

Programme Document



Mainstreaming Poverty Alleviation Strategies through Sustainable Infrastructure Development

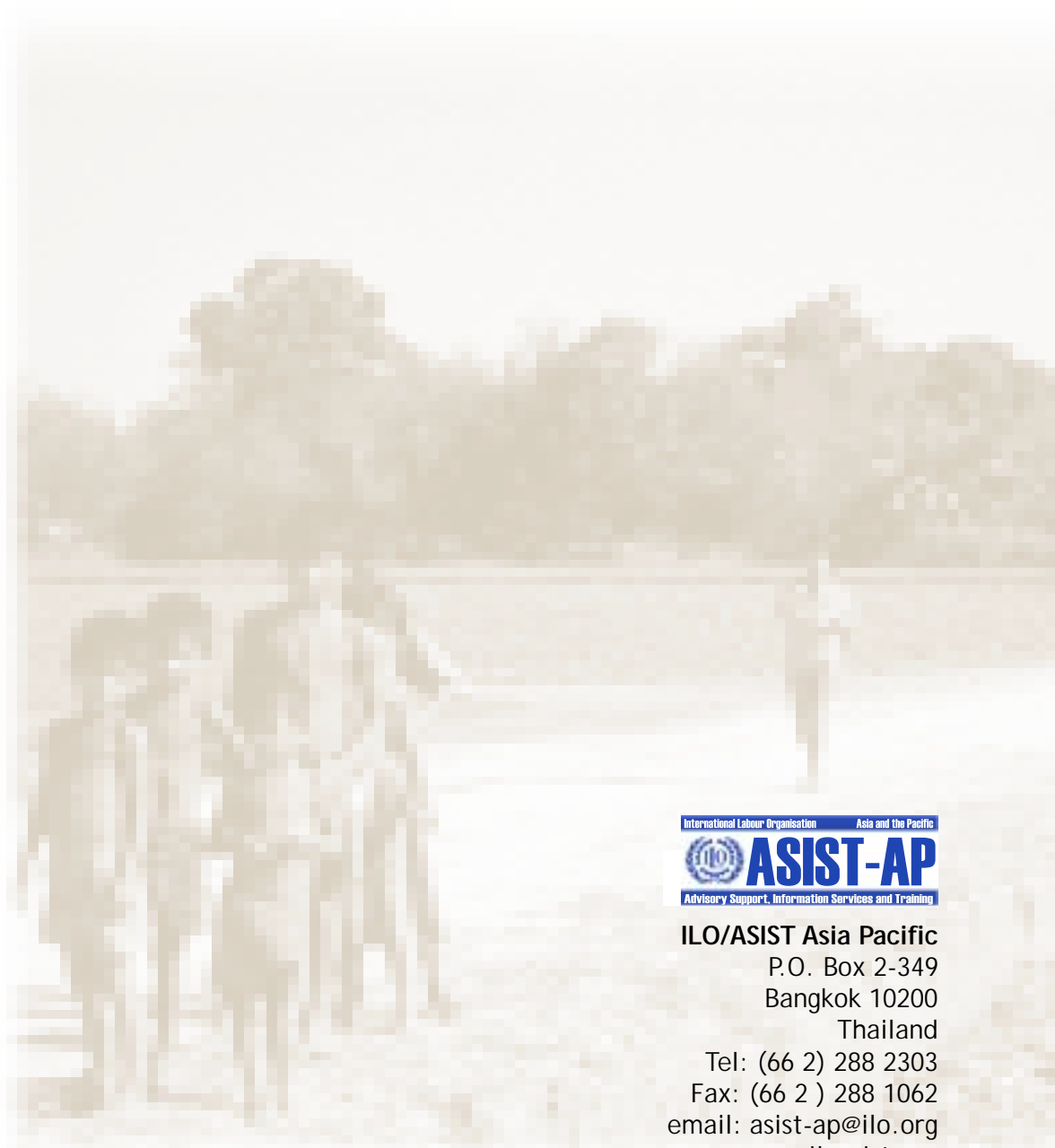
International Labour Organisation

Asia and the Pacific

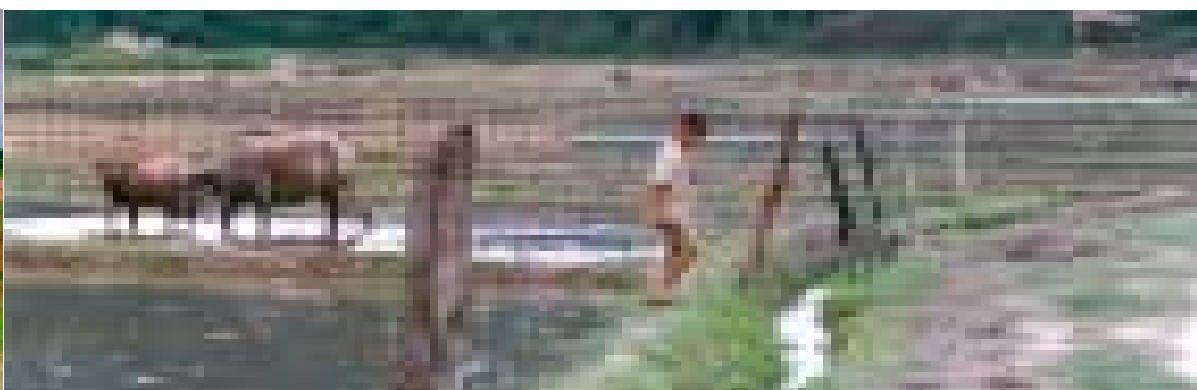


ASIST-AP

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Synopsis

The ILO has been working in the area of employment intensive investments in infrastructure for many years. Whilst the focus of the programme has changed from a specific technological approach with labour based methods to a broader assessment of the infrastructure sector, the concern has always been to provide productive employment and to generate income through infrastructure investments.

Lack of income, of course, is the primary cause of poverty. In turn, lack of access to economic and social services is one of the fundamental characteristics of poverty. The provision of infrastructure has often been seen as a means to improve the access of the population to goods and services. However the experience of the ILO and many other agencies over the years has shown that the provision of the infrastructure itself is necessary but not sufficient to achieve the goal of reducing poverty. Even more important is the manner in which that infrastructure is provided. Making use of the resources or assets that

rural communities have - physical, capital, institutional, technical - coupled with a process that gives them some ownership of the facilities provided has been shown to have a higher potential for success.

The ASIST AP programme is therefore designed in recognition of the lessons learned over the years. In particular, that the development and pursuit of employment intensive infrastructure strategies implies much more than the implantation of labour based technology. It relates to a whole range of issues which need to be addressed and indeed targeted if the goal of more local resource based programmes of infrastructure development is to be achieved.

The programme is concerned with mainstreaming poverty alleviation strategies through sustainable infrastructure development. It is being implemented through four fields of operation viz: accessibility planning, labour based technology, small scale contracting and infrastructure maintenance strategies. These four fields represent the key issues in the effective and sustainable provision of infrastructure, from planning through to maintenance.



The programme has been intentionally designed to be process oriented rather than product oriented. To achieve significant and lasting results will take considerable time and the results will be different in each country. The emphasis of the programme will be on creating an enabling and transparent framework for local resource based approaches. This will happen through a range of interventions which demonstrate the viability of the approach, but in the final analysis by the governments taking ownership of the approach. Thus the strategy of the programme will be to work with governments towards the development of the appropriate framework.

In addition our partnership with donors facilitates dialogue with governments whilst at the same time adding value to the donor country programmes.

The ASIST AP programme is defined technically within the framework of the Employment Intensive Investment Programme of the ILO. It is the operational arm of the EIIP in Asia

and the Pacific. The ASIST AP programme naturally responds to the general characteristics of the region, specific needs of the countries, the requirements of the ILO constituents (governments, workers and employers) and the priorities of its external donors.

Core funding of the ASIST AP programme is presently provided by the ILO itself, Danida, DFID and the Dutch Government.



1. Background and Context

1.1 Poverty, Access and Infrastructure in the Region.

The Asia and Pacific region is still in the process of recovery from the financial crisis of 1997. It is now having to face a downturn in the global economy. The crisis highlighted the limited institutional support for the rapid economic growth that had taken place over the previous decade. It also indicated that economic growth had not resulted in a full integration of the poorer members of society. Massive differentials still exist between the richer and poorer members of society not only in direct income terms but also in their access to basic goods and services.

Most countries in the region are in the process of recovery. One of the lessons learned is that a stable economic and institutional framework is a prerequisite for long term stability. In turn, this has translated into a general recognition that the reduction of poverty has to be part of an overall economic growth plan.

This of course coincides with the overall thrust of many donor and financing agencies policies. For the ILO, this poverty oriented aid strategy provides the potential for the application of the concepts of social justice which are the backbone of the organisation. It means the integration of social policies into the mainstream of economic and financial policies. That is, to embed the concept of employment oriented growth and investments in infrastructure development processes in order to focus on employment and target low income groups.

One of the fundamental characteristics of poverty is lack of access. Poor communities are isolated not only in physical terms but also in terms of their access to employment, financial resources, skills and information. Lack of access to employment is an obvious contributing factor to low income and the lack of skills. Lack of access to land leads to low production and lack of income. Poor health is caused by the lack of access to (adequate) health services and lack of access to clean water.

Access to information can help people in a myriad of ways, including a better understanding of the agricul-



tural techniques which can lead to increased productivity even in subsistence agriculture. Clearly, access to information contributes to improved education and to better health standards being applied.

Lack of access to basic goods and services is still a major impediment in many of the countries of the region. Table 1 provides some indicators of the problem.

The provision of infrastructure has often been seen as a means to improve the access of the population to goods and services. However the experience of the ILO and many other agencies over the years has shown that the provision of the infrastructure itself is necessary but is not sufficient to achieve the goal of reducing poverty. Even more important is the manner in which that infrastructure is provided. Making use of the resources or assets that communities have - physical, capital, institutional, technical - coupled with a process that provides them with some ownership of the facilities provided has been shown to have a higher potential for success.



	The Economy	Poverty	
Country	GNP per capita (U.S. Dollars 1999)	National Poverty Lines (population below the poverty line in %)	
Bangladesh	370	42.7	
Cambodia	260	39.0	
China	780	6.0	
India	450	40.9	
Indonesia	580	11.3	
Lao PDR	280	46.1	
Mongolia	350	36.3	
Myanmar			
Nepal	220	42.0	
Pakistan	470	34.0	
Papua New Guinea	800		
Philippines	1,020	40.6	
Sri Lanka	820	40.6	
Thailand	1,960	18.0	
Viet Nam	370	50.9	



Health			Education
Access to improved water source (% of population with access 1990-1996)	Access to sanitation (% of population with access 1990-1996)	Access to health services (% 1990-1998)	Net primary school enrollment ratio (% of relevant age group 1997)
84	35	74	75
13		100	100
90	21		100
81	16	75	77
62	51	43	99
39	24	100	73
		100	85
38	41	100	99
44	6	10	78
60	30	85	..
28	22	100	..
83	77		100
46	52	90	100
89	96	59	88
36	21		100



1.2 The ILO and Employment Intensive Investment

The ILO has been involved for many years in infrastructure development. The principal objective of this involvement has been the potential for employment creation in the implementation of works financed from public investment. The ILO has had considerable success in implanting the concepts of efficient and effective technology choice leading to more employment intensive means of production of infrastructure.

Over the years however it has become increasingly clear that technology choice is constrained and influenced by a range of administrative, organisational, financial and managerial issues. Moreover, inappropriate technology choice is only one element of the problem. Often infrastructure is being provided in isolation of the actual needs of the population and without their involvement. The ILO uses sustainable infrastructure development as an entry point for supporting good governance and decentralisation.

1.2.1 ILO Employment Intensive Investment Policy

At its November 1998 Session, the ILO's Governing Body endorsed a

policy document on "Employment generation for poverty alleviation: The role of employment-intensive approaches in infrastructure investment programmes". This document renewed the mandate and enlarged the policy advisory and technical support work of the Office in this field. It also recognised the need for a reorientation in specific areas, namely:

- ❖ the move away from relief, emergency or "special" public works schemes to longer-term structural employment generation programmes linked to cost-effective investments and economic growth;
- ❖ the acceptance of the roles of the public sector as the provider of public works and the private sector as the executor of these works;
- ❖ the appreciation of the need for achieving both economic and social objectives, and particularly of investment and employment policy;
- ❖ placing greater emphasis on the inclusion of the relevant labour standards in contract documents to protect workers in an increasingly competitive private sector environment;



- ❖ the promotion of the principles of organisation and negotiation among the social partners, including those working in the informal sector or at the border of the formal and informal economy.

Over the past years, at the request of its member states and of the international donor community, the ILO has been involved in policy and programme development work covering both sectoral investments, such as rural roads and urban infrastructure, and area-based, multi-sectoral investments such as productive infrastructure, like irrigation schemes, land development, afforestation and soil and water conservation and markets, and social infrastructure - rehabilitation of schools, health centres and water supply schemes.

The manner in which public investments are made in infrastructure plays a key role in determining who will benefit from such investments. Such investments are often a precondition for economic and social development. Moreover, they present important technological and institutional options which can generate employment and income and develop local skills. This offers Governments a policy tool to gear investments into economically and socially balanced

directions. They can also be used to foster the growth of the domestic private sector and provide an opportunity to public administration to set standards for the functioning of the private sector at large.

1.3 The EIIP

In March 1999, the ILO published the Director General's views in his *Decent Work Agenda*. It explains the four Strategic Objectives around which ILO's work has been restructured:

1. Promote and realise fundamental principles and rights at work (Standards and Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Sector);
2. Create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income (Employment Sector);
3. Enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all (Social Protection Sector) ;
4. Strengthen tripartism and social dialogue (Social Dialogue Sector).

Four respective sectors (between parentheses) have been created to achieve these objectives and an Executive Director is responsible for each sector.



Eight key programmes, which will receive the principal share of ILO's regular resources, have been developed in support of the Strategic Objectives. These programmes are:

- ❖ Promoting the Declaration on Fundamental Rights;
- ❖ Progressive elimination of child labour, promoting development;
- ❖ Reconstruction and employment-intensive investment;
- ❖ Investing in knowledge, skills and employability;
- ❖ Boosting employment through small enterprise development;
- ❖ Safe work: security and productivity through safety and health at work;
- ❖ Economic and social security in the twenty-first century;
- ❖ Strengthening the social partners.

Within the Employment Sector a new Department, the Recovery and Reconstruction Department, has been created dealing with reconstruction, through a rapid response to man-made and natural disasters, and employment-intensive investment, through a long-term approach to introducing employment-intensive investment policies and practices. The work on employment intensive investment is being dealt with by the

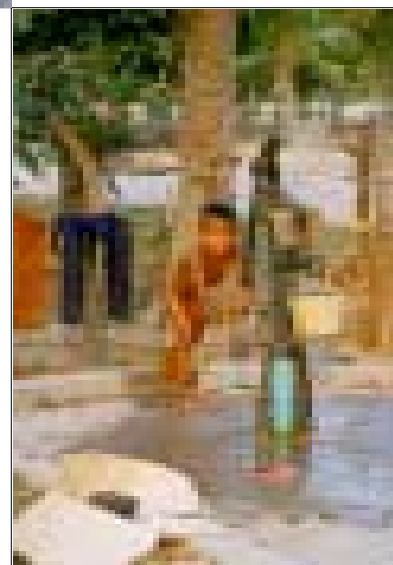
Employment-Intensive Investment Branch¹. The ASIST programme (Advisory Support, Information Services and Training) is the operational arm of the EIIP. ASIST has presently two regional teams, ASIST Africa, based in Harare and ASIST Asia Pacific, based in Bangkok.

1.4 The History of ASIST

The concept of a regional arm of the EIIP programme was operationalised in the early 1990s in the African Region. The simple idea behind it was that a programme based in the region could more effectively respond to the needs of the region.

ASIST Africa is an ILO-executed regional programme operating primarily in East and Southern Africa, but responding to information needs in all Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

ASIST Africa's activities in labour-based technology (LBT) and in planning for improved access and rural employment (ARE) have created an impact on development in the 15 core countries which it serves, and also further afield. During the 1990s, ASIST Africa has expanded the understanding and use of LBT in partnership with Governments, contractor



associations, local authorities, expert networks, international agencies, and organisations that represent the interests of local communities.

The core funding of the programme has been provided by the Governments of Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland, as well as the Governments of the Netherlands and Financial (through Associate Experts). In addition, *ad hoc* agreements at national level have supplemented the core funding from a variety of funding sources.

In 1998, funding was obtained from Danida to initiate a similar regional programme in the Asia and Pacific region. Core funding has also been obtained subsequently from DFID and from the ILO's Regular Budget. More recently, the basis for a sister organisation in Latin America has been established.

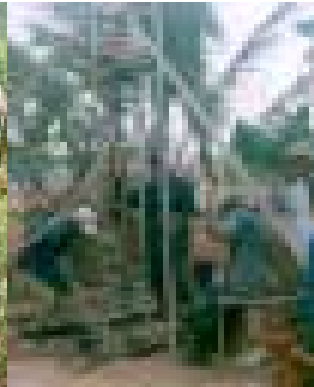
1.5 ASIST AP

ASIST AP was started in May of 1998. In the initial stages it was supported by a grant from Danida. In 2000 additional funds were secured from DFID and in 2001 a long term funding allocation from the ILO regular budget was secured.

The programme is now active in nine countries covering the whole range of EIP focus areas.

The team in Bangkok presently consists of four senior professionals, two associate experts and three administrative staff.

¹ This Branch continues the work of the former Infrastructure and Employment Branch, EMP/INFRA



2. Goals and Objectives

2.1 Rationale

The ASIST AP programme is defined technically within the framework of the Employment Intensive Investment Programme of the ILO. It is seen as the operational arm of the EIIP in Asia and the Pacific. The EIIP has five overall objectives, viz:

- ❖ Labour based employment schemes and social safety nets implemented by special reconstruction and recovery programmes.
- ❖ EIIP policy promoted and national institution capacity developed to implement it.
- ❖ Labour based standards promoted through national EIIPs.
- ❖ Community works implemented and poverty reduced through improved access.
- ❖ Local contractor development programmes established for private sector execution of labour based public works.

The objectives and outputs of the ASIST AP programme are seen as part of this overall framework of objectives of the EIIP. Naturally, however, the ASIST AP programme has to respond to the particular characteris-

tics of the region in which it operates, the requirements of the ILO constituents and the priorities of its external donors.

Even within the Asian and Pacific region there are major cultural, administrative and economic differences to which the programme must respond. In the countries of South Asia it would be redundant to suggest that labour based methods should be used given that the major means of production of much of the infrastructure is labour. Equally, in the countries of East Asia, which are generally middle income countries, the idea of labour based methods needs to be approached more from the point of view of a rational use of local resources rather than as a technology to supplant the conventional methods. Moreover in many countries of the region the most rewarding entry point may in fact be the emphasis on local level infrastructure planning. This is technology neutral and affords the possibility to bring with it concepts of decent work, local participation, equal opportunities and poverty oriented strategies.

Another important issue is that of decentralisation, which is a trend in



all countries of the region. The decentralisation of responsibilities and authority, essential for local decision making and the development of good governance, is a key factor for the successful implementation of geographically dispersed programmes.

The programme is therefore designed in recognition of the lessons learned over the years. It is clear that the development of employment intensive infrastructure strategies implies much more than the implantation of labour based technology. It relates to a whole range of issues which needs to be addressed and indeed targeted if the goal of more local resource based programmes of infrastructure development is to be achieved.

The programme is concerned with mainstreaming poverty alleviation strategies through sustainable infrastructure development. It is being implemented through four fields of operation viz: accessibility planning, labour based technology, small scale contracting and infrastructure maintenance strategies. These four fields represent the totality of the process of infrastructure provision from planning through to maintenance.

The programme however is also defined within a framework of employment creation, decentralisation, the optimum use of local resources, a focus on local participation and the promotion of good governance. It is at the heart of the ILO's Decent Work agenda in that it is concerned with employment creation, the precursor of providing decent work.

Three other issues also need to be mentioned here. These are issues which may not be explicit in terms of defined outputs but which nonetheless suffuse the implementation of the programme.

In the first place there is the application of **ILO standards**. The relationship between standards and the work of ASIST AP has been well defined in



² ILO: *Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programmes: Labour Policies and Practices*

the Guideline produced by the EIIP programme in Geneva².

ASIST AP includes these ILO standards in its documents and activities support their application.

The second issue is that of **gender**. Over the years of the ILO's involvement in the field of sustainable rural infrastructure, a wealth of experience has been gained on how to incorporate gender issues into programmes and projects. This experience is also being brought to bear on the implementation of ASIST AP.

Finally there is the issue of environment, which is seen, not as a constraint in the philosophy of the programme, but more as an opportunity in that local resource based programmes provide the vehicle for more environmentally friendly solutions.

2.2 Goal and Objective

Goal: Access of the population to employment opportunities and to economic and social goods and services improved through the effective provision of infrastructure

The goal of the programme is concerned with key issues of poverty alleviation, employment generation and sustainable livelihoods. The approach to infrastructure being promoted by the EIIP, and therefore the ASIST AP programme, is one that sees these issues as fundamental. The use of local resources, planning on the basis of people's needs and the development of productive job opportunities through infrastructure development are therefore the foundation of the ASIST AP programme.

Objective: Local Resources Based Strategies for sustainable infrastructure provision integrated into country and donor capital investment programmes

The ILO has been involved in employment intensive investment in infrastructure for many years. To a large degree this has concentrated on the promotion and use of labour based methods. There have been many successful programmes which have created significant numbers of jobs both short and long term and have ensured that public funds have been invested within the country, and in



particular in the rural areas, rather than being spent on foreign exchange overseas.

Despite the successes however, it has to be recognised that in general labour based technology has rarely been institutionalised or sustained without funding from donors or financing agencies. There may be many reasons for this. However it does seem clear that the narrow emphasis on the technology has tended to marginalise the efforts to orientate public investment towards employment and local resource use.

Learning from the experience with the programme over the years, the ASIST AP programme has taken a somewhat different approach.

It is necessary to concentrate on a more general framework within which labour based methods are applied. By paying more attention to the overall framework within which infrastructure is implemented, resistance to the acceptance of labour based methods and other initiatives that promote the use of local resources for infrastructure can be addressed more effectively. The environment for their effective use should be influenced.

Labour based methods will be best accepted by the people who will directly benefit from their use. These are less likely to be people in central ministries and agencies.

Decentralised programme financing, management and implementation provide the best potential for labour based methods. However to take advantage of this potential requires that the focus is on assistance to the decentralised agencies in the effective use of the resources that they have available. This means understanding and assisting in the planning process, the management structure and the financial administration.

Taking the focus closer to the beneficiaries also means that one has to become much more preoccupied with community involvement and to look in detail at issues of ownership, responsibility and authority.

This is in line with the ILO's concern with social dialogue with employers and workers organisations, with negotiation and formulation of innovative forms of community contracting, with giving the ILO Decent Work agenda practical application and supporting good governance.





This approach is more focussed on the management of local level infrastructure development. Certainly local level planning and the use of labour based methods are part of this. However the Programme addresses the key institutional, managerial and financial aspects of local level implementation.

The programme seeks to influence policy and implementation of infrastructure works. The aim is to maximise the use of local resources within the constraints of technical and economic viability. Moreover the programme is concerned that the infrastructure implemented is sustained thus ensuring not only short term employment benefits but also long term potential for the improvement of access, sustainable employment opportunities, the development of skills and, hence, the reduction of poverty.

2.3 Outputs

To achieve the objective, several outputs have been defined, and are shown below. They can be seen as forming two groups. The first are related to the actual implementation of the programme strategy both in terms of the development of new

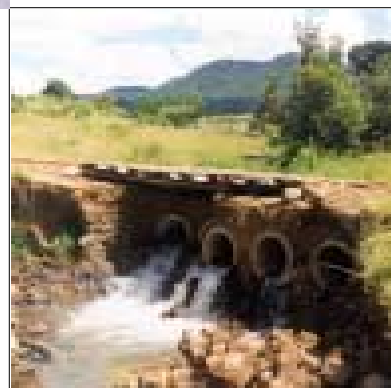
projects and also in the monitoring of ongoing ones. The second group of outputs is concerned with providing the support framework for the operationalisation of the programme.

2.3.1 Implementation

Output 1. Programme Strategy mainstreamed

The foundation of the ASIST AP programme is the partnership with the constituents. The role of the Programme is to assist our partners in Government to orient public investment towards local resource based infrastructure development thus creating employment and providing income to the people.

Clearly this is not a time bound output. It is a process which will proceed at different speeds and different levels according to the particular country situation. Moreover the mainstreaming of the strategy will depend on a range of factors over which the Programme has no control such as the state of the economy, the level of decentralisation and the levels of



unemployment and under employment in the country concerned.

This output will also be reinforced by the effectiveness of the other outputs of the programme. Clearly the more it is demonstrated that projects adopting the ASIST AP are successful, the more likely it is that the Government and the donors will promote the wider application of the strategy. Furthermore, the mainstreaming of the strategy is supported by the development of the appropriate materials, which form part of other outputs of the programme.

The partners in the development of this output of the programme are the Governments themselves and those who provide a significant portion of the capital investment in public infrastructure, the donors and financing institutions.

In several countries in the region, the ILO is well known for its work on employment intensive infrastructure investment over the years. There is an appreciation of the objectivity of the advice that the ILO provides. However it is also clear that without significant funding of its own, the impact of stand alone ILO projects is limited.

Initiatives such as the PRSP, the Comprehensive Development Framework and the strong political commitment by the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the bilateral donors to poverty alleviation imply the creation of an environment in which the ASIST AP programme has a significant potential.

It is apparent from the work already carried out with the Banks that the strategies espoused by ASIST AP are of considerable interest to these institutions. This is related to the fact that whilst the commitment to poverty alleviation may be there, the means to achieve this goal are less obvious. In addition the donors are looking for more than short term projects but for institutional change. The implementation of employment intensive projects is clearly important in terms of demonstration. However this needs to be accompanied by the provision of advice and assistance on the reforms that are required to effectively implement an employment intensive strategy.



Output 2. Resources mobilised for core and country level activities

The Programme requires both core funding to support the staff and the operation and maintenance of the programme and also funds to carry out its country level activities.

Core funding is presently provided from the regular budget of the ILO, from Danida, from the Dutch Government and from DFID. These funds support the six international staff and three administrative support staff, travel and some consultancies.

One test of the efficacy of the programme is its ability to attract additional funds for the country level activities. Experience in this regard is very positive. Additional country specific funding has been and is being provided through the programme by the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, SIDA and AusAid.

The programme is defined in terms of an ongoing process of achieving the objective. The extent to which the programme can proceed and also develop its activities to that objective is circumscribed by the resources

available to it. For this reason the programme does not have a defined total budget. The present financiers of the programme are making it possible for certain activities to take place. We will however be looking for additional core funding from other donors in order to be able to:

- ❖ Expand ASIST AP's geographical coverage
- ❖ Deepen ASIST AP's involvement with our existing country partners
- ❖ Broaden ASIST AP's involvement with the financing agencies
- ❖ Further develop the support facilities
- ❖ Expand into the urban sector

In Section 4 this concept is dealt with in more detail in relation to funding for particular activities.

Output 3. Local resource based infrastructure country projects prepared and approved.

In terms of the practical implementation of the concepts of the EIIP, this output is the most important. It is where ASIST AP works with partners in government and the donors to influence investments in the direc-



tion of employment creation and income generation.

The opportunities for influencing investments are numerous, viz:

- ❖ At the planning stage one can ensure that the investments contemplated actually respond to the real needs of the people. This applies at the macro level where public investment can be directed towards employment intensive infrastructure development and at the micro level where the participatory planning process pioneered by the ILO provides local planners with a tool which is both simple to use and yet effective in defining the actual needs of the population.
- ❖ In the implementation of the infrastructure works, there are opportunities to maximise the use of local resources without compromising quality or cost by the use of efficient labour based methods.
- ❖ In the actual execution of the works there is the potential for promoting the use of local contractors thus developing local skills.
- ❖ Finally, to ensure sustainability of the facilities provided, there is the opportunity to develop effective, locally based maintenance systems.

Over recent years there has been a move on the part of donors and financing institutions to put poverty alleviation at the forefront of their operations. This implies a concern to direct investments towards the root causes of poverty. In practice this means providing income to those without it and access to basic services and facilities where it does not exist.

The ASIST AP programme is in the privileged position of being able to provide advice and support in those areas directly related to making investments in infrastructure poverty oriented.

The programme does not have major investment resources of its own. Rather it seeks to work with governments and donors to assist them to maximise the return on investment in relation to employment creation and poverty reduction.

In practice this means:

- ❖ Defining the ASIST AP strategy for each of the countries in which the Programme is working
- ❖ participating in the preparation of infrastructure projects whether they are funded by the donors agencies or the governments themselves



- ❖ providing detailed inputs into the projects emanating from such preparation work
- ❖ liaising with donors involved in infrastructure programmes
- ❖ working with local government agencies in relation to decentralisation and good governance
- ❖ acting as a catalyst between donors and government for the promotion of local resource based solutions to infrastructure development

Output 4. Local resource based infrastructure country projects supervised

ASIST AP generally provides technical backstopping services to country projects. Clearly its role is to develop programmes and policies in relation to its overall objective. However, some of these projects are directly implemented by the ILO, whilst in others ASIST AP provides monitoring and supervision as requested and financed by the financing agency.

ASIST AP attempts to pursue a balanced approach in which a limited number of directly supported ILO projects are seen as part of an overall implementation strategy. In general ASIST AP strives to obtain directly implemented projects where it is clear that this allows a major contribution to be made to the overall strategy of sustainable infrastructure development. This also provides the opportunity for feedback from practical projects, the collection and analysis of data from these projects, empirical testing of new approaches and the further development of practical approaches to achieve the overall policy objective.

Specifically therefore the main activities under this output are:

- ❖ technical backstopping
- ❖ providing monitoring and supervision facilities during implementation
- ❖ where appropriate providing technical assistance in the implementation of projects

Output 5. Strategy documents, training materials, technical manuals, university courses prepared.



Influencing policy in relation to public investment in infrastructure implies that the relevant tools and the capacity are available to effect the changes proposed. This has several aspects to it.

In the first place ASIST AP has to set out in very clear terms not only the strategy being proposed but also the implications of that strategy in terms of institutional change, management responsibilities and financial allocations. For example, the work in the Philippines over the past few years lead to an Executive Order on the application of an employment intensive approach to infrastructure development. This was based on a strategy document prepared by ASIST AP.

In Cambodia it has been the ILO project, supported by SIDA, which has laid the basis for the development of the rural transport strategy and more recently the development of institutional capacity in the Ministry of Rural Development, the key ministry concerned with rural infrastructure. This work has provided the basis for the further development of the strategy by other donors, including the ADB and the World Bank.

The actual implementation of the overall strategy requires that the basic technical documentation exist. The ILO has built up an accessible knowledge base. However much of this is generic and needs to be tailored to changing country situations. Furthermore there are materials particularly in the area of small contracting and accessibility planning that need to be developed.

Clearly, it is important that there is a cadre of staff in the country familiar with the processes and procedures involved in an employment oriented infrastructure development strategy. This requires training and hence the development of appropriate training materials. Again, much of these materials exist but require adaptation to the particular country circumstances.

It has often been suggested that one of the main reasons that alternative, more local resource based approaches to infrastructure development have not been adopted is the educational training of those responsible for implementation. The ILO over the years has attempted to address this problem in conjunction with universities and colleges by providing them with appropriate



material for curricula development. (see also Output 10) In the region there are already institutions - in Cambodia, Nepal, Indonesia and Lao PDR - who have taken advantage of this service.

The intention is that students who learn about alternative approaches to infrastructure planning and implementation during their training, will be more likely to accept these approaches when faced with the actual application of what they have learned.

Output 6. Managers, engineers, contractors and planners trained

Within this output there are several training activities related to the programme of the ASIST AP, viz:

- ❖ awareness training on sustainable infrastructure

This would generally comprise short one or two day courses to introduce the concepts and to discuss their application.

- ❖ Additional training to support country project activities

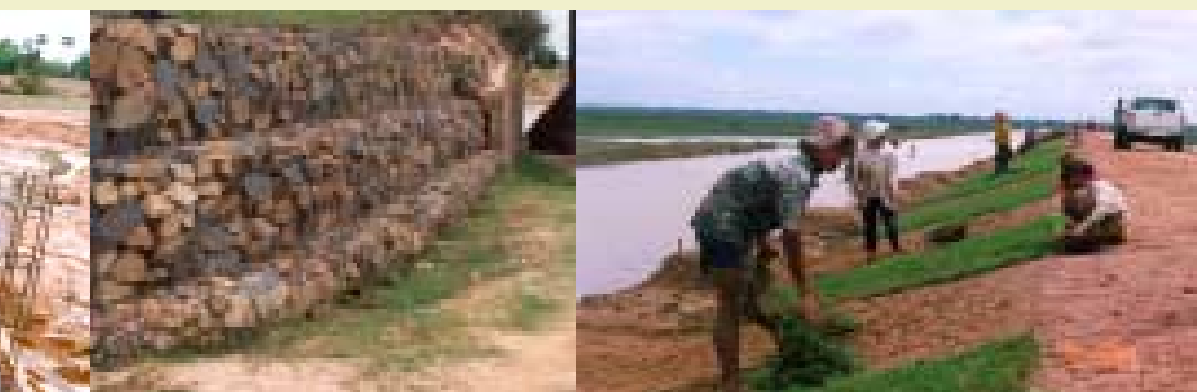
The EIIP already has several projects in the region both on labour based technology, small contractor development and on local level planning. Within these projects there are training components. However ASIST AP provides additional training to these projects to augment specific areas of their work.

- ❖ Tailor made courses to support the development of programmes

In many cases ASIST AP works in partnership with donor and financing agencies in the development and implementation of projects. This often requires specific training to build up the capacity of the staff involved in the countries concerned.

- ❖ Experience and information sharing workshops

Much of the practical work of ASIST AP is related to the demonstration of the principles that underlie the programme. However at selected times and in relation to specific aspects of the work, it is constructive to bring our partners together to share information and experience of their work in this area. Not only



does this provide the potential for cross fertilisation, it also puts the country specific work in a regional context.

Output 7. Research papers produced

Action oriented research provides the opportunity to consistently revitalise the key elements of the ASIST AP programme. Moreover, by involving the academic community in the programme, it provides both a sound intellectual basis for the work and channel for the promotion of the concepts within academic institutions and also with economic and social policy units within governments, Ministries of Labour and local governments.

Subjects for research are defined more by perceived demand rather than through a structured theoretical programme. Clearly the activities under this output are linked to those under Output 10. Moreover we work closely with other key partners such as the International Forum for Rural Transport and Development (IFRTD).

Output 8. Website operational

The Asia and Pacific region is extremely computer literate. Using the internet is second nature to many professionals. It is important therefore to use the internet to both disseminate information on and to promote the concepts of ASIST AP.

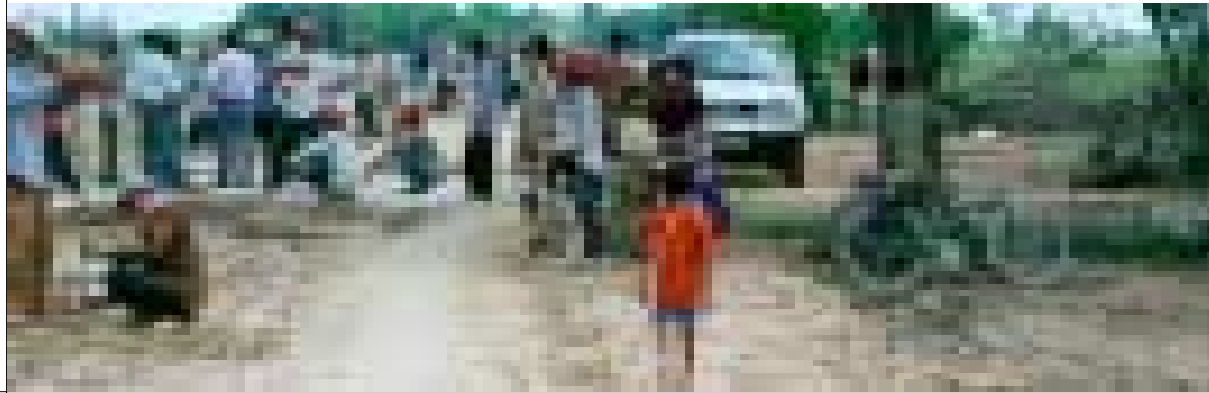
The Web site will of course be linked to the overall EIIP site and the ASIST Africa site.

It is envisaged that the web site is used to provide:

- ❖ Up to date information on the work of the ASIST AP programme
- ❖ A means of linking our constituents with other related sites
- ❖ A forum for work being done in the region
- ❖ A basis for discussion of key issues related to the work of the programme

Output 9. Technical Enquiry Service Operational





A technical enquiry service already exists for ASIST in Harare under the ASIST AF programme and there is no intention to duplicate this in Bangkok.

Nevertheless, due to the high demand in the region, there is room for a simple system of library and dissemination which can respond quickly to the demands of the regional partners.

A basic library of materials exists in the ASIST AP office in Bangkok. This however still needs to be made more accessible.

Output 10. University network operational

In collaboration with the Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta (Indonesia) a network between regional universities in relation to key issues being addressed by ASIST AP has been developed.

This Regional University Network Asia Pacific (RUNAP) is an email-

based platform that facilitates the exchange of information and the discussion on sustainable infrastructure development in the Asia-Pacific Region. Currently 15 Universities throughout the region are members of RUNAP, and participate in the discussions on the various country approaches, the development of education and research programmes, the transfer of know-how, and the exchange of information on active or planned programmes or projects and activities.

The goal is to include the concept of sustainable infrastructure development in academic and other training programmes related to infrastructure development and transport planning.

Experts from universities, but also from local and central government agencies, donor agencies, private sector enterprises, professional associations, non governmental organizations and international organizations can contribute by sending emails to the list-server. In order to stimulate the discussions, each member university has assigned a focal person for providing



technical inputs, while the general moderation and management is done currently by ASIST AP. However, the objective obviously is that the network becomes self-sustaining and moderation would be done by the universities on a rotation basis.





3. Means of Action

The strength of ASIST AP is that it provides advice, information and training within a framework of partnership with governments, the private sector, universities and funding agencies. ASIST AP has no major investments of its own, but because of its objectivity and its position as part of the ILO, it can provide a catalytic role in sourcing funds.

The ILO is recognised as being the world leader for comprehensive policies in the area of local resource based infrastructure. Over the years the fundamental principles of labour based methods and local level planning have become accepted parts of development strategies. The role of ASIST AP is to assist governments to effectively incorporate these principles into their investment programmes and to provide support to ensure sustainability and quality control.

This is require that:

- ❖ ASIST AP provides technical input into the development and implementation of infrastructure programmes

- ❖ There is an information base in ASIST AP that provides a centre of knowledge for the Asian region on local resource based infrastructure
- ❖ ASIST AP supports the development of a network of institutions and individuals involved with the four key areas of the ASIST AP programme - labour based methods, local level, planning, small scale contracting and infrastructure maintenance.

Being an ILO programme, ASIST AP is responsive to the needs of the member states in the region and the ILO's overall programme in the region. Nevertheless, it is also cognisant of the geographical focus of the major donors to the programme. In addition, good contacts have already been established with both the World Bank and the ADB and working with these agencies provides another entry point for the development of the ASIST AP programme.

The programme that has been defined is not circumscribed by present donor commitments, although of course to retain a sense of reality that has been a consideration. Nevertheless we continue to work



towards identifying other donors' support for the core activities.

The EIIP programme is concerned with both Rural and Urban infrastructure. Some work has been done both at the headquarters level and in Africa through ASIST Africa on urban infrastructure. This is an area where we see a potential for the expansion of ASIST AP's work also. Particularly, in relation to community contracts, local level planning and simple technical works. At this stage ASIST AP has only a limited capacity to effectively support programmes in the urban sector. This is not to say that we will not be looking to do so. Rather, we are in the process of developing coherent and substantive programme.

ASIST AP is an ILO programme. The programme has been institutionalised within the ILO, thereby safeguarding its long term sustainability and is seen as an operational arm of one of the regular programmes of the ILO, the EIIP.

ASIST AP also depends on networking with other like-minded organisations. The programme is already working with, and providing support to, National Forum Groups of the International Forum for Rural Transport

and Development. The programme has a good working relationships with TRL. Through the RUNAP it is developing working relationships with 15 universities in the region.

The ASIST AP programme has been intentionally designed to be process oriented rather than product oriented. This needs some explanation. To achieve the overall objective of the programme will take considerable time and the results are different in each country. This is inevitable when dealing with such a diverse range of countries. It is of course possible to identify specific outputs in terms, for instance, of employment created, public investments focussed and local contractors operational. Nevertheless the emphasis of the programme is on creating the framework in which local resource based approaches can flourish. This takes place through a range of interventions which demonstrate the viability of the approach, but in the final analysis through the governments taking ownership of the approach. Thus the strategy of the programme is to work with governments towards the development of the appropriate framework.



4. Resource Mobilisation

Core funding of the Programme is presently provided by the ILO itself, by Danida, by DFID and by the Dutch Government. A proposal for SIDA funding has been submitted. Funds from the ILO are guaranteed until the end of 2003. The funds from Danida and DFID presently are committed until the end of 2002. In addition the Dutch government is providing the services of two associate experts, one until December 2002 and the other until May 2003.

The programme however is an ILO programme with committed ILO funding from its regular budget. This provides funding for some of ASIST AP's core activities. The resource mobilisation for the programme should be seen as being in three distinct parts.

In the first place there is the funding for the core activities of the programme. This includes a staff of

5-6 professionals and 3 administrative staff, consultancy funds and the operational costs that go with the running of the programme. With these funds the programme can carry out its core mandate of providing policy advice and support to governments in the region.

In the second place there is the programme related funding. These funds allow ASIST AP to become much more operational in developing the approaches that are being advocated. Examples of this are the funds being provided by the ADB and the World Bank to prepare, review and evaluate rural infrastructure projects. We would see however further potential for funding not only in field project activities but also in terms of research activities, training courses and country analysis.

Finally, the ASIST AP programme will seek funding for specific country projects which, whilst being the responsibility of the ILO country offices will be technically supported by the programme.



Various parts of the programme are funded. However there is need for further core funding and the development of other elements of the programme, the urban element and the Regional University Network Asia Pacific being particular examples.



5. Institutional Arrangements

The ASIST AP programme is defined technically within the framework of the Employment Intensive Investment Programme of the ILO. The EIIP is part of the Employment Sector of the ILO Headquarters' structure in Geneva. ASIST AP is the operational arm of the EIIP in Asia and the Pacific.

The programme is based in Bangkok and reports administratively to the ILO's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. The ILO has three regional technical teams (MDTs) based in the Asia Pacific region in Manila, Bangkok and Delhi. Being part of the ILO structure, ASIST AP provides technical support to all three of these MDTs. Moreover, the programme can at the same time draw on the technical capacity of these three MDTs in areas linked to its work programme. This ensures that the work of ASIST AP, particularly in relation to policy, can be integrated with the core activities of the ILO in the countries concerned.

The ILO, of course, also has area offices in most of the countries of the region. There is therefore the possibility of a continuity of the support

from ASIST AP and also the potential to use the knowledge base and local contacts developed by the ILO's presence in the country.

The organisational structure of the Employment Sector of the ILO, indicating ASIST AP's place in that structure, is shown in Figure 1.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

International Labour Office Geneva

Fundamental Principle
and Right at Works

Employment
Strategies

Social Protection

Social Dialogue

Recovery and Reconstruction
Department (EMP/RECON)

Employment Intensive Invest-
ment Branch (EMP/INVEST)

ASIST AF
Harare

ASIST LA
Lima

ASIST AP
Bangkok

Regional Office
for Asia
and the Pacific

MDT Delhi

MDT Bangkok

MDT Manila

ILO Area Offices

Technical Support

Administrative Support

Technical Support

Technical Support

Mainstreaming Poverty Alleviation Strategies through Sustainable Infrastructure Development

Goal

Access of the population to employment opportunities and to economic and social goods and services improved through the effective provision of infrastructure

Immediate Objective

Local Resources Based Strategies for sustainable infrastructure provision integrated into country and donor capital investment programmes

Outputs

Programme Strategy Mainstreamed

Resources mobilised for core and country level activities

Local Resource Based Infrastructure country projects prepared and approved

Local Resource Based Infrastructure country projects supervised

Managers, Engineers, contractors and planners trained

Strategy documents, Training materials, Technical manuals, University courses prepared

Research papers produced

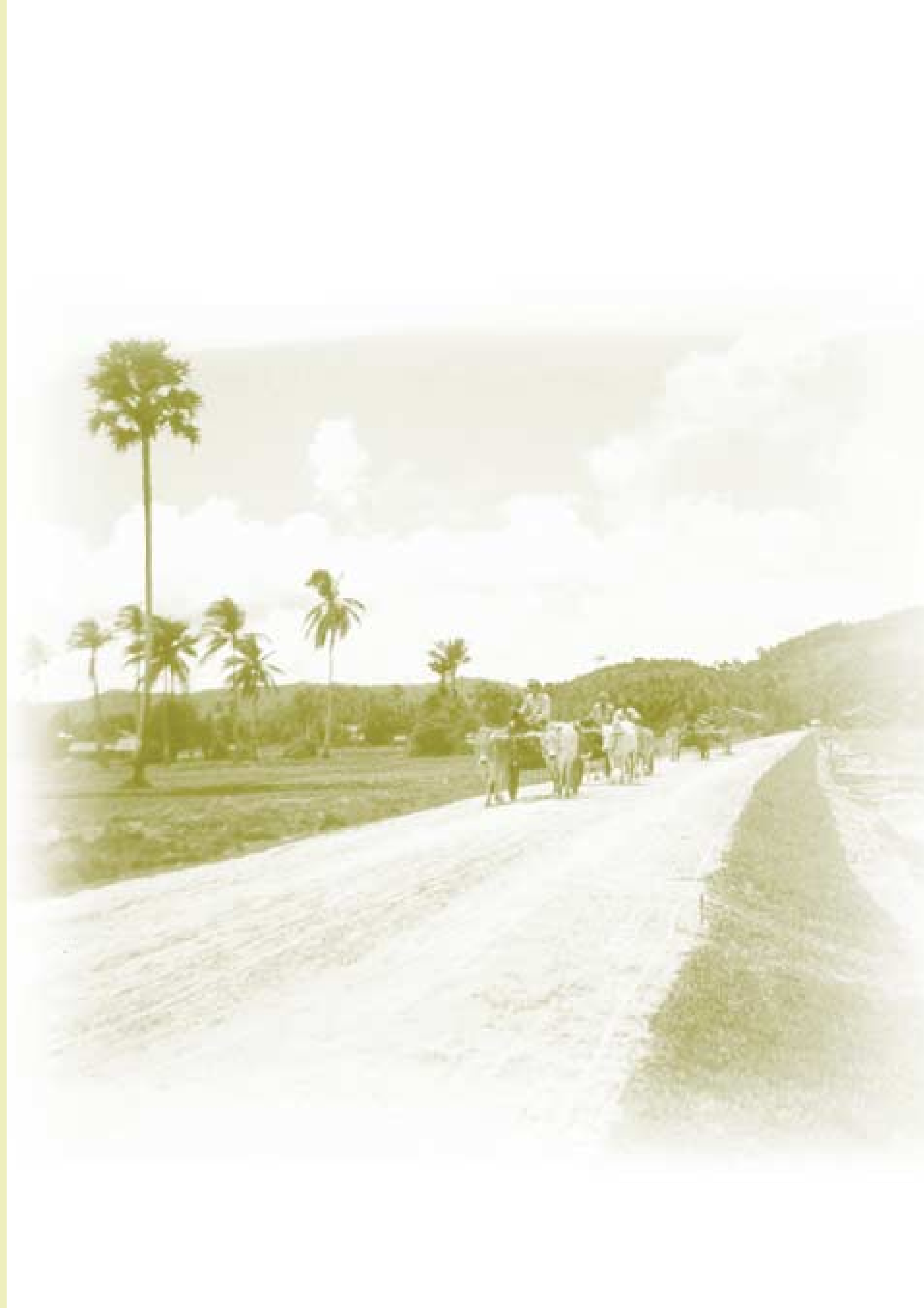
Website operational

Library operational

Technical Enquiry Service established

University Network operational

Reports and Publications produced





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