

REPORT OF THE

REVIEW COMMITTEE

ON

CAPART

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CHAPTER - I

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Background

1.1 Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) was established in 1986. The functioning of CAPART was reviewed in the early nineties, leading to decentralisation, through the setting up of Regional Committees and the setting up of the National Standing Committees and delegation of powers for sanction of projects at various levels.

1.2 Experiences gained in the decade-long performance of CAPART on the lines recommended by the above review and the passage of time has necessitated re-arrangement of priorities and working conditions in the light of current needs. Furthermore, the 73rd Amendment mandates people's participation in planning and decision making and implementation of development programmes through PRIs, necessitating a review of the functions of CAPART to address these new developments.

2. Constitution of the CAPART Review Committee

A Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary (RD) was constituted to review the role and functions of CAPART in the coming years, organisational structure, administrative and financial procedures and related issues. The members of the Committee are: (1) Secretary (Department of Science & Technology), AS&FA (RD), AS (LR), Adviser (RD), Planning Commission and JS in charge of CAPART in MORD.

3. Consultations by the Committee

The Committee held several meetings and consultations with eminent persons from the voluntary sector, Officers from Scientific Departments and representatives of Scientific/Research Oriented Institutions to formulate its recommendations. The Committee received suggestions relating to the

administrative procedures, systems & structure as also financial procedures. These recommendations are summarised hereafter.

4. Summary of the recommendations of the CAPART Review Committee:

4.1 The Review Committee recommended that CAPART's status as a 'Registered Society' is the most suitable to carry out its mandate and future plans and to function independently. In this regard Committee recommended the following for concerted action:

- a. Operationalisation of the 'CAPART Vision Statement' with the goal to shed its present image as funding agency for the VO Sector and create a 'niche' for itself by adopting flagship replicable programmes.
- b. Establishment of strong and enduring linkages between stakeholders, funding, Agencies including bilateral agencies, HRD Institutions, Technology and R&D Institutions, Financial Institutions, IEC Agencies, PRIs and the like.
- c. Identification of core areas not already being addressed by other agencies, that calls for innovation and have prospects for universal replicability.
- d. Establishing/Strengthening of complementary institutional networking/ functioning at all levels.
- e. Focus on convergence of programmes and services under implementation by VOs, Line Departments.
- f. Emphasise the primacy of mandated bodies, like PRIs

4.2 Administrative Systems, Structure & Procedures:-

(a) The provision regarding the number of members in the General Body may not be changed.

(b) Similarly, no change in the number may be made in respect of the Executive Committee.

(c) National Standing Committees of CAPART to be constituted on specific subjects to consider sanctioning of the projects would be chaired by Director General, CAPART. The concerned DDG would be the member Secretary of these Committees. The number of Members of the NSC will be restricted to eleven including DG, CAPART. The constitution of NSCs shall be as under:

(i) NSC on Watershed: Out of the 11 Members 1 each will be from DOLR, MOA and MOEF and the rest from the General Body, VOs and subject matter specialists.

(ii) NSC on Public Cooperation: Out of the 11 Members 1 would be from MORD and the rest from General Body, VOs and eminent individuals/social workers.

(iii) NSC on Rural Technology: Out of the 11 Members one each would be from Dept of Science & Technology, Dept. of Biotechnology, CSIR, 3 from General Body and 3 eminent VOs.

The members will be nominated by the Chairman in consultation with Director General, CAPART. The Committee recommended that these should not delegate the sanctioning powers to any sub-committees.

(d) As regards Regional Committees, the Committee recommended

that members in these Committees should have 6 Members from VO's, Secretary (RD) or his representative from each State, the DG's nominee and the Member Convener. The mandate of these Committees would be to consider and sanction projects received in accordance with the guidelines of CAPART falling within the purview of these Committees. The present arrangement regarding chairing of Regional Committee meetings will continue.

4.3 Financial Procedures

Having examined the current financial procedures in depth including the reasons causing delays in sanctioning of projects by CAPART in the light of the recommendations of the Expenditure Reforms Commission and the suggestions received from the Voluntary Organisations and experts the committee recommended exercise of financial powers as below:-

Financial Powers recommended by the Review Committee	
Director General	Rs. 20 lakhs (for workshops, seminars, conferences, exhibitions, gram shree melas, surveys, studies, outsourcing, production of films and other audio-visual materials like slides and tape packages, vikalp fellowship, printing of prayas, documentation, advertisements, blacklisting and delisting of VO's and any items other than the projects covered under the three NSCs.
Dy. Director General	Rs. 10 lakhs (for any of the above items and starter package of YPs.)
Regional Committees	Rs. 25 lakhs
National Standing Committees	Between Rs. 25 lakhs and Rs. 1 Crore (Rs. 1.5 Crore for Watershed Projects.)
Executive Committee	Above Rs. 1 Crore. (No change)

4.4 Procedure for Sanction:

In order to further streamline the sanction procedures, the committee recommended prescribing specific time limits for each stage of the

proposal. All proposals would be disposed off within four months and completed projects closed within 2 months.

4.5 To further streamline the Project Appraisal procedures the committee recommended the following:-

- (i) A three-stage appraisal system evolved in CAPART may be applied to projects with outlays of above Rs. 5 lakhs.
- (ii) Projects with outlays upto Rs. 5 lakhs may be subject to two stages only; pre-funding appraisal and post evaluation.
- (iii) The possibility of a differential system for experienced organisations be considered as in the case of Watershed Projects.
- (iv) Operational chores like issue of acknowledgements, rejection/return of proposals could be computerised.
- (v) Simplification of formats and procedures and standardisation of notes for sanction may be considered in order to reduce paperwork and delays.
- (vi) Simplified formats and procedures should also be brought out in regional languages.

4.6 Rural Technology:

One of the primary mandates of CAPART is advancement of rural technology. The Review Committee observed that CAPART is perhaps the only organisation that can lead and direct efforts for the optimal use of traditional technologies that have an important place in rural areas. To give fillip to the technology advancement role of CAPART, the committee

recommended the following: -

1. Since the clients to be serviced are BPL families, identification of sectors/activities should be specifically relevant to their needs.
2. Creation of competence for timely and expeditious appraisal of technology related projects.
3. Strengthening of the Rural Technology Division immediately through induction of professionals, ideally on contract.
4. Enlisting of collaboration of DST and CSIR in technology project appraisal.
5. Creation of a live interaction system between (a) DST, CAPART and TRCs. (b) CSIR Labs, CAPART and TRCs.
6. Train, encourage and support VOs to take up Technology Projects.
7. Strengthen and expand the network of TRCs.
8. Constitute an Advisory Panel of S&T Experts to advise CAPART.

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CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

The Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) was established in the year 1986 as a national apex body merging two organisations in existence at that time namely the People's Action for Development of India(PADI) and Council for Advancement of Rural Technology(CART) with the objective of promoting voluntary action for implementing the projects for rural prosperity and effectively propagating rural technologies in the country. Over the years, CAPART has striven to provide the institutional means to strengthen voluntary action in the rural development and rural technology sectors.

2. Following a review of CAPART's sanctioning procedures and administrative systems in the early Nineties, Regional Offices/Regional Committees and National Standing Committees on specific subjects were set up with powers to consider/approve proposals in a decentralized manner. While the nine Regional Offices were created during the period from 1994-99, the nine National Standing Committees, set up in 1998, were reduced to four after a review in the year 2000. The experience since then pointed to the need for a detailed review of CAPART's performance and functioning in the light, interalia, of changing needs, priorities and working conditions, the expanding role of Panchayati Raj Institutions as an instrument to ensure people's participation in planning and decision making, the empowerment of the rural poor through such mechanisms as Self Help groups and use of Information Technology on an extensive scale. A Committee was accordingly constituted by the Ministry of Rural Development comprising the following officials to submit Recommendations to the Minister of Rural Development in regard to CAPART's

role and functioning in the coming years, its organizational structure, administrative/financial procedures and related issues:-

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| (i) Secretary, Department of Rural Development | Chairperson |
| ii) Secretary, Department of Science and Technology
(or his representative, not below the level of Joint Secretary) | Member |
| (iii) Additional Secretary and Financial Adviser,
Ministry of Rural Development | Member |
| (iv) Additional Secretary, Deptt. of Land Resource | Member |
| (v) Dr.(Smt.) Rohini Nayyar, Adviser(RD),
Planning Commission | Member |
| (vi) D.G. CAPART | Member |
| (vii) DDG(A), CAPART | Member |
| (viii) Joint Secretary(In-charge of CAPART,
Department of Rural Development) | Member-Secretary |

3. The Review Committee, in its first meeting held on 27th April, 2002 firmed up the modalities of its functioning. It was decided that the Committee members would undertake in-depth examination of different schemes of CAPART with special reference to Rural Technology, financial matters and procedures, role and mandate of CAPART, Administration and its Committees. It also decided to collect the views of the representatives of Voluntary Organizations working in the Rural Development Sector.

4. The second meeting of the Review Committee held on 27th May, 2002 addressed the issue of functioning of Standing Committees of CAPART and the suggestions for their improvement by the members of the Committee apart from other critical issues regarding financial administration and procedures. The meeting also stressed the need for an active inter-face with the Scientific Departments to identify technologies for rural areas and their dissemination. A subsequent meeting held on 17.6.2002, chaired by the Joint Secretary in-charge of CAPART in the Ministry with the representatives of Scientific Organisations like Department of Science & Technology, CSIR and HUDCO, enabled the Review Committee to ascertain the views of those organizations already involved in the Rural Technology Sector. A third meeting of the Committee held on 20.6.2002 discussed in detail the future role, structure and mandate of CAPART. The Committee held two interactive Sessions with the representatives of voluntary organizations, former Rural Development Secretaries, Director Generals of CAPART and other eminent persons. The Review Committee also invited the written views of the voluntary organizations in this regard. A summary of these views received from VO's in the two sessions and through their written submissions is given at Annexure-I.

5. There were suggestions for expanding the role of CAPART, changes in the administrative structure with greater role for the VOs like creation of post of vice Chairman from VOs and also for conversion of CAPART into a company, for enhancing the professional competence of the staff of the CAPART involved in assessment of the projects through training and for hiring experts on contract basis, for more stringent criteria for nomination to CAPART's Committees and for representation of the women, PRI members, handicapped persons, State and Central Government Departments etc in the Committees of CAPART. Suggestions were also made for setting time limits for the processing of the proposals and release of funds, grading of VOs, utilising the services of 'Peer Reviewers' from VOs, concentrated efforts in the Rural Technology Sector,

capacity building of the Vos, providing support to backward regions and innovative projects etc.

6. Based on the detailed deliberations that took place in the meetings of the Review Committee and also taking into consideration the suggestions and recommendations of the Members of the Review Committee and the voluntary organisations as well as the representatives of the Scientific Organisations, a draft report was prepared and was considered in a meeting of the Review Committee held on 27th November, 2002. The Committee felt that further examination was required of the role of CAPART, nomination of members in the Committees and role of DG, CAPART in NSCs. Further, the Committee wanted that the suggestions received from NGO's be incorporated before finalising the report.

This report has accordingly been modified.

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CHAPTER-III

ROLE AND MANDATE OF CAPART

CAPART was established in 1986 by merging two organisations in existence at that time viz. The People's Action in Development (India) (PADI) and the Council for Advancement of Rural Technology (CART). This was in pursuance of the decision taken by a Group constituted by the Prime Minister under the chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary. The Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) was thus registered on 01st September, 1986 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. Although a large number of aims and objects of the Council were listed in its Memorandum of Association, a few comprise the core objectives of the Council in terms of their criticality and priority. These are:

- ◆ to encourage, promote and assist voluntary action in the implementation of projects for the enhancement of rural prosperity;
- ◆ to strengthen and promote voluntary efforts in rural development with the focus on injecting new technological inputs in this behalf;
- ◆ to act as the national nodal point for the coordination of all efforts at the generation and dissemination of technologies relevant to rural development in its wider sense.

2. The establishment of CAPART was a sequel to the thinking prevalent in the country at that time regarding the role and contribution that the Voluntary sector could make in the field of social and rural development and the need for a facilitation institution and environment for the purpose. The 7th Five Year Plan Document (Involvement of Voluntary Agencies, Seventh Five Year Plan 1985-90, Vol. II, pp. 68-70) emphasized that Voluntary agencies could supplement Government efforts with the added advantage of being flexible and better placed to mobilize and organise the poor. They could activate the delivery system at the grass root level to respond to the felt needs and be the eyes and ears of the people at the village level. Further, they could mobilize financial resources from within the community and train cadres of grassroots level functionaries to

promote professionalised voluntarism. Voluntary organizations were seen as autonomous sources of ideas and impulses offering the rural poor choices and alternatives through simple and cheap innovations, which could reach the largest number of people.

3. The newly created CAPART of 1986 reflected these ideas through its Charter. The main objectives of CAPART were outlined in its Memorandum of Association & Rules.

4. Since its inception, CAPART has been funding voluntary agencies in the country for undertaking rural development and poverty alleviation projects at the grass root level, supplementing the efforts of the Government in this regard. CAPART provided funds as grants to the Voluntary Agencies for projects, through a centralized system of sanction and releases from its Head office at New Delhi for quite some years. However, this approach deprived the VOs of their advantages of flexibility and innovativeness. Moreover, as a consequence of this, agencies that were more in the nature of sub-contractors for government came into existence. After review of the system during the early 1990s, sanctioning procedures were decentralized leading to the creation of Regional Offices and Regional Committees and later National Standing Committees with powers to approve projects. CAPART also switched over from the system of funding straight-jacketed schemes parallel to the Government Schemes, to the policy of financing VOs on projects based on the local requirements and needs, rather than subjecting them to any rigid pattern. The revised schemes of CAPART include promotion of voluntary action in Rural Development, Organization of Beneficiaries, Advancement of Rural Technologies, Disability and Watershed Development.

5. In keeping with this endeavor, new policy guidelines of CAPART came into effect from 1st May 2001. The main highlights of the new policy guidelines included funding not only eligible VOs but good VOs, extending support for innovative and integrated projects, a flexible approach and ensuring participatory management.

6. Even as the systems in CAPART have evolved and the functioning pattern changed over the years, there were simultaneously vast changes in the political and administrative milieu in the country. With Constitutional validity having been endowed upon the Panchayati Raj and Municipal Institutions, they could now act as institutions of local self-governance, to be strengthened by the Government. Gram Sabhas were empowered to ensure people's participation in planning and decision making, The focus on people, particularly the rural poor, through mechanisms of self help groups, local level user committees of various projects, empowerment of women and expansion of information network, considerably changed the dynamics of relationships in the field and at every level. The nature and level of expectations from the voluntary organisations themselves also underwent substantial change in the process. From direct implementation of program's, CAPART moved to working more in the areas of empowerment and capacity building, sustainable modes and technologies for a healthy socio-economic environment, and access to facilities and opportunities by the rural poor. The Review Committee also took note of the rapidly changing external environment reflected in globalization, privatization and liberalization and the new-generation changes in the pattern and quality of demand.

7. The Review Committee studied in detail the Charter, Role and Mandate of CAPART keeping in view the aforesaid, fast-moving scenario in the country. One view expressed during the course of discussions was that while CAPART recorded a good performance in promotion of Voluntarism in the Rural Development sector, however, due to its multifarious activities, its primary mandate of advancing Rural Technology was somewhat neglected. This view

emerged from the belief that CAPART has been unable to keep pace with the rapidly changing scenario as it has not invested enough in human resource development and interacted with Institutions working in the area of Rural Technology.

8. Intertwined with the question of the mandate is the nature of the organization. Currently CAPART is a Registered Society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 enjoying autonomy in its functioning. Its autonomous status ensures that while the policy decisions are taken by the General Body and the Executive Committee of the Council, most of the funding decisions are taken by the decentralized set-up of the Regional Committees and the National Standing Committees as per the ceilings laid down. Suggestions were placed before the Committee by an expert in the voluntary sector to convert CAPART into a Company. The role of CAPART was viewed as a facilitator and a true motivator-cum- partner in all developmental activities of the rural community who was proposed to be a shareholder/stakeholder in every community development project. All the projects were suggested to have 1/3 share contribution by the stakeholders with the larger projects to be formed into Corporations/Registered Companies with shareholders. It was suggested that the funds provided by CAPART might be converted into shares so that CAPART would have control after the projects are completed. The Central Office of CAPART would have a Director General or the Managing Director as the Chief Executive and Directors for different functions.

9. Recommendations of the Committee

(i) The Review Committee studied the basic structure of CAPART as envisaged in the Memorandum of Association to assess the need for any modifications in the background of the suggestion to convert CAPART into a Company. The Committee favours the retention of the basic structure of CAPART as a 'Registered Society', as being most suitable for its mandated activities and future plans. This gives the Organisation the

required autonomy to function independently. The Committee is also of the view that CAPART should, however, operationalise the recently adopted 'Vision Statement' specifying strategies for achievement of its long, medium and short-term goals. These strategies if pursued with vigour by CAPART shall help shed its current image of being limited to a funding agency for voluntary organizations. The Committee further suggests that CAPART attempt to create a 'niche' for itself and towards the achievement of this endeavour, devote all its energies, resources and capacities in the creation of a 'critical mass'. It should focus on adopting certain flagship programmes which would create a visible impact and become models for replication.

- (ii) Accepting the need for a paradigm shift, the committee feels that CAPART should facilitate the process of establishment of sustainable linkages amongst the stake-holders, Financial Institutions(FIs), Extension Research Organisations, PRIs, Training Institutions, input-supply mechanisms and post-production-agencies such as markets, etc. It should aggressively adopt measures leading to facilitation, advocacy, back-up/support role with overriding emphasis on capacity building, enabling role clarity and enhancing the ability of NGOs. It can function as a clearing house for learning experience to be pooled and shared through constantly upgraded contemporary connectivity. In this context the Committee suggests that CAPART should identify core areas and priorities and concentrate on innovative and integrated projects with elements of sustainability and replicability.
- (iii) CAPART should undertake a detailed exercise to identify those areas of activities that are not already being addressed by other agencies or line-departments to avoid overlapping of the activities and multiplicity of the implementing agencies. Considering the fact that programmes are being implemented by multiple agencies like line-departments, State Governments, DRDAs, Panchayat Raj Institutions and others, the

- coordination and convergence of programmes could be pursued through adequate representation of these bodies in the Committees of CAPART so as to create synergy to channelise funds for need based projects and thus avoid duplication.
- (iv) The development of a close mutual relationship with NABARD, KVIC and similar institutions and a pro-active interface with the Institutions like IITs, IIMs are advocated, since in the course of time, these Institutions would become the repository of valuable information related to the voluntary sector and rural technologies. In this context, it is also essential that appropriate networking with the reputed Voluntary Organisations with vast experience and noteworthy core competence in the field of rural development is developed and their services utilized as delivery institutions for training and capacity building of new and inexperienced voluntary organisations. Committee suggests regular interactions with such Institutes and the creation of an Advisory Panel of Experts of Science & Technology for advising DG CAPART on the latest technological interventions and innovations in the field of Rural Technology.
- (v) The Committee is aware that substantial funds are forthcoming from the bilateral and international agencies like GTZ, DFID, UNDP, etc. CAPART should make efforts to collect data on the relationship between the voluntary organisations and the external donors and assess the likely donor assistance that flow into the voluntary sector. It could then play a pro-active role in identifying specific areas and activities to be implemented by the best available implementing agencies to ensure optimal utilization of external funding. The Memorandum of Association of CAPART allows acceptance of funds from foreign agencies on terms as prescribed by the Govt. of India from time to time. However, Donor agencies are likely to channelise these funds with certain conditionalities

and request a specific role for the representatives of such Agencies in the sanction and release of funds. CAPART could therefore act as a channelizing agency for such funds. It could identify good and eligible NGOs for acceptance of funds from the external agencies through a tripartite agreement between the three agencies. A modus operandi formalising the arrangement would need to be put in place to enable routing of external funds to the Rural Development sector through the institutional help of CAPART.

- (vi) CAPART should embark upon a major initiative to catalyze complementary functioning of existing network of institutional infrastructure both at the National/State/District levels and at the grass-roots level emphasizing primacy of constitutionally mandated bodies such as PRIs and drawing upon inputs available from Community Based Organisations/Non Government Organisations, line-departments of Governments, etc. It should also focus on consolidating efforts aimed at co-ordination and convergence of programmes and services.

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CHAPTER-IV

ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS, STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURES

In terms of the Memorandum of Association and Rules of CAPART, which is a Registered Society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860, the administrative functioning of the organization is carried out through the following authorities:-

I. General Body (GB)

2. The General Body comprises the Members of the Society not exceeding 50 members, representing voluntary agencies (60%), Central and State Governments, Institutions engaged in activities connected with rural development (30%) and Technology and Academic Institution (10%) relevant to the furtherance of the objectives of CAPART. The Minister of Rural Development is the President of the Council. The members are nominated by the President of the Council. The General Body gives the overall policy guidance and directions for the efficient functioning of the Society.

II. Executive Committee (EC)

3. The Executive Committee of CAPART comprises a maximum of 25 members nominated by the President of CAPART from amongst the members of the General Body. The Minister of State in the Ministry of Rural Development is currently the Chairman of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee carries out the objectives of the Council and is responsible for management and administration of the affairs of the Council.

III. Standing Committee on Finance and Appointments (F&A)

4. A Standing Committee on Finance and Appointments chaired by the Director General CAPART, considers all matters relating to finance, personnel and administration requiring approval of the Executive Committee and then places them before the EC for approval. The Financial Adviser of the Ministry is one of the members.

IV. Director General (DG)

5. The Secretariat of CAPART is headed by the Director General (DG) who is the Principal Executive Officer of CAPART. He is appointed by the Executive Committee with the prior approval of the Govt. of India and is responsible for the functioning of the Council. He is assisted in the discharge of his duties by two DDGs, (Deputy Director General), Chief Vigilance Officer and Heads of Divisions at the Headquarters and Member Convenor (MCs) at the Regional level. DG has financial powers upto Rs.15 lakhs while the DDGs are delegated powers upto Rs.8 lakhs.

V. Regional Committees (RC)

6. Prior to 1995, all the projects were sanctioned at the Head office level with the result that it was difficult to monitor and evaluate the projects. In the year 1994, six Regional Offices were created at Ahmedabad, Bhubaneshwar, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Jaipur and Lucknow and they started functioning from the year 1995. Two Regional Offices were created at Chandigarh and Patna in the year 1998 and one office at Dharwad was created in the year 1999, taking the total Regional Offices set up to nine. The nine Regional Committees, set up at the nine Regional Offices were authorized to sanction project proposals upto an outlay of Rs.20.00 lakhs, monitor and evaluate all such projects within their respective regions, identify institutions for training of functionaries of voluntary organisations, maintain liaison and co-ordination with the concerned State

Governments, and promote and develop small informal groups. All the Regional Committees were reconstituted in the year 1999. The term of official and non-official members, all nominated by the President of CAPART, is generally three years or till they cease to be members of the Executive Committee/General Body of CAPART, whichever is earlier.

VI. National Standing Committees(NSCs)

7. Two Standing Committees, namely the Standing Committee on Projects for People's Action and the Standing Committee on Projects for Infrastructure were set up by the Chairman under the authorization of the Executive Committee with powers to sanction projects upto Rs.10 lakhs in 1987. Projects above Rs.10 lakhs were placed before the E.C. Subsequently, these Committees were merged and a Committee on Projects was constituted having powers to sanction projects ranging from Rs.10 lakhs to Rs. 20 lakhs. The EC had the power to sanction projects beyond Rs.20 lakhs. In 1995, with the Council taking up Watershed Development as one of its major programmes, a Committee was set up for putting together a set of guidelines for providing support to the Watershed Development Projects. After the Committee had completed its work, it was made into an NSC on Watershed for examining the projects received in this sector. D.G. was made the Chairman of this Committee with a Co-chairman from the Voluntary sector. In 1996, the then D.G. set up another National Standing Committee for sanctioning of projects in respect of various schemes of the Government like, IRDP, CRSP etc. These two National Standing Committees, on Watershed and the other for sanctioning projects were by and large advisory in nature, in the sense that orders of the competent authority (the Executive Committee) were still required for sanctioning the projects even though they had been cleared by the NSCs.

8. Subsequently, based on a decision of the E.C. on 5th August, 1996, eight National Standing Committees were constituted on 10.2.1997 at Head office

level, on specific subjects to consider sanctioning of projects with outlay of Rs.20 lakhs to Rs.1 crore. The projects with outlay above Rs.1 crore are considered by the Executive Committee. The NSCs have one or more project Divisions attached to them and the respective head of the Project Division is the Member Convenor of the NSCs. Members of all these Committees were nominated by the Chairman of the Executive Committee. The total number of these NSCs as re-constituted in January, 1998 was nine. This was further rationalized to four by the decision of the E.C. in August 2000. These four NSCs are,

- (i) NSC on Public Cooperation and Social Forestry.
- (ii) NSC on Water Conservation and Development Programme.
- (iii) NSC on Marketing and Media, Monitoring Evaluation, Human Resources and other matters of interest to the Voluntary Sectors.
- (iv) NSC on Rural Technology.

The NSCs are chaired by the people from the Non-Governmental sector and include membership from Voluntary Agencies.

9. It was brought to the notice of the Committee that until 1998, the Director General, CAPART was empowered to appoint chairpersons of RCs and NSCs. The appointment of chairpersons of these Committees from the Voluntary Organizations (VO's) has meant problems in terms of effective control and supervision by the D.G. who is ultimately answerable and accountable to the Executive Committee as the Principal Executive Officer of CAPART. Suggestions have come for having the possibility of review by DG of the decisions by the Chairman and members of the RCs and NSCs in view of the wide administrative and financial implications of some of the decisions of these Committees. The composition of these Committees was also commented upon to emphasize the need to specify the maximum limit of the number of members that may constitute a National Standing Committee and other Committees. **It was indicated that in line with the present trends, (both in and outside Govt), smaller**

Committees to ensure functional vitality and quicker decision making would be suitable. Suggestions also came for inducting experts, giving representation to women, handicapped persons and organizations from mountainous areas on these Committees. Also raised was the point whether a person could be nominated on more than one Committee. The general tenor of the suggestions in this regard was that more than single committee membership should be avoided.

10. The Review Committee was apprised of the ambiguity that prevails about the powers and the role of various Committees. Some Chairpersons and members of the NSCs see their role beyond the sanctioning of the projects to the appraisal and supervision of implementation of the projects. The insistence of the NSC members to visit the project sites before sanctioning the projects and or during the course of implementation of the projects causes substantial costs and leads to the possibility of the members of these Committees being embroiled in procedural and implementational delays. Some NSCs have also reportedly exhibited tendencies to set up Sub-Committees to deliberate upon matters that should have been considered by the NSC itself. As the NSCs themselves exercise the powers delegated to them by the Executive Committee, further delegation of the responsibilities to Sub-Committees raises issues not only from a legal point of view but also on account of the additional expenditure involved in such delegation. Other issues brought to the notice of the Review Committee were a) the insistence of the Standing Committee Members for consideration of ad-hoc proposals during the course of their meetings and b) the approval conveyed by the Committee for projects appraised to be not suitable for CAPART funding.

11. With the prevailing system, often projects have had to be sanctioned by

the President in emergent circumstances like natural calamities. A need has been felt by CAPART for formal procedure providing explicitly for such extraordinary circumstances. Also, often the need arises for expeditious clearance of proposals of non-project nature which are received at short notice, such as those for supporting Workshops/Seminars/Exhibitions/Melas/Trainings involving small outlays. In general, the suggestions received by the Committee from the members of the voluntary organizations and CAPART pointed to the fact that while there was a real need for a strong presence of the Voluntary Organisations in the RCs/NSCs, at the same time, adoption of suitable measures for exercising effective administrative and financial control over the functioning of these Committees, is essential. Having regard to these considerations and with a view to bringing about greater efficiency and economy, the Review Committee makes the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. General Body(GB).

12. At present the GB has 100 members . The provision regarding the number of members in the General Body may not be changed. It should have an adequate representation from both the officials and non-officials. The Non official members to be nominated by the President of CAPART shall be drawn from NGOs, Experts, Institutional Heads, and should be eminent persons recognised Nationally and Internationally for their work in the field of Rural Development and allied activities. Members drawn from the NGO sector should have the experience of working for a minimum of 10 years in a responsible capacity in a VO of repute.

13. A proportionate representation from NSC/RC Chairpersons should be considered in the General Body so as to maintain some kind of continuity among the various Committees of CAPART. The Official Members, also nominated by the President, would be drawn from various Ministries which are also allocating funds to NGOs. The Financial Advisor of the Ministry of Rural Development would be a permanent Member of the GB.

14. The Executive Committee has the current strength of 25 members. No change in the number may be made in respect of the Executive Committee. The E.C. will include 50% members from the Ministries which allocate funds to NGOs working in the rural areas e.g. Health, Education, Social Welfare, Forest and Environment and Non-Conventional Energy. This would help convergence and coordination of schemes for NGOs and also rule out any duplication of efforts. The remaining 50% of the Members, nominated by the President, may be drawn from the General Body.

B. National Standing Committees (NSC).

a) Composition of National Standing Committees

- The National Standing Committees have evolved over a period of time from the concept of Standing Committees as laid down in the MOA of CAPART. These Standing Committees were originally envisaged to deal

with any demarcated area of operation, including approval of projects. Over a period of time these have come to be recognised as permanent bodies of CAPART for sanction of project funds. However, there has been an

absence of precision in terms of the charter of duties and responsibilities of these Committees. CAPART needs to lay down the role and mandate clearly of these Committees and make appropriate changes in the Memorandum of Association on similar lines to ensure accountability.

- National Standing Committees of CAPART to be constituted on specific subjects to consider sanctioning of the projects would be chaired by Director General, CAPART. The concerned DDG would be the member Secretary of these Committees. The number of Members of the NSC will be restricted to eleven including DG, CAPART. The constitution of NSCs shall be as under:
 - (i) NSC on Watershed: Out of the 11 Members 1 each will be from DOLR, MOA and MOEF and the rest from General Body, VOs and subject matter specialists.
 - (ii) NSC on Public Cooperation: Out of the 11 Members 1 would be from MORD and the rest from General Body, VOs and eminent individuals/social workers.
 - (iii) NSC on Rural Technology: Out of the 11 Members one each would be from Dept of Science & Technology, Dept. of Biotechnology, CSIR, 3 from General Body and 3 eminent VOs.

The members will be nominated by the Chairman in consultation with Director General, CAPART. The Committee recommended that these should not delegate the sanctioning powers to any sub-committees. The Committees should have representation from experts, NGOs, women, and the disadvantaged segments of society. Member drawn from the NGOs Sector should have the experience of working for a minimum of five years in a responsible capacity in a VO of repute. The Term of the Committee shall be for two years. Necessary changes in the MOA be carried out to suitably incorporate the changes in accordance with the recommendations.

- The Director General, CAPART may be nominated as the Chairman of the National Standing Committees as was the position initially, keeping in view the fact that it is the DG who is answerable and accountable to the Executive Committee for the administrative and financial functioning of CAPART.
- Membership in more than one Committee is not desirable more so in the context of the recent adverse comments of the Public Accounts

Committee, that a number of projects were sanctioned indiscriminately and in contravention of the guidelines of CAPART to the VOs who were

members of Grant Sanctioning Committees taking advantage of their membership to secure grants to their own Organisations. The ethical question of Committee members ensuring funds to their NGOs by virtue of their presence on the Committees needs to be scrupulously avoided, Dual or multiple membership in the fund sanctioning committees of CAPART has to be stopped. Necessary changes in this regard need to be addressed in the MOA.

b) Mandate of the NSC

- The role of the Committee should be limited to the consideration and sanctioning of the projects based on the pre-funding appraisal by CAPART officials or independent monitors. The issues pertaining to appraisal and implementation can be raised in the Committee meeting, but the implementation of the decisions and supervision thereof must be left to CAPART.
- The sanctioning Committee has thus a distinct mandate which is separate from the evaluation and monitoring of CAPART projects. In the larger context of the principles of propriety and separation of powers and functions of different bodies, the Committee suggests that evaluation of projects should not fall within the ambit of the National Standing Committees. It has been brought to the notice of the Committee that a separate three stage system of appraisal, fairly stringent, is already in place in CAPART. In view of the above, the Committee feels that the charter of the NSC be limited to sanctioning of projects. This may be formalised through incorporation in the revised provisions of the MOA.

- No further delegations would be made by the NSC to any Sub-Committee as the NSC is already exercising the delegated powers of the EC.
- The Committee shall not consider any adhoc proposals during deliberations and only formal proposals, duly examined, can be placed before them for consideration. On occasions when the Committee members do bring up such ad-hoc proposals during the course of their meeting, the decisions taken in respect of such proposals shall be formally examined at the official level and brought back to the Committee for consideration in its next meeting.

c) Procedure of the Committee

- No grants may be sought by Members serving on Committees of CAPART, for NGOs in which they are working in their official capacity or associated with, till such time as they are serving on the various Committees. This may be specified in the Terms and conditions of the Members on appointment and in the MOA of CAPART.
- Only eligible cases will be placed before the NSC so as to reduce the burden of the Committee. Cases wherein the eligibility criteria of CAPART are not met or they do not fall within the guidelines of CAPART under its various schemes, cannot be considered for support.
- Proposals received at short notice for supporting Seminars/ Workshops/ Exhibitions/Melas/Training Programmes with small

outlays should be sanctioned by DG/DDG within the delegated financial powers.

- If the NSCs are not in a position to meet on account of any reason, the DG may be empowered to clear pending proposals, within the delegated powers, to avoid delays. The proposals, thus cleared should be subsequently brought before the Committee for information. The decision of the Director General in this regard would not be open to any further discussion.
- An annual review of the functioning of the National Standing Committees must be made to tone up efficiency and to coordinate overlapping interests of some projects.
- Administrative matters/decisions shall lie outside the purview of the Committees.

C. Regional Committees (RCs).

(a) Composition of Regional Committees

- The Regional Committees have been created under the MOA of CAPART to effectively discharge the functions of the Society. CAPART needs to bring about appropriate changes in the MOA to formalise their charter of duties and responsibilities, to ensure accountability.
- The Committee recommended that members in Regional Committees should have 6 Members from VOs, Secretary (RD) or his representative from each State, the DG's nominee and the Member Convener. The mandate of these Committees would be to consider and sanction projects received in accordance with the guidelines of CAPART falling within the purview of these Committees. The present arrangement

regarding chairing of Regional Committee meetings will continue. The Regional Committees should also have representation from experts, NGOs, women, and the disadvantaged segment of society. The Term of the Regional Committee shall be for two years. Necessary changes in the MOA be carried out to suitably incorporate the changes in accordance with the recommendations.

- Following the argument incorporated in the National Standing Committee above, in the context of the views of the adverse comments of the PAC, dual or multiple membership should be avoided in the RC level also. Necessary changes in this regard need to be made in the MOA.

b) Mandate of the Regional Committees

- The role and mandate of the Regional Committee should be on similar lines as the NSC for approval of project on a regional basis.
- The Committee suggests that evaluation of projects should not fall within the ambit of the Regional Committee, as a separate system of appraisal is already in place in CAPART. The charter of the Regional Committee should be limited to sanctioning of projects which may be incorporated in the MOA.
- The RC can not set up any further sub-Committees, as it is a delegated body of the EC.
- The Regional Committee shall also not consider any ad-hoc proposals during deliberations and only a formal proposal, duly examined can be placed before them for consideration.

c) Procedure of the Regional Committees

- No grants may be sought by Members serving on Regional Committees of CAPART, for NGOs in which they are working in their official capacity or associated with, till such time as they are

serving on the various Regional Committees. This maybe specified in the Terms and conditions of the Members on appointment and in the MOA of CAPART.

- Only eligible cases will be placed before the Regional Committee so as to reduce the burden of the Regional Committee. Cases wherein the eligibility criteria of CAPART are not met or they do not fall within the guidelines of CAPART under its various schemes, cannot be considered for support.
- If the RCs are not in a position to meet on account of any reason, the DG may be empowered to clear pending proposals, within the delegated powers, to avoid delays. The proposals thus cleared should be subsequently reported to the Regional Committees concerned.
- An annual review of the functioning of Regional committees must be made to tone up efficiency and to coordinate overlapping interests of some projects.
- Administrative matters/decisions shall lie outside the purview of the Committee.
- Decisions taken by the Regional Committee, in contravention of the laid down guidelines and mandate of CAPART, can be reviewed by DG, CAPART.

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CHAPTER - V

FINANCIAL PROCEDURE

Sanctioning Procedures

Voluntary organizations registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 or State Amendments thereof or the Indian Trusts Act, 1982 or the Charitable and Religious Act, 1920 are eligible for support by CAPART. According to the Council's Guidelines, such Organizations are required to fulfil certain other prescribed criteria to be eligible for funding. Any Voluntary Organization fulfilling the eligibility criteria can directly apply to the Council for support under different schemes in the prescribed forms. In the case of a first timer Voluntary Organisation, it has to approach the concerned Regional Committee of CAPART with a project involving a modest outlay.

2. If a proposal meets the norms and guidelines of CAPART at desk appraisal stage, pre-funding evaluation is conducted during which the capability, credibility and community base of the organization and the feasibility of the proposal are evaluated by an empanelled monitor. A panel of monitors is drawn up for the purpose by CAPART on the basis of their curriculum Vitae credentials and specialisation. If the evaluation report is positive, the proposal is placed before the Regional Committee/National Standing Committee concerned for consideration. If sanctioned, funds are released in installments depending upon the progress of the work. The mid-term appraisal is carried out before release of funds in the second and subsequent phase. After the project is completed, impact evaluation is conducted to assess the impact of the programme and to see whether the objectives of the project have been achieved.

3. Comprehensive impact assessment and post evaluation study by independent professional body or team of experts/consultants is mandatory in all cases where funding is of more than Rs.1 crore in a period of 4 years or Rs.50

lakhs for a single project. These reports are also placed before the concerned NSC and the Executive Committee.

4. CAPART has evolved a comprehensive system for ensuring proper accountability of grants released by it to the Voluntary Organizations for implementation of development projects. In this regard, detailed policy guidelines have been laid down by the National Standing Committee on Monitoring and Evaluation which has been specifically constituted for the purpose. Whenever CAPART gets prima facie evidence that grants released by it have not been properly utilized by the Voluntary Organisation or the promises made in the proposal have not been fulfilled during the implementation of the project, a temporary funding restriction, viz. Further Assistance Stopped(FAS) is imposed on the erring voluntary organisation. The same can, however, be removed by the concerned RC and the NSC if the Organisation rectifies all the deficiencies in the project implementation. In case a Voluntary Organisation is found to have indulged in financial misappropriation of CAPART grant, it can be placed in the Blacklist category as laid down in the guidelines.

Monitoring & Evaluation

5. CAPART has a system of monitoring and evaluation of the projects funded by it through the empanelled external project evaluators. Experts from training institutions as well as personnel from other organizations including the voluntary sector are requisitioned as institutional monitors to evaluate the projects. CAPART's own officers, including Young Professionals, are also deputed to conduct these evaluations. A three-stage monitoring is found to be the norm namely pre-funding appraisal before the project is sanctioned, mid-term appraisal before the release of funds in the second and subsequent phases and post-evaluation after the project has been completed.

6. The Review Committee examined in depth the current financial procedures and also the bottlenecks leading to delays in the sanctioning of the projects by CAPART. The suggestions received from the Voluntary Organisations in this regard were also examined by the Committee in arriving at suitable recommendations for overcoming delays. The Committee studied, the current delegation of financial powers including those for sanctioning of projects, procedures for sanction and also the recommendations of the Expenditure Reforms Commission relating to CAPART emphasizing the need for expediting the sanctioning of the projects and ensuring economy in the functioning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

a) Powers for Financial sanctions

- The current powers for sanctioning projects are-Regional Committees upto Rs.20 lakhs, National Standing Committees upto Rs.1 crore(other projects) and Rs 1.5 crores (Watershed projects) and Executive Committee above Rs1 crore. For the Technology Projects, the Regional Committees have powers only in respect of twenty three identified technologies while further projects are handled at the Head Office. The powers of DG and DDGs are respectively upto Rs.15 lakhs and upto Rs.8 lakhs.

Financial Powers recommended by the Review Committee	
Director General	Rs. 20 lakhs (for workshops, seminars, conferences, exhibitions, gram shree melas, surveys, studies, outsourcing, production of films and other audio-visual materials like slides and tape packages, vikalp fellowhip, printing of prayas, documentation, advertisements, blacklisting and delisting of VOs and any items other than the projects covered under the three NSCs.
Dy. Director General	Rs. 10 lakhs (for any of the above items and starter package of YPs.
Regional Committees	Rs. 25 lakhs.
National Standing Committees	Between Rs. 25 lakhs and Rs. 1 Crore (Rs. 1.5 Crore for Watershed Projects.)
Executive Committee	Above Rs. 1 Crore. (No change)

b) Procedure for Sanction

- An overriding consideration with regard to the sanction of projects in CAPART must necessarily be that there are no delays. The various stages a proposal passes through before sanction include Receipt and Acknowledgment, Desk appraisal for verification and eligibility, further processing to decide if eligible or a case for rejection, pre-funding appraisal by a suitable monitor, examination of the report of the monitor, verification of CAPART's records regarding history of the organization and placing the proposal for decision with recommendation. Delays can occur at each stage, from the acknowledgement of the receipt of the proposal to the preparation of the note recommending sanction/rejection. Time limits need, therefore, to be specified for each stage and periodical reports in a simple format be prescribed for review at an appropriate level every month. This

aspect has been debated internally within CAPART and according to the recent directives, four months is the time limit fixed for sanction of a project from the date of receipt of a complete proposal. CAPART needs to commit itself to the time schedule evolved. This shall be applicable equally to the Head Office and RCs.

- At present, a three stage appraisal is conducted for all proposals which are processed. The Committee feels that this is not necessary in case of proposals with small outlays of upto Rs 5 lakhs. In these cases, perhaps a two-stage monitoring should be enough i.e. pre funding and post evaluation. Besides, the possibility of a differential system for experienced organizations may also be considered as in case of Watershed projects.

- Whenever there is an accumulation of workload, CAPART should hire professional staff with technical competence, on short term contracts to complete the job on hand. Simultaneously CAPART should also strengthen the capacity and capability of its own staff to equip them with the necessary expertise required in the changing scenario.

- Formats and procedures should be simplified and brought out in regional languages if not already done. The operations like issue of acknowledgements, rejection/return of proposals could be handled through a computerized system. Standardization of notes for sanction may be adopted by devising suitable formats leading to reduction in the paper work and in delays.

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CHAPTER VI

RURAL TECHNOLOGY

The Mandate of CAPART with respect to Rural Development is to co-ordinate all efforts towards advancement of technology relevant to rural areas except for sectors being dealt with by ICAR and its sister organisations. The broad objective of the Council under this is development and dissemination of rural technology. The thrust is to promote innovative rural technologies in the villages especially those catering to disadvantaged sections of the society. As a medium-term goal, the Council proposes to establish/strengthen technology development and dissemination centers in major sectors of sustainable natural resource management and rural development, namely, water, energy, earth, technology for rural artisans, processing of agro-forestry produce, etc. to ensure rural industrialization and self-employment in the villages. Projects aimed at conducting need-based study, survey and adaptive research, development, administration and dissemination of appropriate technologies amongst the poor are funded under the Rural Technology Scheme.

2. A programme of setting up of Technology Resources Centres (TRCs) was initiated by CAPART under this scheme. These are Voluntary Organisations equipped with laboratory facilities and who have received annual grants from CAPART for development of appropriate technology and dissemination of the same through a network of small voluntary organisations within their areas of operation. CAPART has set up 19 Technology Resource Centres, though only 13 are currently functioning. The objective of CAPART is to set up at least one TRC in every State and at the rate of 5 TRCs every year, eventually about 100 TRCs all over the country. These TRCs, unlike other Technological Centres, address the BPL families. The task of co-ordination and strengthening the networking of TRCs of CAPART is organized by the Centre for Technology and Development(CTD), New Delhi, which is a nodal agency of CAPART.

Focus areas of Technology

3. The areas of Technology identified for focussed attention are the following:

- Land & Water Management
- Aquaculture
- Animal husbandry
- Sericulture
- Integrated Pest Management
- Bio-fertilizer
- Tissue Culture
- Non-Conventional energy devices
- Low cost housing/construction Technology
- Handicrafts
- Water harvesting
- Fruit Processing
- Leather Product
- Information Technology

4. The Review Committee examined the role of CAPART in promoting Rural Technology in the overall context of its aims and objectives. Article 3 of Memorandum of Association lists out the objects for which CAPART has been set up. As a promoter and facilitator and as a nodal point for coordination, it may undertake various activities like providing assistance to programmes, training and HRD, undertake research studies, promote fellowships, conduct workshops, strengthen institutions and so on. The Committee looked at the need for any modification in the existing schemes, interventions and priorities of CAPART which would enable it to become more effective. Even in the Rural Technology sector, CAPART has become primarily an agency for providing project assistance to institutions. The attitude of CAPART is more of a “giver” rather than

that of a partner and promoter for voluntary action and rural technology. This perception is probably the factor for the distancing of several reputed NGOs, many of whom look forward to CAPART to provide space for them, to take up the issues and to provide support in critical areas while others do not come forward to promote 'voluntary action' and 'Rural Technology' more meaningfully.

5. Apart from the TRCs, in the Rural Technology sector, CAPART's assistance has been primarily under the ARTS Scheme which funds specific projects on Rural Technology. Though several useful and relevant technologies have been identified, the adoption of these technologies even in the areas where the projects were taken up has only been marginal. The obvious reason for the limited impact is that there has been little attempt at follow up of the process of technology transfer. The Committee felt that where a relevant and acceptable rural technology has been identified, CAPART should facilitate its propagation and adoption on a larger scale.

6. An exercise is perhaps necessary to first shortlist those technologies (whether traditional or recent) which have been found to be viable, acceptable and of practical application in rural areas. This would mean an examination of CAPART's own repertoire of successful technology projects and the various lists prepared from time to time of successful technologies. Other departments like Science & Technology and organizations like NIRD, NISTADS, NRDC, BMPTC, CSIR Labs, have also supported projects for rural technologies and have compiled lists of the successful ones. These could be diligently examined and suitable technologies short-listed. Thereafter, for each such technology (or a group of them where necessary), a technology specific approach and strategy for dissemination and adoption could be worked out. This exercise would require coordination and consultation with various agencies, institutions and resource persons.

7. The direct support from CAPART, thereafter, may also include assistance for pilot production units, identification of rural entrepreneurs who require institutional finance, marketing effort through professional agencies and so on. There are several excellent products from CAPART supported projects – like the bamboo board, water sensitivity meters, rural housing technologies, banana and other fiber boards which have remained relatively unknown. The private sector, marketing strategists, financial institutions with venture capital, research establishments and the State Governments could all have a significant contribution as part of a coordinated effort. The details could be worked out.

8. Traditional technologies have an important place in the rural areas, and CAPART is perhaps the only organisation which can lead and direct efforts for their optimal use. The deliberations of several Congresses of Traditional Sciences & Technology held in the last ten years, and the projects financed by CAPART could provide a starting point for the focus on traditional technologies. In this area, apart from an overview similar to that required for rural technologies in general, there is one other aspect which is of special concern. In many cases, the practitioners of rural technologies are an endangered species, and their knowledge and skill are unlikely to survive them. We may have Vaidis and tribal practitioners of medicine, metal workers and iron smiths, weavers and craft persons, farmers and fishermen, each of whom with the skills relevant for the society, but which may be neither recognised nor valued. The documentation, preservation and utilization of these traditional skills is important, and would require innovative interventions from CAPART including a frame work for support of the individuals, preservation of the necessary resources (plants and herbs for medicine), retrieval of records (for example those on palm leaves), training and support for production etc. The efforts in some fields as for example, of the Department of Indian System of Medicines, Development Commissioner (Handlooms), All India Handicraft Board have often been sporadic. A continuous focus with a perspective could be provided by CAPART in this field.

9. During the course of deliberations of the Committee, a meeting was also held with the representatives of scientific organizations on 17th June, 2002. The Department of Science and Technology have developed 50 to 60 technologies through a process of intensive field studies for identifying the requirements, undertaking research for a suitable technology, subjecting it to a field test and making available the technology for replication if found successful in the field test. However, only 5 to 7 technologies were being implemented through the Voluntary Organisations for a number of reasons like lack of awareness of available technologies, inadequate capability of the Voluntary Organisations for the implementation of most technologies and often the unwillingness of Voluntary Organisations to undertake implementation of new technologies. The Committee was informed that while the Department of Science and Technology had submitted 79 projects for the approval of the CAPART, only 26 projects could be sanctioned by CAPART due to shortage of competence to scrutinize the project in CAPART. Obviously, it is necessary that time taken to sanction the projects should be specified and adhered to and the timely release of installments of funds ensured.

10. There was also need for effective transfer of technologies through collaboration between Technology Developing Agencies and TRCs of CAPART. The Committee was advised that the mandate of CSIR is primarily development of technologies through their laboratories, and that CSIR does not have the extension and outreach mechanism and is, therefore, only bringing out documents on their technology development work which is made available to interested agencies. The Review Committee is of the view that this is an area where CAPART should take a lead by creating more awareness about the available technologies for involvement of Voluntary Organisations in more areas. The CSIR has brought out 365 technologies including those relating to food processing, water, sanitation, stationery items, medicinal plants, etc.

11. The Committee also ascertained the role of HUDCO in the Rural Technology sector. It was explained that their research and development of technologies is limited to the construction sector and their technologies are disseminated through a network of Building Centers located in rural areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

12. The Committee is of the view that the following suggestions/action points if implemented, will go a long way in the development of the Rural Technology sector.

- (i) The clients to be serviced by CAPART being BPL families, identification of sectors/activities relevant to these families is required so that technologies suited to these can be developed/propagated. This has to be an ongoing process.
- (ii) Creation of competence for timely and expeditious appraisal of technology related projects. The Rural Technology Division requires to be strengthened immediately with the induction of one or two suitable and qualified professionals with adequate experience and capability, ideally on contract.
- (iii) There is also a need to create a vibrant system for appraising technology projects through collaboration with DST, CSIR who could assist in the appraisal of the projects and provide sustained help for the implementation of the projects.
- (iv) Adhering to the deadlines for appraisal and sanctions.
- (v) Creation of a live interaction system among a) DST, CAPART and TRCs, and b) CSIR Labs, CAPART and TRCs.

- (vi) Providing training and continuous support to the Voluntary Organisations which are encouraged to take up technology projects either for local level dissemination and adoption or for upgradation of local technology suited to their requirements. This support can be provided by TRCs in collaboration with DST, CSIR, as the case may be.
- (vii) Competence building of the identified Rural Technology Centres and careful addition to their numbers.
- (viii) The practice has generally been to support the TRCs invariably on a project to project basis, with an annual ad hoc networking grant of Rs.2.5 lakhs. There should be a longer term support of 3-5 years for a technology transfer programme.
- (ix) Each TRC is expected to work in the neighbouring rural areas, identify and develop relevant rural technologies, impart training, lead the transfer of technology process and help even in dissemination. Over time, some TRCs have specialized in certain sectors and have also developed excellent relationships in their area of operation. A longer term plan or vision for each TRC could be drawn up in consultation with CAPART and others, and after discussion, suitable and assured support provided by CAPART. This would help ensure stability and confidence in the TRCs and their activities.
- (x) As a goal for the future, eventually it is envisaged that a TRC be set up in every District. While doing so, however, care must be taken to see that only competent and committed Institutions are taken up after ascertaining that they have experience of working on Rural Technologies and have interacted and been involved in the field

work in villages. Unless quality is ensured in the selection of TRCs, the impact and credibility of this effort will be diluted.

- (xi) Identification of Rural Technology-An important publication of CAPART, “Rural Technology” appears to have been discontinued. This was an excellent Quarterly and unique in many ways since it dealt with grass root issues relating to Rural Technology. The TRC bulletin(monthly) which appears possibly to have been a substitute, has also been stopped. These are both reflections of the low priority being assigned to Rural Technology. It is suggested that

- (a) “Rural Technology” may be revived and

- (b) “CAPART News” which is now being brought out every month be suitably modified and renamed, if necessary to include a section on Rural Technology with inputs similar to those in the TRC Bulletin.

- (xiii) Committee suggests the creation of an Advisory Panel of Experts of Science & Technology for advising DG CAPART on the latest technological interventions and innovations in the field of Rural Technology.
