond well to Kelenikawewa RUO
11. What are the actions taken by SCOR to create an awareness among the farmers about the allocations granted to RUOs out of SCOR funds and also on how to use these money more efficiently as our own money.
12. Although meetings are held under the Feeder Canal, the SCOR officials are not knowledgeable about the pattern of water issue and as a result the farmers are inconvenienced to a great extent.
13. The RUO officials must be made aware of the details of funds and resources channeled through SCOR. Certain things take place even without our knowledge as RUO leaders.
14. We expect support for Animal Husbandry from SCOR.
15. Problems of Sub Committees under Kokawewa should be taken up for discussion to make it a more effective organization.
16. It will be good to prepare an action plan to change the attitudes of the State Officials towards the SCOR and the RUOs.
17. If SCOR phases out, what will be the institutions that will work with us?
18. Does SCOR propose to employ at-least one person to look after its work in the area?
19. We need to discuss how the funds could be increased in our organization.
20. F.O must make an effort to get at-least two agro-wells to each village.
21. Former officials of RUOs have misappropriated funds received through SCOR. These incidents have been intimated to the SCOR official who visit this area. But no action has been taken.
22. It is important that now we are in a position to market our products through the Farmer Company established by SCOR. Since then unscrupulous traders were not able to exploit us.
23. RUO leaders should be paid a travelling allowance for work done for
24. Members taking part should be allowed to speak freely and openly so that other RUOs could get an example from them.
25. If the RUO officials are given training, the SCOR will be able to reach its targets.
26. SCOR Project has been responsible for distributing plants among the farmers. When the farmers were paying the RUO the cost of such plants, SCOR officers went to the homes of the farmers and told them that they had been given free for promoting conservation efforts. However, RUOs insists on paying it.
27. Mini Project Assistants are not paid their allowance.
28. Although the Project Report has been introduced to the Bank, no action has been taken so far.
29. It is appropriate to issue more funds at village level, before SCOR phases out.
30. It is timely that a discussion be held to create a proper awareness program among the RUO officials with a view to establish more Farmer Outlets (sale and purchasing centers under the company) to fetch a good price for farmers

products, nurseries etc. through RUOs, so that they could conduct these activities even after SCOR has phased out.

31. An Insurance scheme has to be established under the RUOs
32. Provide wells for those who are doing teak cultivation under Forestry Program.
33. Is it possible to divert RUO funds for business purposes under a loan scheme?
34. Catalysts should not grant allocations to outsiders against the decisions of the RUO
35. Unknown debits made when bank dealings are done. For e.g. Funds for National Security, Stationary, Other taxes etc. Banks should give details of such deductions
36. There should be better relationship among the farmer leaders.
37. Basic amenities such as water, housing and toilets etc. Should be made available.
38. Awareness on maintaining RUOaccounts.

### **Responses to the role of catalyst and assistant catalyst**

#### A total of 17 responses were received

SCOR catalyst is extending support	15
SCOR catalyst is not extending support	2
Voluntary catalyst is extending support	13
Voluntary catalyst is not extending support	4

### **Recommendations**

The problems identified by the F.O leadership called for a number of interventions by SCOR. However the main problem was the attitudes and skills of leadership, which required to be addressed with a proper farmer training program covering topics such as leadership, financial management, inter-personal relations, book keeping etc. It was also revealed that SCOR need to provide training to catalysts and line agency officers to support and guide RUOs for organizational and resource management tasks.

### **Workshop for catalysts**

A workshop was held at Habarana Lodge on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of March 1998 for catalysts in both projects after realizing the problems at field level through monitoring of activities and consultation with farmer leaders. It revealed that catalysts had been after achieving some SCOR targets to bring about land management practices and had not done much to build the capacity of leaders and strengthen RUOs. This was due to a misconception that leaders of RUOs would learn to do things by doing things and no much training is required. Less attention was paid to capacity building of leaders for management of organizations and resources.

In addition to this, it had been observed that catalysts lacked not only the skills required for introducing and managing changes, but also the required qualities such as respecting the views of others. Some catalyst took the opportunity at meetings to attack their

opponents in very unprofessional manner. They did not respect the views of others or was less concerned about the feelings of others. This could be seen more in Huruluwewa. Some catalysts had been opinionated that there are no people more knowledgeable than they to mobilize resource users are. People like WMCs had been asked not to intervene in RUO activities, as catalysts are the experts on this subject area. Due to these reasons, catalysts had lost many things including the humbleness to learn and respect the views of others. Though all these issues can not be addressed through a workshop limited to one or two days, the main purpose of the workshop was to make catalysts aware of their role as catalysts and provide them some training. Also, the workshop held after the new project leader took over the office reflected IIMI's concern to strengthen the capacity of people and their institutions to manage things by themselves.

The workshop was attended by senior staff members and catalysts in both, senior SCOR staff at head quarters, several invitees from IIMI and Agrarian Research and Training Institute (ARTI) as resource persons. The workshop included the following three sessions.

Sessions 1 – Participants were asked to form in to four groups, catalysts in the two watersheds in to two groups and other professional in to another two groups. They were requested to discuss on the following topics and make presentations.

1. What was the role expected by SCOR from the catalysts?
2. How did the catalysts play this role under the given conditions?
3. What were the constraints and problems encountered by them in performing the expected role?

Sessions 2 – A training by Mr.Ranasinha Perera from ARTI on “The Role of Catalysts in a Development Project”

Sessions 3 – Research findings on Institutional Development attempts in Huruluwewa and Nilwala – presented by two researchers attached to two projects

Sessions 4 – Recommendations of the workshop and future action

Session 1 discussion – Huruluwewa

1. Expected role from catalysts –  
To create necessary awareness and initiate farmers to plan, implement and monitor and evaluate production and protection programs leading to sustainable development in sub watersheds.
2. How did catalysts play this role –  
Play the role of catalyst while doing extension related work such as transfer of soil and water conservation and production technologies

### 3. Constraint and problems faced in playing the role of catalytic role

- Lack of agency support
- Longer period was taken to plan and implement mini-project
- Delay in providing financial assistant for mini-projects by SCOR
- Delay in getting bank loans to use as revolving fund and unwillingness in the part of banks to issue loans amounting to four times of SCOR grants
- Services of the specialists were not received in a systematic manner to implement mini-project
- Project priorities changed from time to time
- Shortcomings due to the problems associated with catalysts

#### Other matters

- Project targets were unrealistically high
- Administration problems in the project
- No comprehensive method for project evaluation
- Unreliability over continuation of the project due to funding problems
- No clear procedures for discontinuing the service of some officers during the project period
- Impact of the discontinuation of some team members on implementation of project activities

It revealed at this session that catalysts in Huruluwewa had paid more attention to implement certain project activities like conservation and had given less attention to institutional development efforts.

Sessions 2 – Mr. Ranasinha Perera from ARTI provided a basic training on the role of catalysts in a development project like SCOR.

Sessions 3 – Mr. L. R. Perera made a presentation on institutional development effort in Nilwala (Please see “Institutional Development in Nilwala Watershed - 1987 “ By L. R. Perera for details) and myself on the institutional development efforts (Please see “Development of Organizations and Institutions in Huruluwewa Watershed –1995, 1996,1997 and 1998 “ P. G. Somaratne for details.

Sessions 4 – In sessions for catalysts were asked to develop and present a program for institutional development. Catalyst in Huruluwewa presented a program for institutional development by implementing mini-project through RUOs. Though this was questioned by some participants who stressed only on institutional development, they pointed out that institutional development alone would not be possible without some activities to be implemented through RUOs. They were asked to further develop the program and implement during the rest of the project period.

### **Meetings with RUO members**

Even though SCOR management at head quarters level wanted to have series of workshops to get the view of other farmer representatives and farmers, they could have a workshop only with leading RUO representatives like president, secretary and treasurer. Therefore, team members were asked to hold meetings at village level to get the response of the farmers to SCOR field activities and problems related to implementation of them. This was required to have an understanding on what kind of changes are required to the on-going program at this stage to make SCOR activities implemented in the field sustainable. However, these meetings held during May and June 1998 with RUOs implementing mini-projects were mostly used to evaluate farmers knowledge on technologies etc. rather than to see why people have failed to adopt them and what are the real problem at farmer level to take up watershed management related activities. In some locations like Mahasengama where RUO members had conflicts with the catalyst, they came up with such problems related to fund management and other relevant issues. In many other locations, it could be observed that team members had approached the community to discuss with them the success of SCOR activities and also to make plans for the future. In these meetings some specialists went in to the extent to remind farmers of SCOR activities implemented in the field to include them in the report prepared by them. However, these meetings highlighted several serious problems. One main problem was the lack of agency support for RUO to continue resource management activities. The other was the lack of knowledge in the part of RUO officials to keep accounts and manage funds. In addition, delay in implementing mini-projects, especially the animal husbandry component and poor participation of members due to lack of benefits from RUOs were also highlighted.

Based on the understanding gained at these meetings, research findings and views and ideas expressed by the farmer leaders at workshops held previously, a training program was designed by the team members for the farmer leaders of 17 RUOs which had received SCOR grants. These training were organized on the initiation of project leader who took a keen interest in the capacity building of the RUOs and other institutions before the withdrawal of SCOR by the end of 1998.

In addition to the training, team members responsible for implementing components like animal husbandry were initiated to implement such activities before the end of the project.

### **Training to farmer leaders**

A four-day training program was held at Mahailuppallama agricultural training center for the farmers in Huruluwewa watershed from 23 to 27 July 1998. The first two days had been allocated for the farmers in downstream areas while the other two days were for the farmers in Feeder Canal area and Palugaswewa representing upstream area of Huruluwewa. On the first day A trainer from ARTI provided training to RUO leaders (secretary, president and the treasurer) on leadership. The training session started with a



discussion by farmer leaders on the institutional problems faced by RUOs. The training started after this initial discussion was mainly on the following topics:

- Leadership types and appropriate leadership for RUOs
- Rural leadership and characteristics and role of leaders
- Selecting leaders and factors affecting leadership
- Membership behavior and joint responsibility
- Organizing and conducting meeting
- The problems within RUOs and how to overcome them
- Concluding remarks on the training

Majority of the leaders who attended these sessions informed that the training was very useful to them and they had no opportunity to expose in to this type of training previously.

On the second day farmer representatives were trained on the following aspects:

- Farmer Companies and linkages of RUOs with them by Mr. Nanda Jayasuriya, EDS of SCOR in Nilwala
- RUO account keeping by Mrs.Chitrani Fernando from ASD
- Practical session on book-keeping by Mrs.Chitrani Fernando from ASD
- Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation by Mr.L.R.Perera from IIMI

### **Workshops with Sub WRMT members**

#### **Workshop in Galenbidunuwewa**

Since the workshop held with the line agency officials in February 1998 did not yield expected results, two workshops were held with the divisional and provincial level heads of line agencies and leaders of RUOs in July 1998. The first workshop was held at IMD office, Galenbidunuwewa on 20 July 1998. SCOR staff members, officers of line agencies like ASD, DOA, LDD attended this, and DSs attached to Palugaswewa, Kahatagasdigiya and Galenbidunuwewa DS divisions. Commissioner of Agrarian Services of NCP and Provincial Director of Livestock Development attended as provincial level officers. A representative from People's Bank, Galenbidunuwewa too attended this workshop. Methgama, Padikaramaduwa Old Village, Nikawewa, Kubukwewa, Puwakpitiya, Kubukwewa (Palugaswewa), Karuwalagaswewa, Tract 6, Weeragala and Mahasengama RUO too represented this workshop. Number of FRs attended was 13.

Team leader of SCOR, Huruluwewa addressing the workshop said that SCOR project ends in September 1998 and the activities implemented by SCOR with RUOs in the past need to be implemented with the line agencies in future. Research Associate, SCOER who addressed meeting said that the objective of the workshop was to discuss the problems faced by RUOs at present in implementing watershed management activities and to find ways and means to solve these problems through line agency participation.

Research officer of SCOR made a presentation on the present performance of RUOs based on research and M&E findings. He pointed out that though some RUOs function at a satisfactory level, most of the organizations are weak in building up of funds, fund management, getting the active participation of members. Major problem with regard to fund management is the inability in the part of RUOs to recover credit given to members.

The line agency officers were made aware through the presentation made of SCOR activities implemented with RUOs. One research officer pointed out that amount given to RUOs as grant amounts to Rs.12,233,073,34.00. Acting WMC of SCOR, Huruluwewa discussed various constraints faced by SCOR implementing mini-projects. Lack of agency support for mini-project activities, problems at RUO level and reluctance in the part of banks to invest on mini-project activities were some of the problems brought to the notice of the participants by the Acting WMC.

WYC of SCOR in her discussion on animal husbandry program under mini-projects pointed out that main problems faced by the project was the death of the animals obtained by farmers on credit from the banks. Farmers failed to settle bank loans due to this reason according to WYC.

After these initial discussions, a session was held to come to an agreement on the action to be taken to strengthen the RUOs. Provincial Agrarian Service Commissioner who chaired this meeting told the participants that ASD has a program to train RUO leaders in book keeping, fund raising and fund management and requested to discuss problems relevant to these issues. In response participants put forward the following problems:

1. Farmer leaders pointed out that acquisition of inputs like seed paddy is a major problem. ASD officers pointed out that seed paddy can be provided if RUOs make request for them through Dos prior to the commencement of the season.
2. Credit recovery was seen as a major problem of RUOs. DOs pointed out that it is possible to take legal action against defaulters. However, it was pointed out that RUOs needed to monitor credit and take initiative to recover credit.
3. Farmer leaders as well as DOs pointed out that farmers in Palugaswewa need a separate company. As RUOs have no their own funds, it was proposed to use the money given to Green Path Company and establish a farmer company at Palugaswewa.
4. DOs of ASD agreed to do auditing of RUO accounts and guide RO leaders to keep accounts systematically. It was also pointed out that any RUO with problems in accounts keeping could seek advice from DOs without waiting till auditing is done. The accounts need to be kept systematically for any body to undertake auditing according to DOs.

5. The Livestock Development officers agreed to provide necessary support to RUOs for implementing animal husbandry programs using mini-project funds.

#### **Workshop at Habarana**

A similar kind of workshop was held in Habarana with the line agency officers in Dambulla DS division and RUO representatives from Feeder Canal area. Some district level officers too attended this workshop. Similar kind of problems was taken up at this workshop too. Though line agency officers actively participated at this workshop and made valuable suggestions, they pointed out that line agency have no capacity to implement SCOR activities. However, ASD agreed to assist RUOs to continue resource management activities. It was also discussed to see weather it is possible to form a sub committee of DS level agricultural committee to look in to watershed management related activities and monitor their progress.

## **PART I - HURULUWEWA WATERSHED**

### **SECTION 6 - CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT**

#### **6.1. Conclusions**

Based on the discussions in the previous chapters, attempts are made here in this chapter to answer the research questions raised in Chapter One of this report. Answer to the question 1 on SCOR conceptual model can be derived from the discussion in the Chapter Three of this report which briefly discusses SCOR concepts as well as strategies and approaches to translate them in to action. Part One – Section Three on the planning process of interventions and Part One – Section Four on the implementation process of SCOR interventions discuss how the project activities were really planned and implemented by SCOR staff in its final Phase extending from September 1997 to August 1998.

##### **Research question 1-**

As discussed in Chapter three, SCOR was supposed to play the role of a facilitator to establish and promote shared management institutional model and to test various kind of technological and management interventions for replication. For this purpose, SCOR conceptual model required SCOR to put its efforts to improve the incentive and institutional context in which agricultural activities were undertaken in the sub watersheds. One major activity area for SCOR to intervene was community capacity building for resource and organizational management tasks. It further required building the capacity of the government, non-government and private sector organizations to work with the communities in such a way to assist them to engage in sustainable production activities. It was further expected to work with a vision for transforming from a project mode to a program mode in order to make SCOR intervention to work after the withdrawal of SCOR. SCOR was expected to implement the project activities with the other stakeholders in an action research mode to learn from field implementation and make adjustment to the implementation program when an where such adjustments were required.

Research questions 2 – What are the strategies and approaches proposed for translating those concepts into practice?

The following were the approaches and strategies proposed by the project to achieve its goals and objectives:

1. Making the watershed the basic planning and implementation unit
2. Enhancing State-User partnership for shared control of resources

3. Using participatory planning and implementation approach
4. Strengthening of resource user groups and organizations through creating economic opportunities, improving access to information, promoting legal recognition and powers, improving regulatory and legal mechanisms and establishment of effective links between private sector, NGOs and public sector organizations
5. Increasing the technical and organizational capacity of resource user groups and organizations to interact effectively with agencies and enterprises and increasing agency capacity to serve the users adequately
6. Improving the capability of government agencies for planning, coordination and implementation of land and water management programs in an integrated manner
7. A phased withdrawal of external assistance while ensuring a high degree of internalization of processes and practices which will have proven qualities of sustainability.
8. Replication of tested innovations in other watersheds

#### Strategies for translating concepts into action

Initially, SCOR had several rounds of participatory planning workshops with line agencies as well as farmer representatives to develop project proposals. Thereafter, SCOR activities started in the field by appointing catalysts to sub watershed areas with specialist to plan and implement the project. Catalysts collected data and information with the involvement of farmer leaders, community leaders, some line agency officials as well as students of schools and prepared participatory maps to identify resources and resource use and problems associated with soil and water resource management. All these data collection activities had one main problem. It focussed on collecting data for making watershed management interventions rather than identifying the real problems of the farmers. In short, it had a project focussed approach for planning.

During the same period the institutional mechanism required for project implementation was established. Thereafter, project's main goal was achieving project targets such as number of groups, organizations formed and strengthened, and area-conserved etc. Though these activities were supposed to be implemented through agency collaboration and close interactions, project could not obtain the desired participation from the agencies due to the following reasons:

1. SCOR professionals did the decision regarding planning and implementation of interventions and also the development of the interventions at SCOR office without any direct involvement of agencies. The hierarchical committees like

Sub WRMTs were used only to review progress. At least a technical committee was not formed at watershed level with the involvement of agency officials to get their participation for the development of interventions and dissemination of them. Therefore, the agency officers did not feel that they have a responsibility for implementing them. In some cases they did not agree with some interventions.

2. Obtaining line agency participation for implementing a watershed management project can not be done overnight. It is required to have program to bring about necessary attitudinal and other changes in the field level as well as at head quarters levels of line agencies. Support from the top bureaucracy is an important factor influencing the participation of field level officials. However, this was a slow process that SCOR could not wait for mainly because it had to achieve certain targets promised to the donors and the government. Therefore, project had to forget about the line agencies and implement the project with the professionals hired by the project. This made a gap between the line agencies and SCOR. For example, many DOA officers were not in agreement with some soil and water conservation technologies initiated by SCOE specialists.
3. Field level officers of line agencies had their own targets to achieve. In DOA, AIs had a larger area to be covered and they found it difficult to involve in SCOR activities on working days. There were no initiation from the head quarters of agencies for the field level officers to participate in SCOR project activities. Due to these reasons, SCOR had to hire them on weekends for certain activities for which SCOR needed them to help farmers. Hiring them for project activities in this way made them to believe that SCOR initiated activities are not their activities and SCOR should pay them for such work. There were instances in which SCOR paid certain field level officers for their participation at cultivation meetings for which they should participate as a part of their job.

This is a basic difference of SCOR with other action research projects implemented by IWMI in Sri-Lanka. For example, in Irrigation and Crop Diversification Project implemented in Kirindi Oya and Walawewe, interventions were developed by a technical committee represented by the project level line agency heads and technical experts and were implemented through the Project Management Committee comprised of government officials and farmer representatives. Higher level officials of agencies attended these committees too from time to time. Project concerns such as finding solutions to water scarcity problems and establishment of water rights between Old Ellegala and New area farmers of Kirindi Oya had become the concerns of both higher level and project level officials. . Though SCOR established new committees like Sub WRMT, they never became effective mechanisms to plan and implement activities at project level. In spite of this, SCOR did not try to find alternatives as it s main focus was on achieving targets by whatever means to show the progress and achievements of the project. Due to these reasons the agency participation at SCOR activities were very weak

by the time SCOR started its Phase II activities and it did not show any trend towards moving from a project mode to a program mode.

Though planning and implementation of project activities were supposed to be implemented with the interactive participation of farmers, this too could not be done for the following reasons:

1. SCOR's main strategy for strengthening of user level institutions like RUOs were to establish RUOs, obtain them legal recognition, provide grants and technical training on use of technologies to initiate them to implement SCOR activities. At awareness creation meetings SCOR officials had promised them various kind of assistance such as credit for seasonal and perennial crops, animal husbandry and purchase of agricultural implements like water pumps to initiate them to undertake soil and water conservation technologies. SCOR had made these promises with the expectation of loans from the bank (equal to four times of SCOR grant) deposited at the bank as collateral. Though SCOR provided grants, banks were not prepared to provide such big loans to RUOs, which had no management or other skills or fund generating activities. Distrust based on these unfulfilled promises could be observed in many places like Meegaswewa, Mahasengama and Kokawewa.
2. Farmers who had taken loans through the organizations had failed to settle them. They tried to avoid organizations for this reason. In organizations like Mahameegaswewa membership dropped down to 8 (from 62 at the beginning) after the organization took action to recover money through legal action. Though all most all the farmers were credit worthy at the beginning, more than 85% had become defaulters to the organizations by the time Phase II activities started. There were various reasons behind the failure in the part of farmers to settle loans. The main reason, however was the lack of a program for credit management at RUO level. Credit programs had been started without creating skill in the RUO to manage credit.
3. SCOR had a set of ready-made interventions for all the locations. These interventions did not offer solutions to the practical problems faced by all the farmers of diverse socio-economic backgrounds with different kind of physical and other problems related to land. For example though bund stabilization by planting pavatta on the bunds (a conservation measure) was attractive to some farmers in Garadiyaulpotha area with erosive slope lands, it did not attract farmers cultivating flat lands. Approaching farmers with a package of interventions too had its undesirable results on farmer participation soil and water conservation related interventions.
4. SCOR in its haste for achieving targets did not seriously consider the necessity of leadership and other management skill building in RUOs and community members. A large amounts were issued to RUOs which had neither leadership or management capabilities to manage funds. Leaders were not transparent in

financial transactions. For these reasons, many leaders were not acceptable to the community and RUOs had become very weak to handle resource management activities for this reason too.

5. SCOR catalysts too involved heavily in fund management activities through which they controlled the leaders and members to some extent to get their participation in conservation activities. Because of this tight control farmers as well as leaders felt that SCOR grants did not belong to them. This had an impact on leaders' skill development for fund management activities.

The strategies and approaches during Phase I under the specific conditions given above can be summarized as follows:

1. SCOR planned the project activities with a project-focussed approach and implemented project activities using catalysts and specialist hired by the project. Project could not get the interactive participation of the agencies.
2. Project was concerned more with achieving targets rather than testing innovations as it had agreed upon targets to USAID and the Government of Sri-Lanka.
3. SCOR initiated organizations or strengthened the existing ones for implementing project activities. SCOR provided grants to RUOs without getting a financial contribution from the farmers. SCOR expected banks to provide credit for production and protection mini-projects planned with the involvement of the farmers. However, bank assistance was not at desired levels. For this reasons RUO could not have sufficient funds to implement member-benefiting activities to initiate them to undertake soil and water conservation technologies.
4. Due to various reasons cited above, SCOR catalysts had to take lead in implementing activities at field level even after more than 4 years of project implementation as the project failed to create necessary conditions to make people and agency feel that the project and its interventions belong to them.

### Strategies during Phase II

When SCOR Phase II activities started, line agency participation as well as farmer participation in SCOR activities were not at desired levels as explained in previous sections. In areas like Garadiyaulpotha where SCOR had a better acceptance than in other locations, number of farmers with SCOR worked was limited to a few households who received benefits through participatory forestry and other programs coordinated by SCOR catalysts. The groups, which had been formed in these areas, too had become defunct due to lack of benefits to members through participation. It was under these circumstances that massive tree-planting program to develop sub watersheds as model sub watersheds



came into operation. This was the main program implemented during Phase II even though there were many other mini-projects activities too in the action plan for Phase II. The planning and implementation process of this activity had been described in detail in Section Three and Four of this report. We summarize this for the purpose of analyzing to see how the approaches and strategies adopted in this activity fit into the conceptual model of SCOR.

1. SCOR project leader decides to develop three sub watersheds as model sub watershed within a short period after realizing that watershed management interventions are not intensively implemented in any of the sub watersheds. On his initiation, team members identify sub watersheds.
2. Team members propose tree planting in all most all the lands in sub watersheds both as conservation and a production measure. They further inform the project leader that plants have to be given free of charge, as banks are not prepared to provide credit for perennial crops. Also, farmers are not prepared to purchase such a large number of plants. Therefore, project leader promises to provide grants to RUOs to purchase plants.
3. Catalysts and specialists collect data on plant requirements by consulting farmers and making field visits. Farmers are consulted mainly to know the number of plants and plant species required by them. In some places like Padikaramaduwa, this is done in ad-hoc manner on the basis of issuing plants worth Rs.1, 000.00 to each farmer. Local knowledge on plant survivals, number of plants that can be managed by a farm family within a season etc. is not tapped.
4. Team members decide to issue plants to those who adopt conservation measures. A conservation program along with a program for tree management is attached to the massive tree planting programs. An action plan indicating the responsibility of each team member is prepared and researchers are asked to monitor and evaluate the field program.
5. SCOR issues checks to RUOs. Catalysts look for places to purchase plants. Some catalysts take RUO leaders to nurseries to buy plants. Some buy the plants themselves and provide plants to RUO leaders for distribution.
6. With the grant money issued to RUOs for the purchase of plants, SCOR catalysts hire farmer leaders or farmer representatives as assistant catalysts to implement the program. Their responsibilities vary from locations to locations. In some places, they distribute plants, provide technical advice and collect data on plant survival. RUO leaders.
7. SCOR specialists provide training on various aspects of plant establishment and management to farmers as well as assistant catalysts. AIs of DOA are hired by the project on weekends for providing technical guidance in some location. In

some locations where catalysts themselves were formerly AIs, they provide technical guidance themselves.

8. In locations like Garadiyaulpotha and Puwakpitiya, catalysts achieve targets such as planting trees in time, applying mulch and number of trees targeted to be planted etc. However, many other conservation targets like eye-brow bundling, alley cropping, pitcher irrigation fails, as farmers can not implement a large number of technologies within a single season while attending to their agricultural activities. In some cases, farmers question the usefulness of technologies, as their usefulness has not been demonstrated.
9. In locations like Padikaramaduwa, catalyst is accused by farmer leaders for not obtaining their participation for plant purchasing and distribution activities.
10. Very hot climatic condition prevails after tree establishment. Farmers find it difficult to water the plants with their other cultivation activities. In case of some farmers, they have no wells in their lands and they have to bring water from distance places. Large number of trees dies during the season itself. Survival rate is 20% or less in most of the locations.

This summary on the process highlights the following:

1. Non-participatory planning – Farmers local knowledge was not tapped Farmers involved as passive recipients of the benefits, mainly the plants free of charge. They were not finally benefited as the plants died due to bad planning. Officers were not consulted to obtain their views on various aspects of the program.
2. Attempts at achieving targets within a single season to show the success of the project. Instead grant money could have been given to the RUOs to implement the tree planting programs four about three four years even after withdrawal of SCOR. They could have been initiated to have their own nurseries by using SCOR grant to implement the program each year.
3. Farmer level capacity building for handling this type of an activity with the participation of the community was not enhanced. RUO leaders or representatives were hired for implementing the program and achieve targets. They were not initiated to take the responsibility of this type of a program (plant purchase, distribution and providing some basic knowledge to farmers on tree establishment and management) as leaders of an organization for resource management. In some cases they were not even introduced to nurseries for them to purchase plants in future if community members require purchasing of plants.
4. Socio economic and other factors, which would influence the outcomes, were not considered in the planning as it was done in haste. Issue of large number of

plants to farmers without considering their practical problems for maintain them was one main course for the failure in the program.

### Research Questions 3

The discussions in previous chapters and summary on the implementation of tree planting activities shows that project has deviated from the proposed strategies and approaches, and therefore it is required to answer the third research question why the project deviated from these strategies and approaches. The reasons for the deviations are explained below:

1. Projects emphasis on achieving targets. Though projects need to have targets, they should be moderate ones and should be made with the interactive participation of the stakeholder to make them implementable. SCOR planned many activities at the project office. Conservation targets like alley cropping, eyebrow bunding etc. were catalysts' targets rather than the target agreed by the farmers. They were unrealistic targets (even though they were small in scale), as the farmers had no accountability to achieve them. Catalysts had to adopt strategies like hiring farmer representatives for implementing tree-planting program and even to count the number of trees survived etc. as project failed to plan and implement the activity with the interactive participation of people. Many catalysts knew that it was not participatory. They said that they implemented the program, as higher level project officials wanted them to implement a hasty program for sub watershed development before the end of the project.
2. Planning of project with a project focussed approach need special attention. Though a watershed management project can not address all the problems in sub watersheds, it needs to direct the attention of agencies concerned to solve the pressing problems of farmers. This helps to implement watershed management intervention. In addition, as Meeoya study for developing a project proposal, prepared with a non-project focussed approach shows that people give less priority to resource degradation problems. In such a case, action need to be taken to create the awareness of resource degradation somewhat prior to implementing interventions for resource conservation.
3. Failure in the part of the management to implement the project in action research mode to learn lessons from field implementation and to introduce corrective measures, policy interventions etc. For example, when committee systems like Sub WRMTs failed, alternatives could have been sought for internalization of the project activities through existing management apparatus like Divisional Secretary level committees, District Agricultural Committee (DSC) etc. However, the professional always tried to show the progress and achievements in the geographical areas or subject areas under their charge rather than critically evaluating the interventions implemented by them. This was mainly because project was implemented as a development project. In a project like SCOR which was supposed to be implemented in an action

research mode need to have professionals with abilities and skills to test interventions and learn lessons. Tragedy of SCOR was that it lacked people with such skills.

4. Lack of skills of the professional and catalyst for implementing this type of a project - Project has not provided orientation training to the professional and catalysts with the assumption that they knew the art and craft of this type of a project. However, the strategies and approaches adopted by the catalysts as well as professionals in locations like Puwakpitiya, Padikaramaduwa clearly demonstrates their lack of knowledge on project concepts and strategies and their less exposure to planning and implementing participator rural development projects of this nature.
5. Many professional and catalysts lacked not only the skill and but also required qualities to engage in a participatory dialogue to share views and ideas and introduce changes to their operation style. Due to this reason, team meetings became forums to attack some professionals who held different views and ideas or who pointed out drawbacks. Project management intervened to improve these things towards the end of the project. However, it was too late for a project like SCOR.
6. Less attention paid for institutional strengthening and capacity building at RUO level. One major assumption of key project officials were that farmers would learn by working with catalysts and therefore training on institutional development is not much required. For example leadership training etc. were considered as conventional training for a project like SCOR and therefore emphasis was more on training on soil and water conservation. This was a serious problem for strengthening of RUOs. Catalysts played the role of the community leader towards the end of the project as leaders had not developed skills due to this wrong assumption made by some key officials of the project. In case of agencies, the constraints that the agency had in involving in the project activities

In addition, many other problems related to the management of the project influenced this process and it is beyond the scope of this PD activity, confined mainly to the sub watersheds, to address such issues.

However, all these problems identified with project implementation can not be applied to the latter part of the project in which a lot of emphasis was given to institutional strengthening. Various kind of training, workshops etc. held towards the end of the project shows the move in this direction. However, impact on these interventions was not visible by the end of the project. The new project leader introduced some major changes to the management style of the project, giving more independence to the team for taking decisions and implementing the project activities in an integrated manner. In most cases he played the role of a facilitator and contributed more to create an environment for participatory dialogue among team members. He had transparent procedures for project

implementation and did not held separate meetings with catalysts and professionals, a practice adopted by the former leader for project implementation. However, this was not the desired role for the majority of team members who were used to a different kind of management style in which individuals made attempts to glorify themselves by implementing activities in their sub watersheds or giving priority to their activity areas by harming the holistic and integrated approach of the project.

The way the project operated four more than four years had serious consequences on redirecting the project. Officers wanted incentive payments for participation at meetings as well as in implementing some limited kind of activities. Farmer leaders heavily depended on catalysts for decisions on implementation of mini-project and other activities. They wanted financial and other assistance from the project for implementing each and every activity and blamed project officers for failing to keep the promises made to them initially. Leaders of most of the organizations had no capacity or acceptance in the community to implement the project themselves. Though officers participated at RUO activities on SCOR initiation to receive some payments, their willingness to implement watershed management interventions themselves could not be observed. However, this does not deny that SCOR had implemented watershed management activities and made awareness in the community on environmental degradation and also on soil and water conservation technologies. The problem was that SCOR did not adopt appropriate strategies and approaches to strengthen institutions to sustain the project efforts in the long run. The steps taken towards the end of the project are most unlikely to address many of these problems as they were too late. The nature and the intensity of the problems related to institutionalization of SCOR need to be explained by allowing a key official to speak for him on this subject area. " You now ask us to take over SCOR activities. An Institution like IIMI came and intervened here in these areas (institutional strengthening for watershed management) because we have no resources and capacity to do these things. Now you ask us to take over. The most important thing is whether the capacity of the communities have been built through your interaction to take over these responsibilities" (by the District Secretary, Matale at the meeting held in July 1998 for internalization of SCOR). As the ongoing sections reveal we can not say "Yes" to this most relevant question.

## **LESSIONS LEARNT**

1. Lack of skill of the officers working at watershed levels were a serious problem faced by SCOR. Skill development of project officials working in an innovative projects like SCOR need to be done at least through orientation training etc. prior to the implementation of projects in case the service of people with such skills can not be obtained. In case of catalysts, at least three months training need to be provided on social mobilization, participatory planing and implementation etc. whatever their background prior to the employment of the project.

2. A mode of project operation like that of SCOR in which project team planned and implemented interventions with a minimum or no involvement of line agencies in development and dissemination of project interventions need to be considered seriously by project with a vision for internalization of interventions. Technical committees at project level participated by higher level officers of agencies and field level staff, technical experts and other professionals of the project would be a better arrangement for technology development.
3. It is not appropriate to start the project with ready made institutional models. Models need to be allowed to emerge through the institutional problems encountered. In case that the hierarchical committees proposed under the project can not be made to sustain after the project through policy and other interventions, best alternative may be the use of existing hierarchical committees by enlarging its scope to undertake watershed management components too.
4. A package approach is very harmful for transfer of soil and water conservation technologies even when such technologies are proven one at research station. Socio-economic conditions of the farmers as well as the nature of the land management problems faced by the particular farmers under specific conditions of their lands need to be considered. SCOR adopted a package kind of an approach in soil and water conservation technology transfer at the beginning and this was not totally abandoned even by the end of the project.
5. Institutional capacity building at community level through training and other means is required to sustain interventions, procedures and practices introduced by projects like SCOR. It does not mean the capacity building of the leaders alone. Skills need to be developed at various sections of the community including that of women and youths.
6. Initiating resource user participation with financial incentives or promises would seriously hamper to cultivate attitude and behavior pattern required for managing resources by users themselves. It is appropriate to start projects with the available resources at community level rather than channeling funds from outside.
7. Projects like SCOR should tolerate slow progress and should not run after unrealistic targets. Resource users' adoption is influenced by various socio-economic factors for which projects can not offer immediate solutions. Therefore, project need to be long terms ones aiming at providing sustainable livelihood opportunities for people. Hasty programs like the tree planting program implemented during Phase II demonstrates that changes in land management can not be brought about within a season or two whatever the effort of the projects may be for bringing about such changes.