

**Report on a visit to South Africa to facilitate a participatory workshop for  
an urban agriculture project in Sobantu Village, KwaZulu-Natal,  
as part of the DfID funded project**

***“Support to the Institute of Natural Resources for  
Institutional Development in South Africa”***

**18-25 June 1998.**

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## Background

1. The DfID project “*Support to the INR for institutional development in South Africa*” is led by the Natural Resources Adviser at DfID in Pretoria, and managed by NRInternational. The project consists of several components (curriculum development, project management, appropriate technology, participatory rural appraisal and farming systems/farmer participatory research FSR/FPR) with inputs from Reading University, Intermediate Technology Consultants and NRI. The project is due to finish by July 1998.
2. In two previous visits, the authors have given courses in Farming Systems and Farmer Participatory Research to members of the Institute for Natural Resources (INR), the Department of Agriculture, the Agricultural Research Council and other institutions concerned with agricultural development of disadvantaged communities in KwaZulu Natal. The content of these training courses has been compiled into a draft training handbook.
3. This visit was made at the request of INR. Unlike previous visits it was concerned with a real development initiative, rather than training, and provided an excellent opportunity to put into practice many of the approaches and methods which had been the focus of training in previous visits.

## Visit Objectives

4. The objectives of the visit were as follows:
  - a) With the Sobantu community and INR and Department of Agriculture staff, facilitate a participatory workshop to identify organisational/institutional, social, technical and financial issues and the processes and activities necessary to initiate an urban agriculture project.
  - b) Discuss the draft of a manual on FSR/FPR being prepared by NRI/INR
  - c) Discuss follow-on activities with INR Chief Executive and staff (given that the present project finishes by July 1998).

**A. With the Sobantu community and INR/DoA staff, facilitate a participatory workshop to identify organisational/institutional, social, technical and financial issues and the processes and activities necessary to initiate an urban agriculture project.**

5. Sobantu Village is a well established former black township of 35,000 people outside Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal Province. Two rivers run through the township, and there are a number of floodplains associated with these rivers. Part of the floodplain is used for rainfed cultivation. Informal settlement on the floodplains has led to loss of life in times of severe flooding. The spontaneous interest of community members to use the floodplains for year round commercial agriculture and the interest

of INR in the sustainable management of the watershed of the major river, has led to their collaboration in an initiative to develop the agricultural potential of the floodplains. This project has obtained funding for one year, totalling 249,000 Rand (approx. £30,000) from an NGO-cum private enterprise called Kagiso Khulani Supervision Food Services (KKS).

6. NRI's support was requested by INR to assist in developing the project in a participatory way that would also result in good management and technical achievement. Particular concerns were the capacity of the Sobantu agricultural co-operative in relation to agricultural, business and marketing planning, issues of access and exclusion and the social impact of the project, the group's constitution and roles and the management of communal and individual inputs and benefits. Our brief was to achieve this in a three and a half-day workshop.
7. The Workshop was held in the Sobantu Village Hall, and attended by 36 community members, as well as by INR and DoA staff. About half the participants were women. Among the Community members, some 12 were members of the Sobantu Agricultural Co-operative, which will be the implementing group and main beneficiary of the project being developed. Community organisations concerned with child care and the environment were also represented. The workshop was conducted in both Zulu and English languages, and emphasised the need for fluency in Zulu by those that would be directly involved in the project. Appendix One contains the Workshop timetable and a list of Workshop participants.
8. A wide range of established and novel workshop techniques were used to draw on the knowledge and analytical potential of the participants, to generate both ownership and self-belief in their ability to confront problems without outside help. The examination of issues was useful in clarifying the relationship between the broad social development aims of the project (improvement in the lives of the disadvantaged community, improved nutritional levels, employment creation, socio-economic development and participation of women etc.) and the commercial profit-making objectives of the co-operative, necessary for it to function as a long term sustainable enterprise. One day was spent in setting up, conducting and analysing field visits using PRA methods (mapping, transects, semi-structured interviews, direct observation and time lines).
9. The workshop followed a number of stages:
  - a) Introductions and expectations
  - b) History, background and present status of the Sobantu Agricultural Co-operative and the Project
  - c) Definition of objectives of different stakeholders
  - e) Stakeholder analysis
  - f) Exploration of the technical, institutional, organisational and financial issues
  - g) Presentation of experiences with agricultural co-operatives elsewhere (reasons for success or failure)
  - h) Classification and prioritisation of issues
  - i) Field work
  - j) Analysis of issues
  - h) Development of an action plan (who is responsible for what and by when)

10. The main outputs of the workshop were:
  - a) a large amount of information on flipcharts (maps, matrices, diagrams and bullet points) that will provide the basis for focus discussions in the future
  - b) exposure of the main issues related to the establishment and implementation of a participatory urban agricultural development project
  - c) a transparent planning process that explored and defined delicate issues such as who would benefit from the project
  - d) an action plan to guide the Sobantu Co-operative and its support institutions (especially INR and DoA).
11. The Workshop was successful in its objectives, and the tangible outputs considerable. Additionally, both the Sobantu Community members and the INR/DoA staff also felt that the Workshop methods provided a good example for application (and adaptation) in other situations. On enquiry, they also felt that they would be able to use many of the methods without further outside assistance.
12. The materials generated by the Workshop are contained in Appendix Two. All originals of materials generated were left with the Community.

**B. Discuss the draft of a handbook on FSR/FPR being prepared by NRI/INR**

13. The training activities carried out on Farming Systems and Participatory Research during 1996/1997 as part of the project "Support to the INR for institutional development in South Africa", are being compiled in a training handbook for use by research and development organisations in South Africa (and for short course work in FSR/FPR elsewhere). A draft of the manual was taken to South Africa and discussed with one of the local authors (B.J. Njokwe) and other interested parties in order to refine the text and ensure factual correctness. The feedback obtained confirmed the relevance of the publication, and the choice of content and style.

**C. Discuss follow-on activities with INR Chief executive and staff (given that the present project finishes by July 1998).**

14. The present DfID funded project finishes in July 1998. While individual project inputs by NRI, Intermediate Technology Consultants (ITC) and Reading University have been very successful (apart from one exception), the co-ordination between them has been poor, leading to poor continuity of attendance by South African staff, and a sub-optimal "corporate-learning" process. In addition, most of the inputs have been directed towards training, rather than assisting real development initiatives (the present visit being an exception). It is felt that circumstances are favourable for the more widespread practical application of Farming Systems and Farmer Participatory Research within KwaZulu-Natal, across a wide range of government organisations, NGOs and CBOs. NRI experience is very relevant to assisting this process.
15. Discussions were held with the Chief Executive of INR (Mr Patrick Sokhela), and members of his staff. The Chief Executive talked about two upcoming initiatives in which INR hope to be a partner; one for the integration of FSR approaches into the KwaZulu-Natal sugar industry, and the other for the establishment of a "transformation

unit” to work with the departments of agriculture and environment, including the incorporation of FSR/FPR into their formal research policy. Mr Sokhela felt that NRI’s skills would be very relevant to both initiatives.

16. One of the long running discussions we have had with INR throughout the Support for Institutional Development project has concerned the lack of participation of a sociologist. Mr Sokhela informed us that he was intending to contract the services of a consultant, Professor Nzimande from the University of Zululand who has considerable research experience in Kwazulu-Natal. At our suggestion, he was invited to attend the last day of the Sobantu workshop.
17. Mr Crawford provided Barry Pound with a draft project proposal to be submitted to DfID Pretoria for funding. The proposal is entitled “*Appropriate Technology for Agriculture and Agribusiness in KwaZulu-Natal*”. Again NRI FSR skills were cited as being relevant to this proposal.
18. A third initiative that is being proposed for funding is entitled “*Vulindlela - Delivering Effective Support to Farmers: A NEDFALD Project*”. This project could be seen as a direct outcome of the present DfID-supported project, much of the field work for which was conducted in Vulindlela.
19. It is encouraging that initiatives, such as the four mentioned above and the Sobantu Co-operative project that formed the focus of this mission, are being formulated and implemented as they demonstrate the application of much of the capacity building that has been at the centre of the DfID project “*Support to the INR for institutional development in South Africa*”.

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to acknowledge the excellent arrangements made for our visit by Hugh Hastings and Tom Mackenzie of the INR. Our thanks also to the Councillor, Co-operative Chairman and residents of Sobantu Village who made us very welcome.

## **Glossary**

CBO	Community Based Organisation
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DoA	Department of Agriculture
FPR	Farmer Participatory Research
FSR	Farming Systems Research
INR	Institute for Natural Resources (Pietermaritzburg)
ITC	Intermediate Technology Consultants (UK)
NEDFALD	Needs Driven, Farmer led Development.
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NRI	Natural Resources Institute (UK)
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal

## **Distribution**

### **INR**

Mr Patrick Sokhela  
Tom Mackenzie  
Hugh Hastings  
Library

### **Sobantu**

Dennis Mncwabe  
Kwazi Mngadi

### **DFID Pretoria**

Dr John Barrett (2 copies)

### **NRI**

Dr B Blake  
Mr J Bennett  
Ms Claire Troy  
Mr M Hebblethwaite

### **NRInternational**

Ms C Stebbings

### **Intermediate Technology Consultants**

Mr Ishmael Sunga

### **AERDD, Reading University**

Prof. Chris Garforth  
Dr Pat Norrish  
Mr Peter Taylor

## Appendix 1 - Workshop Timetable

### COMMUNITY-DRIVEN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOBANTU VILLAGE

Monday 22nd June - Thursday 25th June, 1998

#### Monday 22nd June (Sobantu Village Hall)

9.00 - 9.20	Introductions
9.20 - 9.35	Participants expectations from workshop
9.35 - 10.05	History, background and present status of Cooperative and Project
10.05 - 10.20	Refreshments
10.20 - 11.20	Definition of objectives
11.20 - 12.05	Stakeholder analysis
12.05 - 12.30	Are stakeholder interests covered by the stated objectives?
12.30 - 2.00 pm	LUNCH
2.00 - 2.30	Presentation of issues
2.30 - 2.50	Experience from elsewhere
2.50 - 3.00	Refreshments
3.00 - 4.00	Classification and prioritisation of issues
4.00 - 5.00	Preparation for field work

#### Tuesday 23rd June

9 - 10 am.	Meet at Sobantu Village Hall. Decide on methods and logistics for field visits
10 am - 3 pm	Field investigations
3 - 5 pm	Presentation of findings (Sobantu Village Hall).

#### Wednesday 24th June (Sobantu Village Hall)

All day	Analysis of institutional, technical and organisational issues. Definition of roles and responsibilities
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#### Thursday 25th June (Sobantu Village Hall)

9 am - 12.00 pm	Draw up Project Action Plan for next 12 months
12.00 - 12.30	Conclusions

### List of Workshop Participants

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORGANISATION</u>	<u>CONTACT ADDRESS / TELEPHONE NUMBER</u>
David Blanks	Dept of Agriculture	431897 ext 219
Nkanyezi Buthelezi		191 Mendi Street, Sobantu, Tel: 902826
Muriel Cele	Sobantu Child Care	902267, 798 Sobantu Village
Don Crawford	Institute of Natural Resources	Private Bag X01, Scottsville, 3209, Tel: 460796
Roy Dandala	Institute of Natural Resources	Private Bag X01, Scottsville, 3209, Tel: 460796
Wilhem Dlomo	Sobantu Organization	278 Mngeni Street
Thembisile Dube	Sobantu Child Care Committee	868 Khumbula Drive, Sobantu, Tel: 903563
Mlamuli Dumakude	Sobantu Agricultural Organization	0826779778
Mrs N.T. Gcabashe		1073 Nxele Street, Sobantu, Tel: 901671
Busisiwe Gumede	Sobantu Child Care Committee	1056 Zenzele Street, Sobantu
Mary-Jane Q. Hadebe	Sobantu Child Care Committee	902430. 316 Main Road, Sobantu
Hugh Hastings	Institute of Natural Resources	Private Bag X01, Scottsville, 3209, Tel: 460796 / 0828046005 / (H) 3261543
Nompumelelo Khumalo	Health	797 Skhosana Street, Tel: 901091
T.B. Labane	SISACO	1107 Nxele Street, Sobantu, Tel: 901976
Miriam Mabaso	Kulima	1058 Zenzele, Sobantu
Tom Mackenzie	Institute of Natural Resources	Private Bag X01, Scottsville, 3209, Tel: 460796
Senzo Madondo	Sobantu Environmental Club	130 Msunduzi Street, Sobantu, Tel: 901686
Thulani Magoso	Siyathuthuka Agricultural Co-operative	1148 Nxele Street, Sobantu, Tel: 903640
Mr M.W. Mahlanze	Sobantu Environmental Unit	212 Mende Street, P.O. Sobantu Village, Tel: 902755
Boy Majozi	Sobantu Creche	287 Mngeni Street, Tel: 902586
Mlungisi Makhathini		49 Gardiner Street, Sobantu
Mantombiza Manzi	Sobantu Organization	1010 Zenzele Street, Sobantu
Adrienne Martin	NRI	NRI, Chatham, Kent, ME44TB, United Kingdom
Arthur Maseko	Sobantu Joint Environmental Project	269 Mngeni Street, Sobantu
Bhekisisa Matiwane		19 West End, Sobantu
Michael L. Mbambo		882 Khumbula Drive, Sobantu



**Workshop participants (cont.)**

Edward Mfakadolo	Institute of Natural Resources	Private Bag X01, Scottsville, 3209, Tel: 460796
Mike Mingay	Institute of Natural Resources	Nansindlela Farm 0325-34301
Maida Mkhize	Sobantu	
Dennis Mnawabe	SISACO	1042 Zenzele Street, Sobantu
Irine Mncwabe	SISACO	1042 Zenzele Street, Sobantu
Hendrietta Mngadi	Sobantu Child Care Committee	264 Mpande Street, Sobantu, Tel: 903103
Kwazi Mngadi	Sobantu Development Committee and Sobantu Environmental Desk '96 Network	564 Smith Drive, P.O. Box 20276, Sobantu, Tel: 902403
Margaret Mzimela	Sobantu Creche	Thuthuka Road, Tel: 902919
Mrs Lindiwe Ndlovu		224 Mpande Street, Sobantu, Tel: 903399
Maritha Ngcobo	Agricultural Dept.	313 Mngeni Street, Sobantu, Tel: 902730
Mr D.M. Ngwane		878 Khumbula Road, Sobantu
Mrs L.N. Nkosi		1068 Nxele Street, Sobantu, Tel: 901950
Mrs T.N. Nkosi	Sobantu	1053 Zenzele Street, Sobantu
Victor Siphindoda S.Nzimande	Alberts Nomandla Consultancy	PO Box 1356 Pinetown 3600, Tel 031 7092363
Barry Pound	NRI	NRI, Chatham, Kent, ME44TB, United Kingdom
Vusi Shabalala	Sobantu Child Care Committee	860 Khumbula Drive, Sobantu, Tel: 901536
Mrs F.B. Shangase		1067 Nxele Street, Sobantu
Mrs C.M. Shezi		1054 Zenzele Street, Sobantu
Ntokozo Shezi	Sobantu Environmental Club	1054 Zenzele Street, Sobantu, Tel: 901686
Lungile Zimu		1415 Suncrush Extension, Sobantu
Mandla Zondi	IDEAA Fellowship	Private Bag 9053, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, Tel: 452484

**Appendix 2 - Workshop Output**

## EXPECTATIONS

### Institutional issues

### Technical Issues

The action plan with the responsible people appointed to carry out plan	Everyone knows what the project can achieve and when	How does a co-op work especially in a small scale status.	To know how to <u>implement</u> the project successfully, and to keep the project going	To understand basic urban agricultural concepts	More knowledge about agriculture.	Add knowledge of skills and technology
Practical methodology for establishing <u>agribusiness</u> in developing communities		How to <u>plan</u> projects  How to <u>sustain</u> a project.	Understanding of agricultural organisation (structure, roles, aims and objectives)	Know more about urban agriculture and how to manage it. The steps to take.	To know more on using the land for ploughing	What <u>soils</u> suitable for what.
To learn from the community what they want to achieve, what they expect from INR and how INR can help community to go forward.		At the end of the workshop I expect to know how to initiate urban agricultural projects.	<u>Organised structures</u> to run the project  Coop members know they must plan to run the project almost on their own after 1 year.	I'd like to have experience on how to help other people on what to plough so that we can survive.	I will learn how to care for the <u>soil</u>  <u>Vegetables</u>  Want to know more on how to care for <u>gardens</u> .	Want to know on what soils to plant and how to make lines.
My personal contribution  Everyone understands their <u>roles</u> in the project Roles of different parties.	<u>Training needs.</u>		<u>Marketing</u> our agricultural products.  Want to know more about what you can earn out of the work on the project.	Keeping our <u>environment</u> and nature clean.	How to plant vegetables, flowers and fruits.  How to till the soil	Want to know about <u>flowers</u> and soils suitable for them

## TIME LINE

1928  
Sobantu established

People came with  
agricultural skills

Small farmers within  
village met to discuss  
problems but did not  
raise funds. 1960's

1989  
Community gardens  
competition

1994  
After elections discussed  
ideas for development

Needs for skills  
and training

Development  
Committee  
1996

Sub-Committees

To improve  
social situation of  
Sobantu people  
Agricultural group to  
Change from subsistence  
to commercial farming  
Members are those  
using lands + others  
15-20

Child care  
community  
10 year plan

Negotiate with  
TLC for land  
Feb 1997

Meetings with INR  
1997  
Agriculture &  
Environment

Developing  
understanding  
between  
3 organizations  
1998

Joint organisation

Siyathuthuka  
Agricultural  
Co-operative  
Sobantu  
Environmental  
Club  
Sobantu  
Environmental  
Desk '96  
Network

Environmental issues  
investigated by  
environmental club  
problem of river  
(pollution)  
partnership with  
local factories?

Partnership with  
INR to raise  
funds. KKS Grant  
1998 under process

Training courses  
attended May 1998

12 June 1998  
Project launch

## Sobantu Agricultural Development - OBJECTIVES

	INR/DoA	SOBANTU COOP MEMBERS	SOBANTU RESIDENTS (non coop members)
<b>TECHNICAL OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify technological problems ( e.g. pollution, flooding, crop rotation, production, markets)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small-scale commercial farming</li> <li>To use organic waste for compost</li> <li>To gain agricultural skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To educate more people about commercial farming and encourage home gardens.</li> </ul>
<b>SOCIAL/ COMMUNITY WELFARE OBJECTIVES</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase nutritional level</li> <li>Create job opportunities</li> <li>To minimise diseases</li> <li>To prevent informal settlement near the river</li> <li>Long term aim to lessen crime.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the peoples' lives health wise - combat hunger</li> <li>To prevent and keep our environment in a clean and healthy condition (nature conservation)</li> </ul>
<b>INSTITUTIONAL/ ORGANISATIONAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop sound business principles (includes crops and markets)</li> <li>An active and successful farmers' cooperative within 1 year</li> <li>Identify roles of all stakeholders (financial administrative etc.</li> <li>Selection criteria for further membership</li> <li>Identify land for development with official approval.</li> </ul>		
<b>LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To make the community self reliant</li> <li>To make the project an example to the next generation</li> <li>Project to act as an example for other initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainability of the project.</li> </ul>

**STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS**  
**SOBANTU RESIDENTS**

STAKEHOLDER	INTEREST	POSITIVE/NEGATIVE
1. Umgeni Water Amanzi	Conservation and utilisation of clean water	+ Community involvement
2. Joint Environmental Project (Club and Desk '96)	Creation of environmental awareness	More community involvement +
3. TLC	Proper utilisation of land	Community in the process of establishing urban agriculture +
4. Neighbouring factories	Pollution of water	Establish links between the Co-operative and the factories X
5. Community	Community buying products at affordable prices – job opportunities	+
6. IDT and INR	Community development	+
7. Kagiso Khulani Supervision Food Services	Upliftment and sustainability of the project	+

**STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS**  
**SOBANTU CO-OPERATIVE**

STAKEHOLDERS	INTEREST	P, O AND N
SISACO	Produce and money skills	P
Sobantu Community	Affordable prices Lessen diseases Job Opportunities Social upliftment	P
TLC	Land	P
Sobantu Environmental Club	Cleanliness	P
Sobantu Environmental Desk '96	Floodplain management	P
Development Committee	Socio-economic development	P
INR	Extension and training	P
Department of Agriculture	Training and assistance of implements	P
Department of Health	Improve nutritional level	P
GREEN	Networking	P
University of Natal	Training	P
Nansindlela Farm	Extension and training	P
NRI	Facilitating and training	P
Factories	Polluting the river	N
KKS	Funds	P

**STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS**  
**INSTITUTE OF NATURAL RESOURCES/DEPARTMENT OF**  
**AGRICULTURE**

ORGANIZATION	INTERESTS	+ / X
Sobantu Farmers Co-op	Tenure, production, sustainability, drivers, profit, self-employment, gaining skills – business and agriculture in all other stakeholders	+
KKS (funders)	Success, self-promotion, business relationship, social upliftment	+
TLC	Voters, community benefits, good governance	+ X?
Environmental Groups	Sustainability, functional links, responsible use of natural resources	+ X?
Informal Settlers	Land	X
Factories (pollution)	Image, good neighbour relations, environmental issues	+ or X
INR	Business interests = service provider thus = success, organization technical, credibility	+
Department of Agriculture	Service provider (technical) Developing strategies, credibility	+
Traders (Sobantu)	Income generation, access to markets	+
Schools	Market (food supply), convenience (good price) affordable	+
DWAF	Water rights, quality, flood control	+ X
Criminals	Theft of produce?	X
General Sobantu Community Department of Health	Increased economic activity and social upliftment (health)	+
NRI	Success of project	+



## **IMPORTANT LESSONS FROM FARMER CONTROLLED ENTERPRISES**

- Groups need strong internal cohesion and a clear agenda agreed by members, linked to participatory decision making.
- Small groups of people in similar circumstances are more likely to have these features than larger groups.
- Groups receiving free or subsidised equipment, tend to have problems with the operation and management of these joint assets which undermine group performance.
- Self-reliance, savings and cost recovery mechanisms should be emphasised.
- Political independence is crucial for successful group activity.
- Previous experience of group or cooperative activity can make an important contribution to the development of unified groups.
- Match new joint activities to the organisational and management capacity, skills, experience and resources already existing in smallholder enterprises.
- Focus on a single activity in early stages. Groups should not be overloaded with too many or too complex functions.
- Group must have a strong business rationale if it is to develop successfully.
- Effective structures of accountability, financial transparency and record keeping are needed.
- External training inputs have played an important role in ensuring success of many groups.

- The process of group formation and the spending of funds should not be rushed. Ways of measuring progress are needed other than expenditure.
- Groups should explore linkages with the wider economy, including private sector rather than trying to develop complex activities themselves.
- Training in negotiation skills and the development of risk-sharing arrangements are needed.
- Flexibility in planning and allocation of resources.
- Reflection and group evaluation of activities and progress

(Summarised from case studies from Ghana, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Mali and Burkina Faso.)

**CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL SELF-ORGANISATION  
OF A PROGRAMME OF PARTICIPATORY TECHNOLOGY  
DEVELOPMENT**

- Common interest and focus
- Start informal, become more formal
- Start small and grow as necessary
- Group-selected coordinator
- Periodic meetings
- Group-organisation of joint activities
- Well prepared meetings
- Documentation and sharing
- Periodic self-evaluation by the group

Source: Developing Technology with Farmers

## CORDEP; ETHIOPIA: CONDITIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

- The identification of initiatives should be through a careful diagnosis and prioritisation of community needs, in which all sectors of the community participate
- The community should participate in all stages of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
- The community should decide on the rules and regulations governing the use of the facility (e.g. number of tree seedlings per household, price of seedlings etc.)
- Initiatives should be financially sustainable without outside assistance (establishment of revolving funds managed by a community-appointed treasurer accountable to the community authorities)
- Within the community institutions there should be individuals with sufficient specialised knowledge to solve problems, and, if necessary, get assistance from support agencies
- Government extension services should be involved from the start, and included in workshops and trainings
- Developing sustainable initiatives through a participatory process is very time consuming.

Examples: CORDEP paravet service; CORDEP fodder nurseries; CORDEP women's goat groups.

**EXPERIENCE OF INITIATING SUSTAINABLE  
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN MALI;**

**Phases in capacity strengthening:**

Initiation and growth phase	1986-1991
Co-management phase	1992-1993
Autonomy phase	1993-1996

**Source: Peter Gubbels (World Neighbours). In Farmers' Research  
in Practice**

	<b>ISSUES</b>
A A/C A/B A	<u><b>SOCIAL</b></u> ☐ Differences of interest affecting group? ☐ Linkages between group and other organizations ☐ Impact of project on current or potential land users. Who would be disadvantaged? ☐ Who are the poor? How to target for social benefit? CC + Health + Creche.
B/A A B/C C/A C	<u><b>TECHNICAL</b></u> ☐ Present land use ☐ Conditions of use on land from TLC? ☐ Limitations and potential of area ☐ Development of appropriate products and methods for different scales of production ☐ Economic evaluation of alternatives
A A A/C	<u><b>MONITORING</b></u> ☐ Reflection and learning and feedback to planning ☐ Evaluation ☐ Sharing experience
A A A A/C A/C A/C A/C A/C A/C A/C A/C	<u><b>ORGANIZATIONAL / INSTITUTIONAL</b></u> ☐ Constitution? - Co-operative or less formal structure? Membership criteria, rules, office holders (how chosen?) ☐ Who is included/excluded? ☐ Steering Committee? ☐ Relations with other bodies (village, factory, TLC, etc.) ☐ What conditions needed to operate viable business? ☐ What conditions needed to address social welfare objectives? ☐ Capacity for planning. ☐ What time frame? ☐ Group resource allocation – land, plots, inputs, labour, income ☐ Markets – niche or mainstream? Continuity, scale, quality, price ☐ Management support/training
A A A/C A A A/C	<u><b>FINANCE</b></u> ☐ Conditions of funding ☐ Time limits of funding ☐ How to ensure financial sustainability ☐ Risks – (How are risks and benefits shared?) ☐ Financial transparency ☐ Sources of financial advice/training

**NOTE:**

**A: ISSUES WORKSHOP IN HALL**

**B: FIELD VISITS**

**C: TO ACTION PLAN**

## **SOBANTU**

### **INFORMATION TO COLLECT ON FIELD VISITS**

#### **WHAT**

Soil suitability for agriculture

Soil erosion

Size of land available

Topography (slope of land)

Distance from potential users

Accessibility for transport

How far is river from Production areas

How much damage does flooding do

Who is using the land for settlement

What the land is being used for (Now, and in other seasons)

In Home Gardens:

- What is being grown now, including flowers, lawns, fruit
- What practices (spacing, fertiliser etc.)
- Chickens

#### **HOW**

Observation

Talk to: Councillor, Committee of Cooperative, those who are already farming there

Soil analysis

Posing questions to household growers

Transect

Maps

#### **WHERE**

Three flood plains (different) - suggested we visit Phase I and Phase II

Homegardens in different parts of the Village

#### **WHO**

3 groups - one to Phase I; one to Phase II and one to Home gardens.

## **Definitions**

*Participatory Rural/Urban Appraisal*

PRA

### **Tools**

- Maps
- Timeline
- Transect walks
- Interviews
- Flow diagrams.

### **Stakeholders**

Participants

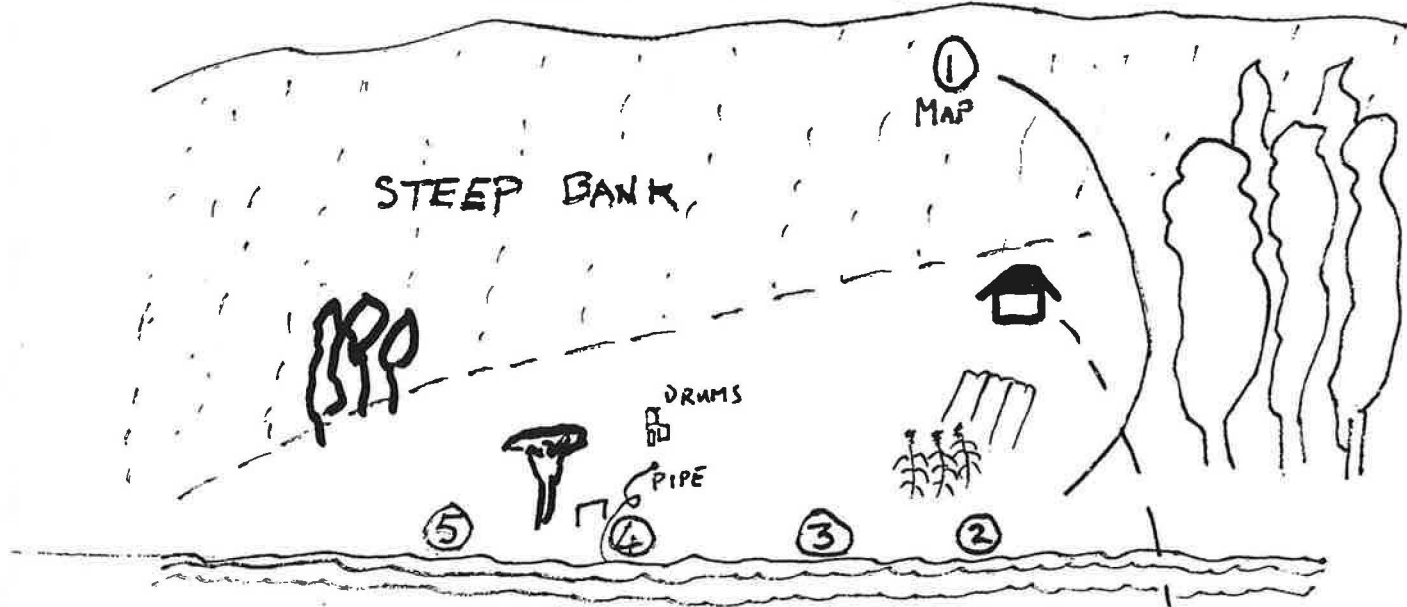
Beneficiaries

Those whose interests can be touched by the project

Those who can influence the project.



# TRANSECT WALK, PHASE II



	5. Mr Mnyanda	4. Mr Dumakude	3. Mrs Ngcobo	2. Mrs Mkhize
<b>Soil suitability</b>	Well drained, fertile, alluvial, deep soil, low clay, easy to plough + seepage			
<b>Slope</b>	Flat, no erosion	Flat	Flat	Flat
<b>Erosion</b>	Nil (undercutting along river bank)	Nil	Nil	Nil
<b>Flooding</b>	Slight to nil	Slight to nil	Slight to nil	Slight to nil
<b>Water Source</b>	Good supply throughout the year, polluted.			
<b>Crops (now)</b>	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow
<b>Summer</b>	-	Mealies, green pepper, chillies, potato,	Pumpkins Mealies	Madumbes Mealies
<b>Winter</b>	-	Lettuce, cabbage, peas, cauliflower	-	-
<b>Irrigation</b>	No	Yes	No	No
<b>Fencing &amp; electricity</b>	None – but needed			
<b>Road access</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Frost</b>	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

**Interview**

1. Owner Mr Mthembu
2. No of families 7
3. Date of settlement 1995
4. Land use: subsistence cropping around the home
5. Use river for watering the garden & washing only
6. Are prepared to move when housing is available

### Problems and suggestions

1. Theft – fencing
2. Hunters burning – fencing and fire breaks
3. Polluted water: involve city health inspector
4. Monkeys – razor wire fencing
5. Informal settlement: being addressed by TLC

## **SUMMARY OF TOWNSHIP SMALL GARDENS**

1. Soil is suitable for planting
2. The plots are small, e.g. 12x19m
3. The skills of agriculture are there
4. They need encouragement, e.g. garden competitions, advice to fight pests
5. They buy seeds from Macdonald's
6. Some of them sell seedlings to the community
7. Women are more involved than men
8. Most use compost to fertilize the soil
9. Mr. Zimu learnt agricultural skills from other community members
10. Most of them are unemployed
11. They grow the following plants and trees

<b>Vegetables</b>	<b>Trees</b>	<b>Animals</b>
Cabbage	Avocado	Chickens
Spinach	Lemons	
Carrots	Oranges	
Beetroot	Naartjies	
Lettuce	Bananas	
Chillies	Loquat	
Maize		
Onions		
Potatoes		
Madumbes		
Peas		

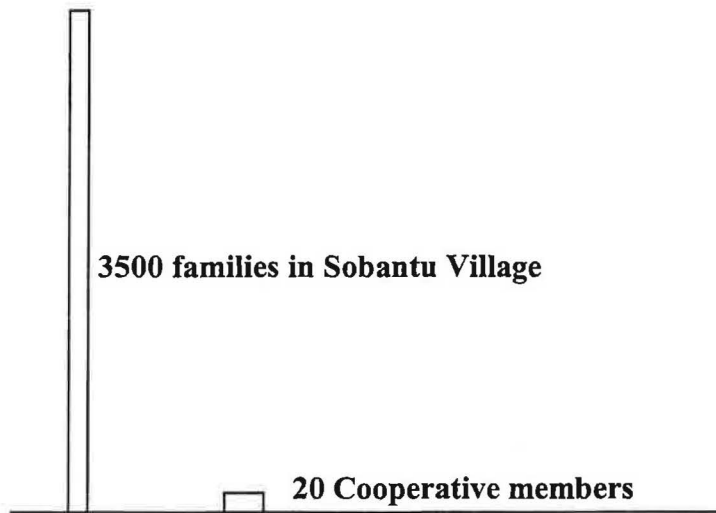
**SOBANTU; Wednesday 24 June 1998.**

Steering Committee. Suggested functions could include:

- Policy
- Orientation of the project
- Relationships with external agencies
- Review of progress against objectives

It was strongly recommended that the Steering Committee is not involved in the day-to day implementation of the project, as there will be many occasions when the Cooperative needs to take rapid decisions. However the Cooperative should be accountable to the Steering Committee and its funders. There will need to be a good mechanism for communicating the decisions and recommendations of the Steering Committee to the members of the Cooperative.

### Group Activity; Wednesday morning



As this diagram suggests a small proportion of the Community (the Cooperative members) is using a large part of the valuable Community Resource which is the TLC owned floodplain lands. The task of the 3 groups was to decide if this situation is acceptable, and if so how it can be justified.

#### Group 1 presentation

Reasons why the situation is acceptable:

1. Formerly the land was used on an individual basis. Now it has become a Community project (before Agric. Committee formed).
2. Land potential: Subsistence/household use is changing to commercial use.
3. Lack of funds and organisation
4. There are farmers who have farmed and are farming (Dark City) who are not organised
5. Size of land is too small to split between 3500 families
6. Interest group (i.e. farmers) have initiated the project. Many Sobantu residents who do not want to farm
7. The community would benefit with farming business (fresh vegetables)
8. There might be other Community members in Sobantu who have the resources (money, transport, implements) who might want to farm. They would have to join the Cooperative if they want to farm
9. It is the desire of the Coop. to see more members added with time. Open membership. Not all of the land is used, and as members are added more land will be used
10. In the past the lands have been used for summer crops and subsistence only; land is under-utilised.

**Group 2 presentation**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>(A) Coop. members</b>	<b>(B) Non members</b>	<b>Wider than Sobantu</b>
Lower cost produce	x	x	
Higher quality fresh produce		x	x
Income from produce sale	x		
Jobs for unemployed		x	
Business opportunities (farming)	x		
Opportunities for processing	x	x	x
School feeding scheme		x	
Supply of inputs		x	x
Informal traders	x		x
Training skills (transfer to others)	x	x	x
Organic waste management/disposal	x	x	
Service of equipment	x	x	x
Supply of equipment	x	x	x
Transport	x	x	
Reduction of crime	x	x	x
Improved nutrition levels	x	x	x
Improved public health	x	x	x
Developing individual business skills	x	x	
Life skills; education of the young (how to feed yourself)	x	x	
Promotion of the image of Sobantu people	x	x	x
Wealth creation	x	x	x
Unification of Sobantu community	x	x	
Secondary animal production using crop residues	x		
Home industries based on agric outputs	x	x	
Clean up water in rivers by negotiation/pressure on polluters	x	x	x

### **Group 3 presentation**

1. Agricultural Cooperative is part of a bigger Sobantu Development Committee - others are learning from the Workshop.

2. Small membership of S.A.C. is OK because:

A) Too many people will cause confusion and conflict

B) Only the current members have shown interest in the past (pamphlets about the project have been distributed)

C) Rest of Community sees this project as providing cheaper vegetables in the future.

## **Discussion Group 1.**

**How far will the cooperative's activities and functions be conducted on a communal basis?**

*Consider:*

- Land holding
- Farming operations
- Acquisition of inputs
- Use and maintenance of equipment
- Marketing
- Income
- Risk.

## **Discussion Groups 2 and 3**

**What will be the scenario in 12 months time?**

Think about the cooperative in 12 months time. The funding period has ENDED.

1) What management structures should be in place?

- For policy
- For finance
- Administration
- Marketing
- Planning
- Infrastructure
- Networking.

Group 2 to produce an organogram, Group 3 to present as a matrix.

## **Group 1 Discussion.**

**How far will the cooperative's activities and functions be conducted on a communal basis?**

### **Land holding**

The land will be cooperative and plots allocated to farmers

### **Farming operations**

The planning committee will plan operations, and coordinator according to the farmers needs and market assessment.

### **Acquisition of inputs**

The cooperative in charge of organising inputs

### **Use and maintenance of equipment**

Somebody in charge of the storage of equipment. The cooperative in charge of the equipment

### **Marketing**

Cooperative will be responsible for marketing.

### **Income**

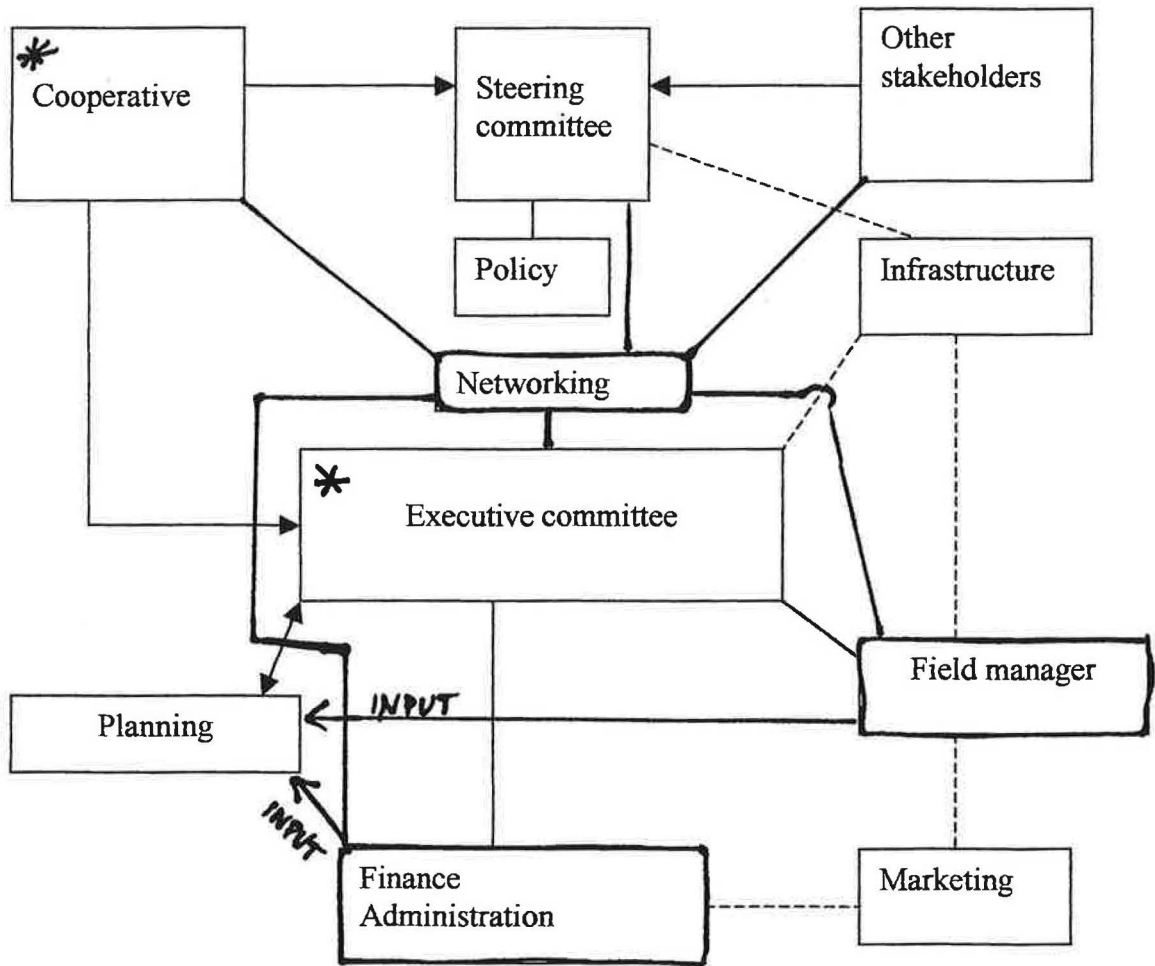
Cooperative account - to profit and reserve

### **Risk**

Cooperative.



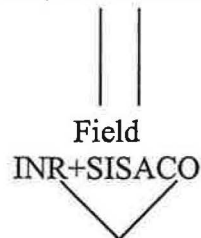
**Group 2 – Diagram of organisational structure.**



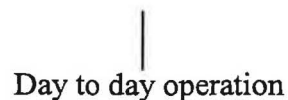
### Matrix - Discussion Group 3

Type of structure in 12 months	Structure	What it will do	How will it be sustainable
<b>Policy</b>	e.g. steering committee	Monthly meeting Problems monitoring Operational guidelines	Policy must come from the constitution
<b>Marketing</b>	Steering committee and task team	Advert. is important Investigate market quantity and quality	Reasonable prices Quality producing
<b>Financial</b>	Steering committee for financial report Task team	Day to day operation	Transparency and accountability
<b>Planning</b>	Steering committee and task team	Plan	Good planning
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Task team nominate tool keepers	Hire security	Containers or sheds for tools
<b>Networking</b>	Steering committee and task team	Networking with other stakeholders.	

Steering committee meet monthly – 2 representatives from SISACO, INR, Dpt Health, Dpt Agriculture, Councillor, KKS coordinator, Community TLC.



Task team (Secretary/ INR treasurer signing cheques.)



**Thursday 25 June**

### **Selection of Scale and Degree of Specialisation and Intensification**

The members of the co-operative observed by the rest of the workshop participants, selected from a number of alternative technology options written on “post-its”, as follows,

#### **Marketing**

Home consumption  
Marketing outlets within Sobantu  
Schools and Hospital  
Markets outside Sobantu

#### **Soil Fertility Maintenance**

Compost  
Inorganic fertiliser

#### **Job specialisation**

Coop members are full time farmers – farming only source of income

#### **Production**

Year round production

#### **Crop Protection**

Intensive use of pesticides

#### **Land Preparation**

Contract hire of tractor

#### **Labour**

Employed casual labour

#### **Crop Specialisation**

Wide range of crops produced

#### **Irrigation**

Irrigation scheme at each flood plain

#### **Transport**

Contract hire from outside the co-operative

#### **Horticultural infrastructure**

Shade netting

### **Rejected Options**

Market – No options rejected

Soil fertility – No options rejected

Specialisation – coop members farm part time as one source of income among others

Production – summer season only

Crop protection – non chemical control methods

Land preparation – tractor owned by co-operative, hand hoes, and animal draft

Labour – family labour, permanent employed labour

Irrigation – individually owned pumps

Crop specialisation – concentrate on one or few crops

Transport – individually owned by coop members and coop owned

Horticulture infrastructure – plastic tunnels and greenhouses.

## **ACTION PLANNING.**

For discussion in 2 mixed groups to define the left hand column. This was followed by a plenary session to combine the results and to construct the rest of the matrix.

<b>Task</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Additional skills/training/support needed</b>

Define needs for knowledge and skills and support - sources internal to the community and external sources with other organisations.