ROLE OF VILLAGE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE EXECUTION OF MALAKAND RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT INTERVENTIONS IN NORTHERN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to see the role of village organizations (VOs) established under Malakand Rural Development Project (MRDP) towards its execution of development interventions in District Shangla. A total of 80 VOs member was interviewed. The study revealed that MRDP funded intervention in the area are water supply schemes, water channel, water bath, bridge constructions and the establishment of small hydropower stations for cheap electricity supply through community participation. Eighty one percent of the sample respondents got both capital and technical assistance from MRDP. They were of the view that VOs have linkages with government agencies mostly with Water Management Department. Seventy five percent of sample respondents were benefited from these linkages. MRDP provided funds to all sample respondents mostly for irrigation (32%) and water supply (20%) schemes. MRDP interventions benefited sample respondents because of improvement in irrigation channels/increase in irrigated land, increase in drinking water supply due to installation of pipes for distribution of water among the villagers. Moreover due to HRD training in different sectors (agriculture, livestock) farm production has significantly increased. The study recommends creation of awareness, frequent visits of project staff for problem solutions, launching of more development schemes and the development of linkages with other donor agencies for development interventions in the area.

Key words: Village Organizations, Malakand Rural Development Project, Interventions, Northern Pakistan


INTRODUCTION

Efforts are being made for the uplift of rural community in most of the developing countries having agro oriented village setting. Due to agriculture based economies, these countries are confronting with numerous obstacles in changing their existing socio-economic conditions. Low per capita income, lack of education and other basic amenities of life are the prominent characteristics of these village communities.

The role of community in economic development has been one of the focal issues on one side (Hayami and Godo, 2005). On the other side devolution initiatives with community as a key actor in a number of developing countries to decentralize development planning and execution. The rationale behind the initiatives is the idea that decentralization through community participation can contribute to efficiency, accountability, and transparency of poverty reduction policies through the utilization of local information and resources (Bardhan, 2002).

Pakistan is one of low income countries located in South Asia. Economic development in South Asia is characterized by a moderate success in economic growth with a substantial failure in human development such as basic health, education and gender equality (Dreze and Sen, 1995). Underlying this situation in a society with unequal distribution of income and assets where the core network is based on familial, clan, and tribal relations, with limited historical experience in CBO-based cooperation in development efforts (JICA, 2003).

A Citizen Community Board (CCB) or village organization (VOs) is a voluntary organization based on the community in which people live. According to Local government ordinance (LGO) 2001, local people form a CCB with
a chairman, a secretary, and general members. A registered CCB makes a proposal for development projects. The local government funds 80 percent of the total project cost. Since the promulgation of LGO in 2001, however, both the number of CCBs and the number of approved projects have been below the expected level (GHK, 2005).

In 2001, a scheme called Citizen Community Board (CCB), a kind of community-based organization (CBO), or Village Organization (VOs) was introduced in Pakistan, under which local people development projects to the local government through forming a CCB, and upon approval the local government funds 80 percent of the project cost. Since 2001, however, both the number of CCBs and that of approved projects have been below the expected level. This raises a concern that the Pakistani society with limited historical experience in CBO-based development is too handicapped for the CCB scheme to be successful (Kurosaki 2005).

As, VO's were properly approved by the government in devolution plan 2000, so their activities were increased further. In the late 1970, a new style of NGOs emerged which were quite different form the old ones. The only thing which is common in the old and new NGOs is that both came into being in response to the colonial state which was regarded as foreign and hostile to different communities. In the second case it is the failure of the past colonial state which created a vacuum and which subsequently came to be filled by the NGOs. Different NGO's were started for the welfare of the people. Different kinds of professionals offered their services. Most of them failed, as they did not launch appropriate approaches. After all approaches, participatory approach launched and worked for. Those who deserved and on the basis of who can do what. Participatory approach deeply rooted in the fertile mind of rural people. With the introduction of participatory approach development concept has emerged. Development of participatory approach leads toward self-help, sustainable development and empowerment to the rural people through knowledge, skill and capabilities development.

In Pakistan beside Government, different Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) like Agha Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP), Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP), and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Barani Area Development Project (BADP) and Malakand Rural Development Project (MRDP) etc. are working for community development of rural areas through village organizations.

**Malakand Rural Development Project**

Malakand Rural Development Project is a package of integrated rural development designed to address the rural poverty through development initiatives in the rural infrastructure and entrepreneur development. Social empowerment, economic mobility, capacity building, decision sharing and self-reliance are the buzzwords for change and sustainable development in the Malakand context. The project aims to reduce rural poverty by enhancing household incomes and improving living standards. Women skill development for added income earning is a major target. With a view to exploit the economic potentials, support and rural social fabric, a community-based approach is envisaged to own the process as well as product. The project aims to:

i. Enhancing household incomes and living standards particularly of small land holders, tenants, and landless people and women communities in remote areas in Malakand Division.

ii. Social organization and capacity building.

iii. Enhancing the capacity of line agencies to reinforce their participatory working techniques and re-orient them towards integrated service delivery to the Village Organizations.

The project has clear instructions for the line departments to maximize use of village organizations in implementing the project interventions. In this regard, in the recent past the government utilized the VOs formed under MRDP to distribute rehabilitation funds to effectees of the disastrous rains of January followed by severe earthquake of October 8, 2005. Resting on the above logic and notions of the social mobilization and community organization the present study focus the efforts to probe into the matter that whether VOs have any role in the rural development or otherwise. In this regard, the case of MRDP in the Shangla District of NWFP was synthesized.
Objectives of the Study
i. To examine the structure and functions of VOs formed under MRDP.
ii. To examine the role of VOs in project development interventions.
iii. To short list confronting issues in VOs development and suggest recommendations for their removal.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

The study was carried out in District Shangla of NWFP Pakistan, with the aim to find out the role of village organizations in the execution of Malakand Rural Development Project interventions in District Shangla. Shangla is different from the rest of the districts in its socio-economic and topographic characteristics. So here the role of VOs in success or failure activities is very prominent and has more diverse aspects. Keeping in view the limitations of resources i.e. time and material two union councils namely Shahpur and Kuzkana where the number of registered village organizations was maximum were purposively selected. There were a total of 22 village organizations in these union councils, out of the total 22 VOs, 4 were in the Kuzkana and the remaining 18 were in the Shahpur union councils. From the total list of village organizations, 20 VO's were selected on proportionate basis i.e. 16 VO's were selected from Shahpur union council and 4 from Kuzkana union council. Eighty village organization members were interviewed which includes 52 respondents in Shahpur and 28 in Kuzkana union councils. The present study was based on primary data. The data were collected from the sample respondents through face to face interview. For the purpose of interview, structured schedule was developed. Before the start of the actual field survey the interview schedule was pre-tested in the field so that strength and weaknesses of the questionnaire could be checked and improved for quality output. The purpose of the study was also explained to the respondents to make them realize the importance of the study. After the collection of data, as it was qualitative in nature therefore results were obtained through percentages and averages. More importantly we were not making a comparison of data so statistical tests were not applied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

MRDP Funded Interventions in the Area and Type of Interventions

MRDP provides a number of services and interventions to develop the area. Keeping in mind the needs and demands of the target population, after the establishment of village organization, MRDP has targeted water channel construction, water supply scheme, bridge construction, establishment of small hydropower station and agriculture and livestock related activities. From the data given in Table I, it is evident that all the respondents said that the MRDP funded the development interventions in the area. Data in Table I also show that 27% of the sample respondents (68% in Shahpur and 32% in Kuzkana) reported that MRDP funded water channels construction in the areas. It was also said by 25% and 9% of the sample respondents the MRDP funded interventions in the areas are clean drinking water supplies and the construction of bridges over rivers, respectively. The data further reported that 17% out of which 71% in Shahpur and 29% in Kuzkana and 12% out of which 40% in Shahpur and 60% in Kuzkana of the sample respondents said that the MRDP funded intervention in the area are water tank constructions for storage of water, establishment of small hydropower station, while 10% said for agriculture and livestock development interventions in the area.

Table 1  Distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of MRDP Funded Intervention and types of intervention in the area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union council</th>
<th>MRDP funded interventions</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes (%)</td>
<td>No (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahpur</td>
<td>52 100</td>
<td>52 15</td>
<td>68 15</td>
<td>75 5</td>
<td>71 10</td>
<td>71 4</td>
<td>40 3</td>
<td>43 52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuzkana</td>
<td>28 100</td>
<td>28 7</td>
<td>32 5</td>
<td>25 2</td>
<td>29 4</td>
<td>29 6</td>
<td>60 4</td>
<td>57 28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80 100</td>
<td>80 22</td>
<td>27 20</td>
<td>25 7</td>
<td>8 14</td>
<td>17 10</td>
<td>12 7</td>
<td>10 80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey
A. Water channel construction  B. Water supply scheme
C. Bridge construction        D. Water tank construction
E. Small hydropower station construction F. Agriculture and livestock related activity.
Type of assistance got from Malakand Rural Development Project (MRDP) by the Sample Respondents of the Area

MRDP assist village organization members for development interventions in the area. MRDP gives capital and technical assistance to VO's members for development interventions. In capital assistance, MRDP pay 90% of the total amount in case of water channel, bridge, water tank construction, while pay 80% of the total amount in case of establishment of small hydropower stations. MRDP technically assist all the development interventions in the area. MRDP has well organized technical staff regarding each and every development interventions in the area. MRDP has technical staff like Engineers, Agriculture officers, Livestock production officers and Credit officers. All of them technically guide the VO's members for development interventions in the project area. The data in Table II shows that 81% of the sample respondents (63% in Shahpur and 37% in Kuzkana) mentioned that they got both Technical and Capital assistance from MRDP. While 11% of the respondents pointed out for capital assistance only followed by 8% of the respondents for technical assistance in Shahpur.

Table II  Distribution of the sample respondents on type of assistance got from MRDP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union council</th>
<th>Capital assistance</th>
<th>Technical assistance</th>
<th>Both Capital &amp; Technical assistance</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahpur</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuzkana</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey.

Benefits Availed from the Interventions

The data in Table III show the types of benefit availed by the community members from the development intervention by the project. The data revealed that 32% of the sample respondents (69% in Shahpur and 31% in Kuzkana) said that through water supply schemes every home in the village got access to clean drinking water. Twenty percent of the sample respondents mentioned that through water channel construction in the area by the project most of the village unirrigated land became irrigated. Thirteen percent of the sample respondents acknowledged the construction of water tank. They store the water for a long time and use during water scarcity period. Eighteen percent of the sample respondents mentioned the benefits by saying that through construction of bridges over rivers and paths; people got easy and short access with other villages of the area. Seventeen percent of the sample respondents mentioned that through the establishment of small hydropower station the village people got low cost electricity for the daily use.

Table III  Distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of benefits availed from intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union council</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shahpur</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuzkana</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey.

A. Every home gets clean drinking water
B. Most of the village unirrigated land becomes irrigated
C. Water store for long time and used during water scarcity periods
D. People got easy convince for communication with other villages of the area.
E. Village people got cheap electricity for daily use.

Linkages and Types of Linkages with Government Departments

The data in Table IV present the VO's member linkage with government department. It is evident from the data that 72% of the sample respondents out of which 66% in Shahpur and 34% in Kuzkana said that they had linkages with other departments of the government in the area. While 28% of the sample respondents said that they had no linkages with other departments of government in the area. The data in Table IV also revealed that 27% of the sample respondents...
out of which 63% in Shahpur and 37% in Kuzkana were reported for the establishment of linkages with the agriculture department of the area, for various agriculture packages, like improved seeds, free chemical fertilizer, free spray and technical assistance of the agriculture specialists personnel’s. Twelve percent of the sample respondents reported the linkages with livestock department of the area for getting technical and capital assistance for the improvement of livestock. The data further stated that 34% of the sample respondents reported for development linkages with water management department of the area for getting water channel for the irrigation of their lands. Twelve percent said for linkages with forest department of the area. Fifteen percent of the sample respondents out of which 44% in Shahpur and 56% in Kuzkana reported for linkages with rural development department of the area.

Table IV Distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of linkages and types of linkages with other agencies and government departments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union council</th>
<th>Linkages with agencies</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Government departments contacted by the respondents</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahpur</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuzkana</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey.

Human Resource Development (HRD) Training and types of Training received by Respondents

MRDP is a package of integrated rural development design to address rural poverty through development initiatives in the rural infrastructure and entrepreneur development. Social empowerment, economic mobility, capacity building, decision sharing, self reliance and sustainable development for Malakand rural areas. The project aims to reducing rural poverty by enhancing household incomes and improving living standards. With a view to exploit the economic potentials and support rural social fabric the social mobilizations and capacity building was one of the important objective of MRDP. The data in Table V depict that 56% of the sample respondents out of which 64% in Shahpur and 36% in Kuzkana said that they received HRD training, 44% of the sample respondents said that they did not receive any HRD training. The table also shows about the types of training got by the respondents in the area. It was reported by 36% of the sample respondents out of which 75% in Shahpur and 25% in Kuzkana said that they got computer training for capacity building. Eighteen percent of the sample respondents received training in agriculture sector. Twenty two percent of the sample respondents reported for getting social mobilization training. Twenty two percent of the respondents received training in livestock related activities.

Table V Distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of HRD training and types of training got by them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union council</th>
<th>Getting HRD training</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Types of training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahpur</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuzkana</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey.

A. Computer training
B. Agric. training
C. Social mobilization training
D. Livestock training

Comments about MRDP and its VO's by Respondents

It is evident from table 6 that 14% of the sample respondents said that everyone should be given representation in VO's setup for development interventions. Twenty five percent of the respondents said that the needy people of the area should be assisted by the project and VO's member for development activities. Twenty two percent of the sample respondents out of which 67% in Shahpur and 33% in Kuzkana said for strong monitoring and evaluation system within
the VO's setup. The data further show that 23% of the sample respondents said for the creation of awareness among the non-members of the VO's by the members and project. Sixteen percent of the people did not want to comment about MRDP and its VO's.

Table VI  Distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of comments about MRDP and its VO's

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union council</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shahpur</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuzkana</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:  Field Survey.

A. Every one should be allowed to become VO's member
B. Needy people of the area should be assisted
C. Strong monitoring and evaluation system within VO's setup
D. Creation of awareness among non VO's members to become VO's members
E. No answer.

Planning for Problems Solutions for Post Project Period

The data in Table VII show the strategy for the solutions of problems faced by the VO's members after the post project period. It was said by 16% of the sample respondents that they should develop linkages with other donor agencies of the area for village development activities. Thirty one percent of the respondents out of which 60% in Shahpur and 40% in Kuzkana said for timely solution of the problems either by the VOs members or by the other line agencies. The table further revealed that 30% of the sample respondents said for the extension of VOs activity, for the collection of funds and increased the VO's saving funds for development interventions. Twenty one percent of the respondents said for the extension of project support for problems solving of the VO's.

Table VII  Distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of planning for problems solutions for post project period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union council</th>
<th>Strengthening linkages</th>
<th>Timely action</th>
<th>Saving increased</th>
<th>Extend project support</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahpur</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuzkana</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:  Field Survey.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is evident from the main findings of the study that there were a lot of changes in village infrastructure and socioeconomic conditions of the village people due to MRDP development interventions. All the VOs were established by the MRDP in the area for project development interventions. The MRDP funded development interventions in the area were water channel construction, water supply scheme, bridge and water tank construction, the establishment of small hydropower station and agriculture and livestock related activities with the collaboration of VOs. The MRDP assist VOs members both technically and financially, following the participative role of the project. The benefits availed from these interventions were the availability of clean drinking water, irrigation of unirrigated lands, easy and short access between the villages and getting of low cost electricity. Most of the VOs members also developed linkages with government departments and other organizations for the village infrastructure development. Most of the VOs members got training of HRD; these trainings are related to computer, agriculture, livestock, capacity building and social mobilization. The study as a whole concludes that all the development interventions of MRDP in the area were completed successfully with the participation of VO's and the community participation played a crucial and important role in development process.
i. Participation of all stakeholders like religious leaders, elders, children especially female can play a vital role at the different level of the interventions in order to reduce the problems occurred during implementation of development interventions.

ii. Concerned government departments may also be contacted and asked to allocate funds with a transparent check and balance to address development in the project area.

iii. A clear strategic plan should be made by MRDP and the others relevant organizations to deal with the problems likely to emerge in the years to come.

REFERENCES


