

UNESCAP-NGOs Meet on livelihoods

Organised by: NCRC

Venue: NCRC Office, Mahalakshmi Nagar, Nagapattinam

Date: 30.05.2006, 2.30 p.m

Participants: Dr. Amitava Mukherjee, Miguel Perez Ludena of UNESCAP, NGO representatives and NCRC representatives

Purpose of the meeting

Generate ideas and share the programme and plans of UNESCAP for livelihood promotion in Nagapattinam

Introducing UNESCAP to the group

Dr. Amitava Mukherjee of UNESCAP gave a brief introduction on UNESCAP

UNESCAP's position in the UN structure

Under the UN Secretariat there are 5 regional offices called commissions namely:

1. Economic and social commission for Asia and Pacific
2. Economic and social commission for Europe
3. Economic and social commission for Latin America
4. Economic and social commission for West Asia
5. Economic and social commission for Addis Ababa

ESCAP is not a funding agency. It is a technocratic institute focusing on policy advocacy and developing best practices

The focus areas of ESCAP

1. Poverty reduction
2. Managing globalization
3. Emerging social issues

UNESCAP's activities are orientated towards Pro Poor Public Private Partnership called as 5 Ps

The short introduction was followed by the screening of a documentary film on the successful projects of UNESCAP in different parts of the world.

Following this, Dr. Amitava spoke about the intention of starting a project in Nagapattinam. A lot of people are still living without basic services, earning less than a dollar per day. The situation needs to be changed. There is a need to set up new institutions, which make money by providing services. This entails economic incentives for the private companies and enough services for poor people.

One of the objectives of UNESCAP's is to create a platform between the private companies and the government for delivering basic services

Different models are available based on the experience UNESCAP across the globe. The important point is to make sure that the poor people have a voice in the design on the enterprises.

How to go about?

1. Feasibility study on what works what does not, in Nagapattinam
2. Once this is through, then look out for partners
3. Implementing the project

Mr. Miguel Perez of UNESCAP said, the commission wants to create a model here and export it elsewhere. India is an excellent place to test – vibrant NGO communities

How it works

The communities buy shares in the company which is set up; will have membership in the board, creating ownership.

The private companies are bringing in money, managerial capacities; community also puts in money; government creates an enabling environment and monitors the company; NGOs facilitating the whole process

Concerns raised by the participants and possibilities sought

Yousuf Meheralli Group, wanted to know the procedural part – who will take the first step?

UNESCAP responded that it has taken the first move by coming to Nagai- the catalytic role has to be played by the NGOs

The NGO has already given training to women SHGs in alternative livelihoods. When competition comes in how does it sustain- don't have the advertising capacity. Planning to organize these SHGs into a federation – any help from UNESCAP in the following areas:

- Competition- how to sustain
- Production
- Marketing

UNESCAP suggested that, instead of starting a new production, marketing the existing ones would be an option and assured to help analyse all possible options and trying out the best option.

Technical support will be made available by UNESCAP.

Annie, CEO, NCRC raised the concern that a lot of small livelihood groups are here, having no proven technology and have been looking for technical support. There is also a need to have some quality control mechanisms

SIFFS

Improvement in processing techniques on deep sea fishing, bumper catch – storage, enhancing the bargaining capacity and also alternative employment training- to

bring a lot of youngsters out of fishing (in the context of dwindling fish resources), are needed

PDA

Giving vocational training for youth on different trades; finding employment here is a great problem.

UNESCAP assured to take into account the availability of manpower while designing the project

ROSA

Working in Tarangambadi in post harvest fisheries- fish pickles making is going to establish training cum production centres. The NGO wanted to know the marketing possibilities

SNEHA

There are lots of traditional practices used for post harvest processing of fish that are slowly dieing off. The NGO wanted to know whether any help is avialable in reviving the tradition

Annie, CEO of NCRC highlighted the issue of technological divide between men and women folk, men using motor bikes and mobiles for improving their marketing

She also cautioned the NGOs that there are a lot of pros and cons before we propose anything to the consultant doing the feasibility study – we hold the responsibility of proposing. Each step on the way should be looked at - production, processing, marketing. Common commitment is required at this stage.

Dr. Amitava Mukherjee said the next step is to finalise the feasibility study and then workout the partnership, with NGOs, companies and government. NCRC was requested to disseminate the feasibility report, collect the Feed back and write to UNESCAP

List of Participants

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