

RESDO

Income Generating Project



Submitted by

RURAL ECONOMIC & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION (RESDO)

Registered under Section 7(1) of the Manipur Societies Registration Act, 1989
(Manipur Act No.1 of 1990) . Regn. No.199 of 2005.

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***Empowerment of Women through
Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP)***



- Income generating activities (IGAs)
- 1-Potential income generating activities
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- Preparation and marketing of dairy products
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INCOME GERATING PROJECT

Income generating activities (IGAs)

The main thrust of the women's development activities is to assist women in the sustainable establishment of income generating activities to be undertaken in or near the home. in pilot villages. This could be also one of the main objectives of the self-help female groups formed with the support of the Project through its reinforcement of group promotion activities. IGAs tend to give women a higher status within the family and studies generally indicate that the greater the amount of income under women's control the greater amount devoted to their children's education. health and nutrition. Generally incomes of women are used for the increase of the well being of the family. However it is essential to guarantee that women will have the control of the funds (saving funds loans etc) and the free disposal of them to implement IGAs. During the feasibility study our project staff has taken good care on not raised expectations.

As we have previously focused on, the identification of income generating activities come from a bottom up approach. An IGA should correspond to the needs of women, the failure of this kind of project generally comes from a gap between identifying women's needs and designing viable project. This means that it may be implemented after some steps have already been carried out with the Project's support like: PRA with women to identify problems, elaboration of a negotiated development programme, group promotion. All these activities should be carried out using participatory methods. In this context and according to the suggested strategy, it seems more appropriate to focus on planning, organizing and supporting IGAs than to give a list of activities. Thus RESDO Field consultant took the following exhaustive participatory methods in advocating the IGAs after having made certain that:

- the consultant spent enough hours in the villages and several meetings were hold with all women in the village who are representative of the community's women at village level;
- in making sure that women were aware of the objectives of the meeting;
- the presence of many officials responsible (mostly female) at the meetings facilitate the discussions:
- make sure villages were visited and inclusive in the Project areas.

1 - Potential income generating activities

To the benefits for women, RESDO considers IGAs to be supported should be those traditionally undertaken by women, and located in or near the home.

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Potential IGAs should concern activities where women can use skills they already possess. Rural women have skills to do small-scale plant and agricultural and animal production, processing and preservation. Areas for potential promotion include home gardens (aromatic and medicinal plants and herbs vegetables), indoor plants, flowers, fruit tree nurseries, animal production dairy products, sewing, knitting embroidering, carpet making. Of course potentialities are various according, to the specific conditions of the village. Marketing must be careful!! considered before undertaking any of these rural enterprises since lack of marketing expertise is the major weakness of this kind of programme.

1) Food drying, processing and preservation

In many rural households in Manipur, women are seasonally involved with these activities, especially in Churachandpur district. They preserve surplus production for household consumption and for marketing when the family needs more cash. However, the regular production of a standardized product for the market is still rare and a wide of local products which could be produced are absent. Most notable of these are:

- dried fruit, vegetables and herbs

In Manipur the solar drying of fruit and vegetables is restricted to a few minor crops such as chilies, usually for household consumption. However vegetables such as tomatoes, eggplants can be dried, as well as many fruit, such as figs, grapes, apricots and peaches. The market for these is as yet poorly developed but the world market is expanding every year. There is also a large market for edible and medicinal herbs which remains poorly supplied from local sources.

- processed fruit and vegetable

Production of jams, pickles, vegetable pastes, fruit juices could all increase farm income and women's income in particular since this would generally make use of existing skills and technology.

Packaging is probably important in attracting consumers for local products when they must compete against imports. Producers need advice about moving dried and processed products from rural areas to larger outlets in towns. These activities could be implemented in some appropriate areas of the Project, especially those where fruit-tree plantations are widespread (Kom Keirap, Khoirentak, Charoikhullen). Mango pickling could be developed in Kom Keirap and Moirang areas. The Federation of SHG Women carries out a project concerning herbs drying and packaging run at community level in Thoubal district, with good results. It seems to be interesting that the FAO Project gets in touch with the Federation which envisages to set up a similar project in Churachandpur district.

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2) Preparation and marketing of dairy products

Small-scale milk processing enterprises could be established in villages where there is a surplus of milk. Milk processing is one area of traditional female responsibility and production of local cheese is done by women. The knowledge of production techniques is already widespread in several families, especially in Manipur. In Manipur milk products are generally preferred but locally cow products may be more popular. One of the main items that store well and is widely sold is dahee (kind of dried yoghurt).

As with agricultural food processing, the main needs are to mobilize women to produce hygienic products of consistent quality and to match their output to local markets. A range of various products can be made: butter, ghee, cream, cheese, yoghurt, etc.

They may be some possibility of reprocessing locally made cheese and packaging and marketing it through urban food stores where traditional local cheeses are not now sold.

This activity could be developed in livestock raising: areas for instance in the villages close to Chainabung range land.

3) Agricultural production

Some agricultural production activities can be carried out in order to provide income such as: *vegetables, aromatic and medicinal plants, flowers, indoor plants and fruit tree nurseries*. The market for aromatic and medicinal plants seems to be important, especially in Churachandpur. Vegetables and medicinal plants should be linked with processing and packaging activities. Different groups of women could implement these activities according to their own interests and skills, one specialized in production, the other in processing and packaging.

Flowers and indoor plants production could interest villages located close to towns where there is a market for this kind of production. Fruit-tree nurseries could be established by women in Manipur (in Churachandpur this activity cannot be profitable as far as the prices of seedlings are highly subsidized), but the constraint is the necessity to obtain a licence. There is a market for high quality fruit-tree seedlings and a few women have competencies in this area.

Biological produce (fruit and market garden produce) could be an interesting' alternative in Manipur where a market seems to exist in main land India.

4) Establishment and improvement of livestock and poultry raising,

The first priority of many women (most of them belonging to the target group "low educational older women" is to establish or improve their animal production by buying cows or small ruminants or improved poultry (particularly laying hen). In Manipur several Groups support this activity in providing credit facilities and



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technical assistance, especially for cattle and pigs. In DoNER it is encouraged by IFAD projects which provide credit lines for livestock and poultry upgradings.

Of course this activity should be the object of caution especially for cow raising and considered according to the fodder cash and grazing land availability. However we emphasize that it is one of the most fitted to a category of women. Many, of them want to buy, only one cow or a few small ruminants, especially in remote villages chosen in 1996. The implementation of livestock raising should be linked with improved forage production for efficient production of milk and meat. Furthermore it can allow at the same time fodder shrubs plantation in rangelands, what consequently should imply more involvement of women, in natural resources management. One of the principal constraints is the animal health problem which can happen. Improved animals like Eroï cattle are generally more fragile and need more care. In that case poultry, which needs less investment, is less risky.

5) Other activities relevant to agricultural and animal production

We gather in this heading potential activities which were not mentioned by women either they do not know them or the participants did not seem interested (what does not mean that no woman were interested).

- **Mushroom cultivation:** it is already implemented at an experimental stage in a few households. Training focused more on men although a few women participate in the activity and seem to take more care and be more motivated. Extension material has been developed for this activity and the Project could emphasize training and extension for women. Moreover mushroom farmers could work in small self-help groups.

- **Silkworm breeding:** this activity, even if it has decreased these last years. MNREGS. provide sporadic income for Manipuri women, at it is the case in whole northeast. About 4500 farmers are silkworm breeders and women are generally responsible for this activity. At the present time the activity seems to take a new- interest according to the potential future market of sill; made carpet, and the General Women Union plans to establish a female silkworm breeders cooperative in Imphal. The interest of this activity is that it can provide small but stable income for poor households and be carried out at group level. Silkworm breeding is present in Kakching, Moirang and Senapati. There are three industrial units in the country: two private (Ukhrul and Tamenglong) and one public (Imphal) which is the most important and produces about 70 tons silk per year. The public unit is supplied with silkworms produced in Kangvai, MesyafChandel, Mayang imphal, Senapati, Saikul and Bijang areas. On average, breeders buy one box of eggs 30 USD and produce 30 to 40 kg sold 5 USD per kg. About 500 kg of mulberry tree leaves provided by 20 trees. This activity can be carried out from April until the end of May. Research is in progress to propose new mulberry tree varieties, more productive and which could reduce the number of trees.

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The women of Chakpikarong area (new area selected by the Project) could be interested by this activity. Mulberry tree promotion in appropriate areas should not be underestimated and it could be relevant to go into thoroughly the possibility of silkworm breeding activity.

- **Beekeeping:** women in general do not show any spontaneous interest for beekeeping. Nevertheless it can be proposed to women. since GUW runs training in this subject in Khoirentak.

- **Forestry produce** exploitation. Some fruits and cherries can be collected and sold to herbalist's shops as those of Pistachia palaestina. Ceratonia siliqua, Rhus coriaria. Laurus nobilis oil is used in soap making and this activity should be developed in some project areas in Churachandpur.

6) Handicrafts

Support to develop handicrafts at village level is the priority request of young women in all visited areas in Churachandpur district and concern carpet manufacturing, knitting and sewing. These activities are traditional and integrated in the cultural context. Knitting and sewing development is firstly wanted to satisfy the household consumption. Consequently, these activities are within competencies of social services (welfare societies, women's union, etc.). However the RESDO Project could support the setting up of micro and small-scale enterprises. There is a gap between domestic handicrafts and those aiming at marketing, which needs business skills and of course entrepreneurship development will not be appropriate for all women. This aspect should be emphasized by the Project in order to avoid the frustration of women who imagine that handicrafts are IGAs which are the easiest to cam out.

In Manipur development of small carpet units at village level could be a viable strategy and would allow women to share their time between economically productive activities and domestic responsibilities. Specific looms, smaller than those used in development centres. could be provided (cost of one machine: 25,500 INR). Studies should be carried out to know the potentialities of marketing: contracts with public or private sector, direct sales to consumers? etc. It is recommended to develop this activity at self-help groups level, the final objective being to establish a sustainable women's group which would be able to manage and run itself its own small enterprise. The same strategy might be carried out for sewing and knitting.

7) Shopkeeper activities

One of the main problems expressed by women in Manipur (Churachandpur district) was the lack of basis medical services. The possibilities to train one or few women in this field could be explored in order to establish a small people's

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dispensary at village level or at least a village pharmacy with basic medicines. Investigation should be made to know the feasibility, of this activity and the possible legislation constraints in this area.

Although this was discussed during the meeting in state level, the implementation creation of a bakery could be envisaged according to the supplying difficulties, linked to the setting up of improved ovens.

2 - Recommendations for implementation

1) General comments; characteristics of IGAs

The general tendency is for women to work in the home and produce goods for domestic consumption. not for the market. However. the aim of an IGA is to produce for the market and furthermore it can be called micro or small-scale enterprise, whether it is managed at individual or group level. One of the main criteria to choose an IGA should be its profitability.

If the Project is providing assistance to these small enterprises, the emphasis must be on orientating them from the social welfare perspective and towards the provision of business development services In order for this strategy to succeed, it is essential that a clear distinction be made between the social welfare assistance and a development strategy that focuses on tapping the economic potential of women producers. The difference between these both activities has important implications in terms of target audience and in terms of overall project design. With regards to welfare assistance, IGAs are generally targeted at a group of beneficiaries that has no prior involvement in the cash economy; IGAs offer women the opportunity to join the labour force and to learn necessary, skills for involvement in economic activities. These activities, however, are designed with a reliance on outside grants built into the project. They are not designed to be self-sustaining business operations. On the contrary business development focuses on a certain level of profitability to ensure self-sustainability . Women involved in small business development generally should have knowledge of the prevailing economic environment and business conditions.

IGAs can be seen as the initiation phase in the progression to small business development. It is difficult to make the transition from being unemployed and lacking in skills to being self-employed and capable of managing a business operation. The first step is to acquire specific technical skills. Once women have this experience. the next step is to upgrade those skills and introduce women to basic business concepts and procedures.

The transition from a social welfare to a micro and small enterprise approach is reflected by a market-driven approach.

Not all women will have ability and potential to become entrepreneurs, and should be not forced to do so. However, those women who do show the interest and determination to make the move self-employment should have access to

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training programs that will provide upgrading from technical skills to business skills. The progression would follow this course: unskilled worker - skilled worker - experienced worker- entrepreneur

As before mentioned, IGAs should be in priority those traditionally undertaken by women and located in or close to the house in order to be as far as possible accepted in the cultural context. As any innovation, the implementation of IGAs is going to modify the traditional context, since it means the increase of the economic -and consequently social- role of the woman at the household level. It is obvious that a social change is a long process, generally, conditioned by economic imperatives. In a patriarchal structure of the family where men are decision makers in the household, there is no chance of success for the implementation of IGAs if the,' remain suspicious and not convinced of their interest for the family. Therefore it is essential during all steps of the IGA setting and especially from the beginning (identification and feasibility) to integrate males in the process. Awareness should be made to inform them about the advantages for the family (increase in living standards, incomes and food security). Resources for women represent resources for food security (experience has shown that resources in the hands of women often have a greater nutritional benefit to children than the same resources controlled by men and they are more likely than men to spend a given income on food for the family...) Reducing gender disparities by enhancing the human and physical resources commanded by women leads to growth in household agricultural productivity. greater income and better food and nutrition security for all. Awareness with case studies in order to show the advantages of the IGA setting is essential to allay men's suspicions. At the beginning it is likely that only broad-minded men will accept the innovation, but good results should gradually decrease the resistance of the others and involve more and more households in the project. It is very important to proceed with caution and this is one of the main conditions for the success of the project.

The same method, based on the awareness and the demonstration of the advantages. should be implemented to raise the resistance of many women to group-based activities. Only economic advantages can be an incentive. Awareness should show that the best results at individual level can be obtained with group-based activities (details are given in the chapter number 4 "group promotion"). It is obvious that a severe implementation should be set up at the group level, by the members themselves. Co-opting should be the rule for the participation in group-based activities. Anyway, during the interviews in the villages, some women (generally single higher educated women) have spontaneously expressed the wish to start group activities. The Project should begin the activities with the voluntaries because, as we have before mentioned, the success of the experience is the best method for extension.

2) Target groups and participation of beneficiaries

Two target groups can be identified according to the skills: women who have already technical skills and those who have no specific skills but seem extremely

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motivated, generally young women with a good level of education. In the first group there are for example a few women in Churachandpur district villages. In both cases the determination of women will be the main criterion to develop an IGA. Group promotion will be encouraged for the implementation of IGAs which are more efficient to be run by several women. This does not mean that the production process must entirely be at group level (in many cases, such as animal production, individual production is much more efficient) and only one stage of the process can be run at group level, such as marketing. It is almost certain that young high-educated women will be more inter-active, since a lot of them have the wish to develop group-activities, like craft and food processing.

Each IGA (individual or at group level) should be considered as a project and beneficiaries should take part in all stages of the project, from the identification to the implementation according to the bottom up approach above described. This is essential to reinforce the capacities and assure the self-reliance of the individuals or groups and in the same time allow the sustainability of the activity.

3) Main steps of the IGA setting

a) Identification

The participants should ask themselves how they can obtain income from an activity, and identify the factors contributing to the success of IGAs. At the same time they should ask themselves if they are already involved in the activity. They need to be aware of these factors and to gauge their own skills when they consider embarking on an activity. (Trainers or promoters should allow participants to express themselves freely and note all suggestions at this stage).

b) Technical feasibility

This involves finding out whether the women suggesting the activity have the required technical skills and, if not. Whether they can acquire them rapidly. The necessity of a minimum of professionalism should be emphasized to allow a minimum profitability of the activity (good quality and competitive goods should be produced). Once the skills of each individual or group have been identified, other prerequisites for a technically feasible operation have to be established (for example water for home gardens, raw materials for handicrafts, feed for animal raising...) Management skills should not be forgotten since an IGA is an economic venture which needs specific skills in management.

c) Economic and financial profitability,

In addition to being technically feasible, the IGA should be profitable, that is to say they should produce income or a surplus (profit) and work without subsidies (sustainability). A profit-making activity should be profitable, in other words, returns should be higher than costs so as to produce a profit. Potential market should be identified and involved risks considered.

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The feasibility study is essential and should be conducted before starting any IGA (the results will allow to find out whether a proposed activity is a good idea or not!). It is a simple exercise because at this stage it concern only a very small scale activity run at local level in some pilot villages (that is to say it is not necessary a feasibility study at national level for each IGA run at pilot level). But this does not mean anyway that the general socioeconomic context should be ignored. On the contrary the IGAs should be integrated in this context especially for some activities (such village carpet unit).

d) Planning

Once the activity has been carefully chosen all the operations should be identified and listed in logical and chronological order. These operations should be scheduled and a timetable should be drawn up. This means that all facilities and resources needed to carry out a given operation must be available in good time to avoid delay and ensure that the other operations begin on schedule. All tasks vocational training courses should be planned in details.

e) Plans for marketing

Products should be of good quality and competitive. Potential markets should be investigated.

f) Ways of financing

Since we are focusing, on profitable activities we should see the possibility of activities financed by the beneficiaries own funds and sources of potential forms of credit In the RESDO Project areas it will be difficult for most of women to support start-up costs by themselves according to the lack of savings. It is important that the real costs are supported by beneficiaries. Nevertheless an initial grant to cover start-up costs can help the establishment of the IGA in specific cases (high poverty for example). Grants and subsidies should carefully used because they distort the real costs and consequently the profitability of the IGA. In addition the` can undermine the self-reliance of the beneficiaries.

Credit may be distributed in several ways and different sources may be explored. In Main land India NGOs have developed original systems of credit. as the following: funds provided at village level are used to provide loans for families and repaid loans guarantee the continuity of the project; savings-credit Project executed by Care allows groups of women to turn their savings into loans for themselves) Traditional banks give credit through normal channels providing the beneficiaries have guarantee. Some projects give facilities which can be suitable for some women particularly women heads of households.

The RESDO Project can help women to follow the procedures and apply for a credit and propose specific other ways of credit. particularly in Manipur where NGOs are not developed as the following:

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- promoting **“rotative funds”** (which already seem to exist in urban areas). Groups of individuals links through mutual trust regularly set aside a given amount which is handed over to one (on a pre-set rotational basis) to be used to meet their funding requirements (interest is not usually payable in this type of credit). This practice allows savings promotion;

- establishing a **revolving fund** at village level. This fund will be used to secure credit and/or grants for financing the purchase of some required inputs for IGAs and improvement of agricultural and handicraft production. The fund may be in cash or kind (or partly in cash partly in kind) depending on the type of activities to be implemented. For example machines (knitting machines looms...) can be provided and beneficiaries will repay in cash according to the terms of credit or animals can be provided and repaid in kind (lambs calves, poultry) which allow other women to benefit from the same advantages. If cash is provided to secure credit it should be repaid with an interest rate. the objective being to increase the fund in order to financing new activities and/or to benefit more women. The management of this fund should be made by the beneficiaries through a kind of committee chosen by themselves (specific training needed). Loans could be made with group liability

- promoting **group loans** (type Grameen Bank). It may be difficult to have small loans and individual borrowers can group their loans request together. The group loan will be granted with group liability. This means that each member is responsible for the other members of the group. If one member fails to repay her part others must repay it. This guarantees the repayment of the loan. The Project could encourage this method. May be it is not acceptable at banks channels (investigation should be made) but it can be promoted when credit is sought at NGOs level. It can be also recommended for individual credit through the village revolving fund.

The different kinds of loans (rotative revolving or group) could be made according to the specificities and the wishes of the different villages. The procedures advantages and drawbacks of the different kinds should be clarified. It is difficult at this stage to recommend one. Even in Jordan the projects relevant on the field of credit for IGAs have been recently implemented and are at an experimental stage. However the first results seem to show the effectiveness of the revolving loans. Care International has also good results with its Saving-Credit Project. It is recommended to encourage savings although this is not popular. Indeed savings promoting should be made because they reduce the dependency of outsiders and increase the self-reliance of individuals and groups. Savings are the source of credit and consequently represent the heart of development.

4) Group promotion

Emphasis should be made on IGA as a process to enhance capacities of women and to promote and train sustainable self-help groups. As women may not be

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treated as passive recipients of assistance it is essential to build up their confidence in their own abilities and promoting their self reliance.

To promote groups we can propose the following steps:

- gather basic information in order to identify the living conditions of different socioeconomic groups in women's community the power structure. the leaders (and potential leaders) the existence of women's union members:
- identify women who are interested in working together and explain the objectives and interests of participator self-help groups (all members can benefit from their combined skills and resources);
- explain the objectives and the potential support of the FAO project through partners contracts which means commitments between the partners;
- establish homogeneous groups formed around income generating activities on a voluntary and democratic basis and discuss goals and expectations. The process of group formation will certainly face difficulties according to the fact there is no habit of this method and women are not accustomed to taking initiatives and decisions (if it happens, it can be relevant to hold some discussions with male decision-makers);
- discuss the set objectives for the group, the work method (regular meetings, role of the members, leadership...);
- establish an effective management structure with representatives: leaders, committees...
- discuss the benefits of group income generating activities and present the IGA as a process with a number of steps and guide the members through the process; discuss problems, members' expectations and wishes;
- discuss ideas for IGAs and help women decide which ideas are economically feasible;
- discuss the building blocks of the group activity to implement an IGA;
- conduct a feasibility study. Help the group to assess the skills of the members. the training needed and to study the market, the competition, resources needed, start up and operating costs, discuss the risks;
- reckon the profitability of the IGA;

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- plan and schedule the steps to be implemented before launching the IGA and define commitments of the partners (Project, beneficiaries); emphasis should be made on vocational and management training;

- seek; and define the means of financing (credit, revolving fund in kind or in money, savings, etc.);

- launch the activity.

The Project will play the role of intermediary between the women's groups and the private or public organizations (and persons! who should be involved in the process. especially for training and financing and partnership agreements will be discussed in details. As we already said. the FAO Project has not enough resources to support all activities prerequisites to the launching of the IGA but should identify the resource institutions and persons in order to mobilize the existing competencies.

3 - Training and capacity building needs

1) Beneficiaries

Different types of awareness and training can be carried out according to the level of competencies of the potential beneficiaries:

- awareness on the potential IGAs at village level. This awareness may be made after the women have identified some IGAs during participatory meetings. Some other IGAS, seeming appropriate to the characteristics of the village, may be presented. Basic information on the advantages and constraints, the main stages to be followed the types of possible organization;

- training on the IGAs implementation process. Information on feasibility and rentability studies access to financial ways. financing methods (as revolving fund, savings...) management;

- training on the management of revolving: fund;

- vocational training sessions relevant to various activities. The training programme should be established with the participation of beneficiaries. The courses can concern various matters (agricultural and animal production, food processing, handicrafts, etc.) Different kinds of courses can be carried out according to the level of competencies of women involved. A difference should be made between basic courses and reinforced courses which target skilled women. Some of these courses can be run at village level and specific courses should be made outside (rural centres, women's unions centres). The FAO Project will help in

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organizing the planning of training and in calling on the most competent institutions and persons in the subject;

- training program on small scale enterprises. This program will target on women interested in creating small enterprises at individual or group level. It will focus on entrepreneurial development and management skills. The content should include specific areas such, as: management, organization, accounting, marketing, production techniques, quality control, cost benefit analysis, etc) Entrepreneurship development training will not be appropriate for all women. This program will be designed to focus on those women who show entrepreneurial interest and drive, to tap that drive and combine entrepreneurial development with skills upgrading and training. This program could be developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs. In Manipur some NGOs have some experience in this matter.

2) Staff in charge of this component

a) Staff needs

Until now there are no gender competencies in the Project level to implement the IGAs in the field. That is the main reason win!' the Project should establish relations with other partners in order to maximize use of resources. Nevertheless minimal female staff are necessary for the monitoring and follow up of the activity at different levels, as following:

- female promotor at village level. She should be the principal piece and the key position for the success of the activity. She would be a woman living in the village' and chosen by the women's community. To be a member of Women's Union should be an advantage. Her job should be only at part time job because she would carry on with her usual activities. Furthermore her job should not be considered as a long-term job. Since she is not a staff member of the forestry services but a "simple villager" - an indispensable condition to play her role of promotor- she should receive incentives for her job (for example food rations from World Food Program). Her status should be different from the one of the extensionists, who are employed and paid by the Ministry of Agriculture. She would be a facilitator (at the same time a participant), would play the main role in groups promotion and would be an adviser (strengthening of organization and leadership capacities! as well as a participatory trainer. In addition, she would be the "link person" between the women's community and the RESDO Project. The main objectives of promoters would be to help women to improve their living conditions and become self-reliant through the implementation of income generating activities. Specific technical skills are not essential but a secondary educational level should be useful;

- one gender person (preferably female) in the extension units located in the areas covered by the RESDO Project. This person would be an



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ordinary member of the extension unit and at the disposal of the gender activities implemented by RESDO;

- one gender person (preferably female) in the districts in the areas covered by the project in Jordan (Ajloun, Jerash and salt). She would be a member of the Extension Services of the Directorate of Agriculture and at the disposal of the RESDO Project. It could be appropriate that a gender person be also involved in the activities at district level in Churachandpur (Forestry services or Extension services) in order to facilitate contacts with potential partners;

- one gender person (female) at the Headquarters of the RESDO Project in charge of the gender activities of the Project and one in the Department of Afforestation and Forest in Manipur. This position is essential according to the absence of women at central level. A redeployment of international technical assistance should be encouraged in order to post a female socio-economist expert (even junior as United Nations Volunteer or Associate Professional Officer) who would be in charge of gender activities carried out by the Project

In India links should be developed with the representatives of Women's Unions (at local, district and village level) who should be involved in group promotion and implementation of IGAs.

b) Training and capacity building needs

The training programs for the staff should be carried out in priority, particularly the ones concerning the female promotor at village level since minimal skills are essential to initiate the activity at grass roots level. The programs should include the following matters:

- participatory methods and techniques should be used during group formation and development of IGAs such as participatory learning methods, organization of meetings, brainstorming, interviews, information locally driven consultation process (involving local populations), identification of problems and solutions, visual communication methods, etc. Participatory Rural Appraisal will be largely used for identifying and prioritizing problems and appraising strategies for solving them. Emphasis should be made on sociologic aspects (identification of homogeneous socio-economic groups, community power structure and leadership), social patterns in the community, informal and formal organizations, etc.

- group formation and making a group constitution (leadership, committees, etc.).

- community and local development. Basic information of the approach and methods. Methodologies of elaboration and implementation of action programs at local level. Partnership and contractual arrangements,

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involvement of the parties concerned in the various phases of elaboration of the program. Planning activities (short, medium and long teen);

- cycle and different stages of productive and IGA projects such as identification, feasibility, profitability, planning, marketing, financial ways (savings, loans, revolving funds), monitoring and management, small scale enterprises...

- vocational training on specific topics (only for agricultural extensionists). This program aims to enhance capacities of female extensionists It can include, as appropriate, different topics according, to the priorities of each area like agricultural and livestock raising techniques, food processing, natural resources management, etc.

Different training modules should be organized for both target groups village promoters and gender persons (extensionists at field unit, district and/or governorate who belong to the Ministry of Agriculture as well as responsables of Women's Unions concerned by the gender activities in the areas covered by the Project). For village promoters the program should emphasize: participatory techniques, group promotion. local and community development, general information on IGAs and the different stages of IGA. For gender persons it should focus on participatory techniques (particularly, PRA. socio-economic surveys, entrepreneurial management and IGAs.

Priority should be given to identification of institutions and resources persons in the fields needed to provide training as the following (not exhaustive list):

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (rural development Government of India) social
- The Ministry of Agriculture;
- Women's Union.
- Universities
- etc.

International experts who implement the Local Community Development project in North East India could be resource persons for local community approach as well as participatory techniques.

The regional nature of the RESDO Project is a good opportunity for transfer of competencies between State and Central. Since there are more institutions engaged in women's activities in India as well In using participatory approach, they could be engaged to provide technical support in Manipur state. Study tours could also be organized in projects involved in group promotion and IGAs.

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International consultants should be used only if there are no national resources. Nevertheless international consultancy should be appropriate to develop training models and organize a seminary on participatory approach and methods.

Short training can be envisaged for women posted at central level if possible in arabic speaking countries or/and receive "training on the job" during international consultancies.

3) Extension material

Some guides could be developed by the Project, such as the following:

- one which would describe the methodology to implement an IGA, the different stages to take into account. the ways of financing and procedures to apply for credit:
- one on the different participatory techniques and methods to promote groups in rural communities ;
- one on the main IGAs which can be developed at village level, with concrete examples of costs and organization. at individual and group level.

Some of them can be simplified and realized from RESDO existing guides. as "The group enterprise resource book", "The group promoter's resource book" and "Managing income generating. rural activities".