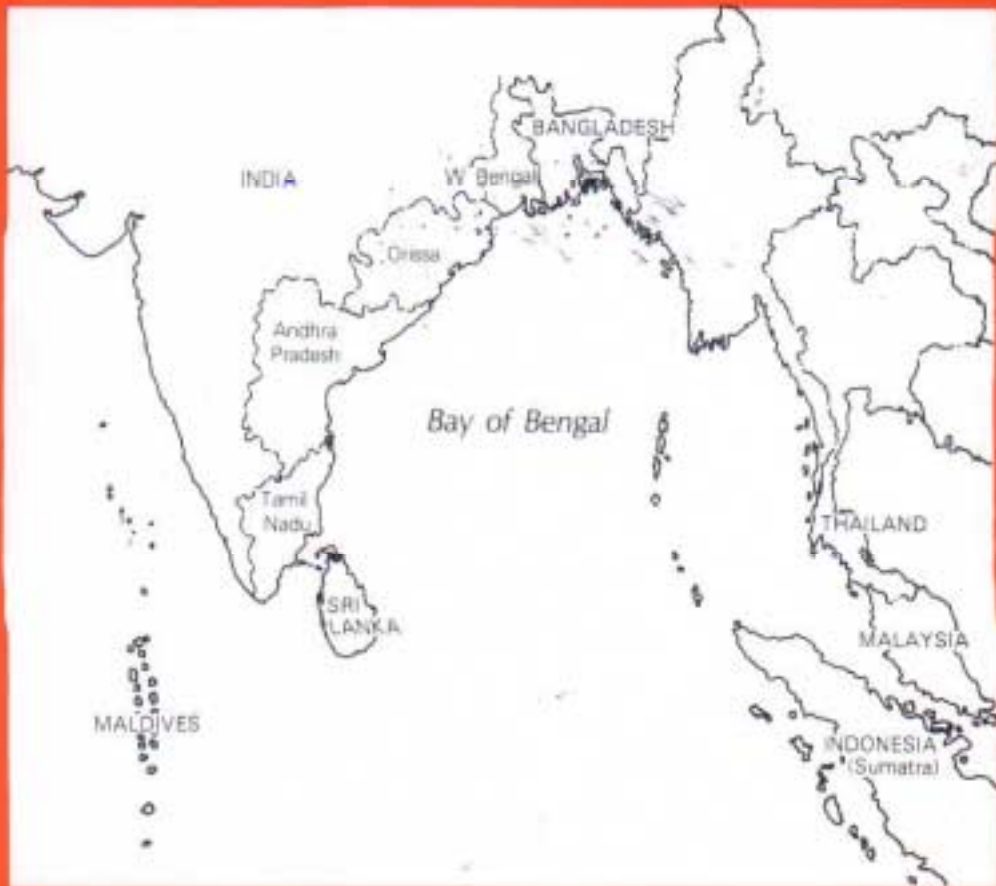


# Attempts to Stimulate Development Activities in Fishing Communities of Adirampattinam, India



SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



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ATTEMPTS TO STIMULATE  
DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN  
FISHING COMMUNITIES  
OF ADIRAMPATTINAM, INDIA

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This paper discusses the rationale, *modus operandi*, conduct and outcome of a pilot project to help the development of coastal fishing communities near Adirampattinam, Tamil Nadu, India. Two earlier papers on the project published by the BOBP are BOBP/WP/19 : "Coastal village development in four fishing communities of Adirampattinam, Tamil Nadu, India" and BOBP/WP/38: "Credit for fisherfolk: the experience in Adirampattinam, Tamil Nadu, India".

The project was carried out between 1980 and 1982 by the small-scale fisheries project of the Bay of Bengal Programme (BOBP) in cooperation with the fisheries department, Tamil Nadu, particularly its Fisherwomen's Extension Service; and with the assistance of voluntary agencies such as the Working Women's Forum.

In the main, the project tried to improve the access of fishermen and fisherwomen to bank loans and Government credit schemes; and organized leadership training courses to promote leadership and group action. Some follow-up activities — relating, for example, to non-formal adult education and better water supply — were initiated after the latter. The idea was to stimulate self-help and self-reliance in Adirampattinam fishing communities, without any substantial external inputs.

The BOBP's small-scale fisheries project is funded by SIDA (Swedish International Development Authority) and executed by FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). It covers five countries bordering the Bay of Bengal — Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Thailand. It is a multi-disciplinary project, active in craft, gear, aquaculture, extension, information and development support. The project's main goals are to develop, demonstrate and promote appropriate technologies and methodologies to improve the conditions of small-scale fisherfolk in BOBP's member countries.

This document is a technical report and has not been cleared by the FAO or by the government concerned.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Early 1980, Adirampattinam, located in Palk Strait, a shallow bay between India and Sri Lanka, was selected by the BOBP and the Tamil Nadu fisheries department for a coastal village development project. The project was to focus on fishing communities in four villages situated near the seashore and a little outside Adirampattinam town. The four villages are known as Karaiyur Street, Sunnambukara Street, Taragar Street and Arumuga Kittangi Street.

The reasons for locating the project near Adirampattinam were: its easy access to good fishing grounds in Palk Strait; its proximity and access by road and rail to fish markets (Pattukottai – 12 km, Thanjavur – 40 km) ; the fact that in spite of these favourable conditions the bulk of the catch seemed to be dried and sold at a price estimated at 30% of its fresh value; the fact that the communities seemed to constitute a good cross-section of Tamil Nadu fishing villages—comprising a diverse social structure, not totally isolated and backward but showing some signs of modernization without however possessing any motorized boats, or being the venue for a harbour development project; and finally the scope for involving women in the project — there seemed to be many women here keen on earning a little more.

The progress of the project till the end of 1981 -the period of project identification -is discussed in detail in BOBP/WP/19. It is summarized in the chapter below.

## 2. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

During the last quarter of 1980, a socio-economic survey was carried out of the residents of the four communities. The villagers were consulted on the activities the project should undertake.

The study provided insights into the horizontal and vertical social structure of Adirampattinam.

### Horizontal social structure

The population of the four streets belonged to four social strata:

- at the bottom, a group of destitute widows, sick and old people;
- next, a group of coolies or manual labourers without assets;
- a third layer consisting of various categories of small fishermen owning some fishing gear (generally, small mesh driftnets), sometimes a boat;
- at the top, an elite group owning the best boats and nets in the area and/or having one or more family members working as migrant workers in the Arab countries and generally employing others to go out fishing.

### Vertical social structure

The four communities were also vertically fragmented as follows:

- They varied in population size. Karaiyur Street was the largest (334 families – 54%) and Arumuga Kittangi Street the smallest (46 families – 7%).
- The Karaiyur Street fishermen considered themselves alone as fishermen and looked on the others as newcomers or even intruders.
- The villagers of Kittangi Street were descendants of an agricultural community while those of Sunnambukara Street had come from fishing communities in Ramnad district.

-The community in Karaiyur Street was better equipped for fishing, had fewer destitutes, better political connections and more educated children.

— In addition to these differences between communities, there were also differences within each community-e.g., a long-standing feud between two leading families of Karaiyur Street; disputes among persons who had migrated from different parts of Ramnad district in Sunnambukara Street.

Different priorities and goals applied to different segments of the communities:

— Those in the bottom group, the destitutes, were the poorest and were always in want;

-Those in the second group were able-bodied but without any fishing assets. They were prepared to work hard- the men by acquiring some equipment, the women by marketing fish ;

— Those in the third group, already owning some craft and gear, wished to improve their productivity and efficiency and also wanted to own more;

— Those in the elite group, already enjoying good incomes and owning the best boats and gear, were satisfied with the status quo. They were not too interested in change-which might entail too high an investment cost or disturb their established and comfortable way of life.

Some possibilities for technological change were considered — motorization of boats; using thinner twine nets to reduce investment cost; increasing efficiency; icing fish on board boats- Each of these possibilities could be tapped only by members of the elite group-but did not appeal much even to them as they were satisfied with the status quo.

— Motorization (with a small diesel engine) was feasible only by the fishermen owning the large sailing vallams. In the discussions held on this point, they demanded a 50 per cent subsidy on the investment cost and a subsidy on diesel fuel.

— The use of thinner twine nets could interest only the owners of large mesh drift nets. But these fishermen had received thick twine nets cheap as a cyclone relief measure. Moreover, there was no immediate need for replacement, and the thick twine was appropriate for most of the species caught in the area.

— Icing of fish on board was not attractive because the extra effort and cost, and the resulting higher quality, were hardly reflected in a higher price. It was not sufficient to offset the extra costs.

The lack of scope for technological development made necessary a change in the orientation of the project. It had to single out those groups in the social structure which had the motivation for change. Such groups were neither the destitutes at the bottom whose needs could be met only through a social welfare system, nor the elite, who were uninterested in change. The groups selected by the project were the two in between.

What these target groups most wanted were:

— credit, i.e., small loans to improve marketing and buy equipment;

— water for drinking, bathing and washing clothes;

— educational facilities for their children and for some adults to learn reading, writing and arithmetic;

— land security, which would make it worthwhile for them to construct more decent houses.

The strategy that BOBP proposed to use was to assist the villagers become aware of the major stumbling blocks in the way of their goals; and to find ways and means of overcoming them. To make the projects replicable, efforts would focus on tapping resources that were available and accessible to the villagers.

The preliminary work, which led to the identification of the target groups and their needs, took up 15 months and was completed around mid-1981.

### **3. ORGANIZATION**

In the meantime, BOBP located a volunteer women's organization -the Working Women's Forum -with experience in mobilizing marketing credit for small groups of women, petty traders in Madras. This organization agreed to cooperate with BOBP in carrying out long-term extension/marketing/credit/village mobilization activities among the women of the Adirampattinam target groups. Two "group organizers" on behalf of WWF started working in June 1981. A male social worker with experience in community development was also engaged by BOBP, and he began work in Adirampattinam in July 1981.

The initial work of the project had suffered from lack of knowledge of the womenfolk. Therefore, a female social worker was also hired, though with some difficulty, as few qualified persons were willing to live and work in a village.

BOBP activities were carried out in consultation with the Tamil Nadu Directorate of Fisheries and from mid-1980, a village level counterpart (a sub-inspector of fisheries) was posted at Adirampattinam. Within the Directorate, BOBP collaborated mainly with the Fisherwomen Extension Service. The latter carried out some parallel spadework on its own at Adirampattinam. Results : In the latter part of 1981, a fisherwomen's cooperative society was started; another village level counterpart was posted from the Fisherwomen's Extension Service to work with the cooperative society.

The activities to be undertaken were divided into two categories: those which required the technical or managerial skills of an organization/person from outside — e.g., credit, improvement of boats/gear, marketing, education, health; and those in respect of which the villagers could take group action themselves.

The second category mainly covered areas in which various government services were available. The fisherfolk needed assistance to know what services existed and how to set about getting these services. Into this category fall matters such as land for housing, desilting of ponds, stand taps for water, desilting of canals which provide access to the sea. The project methodology for this second category was leadership training and stimulating group action.

The project conducted leadership training courses, twice for fishermen and once for fisherwomen. The courses were followed up on a continuous basis by the two social workers; they assiste'd the men and women in translating the training into action and obtaining the desired services. These activities are described below.

### **4. LEADERSHIP TRAINING**

Two training courses were held for fishermen leaders during March 8-10 and June 17-19, 1982. They were conducted by a team of trainers from the Village Community Development Society. The 15 participants for the first course consisted of leaders of the four communities, the chairman and a committee member of the fishermen's cooperative society and the newly elected leaders of nine groups of men that were formed to avail of credit facilities.

The topics discussed in the first course were:

- the relevance of the small-scale fishing industry to socio-economic conditions in India, and the role and contribution of other sectors.
- Government and non-government institutions concerned with the Adirampattinam area — their functions, and ways in which fisherfolk could benefit from them. (Each institution was

discussed in detail : so were district office schemes available for fisherfolk, and the Fisheries Department's Fisherwomen Extension Service. Information was also provided on successful programmes conducted with fisherfolk participation in other places, such as those conducted by the Programme for Community Organization, Kerala, and the Society for Educational Development, Kanyakumari.)

-The need to improve the status of women.

— The economic and social structure of Adirampattinam fishing communities, and identification of their problems and needs.

The problems and needs identified by the participants were as follows:

#### **Problems**

- \* damage to nets by mechanized boats
- \* unfair prices paid for fish
- \* silting up of the canals providing access to the sea
- \* chronic alcoholism
- \* excessive and wasteful expenditure
- \* large families
- \* polygamy

#### **Needs:**

- \* a larger number of traditional fishing boats
  - \* facilities for rail transport of fish
  - \* canal lights and street lights.
  - \* improved water supply
  - \* better village roads
  - \* ration cards for all families
  - \* a programme of adult education
- Ways and means to conduct development activities: Community organization as a basic principle of development work, the involvement of people in identifying and solving problems, with illustrative case studies.
- The meaning of leadership, types and roles of leaders with emphasis on each participant as a leader, his present role and responsibility, and effective ways of working with group members.

Following a discussion of the problems of their own communities and the action needed to solve them, the participants split into small groups, each group dealing with one problem with the assistance of resource persons. The group identified the actions needed in order of priority, drew up a 'step by step' plan of work and allocated responsibility for each step to the various group members.

The participants themselves decided that another follow-up training course was necessary and decided on its time and place.

The second course for fishermen leaders was held June 17-19, 1982. There were 13 participants, all of whom had taken the first course.

The matters discussed at this course were:

- The problem of housing in Sunnambukara and Arumuga Kittangi Streets and the modus operandi for obtaining ownership of land. The work to be done was identified — describing the location of the land, its extent, survey number, tax receipts, length of occupation etc. It was noted that the fisheries department could buy land and allot it to the needy, but these beneficiaries might have to pay some money too, towards the land cost.
- The role and responsibilities of credit group leaders; the need to establish better personal relations between leaders and members; the need to collect repayments more than once a month.



- The possibilities of getting a cyclone shelter constructed by representing to the District Collector and the Red Cross.
- The launching of an adult education programme. (Details were discussed with representatives of the State Resource Centre, a semi-government agency dealing with non-formal adult education.)
- The procedures for obtaining loans for boats and nets under IRDP schemes. (Criteria for selecting beneficiaries were discussed with fisheries department officials. Group leaders suggested that those who did not already own boats or expensive nets should be selected; but that they should prove their ability to repay the loans. They also suggested that a committee of leaders should collect repayments.
- The role and function of a youth club formed by the young men of Sunnambukara Street, and how this club could be strengthened to carry out welfare schemes for the whole village.

In addition, a street discussion was held by one of the women trainers with a group of women from Sunnambukara street to get an insight into their needs.

The needs identified were:

- \* Supply of drinking water-there was only one stand tap for 149 families
- \* More credit was needed for the fishermen to buy nets
- \* Desilting of the canal that gave fishermen access to the sea.

A training course was also held for fisherwomen leaders. It was held March 24-28, 1982 and was conducted by a team from the Working Women's Forum. Participants were 16 women, selected from those who had obtained credit through the WWF and the Fisherwomen Co-operative Society. They were drawn from different streets and castes. Two had studied up to the 10th standard and nine others had a basic knowledge of reading and writing. Eleven were engaged in fish marketing or processing.

The topics dealt with during the training were:

- Social and economic issues which contribute to the general backwardness of women. Matters relating to their social status- dowry, child marriage, widowhood, cultural myths and beliefs, and women's place in the marketing set up-were discussed with full trainee participation. Skits, posters and charts were used to get the trainees analyse their own situation and start thinking of ways to improve it.
- Health, hygiene, nutrition and family planning were discussed with the help of teaching aids.
- The meaning of leadership, the role of leaders in organizing and maintaining group harmony and team spirit and skills in effective communication were demonstrated with the help of a role play. (It showed women fish traders requesting a municipal commissioner to provide them with a market shed.)
- Ways and means of dealing effectively with various authorities. A panel discussion was held among a district revenue officer, a banker, fisheries officers and a police officer, on schemes available and how to benefit from them.

The training courses for fishermen and fisherwomen leaders led to several follow-up activities to help the community. These activities covered implementation of IRDP schemes, desilting of access canals, land security and housing, water supply, credit and non-formal adult education. The two BOBP social workers, one male and the other female, were continuously involved — before, during and after the training — in helping the trained leaders to initiate, follow-up and coordinate these activities. These are described below.

## **5. THE IRDP SCHEMES**

In 1981 a 50 per cent subsidy for purchase of 10 traditional boats had been sanctioned through the fishermen's cooperative society. The beneficiaries selected by the society already owned boats. Society members belonging to the target groups objected to the selection. In response, the Block Development officer decided to use the loan for an alternative scheme benefiting the target groups, but his decision could not be implemented.<sup>1</sup>

In 1982, 20 traditional boats, a FRP boat, a van, nets worth Rs. 104,000, 10 insulated boxes and 10 tub-cutting materials were sanctioned under the same scheme.

The criteria for picking beneficiaries drawn up during the second fishermen leaders' training courses were put up to the society. The social workers and the village-level counterpart approached the lead bank through which IRDP funds were disbursed for details of the repayment period etc. Arrangements were made to study the costs and earnings of boats to find out whether boats got under the scheme would be viable and whether changes in repayment terms were necessary. By the end of 1982 there was no definite outcome regarding the sanctioned inputs.

## **6. DESILTING OF ACCESS CANALS**

The two canals providing the villages access to the sea had to be desilted periodically. The northern canal serving Karaiyur Street had been desilted twice with funds from the fisheries department, while the southern canal serving the three poorer communities was left unattended.

With the assistance of the social workers, the fishermen of those three streets formed a committee and represented to government officials. The fisheries department then allotted Rs. 250,000 for desilting, but this was not enough because labour costs had risen. The department could not sanction funds to meet this increase. The canal committee stepped in and raised a loan from local money lenders by mortgaging two boats. The loan was paid back by raising collections from the fishermen.

## **7. LAND SECURITY AND HOUSING**

Several families in three of the communities did not own the land on which their houses stood – 21 per cent of the families in Karaiyur Street, 58 per cent in Sunnambukara Street and 39 per cent in Arumuga Kittangi Street.

In all three streets, land was privately owned, but in Arumuga Kittangi Street a vacant plot, a silted up tank bed belonging to the government, was available. The fisherfolk of Arumuga Kittangi Street, with the assistance of the social workers and village level counterparts, approached the Collector through the Assistant Director of Fisheries and got this land allocated to them for building houses.

The fisherfolk of Sunnambukara Street followed a different plan. They paid house tax in their own names to establish ownership of the homestead. They then negotiated the price with the land owner and applied for government assistance to buy it. By the end of 1982 each had paid an advance of Rs. 25 to the land owner and awaited the government's response to their application.

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<sup>1</sup> BOBP/WP/19 – Chapter 6, Page 14.

## 8. WATER SUPPLY

There were only six stand taps for all four streets and Sunnambukara Street was the worst off — 149 families shared a single tap.

Following up the plans made during the leadership training courses, men and women leaders from this street represented to the Adirampattinam panchayat and got two taps sanctioned. But only one tap was installed as the villagers could not agree on the location of the second.

The five tanks in the village also supply water for purposes other than drinking. These tanks silt up fast during the rainy season and consequently do not hold enough water. The youth club in Sunnambukara Street undertook the task of desilting one of the tanks. The project provided implements for digging up the tank bed. However, the outcome was not satisfactory — 14 youths worked only for three days and no improvement in water supply was noticed.

## 9. CREDIT

The Adirampattinam fisherfolk told project personnel that credit was their main need. The men needed credit for buying nets, the women for fish marketing. Small groups were formed among the target community of men and women to facilitate bank credit.

The immediate aim of the fisherwomen groups was to increase the profitability of petty marketing operations, generate investment capital of their own through savings, and ultimately step up the volume of marketing through increased investment-by replacing their normal high-interest loans (10% per mensem) from private sources with low-interest bank loans (4% per annum).

### Loans for fisherwomen

Two agencies helped organize credit facilities for fisherwomen: the Working Women's Forum (WWF) and the Fisherwomen's Extension Service (FWES). The WWF loans were provided by the local Canara Bank. The FWES loans were provided by the Fisherwomen's Cooperative Society. By 1981 -end, under the WWF scheme, 227 women organized in about 25 groups (of about 7 to 11 members each) had obtained bank loans of Rs. 100 to Rs. 300 each at 4 per cent interest for fish marketing operations. The low rate of interest was made possible by the DRI (Differential Rate of Interest) scheme applicable to low-income groups. A government subsidy of 30 per cent was applicable to the loans through the IRDP (Integrated Rural Development Programme). By 1982-end, the number of women borrowers had increased to 452.

In mid-1982, the female social worker studied the operation of the fisherwomen loan scheme. It was suggested to the WWF that:

- A savings scheme be operated along with the loan scheme;
- That an assessment be made of the amount the women could save considering the low rate of interest, and the number of loans each women should get to enable her build up an adequate operating capital without recourse to borrowings, and that
- Emphasis be placed on recurring loans to fewer borrowers rather than more loans to one-time borrowers.

These suggestions were not, however, acted upon by WWF-either because there were not enough field workers, or because they held different views.

The study elicited the following facts regarding the daily marketing operations of fisherwomen :

- It showed that the targeted credit levels were appropriate; the women in the target groups were engaged in marketing both fresh and dried fish, a larger number being engaged in the latter.

- The majority took their fish by bus or train to various markets at distances varying from 5 to 60 km from their villages; a minority walked with headloads of fish to neighbouring villages ½ to 8 km away.
- For a single operation, the investment level was about Rs. 50-200 for fish purchases. The operational costs for the majority (for train/bus fare, market fee, cart hire) ranged from, Rs. 2.75 to 7.00, depending on the distance, and the profit was about Rs. 10 for every Rs. 100 invested; the majority lost money in the operation about once a month.

All borrowers asserted that they found the loans advantageous since they did not have to pay exorbitant interest rates, and although the repayments were not made in regular instalments, or within the stipulated period of six months, the record of recovery was high; 87 per cent of the loans had been repaid at the time of the study.

It was not possible to conclude whether the process of capital formation aimed at had been achieved — in any case it was unlikely with a single loan. It was found, however, that 14 per cent of the women interviewed had used the loan for purposes other than fish marketing.

There was also no indication that the loan groups had any catalytic impact stretching beyond the immediate credit objective. The groups never met for a discussion once the loans were obtained -they met one another only on the days the instalments were due,

### **Loans for fishermen**

In 1981, a hundred fishermen belonging to nine groups received bank loans of Rs. 1,000 each, to be repaid in two years at 4 per cent interest. The cheap credit, utilizing the benefits of the DRI scheme and a IRDP subsidy of 30 per cent, was meant to increase members' incomes by improving the productivity of fishing operations through the purchase of nets.

A study conducted in 1982 showed that around 67 per cent of the debts normally incurred by fishermen were for buying nets, and therefore confirmed the appropriateness of credit for this purpose for the benefit of the target groups. (The study is described in greater detail in BOBP/WP/38 : "Credit for fisherfolk: the experience in Adirampattinam, Tamil Nadu, India").

The credit provided did not, however, lead to the achievement of the immediate objectives: only 25 per cent of the borrowers admitted to an increase in catch/earnings with the new nets. Fifty five per cent admitted to a negligible increase, while 25 per cent said there was no increase at all. Several factors were responsible. The majority of the borrowers (80%) had decided to purchase a particular type of net ('Koi' net of 1" mesh). But the nets were received from net factories only after the peak season was over. This was compounded by the fact that the next season for such nets was a lean one. Very few nets could be bought with the loan. The fishermen usually buy good second-hand nets-they can buy two of these for the price of a new net — but the bank insisted on their buying new nets, to ensure that the loan was not diverted for other purposes.

The failure of the credit scheme to attain immediate objectives resulted no doubt from an unfortunate combination of circumstances; however, it also derived from certain unsatisfactory features of the target groups themselves.

The study showed that most of the members, even a few group leaders, had not understood the aim of group formation. Of the 100 members, 17 did not know the objective at all, 57 members believed it was only to get loans or to ensure repayment. Only 22 members had an idea of a larger purpose, such as helping fishermen to work together or improve their living conditions.

When the social worker started working in Adirampattinam, he was regularly assisted by a few young fishermen in collecting data on the village, conducting field workshops, identifying those in need of fishing gear, etc. He depended on the same persons for identifying beneficiaries for credit and for initiating the process of group formation. When the groups were formed, the members selected these same persons as group leaders — out of gratitude for having told them about the credit scheme rather than out of respect or any belief regarding their capabilities.

When interviewed during the study, 25 of the group members said they did not know what the role of the leaders was. In fact the leaders themselves did seem to have a real understanding of

their role, beyond the initial function of getting the groups organized. So the groups met only a few times before the loans were sanctioned. The discussions were mainly on the type of nets to be purchased. There was hardly any meeting after the nets were acquired.

In spite of this, the group approach did appear to have had a positive influence on the repayment of loans. After 16 months of the stipulated 24-month repayment period (at the time of the study), 48 per cent of the repayments falling due had been made. The repayment period allowed to the groups was shorter than the five years allowed under the DRI scheme. On the basis of the normal repayment period, the amount repaid so far would be equivalent to about 72 per cent — a figure that compares very favourably with the national average of 29.6 per cent recovery under the DRI credit scheme — particularly when the problems attending the purchase of nets is considered.

## 10. FISH MARKETING BY WOMEN

Two possible methods of reducing the energy and time spent by women on their fish marketing operations were looked into.

A group of fisherwomen of Arumuga Kittangi Street, who usually took their fish by bus to Turankuchi, 25 km away, suggested using motorized three-wheelers instead. The operation would be viable only if the vehicle carried three women and their fish and one of the women drove the vehicle herself. The matter was still under discussion at the termination of the project.

A 10-member women's group from Karaiyur Street proposed the use of a hired van. It would carry ten women with their fish on a regular return loop trip covering big markets — Pattukottai, Thanjavur and Tiruchi.

They were to be given loans of Rs. 2,000 each, so that they could deal in a sufficient volume of fish to offset the transport costs. This project, however, did not get off the ground because of internal dissension among the group members. Probably enough time and care had not been devoted to organizing the group.

## 11. NON-FORMAL ADULT EDUCATION

As a follow-up to the discussion on adult education at the second training course for fishermen leaders, 16 animators were recruited. Two training courses were organized for the animators by the State Resource Centre.

The first training course dealt with the following:

- importance of non-formal education
- the NFE process
- role of an animator
- identification of topics for a curriculum
- preparation of teaching aids
- organizing adult education centres
- adult psychology
- preparation and presentation of lessons,

At the end of the first training course participants prepared a curriculum and a step-by-step work plan to start their centres. Five months later, there was a second training course to deal with specific problems encountered by the animators in their work.

These initiatives in Adirampattinam later led to a wider BOBP project for developing a NFAE (non-formal adult education) curriculum for all of Tamil Nadu's marine fisherfolk. The experience of the five Adirampattinam centres helped develop that curriculum. The centres were also used to test the approach to NFAE and the lessons developed as part of that curriculum.

## 12. DISCUSSION

### 12.1 Working through groups

Groups functioned in Adirampattinam for three purposes-credit, youth activities and non-formal education. The weaknesses of the credit groups, as well as their positive influence on repayment, have been referred to earlier. The youth group carried out one task relevant to a priority need of Adirampattinam. The non-formal education group provided a more positive illustration of what could be achieved. After the training *course* lesson on environmental sanitation, they dug garbage pits, and after the lesson on savings, 15 members opened post office savings accounts.

The concept of group functioning is based on the assumption that rural fisherfolk have an innate knowledge of their own status and problems. Because of poverty, they are preoccupied with daily subsistence and do not consider ways of improving their status. Given the opportunity, they are capable of identifying and tackling many problems which they normally tend to accept as part of their way of life. To illustrate : one of the loan studies showed that 67 per cent of the fishermen's debts are usually for the purchase of nets. The quantum of credit identified as being necessary was realistic. (Rs. 100-300 for women's marketing and Rs. 1,000 for nets). Equally realistic were the other priorities that they identified-water, land, education.

The project recorded a noticeable achievement in a short time in mobilizing the people to improve their lot. But the process of transforming an authoritarian village leadership and a passive membership is complex, and requires time. More effort in identifying the factors that stimulated self-reliance would have taken the project a long way. Their work should have been continuously guided. They did submit regular monthly reports, periodic discussions were held with them, and BOBP professional staff paid field visits to Adirampattinam to the extent possible. All this, however, appears to have been insufficient.

The Adirampattinam project gives an idea of the type of constraints that will be encountered if the fisheries department were to undertake a programme of village development activities. Supervision by a couple of officers who have other responsibilities as well, won't do. What's necessary is trained officers (of assistant director level) in the field, handling such a project as their sole responsibility.

While the credit group leaders were ineffective in that capacity, they, together with the four village leaders, were able to get stand taps for drinking water and land for housing. This shows that leadership training of the type provided by the project is an effective yet inexpensive way of promoting village development. Given time and proper guidance, they might have been able to perform better; unfortunately this could not be tested as the project was terminated early.

#### **The target group approach**

The socio-economic survey in the initial stages of the project identified the layers in the social structure most in need of assistance, and selected the two layers that could be assisted practically with the resources available-the target groups.

In implementing the project, however, particularly during the first year, there was a tendency to ignore the fact that in a village community there are many inter-relationships between the social layers; in particular, the dependency of the target group on the powerful elite group was overlooked. The stance adopted by the project towards the latter seemed at times to be one of open opposition and generated reciprocal opposition to project activities, which a more flexible stance could have avoided.

The experience in the second year of the project suggested that the target group is more likely to benefit if an attempt is made to enlist the cooperation of the top layers in the village power structure.

#### **Organizational aspects**

When the project began, the intention was to handle its activities essentially through non-government organizations or personnel — hence the cooperation with the Working Women's Forum, and the hiring of a social worker who had earlier served a voluntary village development organization.

With the establishment of a fisherwomen's cooperative society and the starting of some activities by the Fisherwomen Extension Service of the fisheries department, a government organization also came on the scene.

By the end of 1982, the concord that had been attempted earlier between the different parties working at the village level in Adirampattinam -the social worker, the village level counterpart, the Working Women's Forum and the fisherwomen's extension service-showed signs of disruption.

The WWF's credit schemes sometimes appeared to compete with the scheme operated by the Fisherwomen's Extension Service. The social worker's activities in the village appeared, perhaps inadvertently, to make the fisherfolk distrust the fisheries department. This led to bad feelings between the social worker and the department staff working at the village level and to impede the work of the FWES.

The conflicts between the different organizations in Adirampattinam were to some extent due to ideological differences, but also to the difficulty of clearly demarcating responsibilities and functions between them. If more efforts had been put into the latter, some sort of balance might perhaps have been achieved, but it is also likely that the conflict would have persisted.

#### **Time frame**

The project's preliminary activities, such as the conduct of a socio-economic survey and the identification of target groups, took up about 15 months and the activities reported took about 18 months.

It is clear from the experiences described that the period was far too short for any tangible results. All the activities were left unfinished, and the few achievements- water supply, land for housing, education — gave an indication of what might be possible with patient and prolonged effort. In the case of fisherwomen's loans, there is obvious need to repeat them till a stage is reached where enough income is generated to provide operating capital without borrowing; and to reorient the groups so that they stretch beyond the mere administration of credit to a catalytic impact on other aspects of the fisherwomen's lives. As for the fishermen's loans, better results may have been achieved if the terms of repayment had varied with delay in utilizing loans, lean seasons, etc. These groups also needed to be reoriented and guided towards objectives beyond the immediate one of credit.

Such follow-up is difficult for projects with a limited time frame, such as those organized by BOBP. Village development work requires a long gestation period. It would appear that such work should be undertaken only if there is some prospect of carrying it through on an open-ended basis.

## *Publications of the Bay of Bengal Programme (BOBP)*

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The BOBP brings out six types of publications:

*Reports* (BOBP/REP/. . .) describe and analyze completed activities such as seminars, annual meetings of BOBP's Advisory Committee, and projects in member-countries for which BOBP inputs have ended.

*Working Papers* (BOBP/WP/. . .) are progress reports that discuss the findings of ongoing BOBP work.

*Manuals and Guides* (BOBP/MAG/. . .) are instructional documents for specific audiences.

*Miscellaneous Papers* (BOBP/MIS/. . .) concern work not originated by BOBP staff or consultants — but which is relevant to the Programme's objectives.

*Information Documents* (BOBP/INF. . .) are bibliographies and descriptive documents on the fisheries of member-countries in the region.

*Newsletters* (*Bay Of Bengal News*), issued quarterly, contain illustrated articles and feature; in non-technical style on BOBP work and related subjects.

A list of publications follows.

### *Reports (BOBP/REP/. . .)*

1. Report of the First Meeting of the Advisory Committee. Colombo, Sri Lanka, 28-29 October 1976. (Published as Appendix 1 of IOFC/DEV/78/44.1, FAO, Rome, 1978)
2. Report of the Second Meeting of the Advisory Committee. Madras, India, 29-30 June 1977. (Published as Appendix 2 of IOFC/DEV/78/44.1, FAO, Rome, 1978)
3. Report of the Third Meeting of the Advisory Committee. Chittagong, Bangladesh, 1-10 November 1978. Colombo, Sri Lanka, 1978. (Reissued Madras, India, September 1980)
4. Role of Women in Small-Scale Fisheries of the Bay of Bengal. Madras, India, October 1980.
5. Report of the Workshop on Social Feasibility in Small-Scale Fisheries Development. Madras, India, 3-8 September 1979. Madras, India, April 1980.
6. Report of the Workshop on Extension Service Requirements in Small-Scale Fisheries. Colombo, Sri Lanka, 8-12 October 1979. Madras, India, June 1980.
7. Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Advisory Committee. Phuket, Thailand, 27-30 November 1979. Madras, India, February 1980.
8. Pre-Feasibility Study of a Floating Fish Receiving and Distribution Unit for Duhla Char, Bangladesh. G. Eddie, M. T. Nathan. Madras, India, April 1980.
9. Report of the Training Course for Fish Marketing Personnel of Tamil Nadu. Madras, India, 3-14 December 1979. Madras, India, September 1980.
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- 10.2 Report of the Consultation on Stock Assessment for Small-Scale Fisheries in the Bay of Bengal. Chittagong, Bangladesh, 16-21 June 1980. Volume 2: Papers. Madras, India, October 1980.
11. Report of the Fifth Meeting of the Advisory Committee. Penang, Malaysia, 4-7 November 1980. Madras, India, January 1981.
12. Report of the Training Course for Fish Marketing Personnel of Andhra Pradesh. Hyderabad, India, 11-26 November 1980. Madras, India, September 1981.
13. Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Advisory Committee. Colombo, Sri Lanka, 1-5 December 1981. Madras, India, February 1982.
14. Report of the First Phase of the "Aquaculture Demonstration for Small-Scale Fisheries Development Project" in Phang Nga Province, Thailand. Madras, India, March 1982.
15. Report of the Consultation-cum-Workshop on Development of Activities for Improvement of Coastal Fishing Families. Dacca, Bangladesh, October 27-November 6, 1981. Madras, India, May 1982.
16. Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Advisory Committee. New Delhi, India, January 17-21, 1983. Madras, India, March 1983.
17. Report of Investigations to improve the Kattumaram of India's East Coast. Madras, India, July 1984.
18. Motorization of Country Craft, Bangladesh. Madras, India, July 1984.
19. Report of the Eighth Meeting of the Advisory Committee. Dhaka, Bangladesh, January 16-19, 1984. Madras, India, May 1984.
20. Coastal Aquaculture Project for Shrimp and Finfish in Ban Merbok, Kedah, Malaysia. Madras, India, December 1984.
21. Income-Earning Activities for Women from Fishing Communities in Sri Lanka. Edltraud Drewcs. Madras, India, September 1985.



22. Report of the Ninth Meeting of the Advisory Committee. Bangkok, Thailand, February 25-26, 1985. Madras, India, May 1985.
23. Summary Report of BOBP Fishing Trials and Demersal Resources Studies in Sri Lanka. Madras, India, March 1986.
24. Fisherwomen's Activities in Bangladesh. A Participatory Approach to Development. Patchanee Natpracha. Madras, India, May 1986.
25. Attempts to Stimulate Development Activities in Fishing Communities of Adirampattinam, India. Patchanee Natpracha and V.L.C. Pictersz. Madras, India, May 1986.
26. Report of the Tenth Meeting of the Advisory Committee. Male, Maldives. 17-18 February 1986. Madras, India, April 1986.
27. Activating Fisherwomen for Development through Trained Link Workers in Tamil Nadu, India. Edeltraud Drewes. Madras, India, May 1986.
28. Small-Scale Aquaculture Development Project in South Thailand: Results and Impact. E. Drewes. Madras, India, May 1986.
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30. Summary Report of Fishing Trials with Large-Mesh Driftnets in Bangladesh. Madras, India, May 1986

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1. Investment Reduction and Increase in Service Life of Katrumaram Logs. R. Balan. Madras, India, February 1980.
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3. Improvement of Large-Mesh Driftnets for Small-Scale Fisheries in Sri Lanka. G. Pajot. Madras, India, June 1980.
4. Inboard Motorisation of Small G.R.P. Boats in Sri Lanka. Madras, India, September 1980.
5. Improvement of Large-Mesh Driftnets for Small-Scale Fisheries in Bangladesh. G. Pajot. Madras, India, September 1980.
6. Fishing Trials with Bottom-Set Longlines in Sri Lanka. G. Pajot, K. T. Weerasooriya. Madras, India, September 1980.
7. Technical Trials of Beachcraft Prototypes in India. O. Gulbrandsen, G. P. Gowing, R. Ravikumar. Madras, India, October 1980.
8. Current Knowledge of Fisheries Resources in the Shelf Area of the Bay of Bengal. B. T. Antony Raja. Madras, India, September 1980.
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10. Fishing Trials with High-Opening Bottom Trawls in Tamil Nadu, India. G. Pajot, John Crockett. Madras, India, October 1980.
11. The Possibilities for Technical Cooperation between Developing Countries (TCDC) in Fisheries. E. H. Nichols. Madras, India, August 1981.
12. Trials in Bangladesh of Large-Mesh Driftnets of Light Construction. G. Pajot, T. K. Das. Madras, India, October 1981.
13. Trials of Two-Boat Bottom Trawling in Bangladesh. G. Pajot, J. Crockett. Madras, India, October 1981
14. Three Fishing Villages in Tamil Nadu. Edeltraud Drewes. Madras, India, February 1982.
15. Pilot Survey of Driftnet Fisheries in Bangladesh. M. Bergstrom. Madras, India, May 1982.
16. Further Trials with Bottom Longlines in Sri Lanka. Madras, India, July 1982.
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18. Review of Brackishwater Aquaculture Development in Tamil Nadu. Kasemsant Chalayondeja and Anant Saraya. Madras, India, September 1982.
19. Coastal Village Development in Four Fishing Communities of Adirampattinam, Tamil Nadu, India. F. W. Blase. Madras, India, December 1982.
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22. The Impact of Management Training on the Performance of Marketing Officers in State Fisheries Corporations. U. Tietze. Madras, India, June 1983.
23. Review of Experiences with and Present Knowledge about Fish Aggregating Devices. M. Bergstrom. Madras, India, November 1983.
24. Traditional Marine Fishing Craft and Gear of Orissa. P. Mohapatra. Madras, India, April 1986.
25. Fishing Craft Development in Kerala: Evaluation Report. O. Gulbrandsen. Madras, India, June 1984
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27. Reducing Fuel Costs of Fishing Boats in Sri Lanka. (In preparation)
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32. Pen Culture of Shrimp in the Backwaters of Killai, Tamil Nadu: A Study of Techno-economic and Social Feasibility. Rathindra Nath Roy, Madras, India, January 1985.
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36. Marine Fishery Resources of the Bay of Bengal. K. Sivasubramaniam. Colombo, Sri Lanka, October 1985.
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38. Credit for Fisherfolk: The Adirampattinam Experience. R. S. Anbarasan and Ossic Fernandez. Madras, India, March 1986.
39. The Organization of Fish Marketing in Madras Fishing Harbour. M. H. Kalavathy. Madras, India, September 1985.
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41. The Demersal Fisheries of Sri Lanka. K. Sivasubramaniam and R. Maldeniya. Madras, India, December 1985.
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1. Women and Rural Development in the Bay of Bengal Region: Information Sources. Madras, India, February 1982.
2. Fish Aggregation Devices: Information Sources. Madras, India, February 1982.
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*Newsletters (Bay of Bengal News) :*

21 issues quarterly from January 1981 to March 1986.