

No. 106

**COMMUNITY LEARNING, INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION CASE STUDY**

**KERALA
PEOPLE'S PLANNING CAMPAIGN
TRIVANDRUM**

Janelle Plummer

Sean de Cleene

November 1999

WORKING PAPER NO. 106

Community Learning Information and Communication Case Study

Kerala People's Planning Campaign Trivandrum

**Janelle Plummer
Sean de Cleene**

November 1999

GHK Research and Training
St James Hall
Moore Park Road
London SW6 2JW
Tel: + 44 171 736 8212 Fax: + 44 171 736 0784

**Kerala
People's Planning Campaign
Trivandrum**

CONTENTS

SECTION 1 - BACKGROUND	1
1.1 Background Information on Trivandrum	1
1.2 The Operating Context in Trivandrum	1
1.3 General Information about the Trivandrum Municipal Corporation	2
SECTION 2 - THE PROJECT	2
2.1 Background	2
2.2 What is the KPPC?	3
2.3 Campaign objectives	3
2.4 People's campaign and planning process	3
2.5 Phase I Grama Sabhas and Ward Conventions	4
2.6 Phase II Development Seminars	4
2.6.1 Collection of secondary data	4
2.6.2 Study of local geography and natural resources	4
2.6.3 Review of ongoing schemes	4
2.6.4 Survey of local history	4
2.6.5 Consolidation of Grama/Sabha	4
2.7 Phase III Task Forces	5
2.8 Phase IV Annual Plan Finalisation	5
2.9 Phase V Annual Plan of Higher Tiers	7
2.10 Phase VI Plan Appraisal	7
2.11 Implementation of the 97-98 Plan	7
2.12 Preparation and implementation of the 97-98 Plan	8
SECTION 3 - INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND LEARNING PROCESSES	9
3.1 Initial Overview	9
3.2 Approach	9
3.3 How was the training implemented	11
3.3.1 First year	11
3.4 Overall assessment of the first year training programme	13
3.5 Responses in Trivandrum to the first year training programme	13
3.6 Second year training programme	14
3.7 Assessment of the second year training programme	17
3.8 Response in Trivandrum to the second year training programme	17
3.9 Indirect and informal learning	18
3.10 Impacts of training	19
SECTION 4 - LESSONS LEARNT	20
4.1 Importance of a campaign environment	20
4.2 The importance of a technical support function	20
4.3 The importance for a comprehensive training programme	21
4.4 The importance of managing change	21

SECTION 1 - BACKGROUND

1.1 Background Information on Trivandrum¹

Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum) formerly known as Ananthapuri is one of the ancient towns of India, referred to in the book entitled "Ananthapura Varnana"(Description of Trivandrum) which might have been written in the 12 Century AD.

Thiruvananthapuram developed into a full fledged town during the reign of Sri Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma, The King of Travancore.

Thiruvananthapuram Municipality was formed only in 1921 based on the Municipal Act (Act 1095- Malayalam Era). At the time of the formation of the Municipality the right to franchise was limited to the taxpayers amounting to 3.5 % of the total population. The City Corporation of Trivandrum was formed in 1940 (as per Act 4 of 1116- Malayalam Era.) with a total area of 30.66- sq. km., divided into 24 wards. The first general election to the City Corporation was held in 1942 September in which the taxpayers i.e. 6.5% of the population had the right to vote. The communist movement became dominant in Kerala in the 1950 's and the right to adult franchise was established in 1953.

The leftist Government which came into power in 1996 under the leadership of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). Building on the legislative context created by the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments and the resultant Kerala Municipalities Act of 1994 which replaced the earlier Municipalities Act of 1961, the government took the bold political decision to devolve not just powers but also finances to the local governments. The result is 35 – 40 % of the State Plan funds have been earmarked in the State budget for the plans formulated at local level with the direct involvement of the people through the functioning of grama sabhas in rural areas and ward conventions in urban areas. These local development plans are then synthesised into block or municipal plans and then district plans. This decentralised planning process is officially referred to as the People's Planning Campaign.

1.2 The Operating Context in Trivandrum²

The Municipalities are under the control of the Director of Municipal Administration, which in turn is under the Secretary to Government, and the Minister for Local Administration. The State Planning Board is an apex policy making body in planning implementation and related matters. It also coordinates various agencies and line departments and is responsible for the organisation and planning of the Peoples Plan Campaign. A Campaign Planning Cell was

established for this purpose which has 25 experts and 5 consultants who co-ordinate and monitor all the activities of the Campaign.

A state level co-ordination committee under the chairmanship of the Minister for Local Administration to discuss and decide all the policy matters connected with the People's Planning Campaign. District Planning Council were constituted at all the District Headquarters under the chairmanship of the District Collector to discuss and resolve local problems as and when they arise.

The Trivandrum Municipal Corporation has a well established structure with significant experience in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the various state level plan programs. The People's Planning Campaign however was in many ways unprecedented in terms of scale and the people's involvement. The main problems identified by Trivandrum Corporation in relation to the People's Planning Campaign have been:

1. How to mobilise sufficient local expertise to carry out the decentralised planning programme.
2. How to create an attitudinal change in the urban population so as to ensure their collective involvement in the campaign programme.
3. How to break down administrative and political resistance to the change process initiated through the Campaign
4. How to implement the plan programs through genuine beneficiary committees ensuring peoples active participation.

Trivandrum did have some background experience of this kind of Campaign, which it has been able to use to give shape to the activities of the People's Planning Campaign. As a Corporation they had actively participated in the State level literacy campaign held during 1990-91. Of the 21,654 people classified as illiterate within the Municipal area, 13241 achieved literacy through the campaign and another 8500 came forward to participate in subsequent continuing education programmes. More recently, the Municipal Corporation staged another program by name "Clean City Green City" which did not produce the expected results, principally because as it was envisaged and implemented at the bureaucratic level with the corporation failing to ensure effective community level participation and support. Many of the lessons learnt from this experience have helped to formulate the current approach adopted by the Corporation to the Campaign.

1.3 General information about the Trivandrum Municipal Corporation

¹ Section 2 has been co-written in conjunction with State Planning Board Consultant Dr. P. Madhusoodanan Pillai

² See Annexe 1 for a diagram of the administrative framework at the municipal corporation level.

Population
524,006 (1991 census)
Density of Population
6976. 51 /sq.km
No. of wards
50 (17 reserved for women including 2 SC women) 2 wards SC/ST reservation
No. Of households
107,892
Literacy rate
81 % (as per 1991 census)
No. Of industrial training centers
12
No of libraries
44
No of hospitals
25

Birth and mortality rates

	1991 1993	1992 1994	1993 1995
Birth rate	24.70	27.32	30.00
Death rate	3.45	3.62	4.94
Inf.Mortality	13.92	11.88	11.29
	11.29	13.20	11.68

Land use Pattern

Residential purposes	60 %
Agriculture	10 %
Roads, streets, parks etc	15 %
Govt. and quasi Govt institutions and associated lands	10 %
Industrial purposes	4 %+

SECTION 2 - THE PROJECT

2.1 Background

The origins and development of the Kerala People's Planning Campaign

In July 1996, in the context of a strong legislative framework provided by the 73rd/74th Constitutional Amendment and the Kerala Municipality Act 1994³,

³ The 73rd and 74th amendments made 'panchayats' constitutional bodies. Article 243-G mandated them to prepare plans for economic development and social justice and to implement the schemes that are subsequently entrusted to them. Municipalities have also been charged with a similar function under Article 243-W. Article 243-Z mandates the establishment of district planning committees to consolidate the plans prepared by panchayats and municipalities and to prepare a draft development plan for the district.

that committed political support and allocated financial resources, the Chief Minister of Kerala, initiated a "People's Campaign for Decentralised Planning". The aim of the campaign was not only to empower municipalities to formulate development plans for the Ninth five year plan but to facilitate a process for the participation of the people of each ward, municipality, block and district, i.e planning for the people, by the people.

The decision to rethink the planning methodology of the five year plans fundamentally recognised that, after a succession of eight five year plans, improvements in the quality of life of the people in Kerala had not met the targets set; that services, infrastructure and facilities provided for the people were deteriorating rapidly and were unable to meet demand; and that economic constraints were limiting the capacity of government to successfully intervene. An acknowledgement of the limits of existing government resources was coupled with the recognition that the people of Kerala remained passive and uninvolved in the development process.

The broad goals of the campaign aimed to develop the commitment and responsibility of elected representatives; to motivate 'the people' to become partners in a democratic development process; to develop the capacity of municipal officials to work with the people as a team; and to mobilise the expertise of the private and voluntary sectors to assist in a new approach to development.

The Kerala Municipality Act provided a substantive framework for implementing change. With this in mind, politicians promoted decentralisation and the participation of the people. People are empowered by the very process of participation in planning and this mechanism lives out both the intent and written word of the Kerala Municipality Act. The process includes a participatory tool for organising the community through the Ward Committee⁴ which is chaired by the municipal

The Kerala Municipalities Act (1994) was brought in during the congress led coalition government. In Sections 42-47 the organisational structure of the Ward Committees was established. Sections 51-52 empowers local authorities to develop appropriate development plans. Section 53 establishes District Planning Committees in every district.

⁴ Each ward should have a ward committee of not more than 50 persons nominated by the chairperson of the municipality in consultation with the elected representative for that area, the ward councillor. Members shall include: heads of local education institutions, representatives of residential associations, trade unions and NGOs, Community Development Society representatives, and prominent citizens. The committee is chaired by the ward councillor. The primary role of the ward committee is to organise ward conventions and from these assist in the preparation of

politician for that area, the Ward Councillor. The primary function of these ward committees is to 'give assistance for the preparation and encouragement of the developmental schemes of wards and the supervision of their implementation.'

2.2 What is the KPPC?

The *People's Planning Campaign* is a mechanism for planning and budgeting, specifically established for the development of the 9th five year plan, through a hierarchical compilation of plans from local level up to state level. The most localised plan is developed at panchayat/ward level through a grama sabha/ward convention, under the leadership of the local elected representative. It aims to identify local needs and establish local development options through a process of consultation and participation with the people of the ward. In all, the convention addresses 12 sectors of development from education, water and health, to housing and social welfare, by identifying key issues, problems and solutions and prioritising needs. Theoretically, these are then compiled into Municipal Plans which are then framed into block plans, district plans and finally into the State-wide 9th five year plan.

2.3 Campaign Objectives

The objectives of the Kerala People's Planning Campaign are:

- to empower the panchayats and municipal bodies to draw up the schemes for the Ninth plan within their respective areas of responsibility;
- to develop the responsibility of elected officials and to equip them to work effectively in a new work environment;
- to develop the capacity of officials in the various line departments to work under the direction of panchayats and local bodies;
- to mobilise the expertise of non-officials and the private sector to work in a voluntary capacity for the Campaign;
- to mobilise the 'mass of people' to become partners in the development process;
- to reorientate the focus of Civil Society Organisations to mobilise their members to assist in the new development initiatives;
- to institutionalise these changes by amending and updated current laws and developing new institutions and traditions.

The intended project outputs are:

- to identify and prioritise the felt needs of the people through the convening of Grama Sabhas in rural areas and Ward Conventions in

appropriate economic and social development schemes, to supervise their implementation and mobilise voluntary labour and additional sources of finance.

urban areas and through these public forums formulate proposals in each development sector which need to be addressed in local plans;

- to match these needs with local resource availability through the generation of a local data base in the form of a development report;
- to form task forces to prepare the development projects corresponding to the development problems identified by the people;
- projects prepared by the task forces which are prioritised and integrated into the plan document of the panchayats and municipalities, according to budgetary guidelines;
- a development report and plan document produced by block and district panchayats which integrates the analysis and programmes of the lower tiers.

2.4 People's Campaign and Planning Process⁵

The primary objective of the Campaign was to empower the panchayats and municipal bodies to draw up the schemes for the Ninth plan within their respective areas of responsibility. Though the progress of the Campaign was broadly in line with the intended outputs listed above, there were significant readjustments to the vision originally set out in the original *Approach Paper* as major obstacles and problems were encountered and dealt with. The first year of the Campaign was originally designed by the State Planning Board in five phases with extensive training to precede each phase (for full details of the training programme, see section 4). A new sixth phase was later added to the programme to take into account problems that had occurred, particularly in relation to the technical quality of proposed projects and plans. Following is a brief outline of the different phases of the campaign.

2.5 Phase I Grama Sabhas and Ward Conventions (August to October 1996)

The Grama Sabhas/Ward Conventions are constitutionally mandated and have to be convened a certain number of times a year. In Kerala, the minimum number is twice a year. The first round of statutory Grama Sabhas/ Ward

⁵ This section draws heavily on discussions held with the Kerala State Planning Board in March 1999 and from material contained in three State Planning Board publications: *Decentralisation, Democracy and Development: People's Planning Campaign for Decentralised Planning in Kerala*, T M Thomas Isaac, Kerala State Planning Board, January 1999; *People's Campaign for Decentralised Planning: An Experiment in Participatory Development*, I S Gulati & T M Thomas Isaac, Kerala State Planning Board, April 1998; *Selected Articles on People's Campaign for Ninth Plan*, State Planning Board. All boxed references are direct quotes from the *Decentralisation, Democracy and Development: People's Planning Campaign for Decentralised Planning in Kerala*, T M Thomas Isaac, Kerala State Planning Board, January 1999

Conventions was convened in early 1996 after the panchayat elections, for which there was a particularly low turn out. This was before the People's Planning Campaign was initiated and there were many problems in terms of people being able to effectively participate in the meetings. If the Campaign was to use the idea of the Grama Sabhas/ Ward Conventions later in the year, as the basis for participation in the People's Planning Process, clear guidelines had to be established and significant efforts made to ensure there was broad based and direct participation.

"The first step in drawing up a local development plan is to identify the felt needs of the people. The local development problems are identified by the people of every locality in their Grama Sabhas. Grama Sabhas, it may be noted, is the assembly of all voters in an electoral ward. Given the relatively larger size of the grama panchayats in Kerala special guidelines had to be framed for organising the Grama Sabhas effectively. The most important guideline was to hold group wise discussions in the Grama Sabhas according to the various development sectors. In addition to the sectoral groups, there were also to be a group each for SC/ST and for women's development. But for brief inaugural and valedictory sessions, all the deliberations of these Grama Sabhas/ Ward Conventions were in these groups of 25-50 participants. The organisation of group discussions made it possible for the maximum number of people to participate in focused deliberations.

Around one lakh resource persons at the local level were given training to act as facilitators in the discussion groups. A semi-structured questionnaire was also distributed to help the flow of discussions. People were encouraged not to limit themselves to listing of the developmental problems but search for their causes and remedies drawing from their life experience. Through wide publicity and propaganda using, not only printed media but also music and folk arts, every effort was made to increase the participation of the people in the Grama Sabhas. It is estimated that nearly 3 million persons participated in these meetings - a fifth of them being women. At least one representative from around 1/4 to 1/3 of the households in Kerala must have participated in the Grama Sabhas. The success of the Grama Sabhas created a general awareness among the people regarding the decentralisation and local level development needs were systematically listed."⁶

2.6 Phase II: Development Seminars (October - December 1996)

⁶ Decentralisation, Democracy and Development: People's Planning Campaign for Decentralised Planning in Kerala, T M Thomas Isaac, Kerala State Planning Board, January 1999, pages 4-5

After the felt needs of the people had been identified and prioritised through the convening of Grama Sabhas and Ward Conventions, the next step was to match these needs with local resource availability by creating a local data base in the form of a development report.

"A series of participatory studies were undertaken in every grama panchayat and municipality, most important of which were the following:

2.6.1 Collection of secondary data: No attempt was made to collect primary data because of the time constraint. Instead, the relevant secondary data available in the various registers and records at the local level offices of different line departments were identified and collected in a common data format drawn up for the whole state.

2.6.2 Study of local geography and natural resources: A rapid appraisal of the natural resources was undertaken using transept walk technique. Eco-zones in every panchayat were identified by first demarcating the area into various zones on the basis of land form and then identifying the soil, water and vegetation characteristics in each zone. An environmental appraisal of each eco-zone was also attempted in many panchayats.

2.6.3 Review of ongoing schemes: Each department was to prepare a sectoral report on the ongoing schemes and make them available to the panchayats and municipalities. However, most departments did not take the task seriously and this was to have serious implications for the spill over projects of the departments in the subject areas transferred to the local bodies. As a result very few of them found place in the plans of the local bodies.

2.6.4 Survey of local history: A short history was prepared by every local body mostly drawing from oral testimonies and local records. Participatory techniques such as history time line was also encouraged.

2.6.5 Consolidation of Grama Sabha/ Ward Conventions/ Ward Conventions reports: The reports of Grama Sabha/ Ward Conventions/ Ward Conventions discussions, including lists of problems identified, were consolidated for each development sector in a panchayat. The outcome of the above exercises was a Development Report, for each panchayat/municipality, 75 to 100 pages. The majority of the reports were of a high quality, even in an academic sense, and easily qualified to be the best available benchmark studies on the development of respective areas"⁷.

⁷ Ibid

The Development Reports were then presented and discussed in one day development seminars that were organised in every grama panchayat and municipality. Discussions at the development seminars were also organised into sector groups which would then come up with recommendations for projects. A task force was elected by the group to take the plans forward for each sector. The task force was to include political representatives, technical officials as well as NGO representatives. According to non-statutory guidelines, 30 % of the task force was to be made up of women. The chairperson was to be an elected representative and the convenor an officer of the relevant line department.

2.7 Phase III: Task Forces (December 1996 - March 1997)

Sector specific task forces were supposed to draft into projects the recommendations and suggestions that had emerged from the development seminars. On average there were 12 task forces constituted in each local body, with some of the sectors being joined together under one task force.

Preparing and drafting the projects required greater involvement of officials and technically qualified people than was the case in previous stages of the campaign. It was also expected that each project would include a beneficiary component of up to 25% of the project costs either as cash, land, labour or materials.

“A simple transparent format was proposed for the projects to be prepared by the task forces. In order to ensure uniformity, it was suggested that the project reports should generally have the following components:

- **Introduction:** explaining necessity and relevance of project.
- **Objectives:** in well defined (as far as possible in quantitative/measurable) terms.
- **Beneficiaries:** criteria proposed to be followed in selecting beneficiaries or benefiting areas.
- **Activities:** technical analysis and time-frame of all project activities.
- **Organisation:** agencies and their role in implementing project activities.
- **Financial analysis:** investment needed for each activity and identification of source of funds.
- **Achievements:** analysis of likely direct and indirect benefit of costs.
- **Monitoring:** details of the proposed monitoring mechanism.”⁸

There were also specific guidelines for Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe projects. It was also stipulated that 10% of a local body’s plan should specifically target women, either as separate projects, or in an integrated capacity.

A review by the State Planning Board of sample project proposals revealed that the task forces had not functioned as well as had been anticipated. Many of the projects lacked technical and financial feasibility. In addition, the number of officials with technical skills who participated in the task forces, was quite low. Several measures were initiated including project clinics, reorientation conferences and a major retraining initiative, but by far the most successful addition was the formation of a Voluntary Technical Corps (VTC) who would provide the necessary technical assistance to ensure both the technical and financial feasibility of projects (see Phase VI for a fuller account of the VTC). However, all this helped to bring about unforeseen delays in the final plan preparation.

2.8 Phase IV: Annual Plan Finalisation (March - May 1997)

Release of Plan Funds

By the end of the third phase, every local body had a portfolio of projects corresponding to the development issues raised by the people in the Grama Sabhas and Ward Conventions which were then put forward in the development reports. By this point, at the end of financial year at the end of March, the grant-in-aid had also been announced.

- Nearly 36% of total State outlay for 1996-97 was earmarked for the local bodies in the People’s Planning Campaign.
- A total of Rs 10,250 divided into
- 1) Rs 2,760 million for State Sponsored schemes (prepared by State departments but implemented through local bodies)
- 2) Grant-in-aid of Rs 7,490 million.
- Grant-in-aid was divided into three categories:
 - 1) Rs 5,160 million, for the general sector
 - 2) Rs 1,940 million, for projects included in the Schedule Caste Plan (SCP).
 - 3) Rs 390 million, for projects making up the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP).

Allotments for each area were decided on the basis of population. Though there were criticisms of this because it did not positively discriminate in favour of areas that were more economically disadvantaged or which covered a wider geographical area and needed more support. However, the transparent objective criteria based on population, significantly reduced the chance of political manipulation which would have eroded confidence in the overall campaign.

⁸ Ibid

Grant-in-aid to the three tiers of local bodies

	Grama Panchayats / Wards	Block Panchayats / Municipalities	District Panchayats / Corporations
Total Allocation	70%	15%	15%
SCP	60%	20%	20%
TSP	20%	20%	60%

Guidelines for sectoral allocation were as follows:

Sector		Rural Local Bodies	Urban Local Bodies
	Agriculture Animal Husbandry Fisheries Minor Irrigation Small Scale Industries	40-50%	20-30%
Social Sectors	Education Public Health Water Supply Culture Social Welfare Women's Welfare Housing Slum Improvement Work	30-40%	40-50%
Infrastructure Sectors	Public Works Energy Transport Infrastructure	10-30%	10-35%
Total		100%	100%

- For the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) and Schedule Caste Plan (SCP), it was felt unreasonable to stipulate that 40-50% of the grant-in aid allocation be invested in the production sectors, given the poor asset base of the weaker sections of those communities. As a result, a higher outlay was permitted in the social sector of these plans.
- It was also stipulated that 10% of every local body's plan should specifically target women, either as separate projects or in an integrated capacity.

"By the time the grant-in-aid for the local bodies was announced, most of them had prepared a shelf of projects corresponding to the development problems identified by the people. This set the stage for the fourth phase, wherein the projects prepared by the task forces were prioritised and incorporated into the plan document of the panchayats and municipalities. The plan document comprised of eight chapters:

1. **Introduction:** a brief description of the development challenges.
2. **Development Strategy:** a statement of intersectoral priorities (i.e sectoral distribution of outlay) and intra-sectoral priorities (i.e. sub-sectoral policies)
3. **Resource mobilisation:** an estimate of additional local resource mobilisation from the following sources: own funds, State sponsored schemes, centrally sponsored schemes, co-operatives, other financial institutions, voluntary contribution and beneficiary contribution.
4. **Sectoral programmes:** a listing of projects and sub-sectors.
5. **Integrated Development:** a discussion of possibilities of backwards and forwards linkage of projects and integration of related sectors.
6. **Welfare of Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribes:** a discussion on how the guidelines for SCP and TSP have been complied with.
7. **Women's development programmes:** a discussion of the gender impact of the plan and listing of projects included in the women component plan.
8. **Monitoring:** a discussion of the monitoring system.

The delays and problems in project preparation had an adverse impact on the plan finalisation, so drawing up the plan document proved to be more difficult than was expected. One possible reason for this situation was that the training programme for the fourth phase focused

on the elected representatives and in many areas adequate voluntary help failed to come forth.”⁹

2.9 Phase V: Annual Plan of Higher Tiers (April - September 1997)

Once local body plans had been completed, block panchayats/municipalities and district panchayats/corporations were to compile annual plans. The process was sequentially arranged so that local level plans could be integrated into annual plans which also complimented them and filled perceived gaps in the lower level planning process. In order to achieve this effectively, every block and district had to undertake a detailed analysis of local body development reports and local body plans pulled together in a development report. The format for these reports was similar to the local level development plans, using the same eight chapter framework.

Due to the delay in previous phases, particularly in the preparation of the grama panchayat/ward development plans, successful integration of the plans at the various levels could not be achieved. As a consequence, there was a significant amount of repetition at the various levels as well as important gaps that were not picked up until later.

2.10 Phase VI: Plan Appraisal (May - September 1997)

Initially, it was thought that the Campaign would only need 5 phases in the first year. However, as it progressed, it was clear that many of the local level projects lacked technical and financial feasibility and that there was insufficient skilled manpower at district level to rectify this problem. As a result, a major revision to the original Campaign structure was called for, which led to a new sixth phase where the Voluntary Technical Corps (VTC) were formed. This body was constituted at the block and district levels to provide the necessary technical and financial appraisal of projects and plans as well as procedural acceptability.

The VTC was made up principally of retired technical experts and professionals. A member of the corps was asked to spend approximately one day per week giving assistance to the wards and panchayats, reviewing and assessing plans and projects for feasibility. Special orientation training was given to members of the VTC. VTC members did not have the right to question the priorities decided upon by the local bodies. More than 4,000 people were recruited (50-60 experts per local body). Expert Committees were also formed at block, municipal and co-operation levels.

“Expert Committees were formed at block (BLEC), municipal (MLEC) and co-operation (CLEC) levels drawing from the VTC members and certain categories of mandatory officers. Each

expert committee had a non-official and the block panchayat secretary officer from the Town Planning Department as its convenor. The expert committees functioned through subject committees with membership confined to those would had expertise in a particular field. A non-official expert was the chairperson and a senior officer of the related department the convenor of the subject committee.

The expert committees were, one the one hand, an advisory arm of the DPC helping the latter to appraise the plans and projects and on the other hand a body to render technical assistance to the local bodies. The expert committees had no right whatsoever to change the priorities set by the local bodies. Their tasks were clearly confined to technical and financial appraisal of the projects and providing suggestions for modifications so that they may be made viable and feasible. The District Planning Committees approved the plans on the recommendations of the expert committees.

In the course of time, the expert committees were also given the power of approval of technical sanctions and tender excesses within certain limits. They were also given a role in the plan implementation such as approval of revised estimates, settling disputes in measurement, inspection of all works and verification and approval of performance/completion reports of works within certain financial limits.

The District Level Expert Committee (DLEC) consisted of the senior most officials and non official experts, also drawing on the VTC, with Collector as Chairperson. It is an advisory body to the DPC in appraising project and plan documents of block and district panchayats. It also enjoys a wide range of powers in approval of technical sanction, tenders excesses revised estimates and disputes in measurement. Just as the BLEC/MLEC, the DLEC also worked through subject committees.”¹⁰

The VTC was seen as separate from the Expert Committees yet most of the committed members of the VTC had been drafted on to the Expert Committees. In Trivandrum, as time went on many of the VTC who did not have a formal role on the Expert Committees have dropped out from their support role as a member of the VTC.

2.11 Implementation of the 97-98 Plan

Though there was much initial scepticism about the wide ranging changes that were to be initiated through the Campaign and significant adjustments had to be made during the first year, overall results were very positive.

Key Issues

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid

- Though the total grant-in-aid was Rs 7,490 million, the total outlay as a result of the plans put forward in the development reports of local bodies, was in excess Rs 17,500 million. This was because state and centrally sponsored schemes were integrated with local plans, surplus funds from the panchayats own revenue were utilised and additional local resources were mobilised from financial institutions and beneficiaries.
- A shift in local spending, predominantly away from infrastructure projects to production and social projects. Some of this was because of the mandatory sector allocation of funds, but some was due to local priority setting. Local bodies tended to give a much higher priority to animal husbandry, household drinking water and sanitation than was the case previously under a state led administration.
- There was very little diversion of funds allocated for SCPs or TSPs. Many areas actually supplemented the total allocated resources with surplus funds to cover additional projects. Though there was little diversion of funds, the projects that were developed were quite traditional in nature with a focus on the provision of basic services and benefits rather than promoting initiatives that would enhance economic development. There was, however, some problems regarding adherence to the guidelines which required 10% of the allocation to be directly targeted to the benefit of women. On average only 6.68% of the grant-in-aid was set aside for special programmes for women and many of these were quite traditional with little in the way of new initiatives.
- One of the strengths of the People's Planning Committee was to set up an environment where a genuine beneficiary committee could operate. Grama Sabha/Ward Conventions selected the beneficiary committees, significantly reducing the scope for political patronage, though there were still allegations of manipulation of these lists at local level. More realistic local market rates were established which would be adjusted annually by the DLEC. In a departure from previous norms, up to 25% of the cost or Rs 50,000 was allocated in advance to the beneficiary committee/ contractors, which was followed by instalments for part bill payments and final bill settlement when the work was completed.
- A major drawback to the Campaign was the fact that there was insufficient credit linkage for plans and projects drawn up by local bodies. Banks did not support the campaign and on the whole, were unwilling to allow bank officers to serve on expert committees to check financial viability and increase the links between local bodies and banks. There was also little conscious effort to co-ordinate the co-operative movement with the local planning process, particularly in agriculture and small scale production.
- One of the major weaknesses of the first year of the Campaign was the lack of integration of plans throughout the different levels. Delays in producing local level plans meant that there was significant duplication of projects with the same programme being implemented at all four tiers, each with different norms. There was also far too little development of forward and backward linkages.
- A problem was that before the function of the VTC and Expert Committees had been clearly defined, there were many delays in the implementation of projects. All work had to be checked by official engineers before payment could be made and the usual bureaucratic obstacles having to be overcome. With the introduction of the VTC and Expert Committees, bureaucratic delays were significantly reduced although the damage in terms of delays had already been done, at least in terms of first year implementation.
- Though the beneficiary committees worked effectively at the local level, at block and district levels it was found inconvenient to call further Grama Sabha/ Ward Conventions at short intervals. For this and other reasons, including January elections when no Grama Sabha/ Ward Conventions could be called according to Electoral Commission rules, a number of schemes had to be postponed, particularly beneficiary focused projects. When these projects were undertaken late in the financial year or early in the next, there was undue pressure to implement before funds lapsed. This led to quite a significant number of projects being rushed through, unauthorised changes being made to speed up the process and what amounted to window dressing, as local bodies undertook the bare minimum to give the appearance of having completed the proposed project.
- Ineffective monitoring procedures within project planning also contributed to problems in checking irregularities in the implementation process.

2.12 Preparation and implementation of the 97-98 Plan

Though at the time that this case study was conducted, the second financial year of the Campaign had not yet finished and a comprehensive review had not been undertaken, certain key events and changes had taken place and these are recorded here:

- the preparation for the second annual plan followed a similar staging to that of the first year. The main difference was the changed role of the task forces and the role of the VTC was included within the overall planning structure and not seen as a phase on its own.

- task forces were given a significantly more prominent role in the planning process with additional support provided by the VTC and Expert Committees. Not only were they just responsible for the preparation of projects as was the case in the first year, but they also played a key role in the running of the Grama Sabha/ Ward Conventions meetings and development seminars, as well as undertaking informal training of the beneficiary and monitoring committees.
- the training programme was significantly changed. For a fuller analysis of training and capacity building in the second year, see section 4.
- there was a much stronger emphasis on women's participation.
- a special review programme of the Schedule Caste Plan and Tribal Sub Plan was made with specific capacity building undertaken to ensure that an effective strategy can be developed.
- co-operatives were actively linked into the Campaign in three ways:
 1. as the implementation agency for specific projects when this was appropriate
 2. by providing increased access to credit and financial support for beneficiaries involved in plan schemes.
 3. by providing institutional finance and establishing joint credit initiatives that will support local level initiatives.
- there was a move to more actively involve co-operatives in the assessing and monitoring stages of plan design and implementation and improve linkages with local bodies.
- to develop technological facilities to promote efficiency of the decentralised planning process; to involve a wider range of NGOs in the Campaign.
- to continue the deployment of government officials to local and district level government departments.

SECTION 3: INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND LEARNING PROCESSES

3.1 Initial Overview

Before launching the People's Planning Campaign, consultations were held with a range of professionals, academics, government officials and elected representatives. This led to the establishment of the framework that was adopted by the Campaign and was outlined in the *Approach Paper*¹¹ which came out in July 1996. This document also outlined the general capacity building methodology for the Campaign.

It was decided that the objective of the first phase of the Campaign would be to conduct a

detailed needs analysis which included the needs of the poorer communities. This was necessary in order to establish the learning requirements of the people in relation to the Campaign. As a full needs analysis would not be conducted until after the start of the campaign, flexibility had to be built into the Campaign process. Though there was some criticism of this approach, the concept of learning by doing, within the context of a flexible framework, was a key factor in many of the successful outcomes attributed to the campaign.

Right from the outset, capacity building was seen as crucial to the success of the Campaign, fulfilling two distinct functions. The first was to ensure that there had been adequate preparation so that each phase of the campaign could be carried out successfully. Capacity building developed the necessary skills of officials and elected representatives inexperienced in this kind of decentralised approach to government. The experience and education profile of elected officials indicated that a substantial amount of training would be essential if they were to undertake the required planning responsibilities. Added to this was the fact that the technical skills of local bodies was very weak with only 41 out of the 11,509 Grama Panchayat staff being technically competent. Even with significant redeployment of staff from higher tiers of government, training would still be essential for them to be able to work effectively in a decentralised framework that made them responsible for local level planning as well as implementation. The second function of capacity building was to use the training programme to promote the ideals and objectives of the Campaign and create an appropriate environment for success. This meant linking training into the wider publicity function necessary to give the Campaign popular appeal, counter initial scepticism and make the decentralised planning process into a viable and sustainable form of governance.

The Campaign required systematic training of a large number of people in a relatively short period of time, across a large number of locations. This was one of the key reasons behind adopting a campaign style approach rather than looking at institutionalising the training.

3.2 Approach

The approach and methodology that was adopted for the Campaign drew heavily on the experience of the Kerala Total Literacy Campaign and the Land Literacy Movement¹². Many of the key

¹¹ See Appendix 4

¹² The Land Literacy Movement was a programme run by the Centre for Earth Sciences and the Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP). It was a programme that surveyed and mapped village level resources and focused on local community participation to do this. KSSP also played a key role in the People's Planning Campaign, helping to mobilise many of its own members to be resource people at the various levels.

people involved in developing the subsequent training programme came from these two movements as did several key members of the Campaign Cell¹³. Mr Jagagevum, who was responsible for heading the capacity building programme of the Campaign in the State Planning Board, had formerly been the vice director of the Total Literacy Campaign. In developing the methodology for the capacity building programme, the Campaign Cell built on lessons learned by the local tertiary and training institutions, including the Centre for Development Studies (CDC), Institute of Management in Government (IMG), Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) and the Rural Studies Institute.

Initially, a campaign faculty cell was set up within the State Planning Board. This was responsible for developing the training modules and materials that would provide the basis for the Campaign. The key features of the capacity building programme was that it had to be:

1. Achievement orientated: it was important that the objectives of each phase of the programme be successfully conveyed.
2. Time bound: the seven stages of the training had to coincide with the 5 phases of the campaign, as set out in the *Approach Paper*.
3. Mass outreach: the programme had to be designed to reach the broadest number of people possible but in a manner that facilitated the production of realistic development plans. The use of Grama Sabha/ Ward Conventions is an example of this, where mass outreach is achieved through discussion and planning carried out in specific sectoral groups.
4. Campaign-like mode: this was adopted because of the need to train such a large number of people, across a diverse range of topics, all within a specific time frame. The campaign style was also necessary to create the appropriate environment required to generate sufficient motivation and support for the programme as a whole.
5. Cost effectiveness: the whole capacity building programme relied on the mobilisation of a large number of volunteers receiving nothing other than travel expenses and food. The initial stages of the Campaign were run with only 28 full time paid staff. They included, 14 in the State Planning Board Campaign Cell and a co-ordinator for each of the districts. It was only towards the end of 1997 that this was increased to 224, to allow for a full-time co-ordinator at block and municipality level.

¹³The Campaign Cell was made up of 14 full time staff who coordinated the People's Planning Campaign from within the State Planning Board. The members of the Campaign Cell were seconded from a variety of government departments and Education institutes within Kerala.

The mobilisation and training of resource people was a key part of the Campaign. Following the model used in the Total Literacy Campaign, Key Resource People (KRPs) would be trained at State level, who in turn would train District Resource People (DRPs) who then would train Local Resource People (LRPs). Local Resource People would be responsible for facilitating the discussions at the Grama Sabhas/Ward Conventions and at development seminars. The initial idea set out in the *Approach Paper* envisaged a single round of training at each of the three levels: seven days training for the KRPs; three days training for the DRPs; one day training for the LRPs (just before the Grama Sabha/ Ward Conventions). It was realised very early on in the programme that such a limited training cycle would be insufficient if the Campaign were to succeed in meeting its overall objectives and additional training would have to take place before each phase.

As set out in *Approach Paper*, it was initially envisaged that only around 250-300 Key Resource People would need to be trained, with a further 5,000-6,000 trained at District level and 50,000 at the local level. Right from the outset, however, it was realised that if the Campaign was to achieve what was expected, then these figures would have to be significantly increased from the very first round of training. Another reason for the increase in numbers of resource people was to respond to criticism made of the Campaign after the first round, that the LRP was seen as unrepresentative, with many groups seen as having been excluded from the training. The pool of resource people was therefore enlarged at the local level but to ensure that they were all adequately trained and supported, the numbers at all three levels had to be increased. As a result, the total numbers of those trained increased in the second round to 660 KRPs, 11,808 DRPs and 100,000 LRPs.

The establishment of full time co-ordinators at the block and municipal levels was also seen as a key factor in improving the efficiency and impact of the training. Co-ordinators played a major role in organising training at the local level, ensuring that human resource gaps were filled and, most importantly, that motivation levels were maintained among the large number of volunteers. In Trivandrum, a number of people spoke of the key role the municipal co-ordinator Mr Sugedan had played in significantly improving the Campaign's functioning in the second year and in improving the capacity of local bodies within the Municipality to undertake the planning and subsequent implementation process.

A significant constraint on this initiative was the dilution of the training as it passed down through the levels. This was a criticism that had previously been levelled at the Total Literacy Programme which had used a similar cascading approach to training. According to some key people working closely within the Campaign,

potentially only 20% of what was initially passed on to the KRPs actually made it to LRPs.

Consequently, the Campaign worked hard to ensure that the resource people, particularly at State and District level, saw their role not only as trainers but as playing a vital role filling in the gaps between the training and the implementation of each phase of the campaign. The further development of the sectoral handbooks in the second year was also in response to this problem, as was the formation of the VTC, the further development of the support role of the task forces and the emphasis on indirect learning.

Other key constraints included the shortage of training space and the lack of skilled trainers. Although many of the resource people were very willing and put in a lot of effort, they were not essentially trainers and lacked sufficient skills to get their message across in a purposeful way. There was also a lack of capacity to use technology adequately. Such constraints were compounded by problems that arose from the changeover of elected officials (and to a lesser extent key municipal staff) which meant a new assessments of skill levels and more training so that new people could understand the objectives of the campaign.

Another key part of the Campaign's capacity building approach was the formation of the Volunteer Technical Corp (VTC) in March 1997. They provided the necessary technical support in the second year needed to fully develop the greater sectoral focus to the training. They also facilitated the programme's second year emphasis on improving the qualitative output of projects. Their involvement in the capacity building programme also prompted the further development of the self study programme, as well as playing a role in the shift to indirect learning which has become a significant feature of the programme as a whole.

3.3 How was the training implemented?

3.3.1 First Year

Training during the first year of the campaign was divided into seven rounds to coincide with the various phases of the Campaign. The aim of each training course was to ensure that there were sufficient skills to undertake the tasks needed to complete each phase.

There was a strong emphasis on self study and for this purpose a basic handbook was prepared for each round of the training. This was also meant to help alleviate the problem of dilution as training cascaded from state down to local level. For the second and third round, simple sector specific monographs were produced at state level. These was finalised at the state training camps of the KRPs for each of the sectors. After the first year of the campaign, it was felt that these monographs were inadequate. A more substantial training manual was produced for each sector and

included much that was useful for the task forces designing projects in such areas.

Most of the training took the form of lectures followed by short question and answer sessions to clarify points raised. There was also an opportunity for group discussions to encourage a problem solving approach to the learning process. KRP training was more participatory with greater emphasis on discussions and the assessment of case studies. Textbooks were prepared by the State Planning Board faculty and revised at the state level camps to include the suggestions of KRPs. Though KRPs in Trivandrum were satisfied on the whole with the training they received, many of the DRPs and particularly the LRPs, felt that they had had little opportunity to take on board the range of new ideas and that there had been too little time devoted to working through case study examples.

First Round

The objective of the first round was to train the resource people at all three levels. Key Resource People received five days training, District Resource People then received an abridged three day version of this training and Local Resource People received just a one day training session which briefly covered the overall aims of the People's Planning Campaign and focused on the skills necessary to organise Grama Sabha/ Ward Conventions and facilitate discussions.

The focus of the training for KRPs and DRPs was:

- The challenge of development in Kerala; although social indicators have in the past improved and the social sector continues to grow, the quality of service has begun to decrease. Meanwhile, production is stagnating, causing an economic crisis which potentially threatens to undermine all the gains previously made in the social sector.
- The decentralisation philosophy behind the Campaign, including the adopted approach to decentralised planning and the role of people's participation
- The legislative context, in particular the 73rd/74th Constitutional Amendments and the Kerala Municipalities Act.
- The different stages of the Campaign.
- Organising and facilitating Grama Sabha/ Ward Conventions

Second Round

The objective of the second round of training was to provide the necessary people with skills to ensure that local level development reports could be drawn up. Once again, the main beneficiaries of the training were KRPs, DRPs and LRPs. The duration of the training at state level was three days, while at district and local levels, it was two days and one day respectively.

The training had two key focuses:

- Preparation of the Developmental Report
- The sectoral perspective and the guidelines for sectoral allocation for the production, social and infrastructure sectors.

Third Round

In the third round of training, the objective was to develop the skills of the task forces in order that they be able to draw up projects that responded to needs prioritised in the development plan. Whereas during the first two rounds the focus had been on the training of resource people, in the third round the focus shifted to officials, elected representatives and the task forces.

At state level, selected members of the various task forces were trained. These people would then act as trainers at district level and be known as the task force training faculty. This lasted for four days with 300 people trained in total.

A three day training camp was held at district level. Participants included KRPs and various officials such as Municipal Secretaries, District Planning Officers, District level line officers for the various sectors and senior bank officials. In total 1146 people were trained.

At block level, a two day workshop was held for task force members and elected officials. This workshop focused specifically on producing projects within each block or municipality. One of the key constraints of this round, and which continues to dog the Campaign, is the lower than expected turn out of elected officials. There have been various reasons put forward for this, including resistance to the objectives of the Campaign as a whole, time constraints and the fact that they thought that they should receive training at a higher level. Despite this limitation, the number of people trained at block level was over 1,500,000.

Fourth Round

The objective of this round of training was to train the task forces and local bodies in the drafting of the Development Plan.

During this round of training, the structure of the Plan Document (see 3.3 Phase IV) was examined in detail, along with the weaknesses emerging in projects that had been drawn up in the preceding phase.

One of the notable features of this round of training was the convening of 'project clinics'. Established in part to improve the standard of the project submissions, the intention was to add quality to development plans. Wards or panchayats with well developed or advanced projects, were asked to give repeated seminars of their work to different groups. The role of the clinic was to specifically promote discussion around the technical and financial aspects of a project to demonstrate what was expected of a project submission. One of the strengths of the project clinics was that rather than being given a set of guidelines by government officials, people learnt from others going through

the same developmental process as themselves. Trainees were able to look at a range of developmental approaches to project design and more importantly, given the tools to produce better development plans. Bank officials were also asked to attend these clinics to look at the budgeting of projects or the role of banks and co-operatives play in providing additional credit to local schemes. In Trivandrum it was felt that the number of bank and co-operatives officials who lent support to these clinics were less than expected that there was significant resistance to the Campaign from these two sectors.

Fifth Round

The objective of this round of training was to train district planning officials and more specifically elected district representatives in the preparation of district level Development Plans. For this purpose a three day workshop was held at state level for KRPs, elected officials and district planners.

The key focus of this round of training related to effective integration of the three tiers (ward, municipality and district) of plans from the various levels of government. Model case studies were used to look at how this could be achieved. Problem identification and analysis was highlighted. One of the problems at this level was the lack of perspective planning and training in the more strategic aspects of planning. Many individuals in Trivandrum felt that this section of the training focused too much on why integration was necessary and the role that it played in the overall planning process rather than the specifics of how this could be achieved.

Sixth Round

The objective of this round of the training was to ensure that the Volunteer Technical Committee (VTC) could function effectively and address the issue of project feasibility which had emerged as the weakest part of the planning process up to this point. The fact that this additional and large scale training component could be introduced at this late stage of the Campaign highlighted the fact that there was a willingness to learn from mistakes. It also showed that there was enough organisational flexibility and capacity to make significant changes to the programme.

At state level the faculty had to be trained in what was expected of the VTC. 6000 VTC were then trained at district level and again the same number at block level. The training camps gave an overview of the issues that had previously been covered in other rounds of the training but also focused specifically on the technical, social and financial appraisal of local level plans. Another sub focus of this round was to introduce issues relating to implementation.

The fact that the VTC would play an important role in indirect training and learning by providing ongoing technical support to a range of

people involved in the Campaign, was also something that was also covered in these training sessions. (For a fuller discussion on indirect and informal training see section 4.4)

Seventh round

The objective of this final round of training, in the first year of the Campaign, was to ensure that those involved in facilitating and coordinating the project implementation process had the necessary skills to carry out this role.

At state level training was conducted in a series of two day camps. At this level the focus was specifically on elected representative and key officials directly involved in overseeing the implementation process. At block and municipal level 25,000 people were involved in a series of two day workshops, these include a range of officials, VTC and Key, District and Local Resource People.

3.4 Overall assessment of the first year training programme

Though there were problems with the training programme in the first year, it was felt that overall it had achieved its aim of mass mobilisation and providing a basic level of training for all those involved. This ensured that the various phases of the Campaign could be carried out with a relative level of success. Despite issues of project feasibility and integration, annual plans had been drawn up and implemented at all levels and a bottom up approach to planning adopted. Implementation rates were around 90%. Active not just passive community involvement in the planning process had been achieved on an unprecedented. A problem solving approach to learning had been successfully encouraged. The capacity building programme had also shown that it had enough flexibility to cope with a major shift in programme direction, with the formation and subsequent training of the VTC.

Key issues that had emerged from an analysis of the first year capacity building programme, included:

- that the sectoral focus needed to be strengthened.
- that some of the training programmes need to be significantly revised including those relating to the financial and technical aspects of project writing and the subsequent implementation and monitoring of those projects.
- that there was a need to improve training in relation to integration of plans and backward and forward linkages.
- that training needed to begin to look at issues of longer term perspective planning.
- that there was a need to involve a wider range of department officials and also non-official technical specialists, particularly the VTC, in the training programme.

- that if the VTC and task forces were to undertake a much more active role in the development and appraisal of projects then they would have to be given further training.
- that there needed to be further attempts to encourage inter ward/panchayat learning and the sharing of best practices and successful learning models.
- that if the Campaign was going to involve more women in the decentralisation of planning process as a whole, then there needed to be a conscious move to include more women in the training programme.
- more specific training relating to Schedule Caste and Tribal groups needed to be developed.
- in addition to the valuable role being played by one or two key NGOs like KSSP, there was a need to involve a much wider cross section of NGOs in the training programme.
- there was a need to encourage and formalise the indirect training role that was to be undertaken by the VTC and task forces.
- that the campaign mode of training, though essential to meet the initial objectives of the Campaign was not sustainable in the longterm. Ways of institutionalising training would have to be developed by the end of the second year. At the same time there was a need to improve linkages between the capacity building initiatives of the Campaign and tertiary institutions as a whole not just those that would have a formal role in the institutionalisation of the training programme.

3.5 Response in Trivandrum to the first year training programme

In Trivandrum, there was initially fairly strong resistance to the People's Planning Campaign and the associated capacity building programme. This came about for several reasons. As a Corporation there was already a strong ward based administrative structure in place. This situation was different from the panchayats where local level administration had only been in place for several years. There was also a strong resistance from officials because being in the state capital meant that it was where the previous state led system of planning and implementation was the most entrenched and also where the impact of deployment of officials would be the greatest. People at the grassroots level were also initially quite sceptical of the campaign seeing it just another politically inspired move, which like the "Clean City Green City" campaign was a government led initiative that was bureaucratically implemented with little involvement from the people. However, as the programme unfolded and the more participative nature of the Campaign was revealed then levels of participation have steadily grown.

Key Resource People were on the whole positive about the appropriateness of the initial training programme they had undertaken. LRPs and to a lesser extent DRPs, though still positive, felt that the training at district and local level was too superficial. There was a strong feeling that they had been given the rationale for the Campaign but had very little idea of how this was to be carried out and how they were to put these new ideas into practice. LRPs also did not feel they had a full grasp of the wider picture. In the first round of training there were also too few LRPs and people felt that the task of organising the grama Sabhas was overly ambitious but this changed with a significant increase in the number of LRPs recruited for the second phase. Several people commented on the loss of information through the adoption of a cascade approach to training, though they felt that given the scope of the training initiative in the first year there was little alternative. The Campaign would however need to ensure that there were refresher courses in subsequent years to compensate for this.

In terms of methodology DRPs, LRPs and to a lesser extent KRPs felt there was too much in the way of lectures and not enough chance to discuss issues or to work through problems in a practical way. KRPs also did not feel that they had been given adequate training on methodology and training of trainer techniques. This had as a result impacted on their ability to transfer information effectively.

DRPs and LRPs did not feel that the formal training conducted in the first year was in any way sufficient. Much more of what they learnt was achieved through informal learning processes developed in the Campaign, particularly by using the Key Resource People, and at a later stage the VTC, to fill in the gaps they had in terms of understanding the Campaign process. Learning from their own mistakes and others involved in the Campaign was also another significant factor in this process. They felt that this informal learning process was a key aspect of the general success of the Campaign in the first year and would be more efficient if it was better structured. This was something that was developed more in the second year with the appointment of a Municipal Campaign co-ordinator and a strengthened task force and VTC.

Resource people felt that apart from their own contribution to the wider development process, they had also individually got a lot out of being involved in the Campaign. They had found it exciting to work on such a mass mobilisation programme and enjoyed the opportunity to develop the capacity of communities as the decentralised planning process took shape. They had also been able to significantly broaden their own knowledge of development planning.

Both resource people and government officials felt that there had been insufficient sectoral based training and this had been a major

factor in relation to the problems experienced in project writing and implementation. Officials also felt that they had really only been actively involved in the Campaign at the point leading up to the implementation and to a lesser extent the project writing stage. As a result, they had not been part of the overall learning process that had taken place in the first year and therefore had not really come to grips with the overall decentralised planning process but just the part where they fitted in.

VTC also felt that in the first year their training had been rushed, though they understood this was to be expected as their role was only determined towards the end of the first year of the Campaign. They also felt that the sectoral aspect to the training was weak and several resigned after the first year feeling that the quality of implementation was being weakened through the People's Planning Campaign process.

Elected officials had found that there were increased demands on their time and that they needed to be more directly involved in the day to day running of the Campaign. In Trivandrum at the start of the second year, elected officials were given offices at the local level. Previously they had been based at the Corporation offices. In retrospect it was realised that if this had been done in the first year it would have improved coordination of the Campaign significantly and involved elected officials from an earlier stage while also improving the political-administrative interface at the ward and district level. KRPs also spoke of the difficulties of involving elected officials in the training process, unless the training was conducted at state level where officials felt that their contribution was warranted.

3.6 Second Year Training Programme

The overall aims of the first year training programme continued in the second year. Rather than organise the training into seven rounds in the second year these were combined into 3 broad stages.

- plan preparation
- specific sectoral approaches to planning
- implementation of projects

Plan preparation

At the end of the first year of the Campaign a handbook called Aasoothrana Sahayi No 1 (Plan Guide No1) was prepared. It was divided into the following chapters.

Chapter 1: At the doorstep of the second year's annual plan

Chapter 2: A review of the annual plan 1997-8

Chapter 3: The procedures for the second year's annual plan preparation

Chapter 4: The organisational functions of task forces

Chapter 5: How to write a project proposal

Chapter 6: The grama sabhas and ward conventions

Chapter 7: The development seminars

Chapter 8: Formulation of the plan document

The handbook summarised the experiences of the first year of the Campaign and reviewed and analysed the key successes and problems that had taken place. It also set out the guidelines for the current year. This was to be used as the basis for much of the general preparatory training that was to take place in the second year.

General orientation workshops were held for office bearers, elected officials and members of the district planning committee to review what had taken place in the first year and how the second year could build and improve on that. More specific workshops were given to members of the District Planning Committees and key officials to set out revised procedures and specific guidelines for the current years planning procedure.

Whereas in the first year the focus was on the KRP, DRP and LRP. In the second year task forces (made up of KRP, VTC and officials) undertook much of the formal training role and the organisation of grama sabhas/ward committees and the preparation of the development plans and projects. Resource people would still play a valuable supporting role in filling in the gaps as and when they emerge and providing an informal resource base for local communities. KRPs were given a clearly defined regional and sectoral allocation. In Trivandrum there were 11 KRPs. 5 KRPs coordinated regional resource groups, each with ten wards under their charge. Another 5 KRPs had sectoral responsibility, each with one or a group of sectors under their charge and one worked as the KRP supporting the Trivandrum Corporation Campaign Cell.

Task forces also undertook general orientation training but rather than taking the form of a one off training camp, training was divided up into four workshops spread out over a couple of months. This was primarily done to develop a problem based and incremental approach to learning. It was also hoped that a degree of self study would be encouraged through this process.

General categories for the four workshops, included:

- Orientation
- Review of last years planning process
- Organisation of the grama sabha/ward committee, development plan and development seminar.
- Development plan document finalisation

At state and district level selected key resource people were trained as facilitators to conduct block and municipal level training of task forces.

Sectoral focus

In addition to the general orientation training given to task forces, they were also given sector specific training in the form of workshops and project clinics. For this to be successful, it was felt the training material that was available to participants

needed to be significantly improved. The sector specific monographs that had been designed for the first year's training were upgraded into more comprehensive sector specific training manuals.

To design both the textbooks and the associated training a core faculty was organised at state level consisting of VTC, technical officers and KRP. For each sector there was a faculty of on average 30 people. Agriculture had the largest group of 60. Training courses and handbooks were prepared in the following sixteen areas:

1. Agriculture and Irrigation
2. Animal Husbandry
3. Fisheries
4. Industry
5. Energy
6. Public Works
7. Health
8. Sanitation
9. Water Supply
10. Housing and Urban Development
11. Education, Art and Culture
12. Anganawadis
13. Schedule Caste / Schedule Tribe Development
14. Women's welfare
15. Co-operative Societies
16. Resource Mobilisation

In sector groups each faculty brainstormed the key areas that needed to be included in the manual and subsequent training. Faculty groups then divided into sub-groups to draft the various chapters of the manual. The manuals were then used at state level camps to train district faculty members (25-75 per sector). After which the manuals were then revised to include amendments and suggestions put forward by district level participants. Final versions were then produced and used to train between 10,000 - 25,000 people in each sector in sectoral workshops and project clinics at block and municipal level.

The general themes covered in these sectoral workshops at block and municipal level were:

- a critical review of last years Campaign.
- an analysis of sectoral issues and assessment of the current planning process
- an analysis of the projects being implemented in the second year of the Campaign

Another aspect of this increased sectoral focus was the trialing of semi-institutionalised training. This was done with various sectors using institutions such as Institute of Management in Government (IMG), Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) and the Institute of Rural Studies. The first such programme focused on Schedule Caste and Tribal development. In this programme groups of 400-500 were trained in a series of two day workshops. All together 4,500 people were trained. The course covered topics including: issues regarding the SC/ST, a review of last years development plans and an assessment

of what had to be undertaken in the second year of the programme and the issues surrounding project implementation.

Implementation of the development plans

Task forces, once again, were the key focus of this stage of the training with sector specific workshops being organised at state level and block/municipal level. Officials, district resource planners and elected representatives were also involved. The issue of under representation of elected officials was still an issue in the second year. The training programme was organised into two stages. The first was a convening of faculty members for each of the sectors for them to review the current years projects, looking specifically at the qualitative nature of the projects being submitted, to see if there was an improvement since last year. There was not a separate general appraisal component to this year's training programme but rather a one day orientation for expert committee members. Once this review process had been undertaken then a training programme of sector specific implementation workshops was initiated at block level with the VTC and task forces actively involved in the process.

Specific training for the SC/ST, women, and NGOs.

These three sectors were targeted as being weak in the first year of the Campaign and needing particular attention during the second year.

In the women's sector there was a specific aim to increase the number of female resource people at all levels as well as recruiting more women onto the VTC and Expert Committees, particularly elected women representatives and professional women. Task force training also stressed the importance of the gender impact statement in the plan documents and project proposals. Female elected representatives were given extra training so that they may have a stronger input on the drawing up of sectoral gender programmes and would also monitor sector committees to ensure they were following this through.

In Trivandrum, there was a move to involve Anganawadi workers more directly in the Campaign. It was expected that they will in turn help to mobilise women from the poorer communities and help to draw up plans for improving the quality of local services. A series of district level conventions were held to facilitate this process. Local neighbourhood groups of women, with an emphasis on Mahila Nidhi and Community Development Societies (CDS)¹⁴ were also to be

involved more directly in the Campaign and model projects were promoted on a wider scale. Interestingly enough there has been very little formal use of the CDS to promote the Campaign, though there is a statutory mandate that ensures that the Area Chairwomen are included on ward committees. In discussions with senior officials at the State Planning Board the neighbourhood community role of CDS was well known but there was little awareness of the particular strengths that the tiered nature CDS could provide as an effective mobiliser of people in poorer communities, framework for helping to prioritise local level plans from neighbourhood to district level and as a source of leadership skills among women. At the local level several KRPs and elected officials who had been directly involved with CDS were using the capacity that it developed among women at local level to generate more representative local level plans.

Extra training programmes to increase the levels of participation Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribal members and to improve projects targeted specifically at this sector were also undertaken during the second year. A series of conventions were held at state level involving all the grama panchayat presidents and secretaries to review and strengthen this component of their plans. Linked to this was a scheme that employed paid tribal development activists. These activists were given training in a two day workshop held at state level. Their role is to generate support for the Campaign at the local level and to improve the quality of plans for this sector, with a particular focus on improving productivity and earning capacity.

Women's development and the SC/ST will be the only sectors where the State Planning Board have indicated that they themselves will organise training in the third year, all other sectoral training is expected to be institutionalised. This is because they feel that the existing training model still needs to be strengthened in these areas to achieve the desired results.

NGO participation was also an area that the Campaign had not successfully targeted. Though a few key NGOs had been closely linked to the Campaign such as KSSP, the majority of NGOs had had very little involvement in the programme. A meeting had been held in the early stages of the programme where a number of NGOs had attended to discuss possible NGO involvement in

plan and finally the community development societies who integrate these area plans into a municipal level action plan.

Mahila Nidhi is also a system of organising women into neighbourhood groups for development purposes but is not tiered in nature like the CDS.

¹⁴ The Community Development Society (CDS) as applies in Kerala, is a system of organising women in communities to plan for their development. This is achieved through a tiered structure of neighbourhood committees who prepare micro-plans, area development societies who consolidate these micro-plans into a mini-

the Campaign. This however had not been followed up during the Campaign and many NGOs felt disappointed that they had not had any further involvement. Half way through the second year the State Planning Board employed a consultant to look at how NGOs could contribute to the Campaign and potential methodologies for training of NGO members. It is expected that this aspect will be developed in the third year of the Campaign.

3.7 Assessment of the second year training programme

Though at the time of undertaking this case study the implementation process was still underway and there had been no formal review of the second year training programme certain key issues had emerged.

- that the focus on sectors and the role of the VTC in the capacity building process had a direct positive impact on the quality of plans and in particular in relation to the technical and financial feasibility of projects produced.
- that the semi-institutionalisation of training had reinforced the need for fuller institutionalisation of the training process, if the longer term capacity building programme initiated under the campaign is to be successful.
- that there is a need to look more closely at the methodology and materials to be subsequently used by the training institutions to ensure that they are compatible with the ideals of the campaign.
- that despite institutionalising the capacity building programme there is still a need for structure that facilitates incremental and problem based learning. For this the development of a Technical Support Group (TSG) has been suggested.
- that the VTC is not sustainable in its present capacity and needs to be more formally incorporated into the system.
- that there is a need to look at perspective (mid to long term) planning and build sufficient capacity for this to be undertaken.
- there is a need to look more closely at institutional learning.
- that the use of model panchayats/wards should be developed as an integral part of the learning process.
- that to ensure sustainability of the current capacity building process, effective deployment needs to take place within a sound administrative and legal framework.

3.8 Response in Trivandrum to the second year training programme

The response to the second year training programme was significantly better than the first. People felt that the role that had been played by the VTC and the task forces had improved the quality of planning and implementation significantly. They in turn had benefited from more

training and a greater emphasis on a sectoral based approach.

People felt that the quality of literature that was available was much better. In particular, the *Aasoothrana Sahayi I* and the sectoral handbooks. There was an issue that some of the sector textbooks had come out a lot quicker than others which had caused a few problems. Several KRPs and officials remarked on the fact that the next step was to look at use of modern technology. Specific mention was made to the need for computer skills training so that much of the material collected for the data base could be transferred from printed form onto an electronic data base. This could then be easily accessed when projects are being put together. There is also the potential to develop the use of satellite TV as a means of communication and mass education. The proposed idea is to make this kind of technology available in each ward.

The extended use of task forces in the capacity building process was seen as a particularly positive initiative in Trivandrum. Being the state capital the quality of membership of the VTC, and as result the task forces, was very high with a significant number of former state level officials participating. The project clinics, building on last years efforts were of a particularly high standard with some excellent models of the planning process being used as demonstration models for other wards. It was also felt that inter ward study tours needed to be encouraged to promote ward level learning. There is still a feeling that mid to long term perspective planning was something that people had not been sufficiently trained for and this would have to be a training focus if feasible 5 year plans are to be produced. At the ward level people also felt that there was not enough training on how to plan and that more skills of action planning would be useful for the objectives of the Campaign to be sustainable.

At the Corporation level there was also concern about how to effectively develop longer term and integrated development plans at the local level. At present there is a strong ward focus to the planning process and individual wards are not really looking at cross cutting issues where plans would have to be integrated across a number of wards. This has meant that such programmes are often initiated at Corporation level with a task force convened specifically for this purpose and then prioritisation being done at a development seminar with ward representatives and key stakeholders present. In discussions with Antony Benchilas, the chairperson of the Trivandrum Town Planning Committee, he pointed out that there were several issues that made this kind of integrated planning more difficult. There were difficulties in mobilising beneficiary groups that spanned several wards to oversee the implementation of these programmes. There was also a problem of short term opportunism as individual politicians prioritised programmes that had the most immediate visible

benefit. Another issue was at this level, is there is sometimes a conflict of interest between the Corporation Planning Committee and the Chief Town Planner who was responsible for State funded programmes. It was not exactly clear where the dividing line was between these two bodies and blurred further by the existence of the quasi state Trivandrum Development Authority. At the moment issues are sorted out as they arise but the process will have to be formalised if the development of longer term planning is to be fully developed within a decentralised context. Training and capacity building initiatives will be needed to encourage a wider view of town planning at the ward level as well to bring about effective integration of planning at the various levels.

The low levels of participation in the Campaign among women was still a concern at the end of the second year. Though numbers were up on last year, ways were being looked at to involve various women's organisations more fully in the overall capacity building process. Organisers were also looking at trying to include a greater proportion of well educated women as facilitators, to more effectively use their skills and social standing in the community.

At the institutional level in Trivandrum, the Institute of Management in Government was concerned of the logistical problems of training such a large number of people once the training programme became fully institutionalised in the coming year and the fact that it would have to upgrade it's facilities to cater for the demand.

3.9 Indirect and informal learning

The success of the People's Planning Campaign basically rests largely on it's ability to build the capacity of all those connected with planning, development and administration to manage a decentralised planning process. One of the strengths of the Campaign was the emphasis that it placed on creating an effective learning environment. Though the formal training aspect of the programme was crucial the campaign also relied heavily on indirect and informal learning to maintain the momentum of the Campaign at the local level as well providing the flexibility and informal support that this kind of programme needed.

Originally, it was perceived this role would be filled by the KRPs, DRPs and LRPs at the various levels. At the end of the first year their capacity to fulfil this role was substantially enhanced by the formation of the VTC and then in the second year by the increased capacity building role allocated to the task forces. Apart from their formal training role and direct input into the drawing up of projects both the VTC and the task forces have also made a significant contribution to the indirect learning aspect of the programme. When drawing up projects they have often worked quite closely with local beneficiary committees giving additional technical inputs but also acting as

motivators and ensuring commitment to the broader ideals of the Campaign as a whole. The importance of this indirect learning is something that has been recognised within the Planning Board and one of the rationals for developing a much stronger self study initiative in the second year of the Campaign was to harness and develop some of this learning.

KRPs also relied heavily on the opinions of members of the VTC for guidance on technical issues particularly in instances where administrative resistance was higher and support not so forthcoming. Though there were structured processes within the Campaign for this interaction to take place, much of it took place in an informal capacity.

Both the VTC and the KRPs also provided an informal feedback mechanism whereby which much information about the successes or problems relating to various initiatives was conveyed allowing for appropriate short term responses to be initiated while the more formal appraisal of wider issues was undertaken. The capacity for individual and organisational learning has also been increased with the appointment of full-time Campaign coordinators at the municipal level. In Trivandrum, various officials and non officials involved in the Campaign felt that the appointment of Mr Sugedan, the municipal Campaign coordinator, had been a crucial factor in the improved performance of the planning process in the Municipality in the second year. In his capacity as Municipal Campaign Coordinator, he fulfils an important function of drawing together much of the learning and information that is developed informally and providing a mechanism where cross cutting issues can be highlighted and subsequently integrated into the more formalised learning aspects of the Campaign.

The function of beneficiary committees was also another area where indirect and informal learning took place. The fact that they provided a vehicle and outlet for discussion and potential dispute resolution was an example of this. In Trivandrum, one of the initiatives of the Campaign is to widen some of the larger city roads that run through the central shopping district. In the past resistance by shop owners towards municipal officials has made this impossible and a stalemate situation normally developed where neither side felt it could communicate effectively with the other and both would subsequently refuse to compromise. Under the People's Planning Campaign, shop-owners had been included onto the beneficiary committee allowing dialogue to take place and a acceptable compromise be reached. Already one such road has been widened and two more look certain to go ahead.

Beneficiary committees also provide a supportive environment for promoting community interaction, sharing of ideas and the development of a more focused neighbourhood group. This improved community functioning had encouraged

problem based and incremental learning where the shared capacity of the group to learn is greater than the individual. Campaign organisers are very aware that to bring about significant and long lasting attitudinal and structural change that the promotion of indirect learning is a key factor and needs to be actively encouraged and developed within the framework of decentralised planning.

At the Corporation government level there is also significant amount of indirect institutional learning taking place. There is a perceived need that this needs to be structured more appropriately so as to get maximum benefit out of it. Much of this learning occurs indirectly through individual officials. Certain individuals and many of them are elected officials hold key positions on the various standing committees within the co-operation or on monitoring committees set up under the Campaign itself. As a result, they play a key role in evaluating programmes initiated under the People's Planning Campaign and much has been learnt by them about the running of the Campaign and indirectly passed to others in the Corporation or involved in the Campaign. A problem that was highlighted by several officials is that there is no formal institutional learning mechanism within the Corporation itself for ensuring that this learning is taken on board by the Corporation as a whole, though some does get passed on at council meetings where a particular issue has been raised. As a result, there is a over emphasis on the individual and should that person not be re-elected at the next elections then much of the learning that has taken place in their section will also not be carried over.

The second issue concerns perspective planning. Much of the learning that takes place is reactive in the sense that when a problem is encountered a solution is sought and often the institutional learning that takes place is indirect and informal in nature. Without an institutional framework for formalising this kind of learning then it is more difficult to introduce lessons learnt into longer term planning initiatives.

3.10 Impacts of training

To achieve the sort of widespread change envisaged by the People's Planning Campaign a capacity building programme on a massive scale had to be initiated. After two years, the organisational framework has been effectively set up and training has ensured that the necessary steps has been carried out in order to achieve each stage. However, there is still a need to significantly improve the quality of output from each of these stages and training will have to be continued at all levels to ensure that the momentum generated over the last two years can continue and the emphasis on quality of output is maintained.

Though local resource people now feel confident with the micro-planning process and the sectoral focus in terms of producing local level

development plans, they still need to be able to develop more expertise with the overall planning process and how these issues can be look at strategically to develop longer term perspective plans. There is also a continued need to improve the integration of planning through the three tiers so that both overlap and the omission of key planning issues is avoided.

In assessing the impact of the learning and information sharing process it is very important to look at the role of the VTC to the success of the overall scheme. They have provided the necessary sectoral expertise and the technical and financial oversight that was so lacking in the first year. They also provided the Campaign with a temporary vehicle to analyse, approve and help to implement projects while the traditional government mechanism undertook the necessary changes. In this way the Campaign was able to sidestep the existing bureaucratic structure that was stalling the process of decentralisation and through the visible actions of the VTC provide the catalyst to facilitate change within the bureaucracy itself. There is a strong call by opposition parties for them to be disbanded and for their role to be filled by deployed officials. This will probably take effect during the coming financial year. However, it is also realised that for the Campaign to be successful in the short to medium term, there still needs to be a technically proficient support team that can facilitate the planning process. A suggestion being promoted by the State Planning Board is to establish a Technical Support Group (TSG) which would be constituted at panchayat/ward level and formally take over the role of the VTC though it would not form an independent group but act as a service provider to local institutions. It would be form part of task forces and implementation and monitoring groups. The idea is currently being trialed on an experimental basis in four panchayats and the exact structure that it would have is still unclear.

Another impact of the Campaign given it's fluid and flexible nature, is the need is to redefine the idea of change management within the Kerala government context. There is an appreciation that the interface between the administrative and political functions of state is an inescapable reality but that for this to work in a decentralised capacity this interface needs to be carefully managed. Leadership and management issues are among the future priorities of the ongoing capacity building programme.

Another significant impact of the Campaign will be on the institutions that are to take over the capacity building function in the near future. They are concerned with their capacity and lack of infrastructure to deal with the estimated 364,000 people that will potentially need training over the next five years. At the IMG they only have an annual maximum capacity of 8,500. As a result, there is a need to look at alternative capacity building initiatives including the use of mobile

resource and training centres and the use of satellite TV at ward/panchayat level to give on going training lectures. There is also the issue of differing methodologies. The State Planning Board perceive future training to be carried out with a similar approach being adopted to that of the second year training but with the scale of the training diminishing over the next few years. The fact that institutions have their own methodologies that are not necessarily the same as those put forward in the Campaign is something that the State Planning Board are currently looking at to assess the impact of institutionalising the training aspect of the Campaign and the subsequent changes that will have to be made.

There is also a need to look at more effectively linking academic research into the planning campaign to ensure that projects, particularly those that are being introduced on a wide scale (eg new agricultural initiatives) have been properly researched so that local authorities can make accurate assessments based on local needs and conditions. It has been suggested that a review of grants and research funding should be undertaken to assess how such linkages can be encouraged.

The impact of the information and learning process should not be assessed purely in terms of those who have undergone formal training. Most of the community learning that takes place is not through the formal capacity building programme which is focused on resource people, officials and non-officials with a technical focus. Several communities expressed the view that, an indirect result of the Campaign, is that they can see more clearly what the expected role of an elected official should be and how when planning is coming from the bottom up, pressure can be applied to make sure that they are doing their job correctly. It is expected that a significant number of elected officials will lose their seat at the next elections as a consequence of communities becoming more aware of what should be expected of someone in such a position. Several elected officials have said that they are aware that they will have to significantly change their role as an elected official, not so much because of what was said at the formal training camps, but due to the indirect pressure being placed on them through local communities asking for change.

SECTION 4 LESSONS LEARNT

4.1 Importance of a campaign environment

The fact that the Campaign was supported by a clear legislative framework gave the programme legitimacy and allowed it to push through the initial barrier of public and official scepticism as being yet another politically inspired populist publicity campaign. The campaign environment was essential to create the momentum and provide the organisational structure that was needed to get the

programme off the ground in the first year. It also provided a sense of purpose ensuring that those recruited as trainers and facilitators were motivated and committed to ideals of the programme as a whole. Such an environment was also particularly necessary to undertake the massive task of training such a large number of participants who were to part in the programme. The number of participants in the first year alone numbered over 400,000.

Another strength of the campaign mode was that it allowed key individuals to bring their skills to the fore, less fettered by institutional and bureaucratic stiffness concerned with issues of superiority, age and social standing. The campaign mode also allowed for direct targeting of people's attitudes to change rather than just focusing on technical issues. In the end it is this attitudinal change that is essential to obtain, if work practices are to change and the process is to be sustainable. At the same time the State Planning Board have realised that there is a finite use that can be made of the campaign mode and that for long term change to occur the campaign process needs to be formalised and institutionalised. Training needs to be placed in the hands of academic institutions and training centres. The VTC disbanded and the support services they provided to be replaced through effective deployment of a significant number technical officials to block and panchayat level.

4.2 The importance of a technical support function

As the failings of the first year of the Campaign showed, with the support of committed resource people it is possible to reach a satisfactory degree of organisational competence, with all the phases of the Campaign being achieved. However without the necessary degree of technical input the qualitative component of what is produced remains weak. The strengthened role of the task forces and the creation of the VTC provided the necessary independent technical and financial appraisal which strengthened the sectoral focus as well as preventing over simplification of technical inputs by those without the necessary expertise who were focusing more on the process of decentralisation rather than the outputs. At the same, it also helped to resist overly bureaucratic control, which had previously been maintained through the concentration of expertise at state level.

The functioning of the VTC as a technical body outside of traditional bureaucratic structure allowed institutional change to take place as both officials and beneficiaries could see what realistically be achieved in a given time frame. It also gave time for institutional adjustment to take place and the necessary attitudinal change to occur without simultaneously resisting the change from within as would have been the case had the VTC function been carried out within the official structures as had been previously planned for.

4.3 The importance for a comprehensive training programme

The long term success of such a comprehensive restructuring of government relies heavily on the scope and results of the capacity building programme that is carried out at all levels. Ensuring that the Campaign objectives are met, means providing the necessary skills as well as making sure that people are sufficiently motivated to follow through with the required tasks at each stage of the Campaign. A successful training programme also plays a significant role in diminishing the natural resistance people and institutions have to such large scale change.

Originally, only one large round of training was envisaged but organisers very quickly became aware that continual training would have to take place, particularly before each phase of the Campaign to ensure that targets could be adequately met. The development of a staged training programme meant that incremental and problem-based learning could develop which substantially improved the quality of the formal learning while also giving a focus to the indirect learning that was to be facilitated by resource people, task forces and the VTC. This also led to the development of material specifically focusing on self learning which served to encourage an overall learning environment.

One of the strengths of the capacity building programme attached to the People's Planning Campaign is the willingness to adapt when it was apparent that there were significant gaps and problems in the approach initially adopted. This was displayed in the doubling of LRPs after the first round, the formation of the VTC and the subsequent use of them to strengthen the sectoral focus of the capacity building programme and the associated upgrading of the sectoral literature. There are still key issues that need to be addressed such as the overall lack of participation of women as there are with the scheduled castes and tribal groups. To the Campaign's credit they are prepared to acknowledge this and are still looking at different ways to increase this participation through various capacity building initiatives.

One of the other significant challenges will be the move to institutionalise the capacity building programme and also ensure that the momentum and scope is not lost by such a move. This will no doubt have a significant impact on the running of such institutions as they adjust to cater to the demands of the Campaign.

4.4 The importance of managing change

To bring about strategic change there is a need to ensure that the process is effectively managed so as to avoid significant strategic drift. A balance has to be found between reactive change which if too much can lead to crisis lead management and a proactive approach to change which can become

overly prescriptive and create additional bureaucracy rather than achieve the desired result of diminishing it. The Campaign has shown that there is a need to ensure that an effective institutional learning environment is established and that there is a structure for ensuring that best practices brought about by informal and indirect learning can be effectively harnessed in a formal capacity for use in future planning.

There is also a clear need to acknowledge the political/administrative interface and manage this to ensure that unnecessary blockages aren't being created. The Campaign has shown that effective communication needs to be maintained in order to allow change to take place in a positive sense and reduce the risk of institutional resistance to change. The impact of key change agents has also been quite key in the process particularly municipal/block level Campaign co-ordinators, resource people and the VTC. The role of the significant individual has also been key to the general success of the Campaign as both a motivator and a catalyst for change.

APPENDICES

- 2 Decentralisation, Democracy and Development: People's Planning Campaign for Decentralised Planning in Kerala, T M Thomas Isaac, Kerala State Planning Board, January 1999;
- 3 People's Campaign for Decentralised Planning: An Experiment in Participatory Development, I S Gulati & T M Thomas Isaac, Kerala State Planning Board, April 1998;
- 4 Selected Articles on People's Campaign for Ninth Plan, State Planning Board.
- 5 An Approach Paper