

## Minutes of the Weekly Meeting with Collector

**Venue: Mini Conference Hall**

**March 4, 2005, 6 pm**

### *Presiding:*

Additional Collector, Mr. Ranvir Prasad

Additional Director of Fisheries, Mr. Pankaj Bansal.

This meeting is a continuation of a previous meeting regarding livelihood restoration of fishermen along with permanent shelters.

### Agenda:

- Fisheries livelihood
- Permanent Shelters

### **1. Fisheries Livelihood Discussion**

Pankaj Bansal, Additional Director of Fisheries reviewed the Government package that was announced in the previous livelihood meeting in order to clarify the doubts from the NGO and public side:

- Nets: Rs. 20,000 for net for FRP boats, Rs. 10,000 for kattumaram nets
- Partially Damaged Boats: Rs. 15,000 for repair of FRP boats, Rs. 10,000 for repair of kattumarams.
- Fully damaged:
  - Wooden kattumaram: Rs. 32,000 is 100% subsidy, which includes Rs. 10,000 for net.
  - FRP boats: Rs. 150,000 the whole units including engine, net and boat, with 50% subsidy (Rs. 75,000)
- Mechanized sector:
  - Partly damaged boats: Subsidy is 60% of repair to be done or 3 lacs, whichever is less.
  - Fully damaged: Subsidy is 35% of total boat or 5 lacs, whichever is less.

In connection with the march 1 meeting on livelihood and the observations made by the Additional Director of Fisheries several issues were raised the essence of which comes below:

- Joint Ownership of donated boats is not going to work. It is not desirable that the NGOs give a boat to a group of people. Replacement of Kattumaram with the FRP boats is not at all a progressive approach while considering from the resource and productivity point of view.
- Inshore versus Offshore Fishing- The in-shore fishery where the kattumarams, FRP, and mechanized boats are being in use is over-exploited, while there is still scope for Deep Sea fishing. This is not being used since it is costly (Rs. 30 lacs per boat) and requires expertise. At the same time there are stories of nonviable deep sea fishing efforts. In this context, deep sea fishing needs to be encouraged

in a diversified way only. More clarity on this is needed. Experts in the fishery sector and NGO representatives can directly talk to derive a clear approach on Deep Sea Fishing.

- Over-supplying onshore fishing boats: If we increase the number of onshore boats (add assets), the catch per boat decreases, that will lead to the overall increase of unviable fishing operations.
- NGOs should consider options other than boats and nets such as construction of a drying area, ice plant, solar lighted area, specialized vehicles to transport fish, etc.

### **Announcement in Fisheries Livelihood Front**

Full list of kattumaram compensation beneficiaries is available at NGO Co-ordination Centre and will be available on the Internet.

Regarding FRP sector and mechanized sector, government verification is ongoing and will be complete in a few days time. This will also be available at NGO Co-ordination Centre and on the Internet soon.

Not a single check has been issued for FRPs as of yet.

### **Joint Account Cheques:**

- For partly damaged category and nets, government cheques are in the name of the beneficiary, except mechanized boats.
- For fully damaged category of kattumarams and FRPs, the money goes into the joint account of beneficiary and AD of Fisheries. As soon as the fisherman is producing assets, the fund will be released. NGOs can help with release of checks by providing assets. Thus, NGOs investment and government compensation can together work to replace the fishing assets of villages.
- Rationale behind issuance of cheques to joint account: fear that NGO will give full FRP boat to a fisherman, and government will also give Rs. 75,000 that the fishermen get double benefited.
- Process for release of funds:
  - Beneficiary approaches and NGO. NGO will procure a supplier and deposit monies into the account. AD of Fisheries will then release the monies and designate them to be paid directly to the supplier. The 50% government gives is fully subsidized, and the 50% that NGOs give is fully donated, so the end result is that the fishermen doesn't have to pay anything.
  - If the supplier is hesitant to commit, the Additional Director of Fisheries, Pankaj Bansal will issue a letter to ensure payment will be made.
  - An issue was raised that the onus of the responsibility is on the beneficiary, who has to approach an NGO. The response was that the beneficiary can directly approach the supplier and fix the rate in lieu of approaching and NGO, and Mr. Bansal will issue a letter to the supplier.

FRP Repair issue: An issue was raised that boats that have been repaired by different organizations are not being taken into account in compensation list. The beneficiaries need assurances that they will get compensation, as the government has not taken photos of every damaged boat. Response was that Mr. Bansal will discuss this issue with the Collector.

## II. Permanent Shelter Construction and Long Term Rehabilitation Work by NGOs

Additional Collector: Ranvir Prasad initiated the discussion on permanent shelter construction and long-term rehabilitation. All NGOs who intend to do long-term rehabilitation work are to review the Permanent Shelter Guidelines and submit prequalification documents by March 10. Mr. Prasad will have individual meetings with each NGO.

The discussion turned into a lively one with the participants raised concern over the following issues that lead to further discussion:

- **Problems with numerous NGOs working in one village.** If all NGOs are involved in different activities, there will be problems with infrastructure. All work must be done at same time for infrastructure to work. If an NGO focuses on a single village, it will be more convenient for all parties and the NGO can better garner the support of the Panchayat.
- **The Problem of Uncontrolled livelihood asset supply in fishery.** The unchecked assets supply will leads to overcapitalization. To prevent this practice, the parties need to be discouraged from handing out boats and nets to someone in a village without some effort at co-ordination. The government will not physically stop NGOs from dumping supplies, but the NGOs must be aware that the people are the ones who stand to lose from such actions. The Rehabilitation plan should be HOLISTIC.
- **500 m. issue in the Reconstruction Plan-** The government has decided that it will look at each rehabilitation proposal even if it includes construction inside the 500 m line. There will be no across-the-board policy. Each proposal will be decided on a case-by-case basis after meeting the NGOs one-on-one.
- **Permanent Shelter Guidelines** are not requirements but mere guidelines. NGOs are free to design their own models for permanent shelters. But there are some specifications such as wind resistance, seismic resistance, etc.
- **Infrastructure-** Although the MOU provides that the infrastructure responsibility is on the NGOs, this only means roads, etc., and NOT electricity, water, and other utilities. This will remain the government's responsibility. Furthermore, even if an NGO determines that it cannot take care of roads, etc., and that it is only able to focus on the shelters, the government will step in and do it. (These are all "fill-in-the-blank" initiatives whereby the government steps in when the NGO cannot)



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