



GTZ International Services

**Rural Development and
Natural Resource Management**

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Challenges and Issues at Stake



The fulfilment of basic needs is a human right. Yet for too many people these needs are not met. Poverty is the biggest threat to the sustainability of our planet; eradicating it is the biggest challenge that we face today. The Millenium Summit in 2000 placed poverty alleviation at the heart of the global development agenda and set clear targets for reducing poverty and its key underlying causes: disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women.

■ GTZ actively supports the endeavour to achieve these goals by assisting people in their efforts to improve their own lives and living conditions.

Regardless of rapid urbanization, poverty in Asia is disproportionately concentrated in

Dimensions of Rural Livelihood Improvement

Ecological Dimension
Managing Natural Resources

Political and Institutional Dimension
Creating Ownership, Responsiveness & Capacity

Sociocultural Dimension
Institutionalizing Public Participation and Interaction with People

Economic Dimension
Promoting Opportunity & Fair Access

rural areas. Poverty alleviation must therefore focus on livelihood issues faced by the rural poor. International research confirms that high rates of broad-based economic growth and social progress are strongly linked to rises in agricultural productivity. Rural and agricultural development thus play a fundamental role in the fight against poverty.

The lack of alternative farming methods among the rural poor, however, often aggravates environmental degradation, which in turn threatens both agricultural production and rural livelihoods. As users and custodians of much of the world's natural resources, the rural population plays a central role in securing environmental sustainability. There is strong need for sustainable agricultural and economic systems to ensure that the rural space continues to support growth, and to provide environmental services, which are important to society at large.

Achieving poverty alleviation and balancing socio-economic development against the need

for natural resource conservation are the major challenges ahead. Widening disparities between rural and urban areas call for pro-poor policies that empower the poor to take responsibility for their own sustained development.

■ For almost three decades, GTZ has supported partners world-wide in converting these challenges into opportunities. GTZ has supported projects ranging from agricultural production to integrated rural development, and from local and regional initiatives to policy advice at the national level.



OUR APPROACH



Promoting Ownership and Capacity

GTZ's management and capacity building approach is based on the following principles:

Client orientation and tailor-made service packages

There are no blueprint solutions for development. Approaches depend on many factors: progress in policy reform, institutional capacities, poverty patterns, the state of the rural economy, natural resource potential, and access to internal and external markets and finance. There are, however, principles, methods, and scenarios that are useful tools for most situations. These are what GTZ draws on when working with its clients to sketch out a workable scenario and a specific mix of interventions for achieving it. With its client-oriented service packages, quality management, and vast experience all over Asia, GTZ provides professional expertise in responding to different conditions and needs.

Application of lessons learned and adaptive management

Continuous learning, solid documentation, and adaptive management approaches ensure that lessons learned are passed on. GTZ in-house knowledge management structures are designed both to foster personal interaction among professionals and to put networks of state-of-the-art information and international best practices at their fingertips.

Local ownership and broad-based participation

Projects aiming to support social change need broad-based participation. GTZ encourages and supports genuine participation at all levels: Local communities, civil society, and government authorities. GTZ facilitates dialogue and provides reasonable participatory tools to enhance and sustain the commitment of stakeholders towards goals, concepts, and actions, and to reinforce - not replace - existing structures, institutions, and processes.

Capacity building and responsive and responsible governance

To focus strategically on comprehensive capacity building at individual, institutional, and system levels is all-important. The decentralization of government functions and dynamic private sector initiatives largely depend on effective local governance. To improve the ability of stakeholders in expressing their needs, reaching consensus on goals, assuming responsibility, and acting transparently is central to GTZ's work.

Dynamic networking and coordination at all levels

Coordination of the diverse interventions within a country or a region increases efficiency and effectiveness. GTZ is committed to maximizing synergies within the existing frameworks of national policies, programs, markets, and service systems - and to avoid redundancies.

GTZ's in-house sectoral knowledge, institutionalized via regional Sector Networks on Rural Development and Natural Resource Management, constitutes forums for the exchange of state-of-the-art knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned.

OUR SERVICES

Broad Expertise with a Practical Focus

While the question of 'how' to approach sustainable development is essential, 'what' to promote is equally important. GTZ is familiar with both and combines knowledge of processes, organizational development, and capacity building with technical and economic competence in all areas of rural development: Agriculture, Integrated Rural Development, and Natural Resource Management.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture (including Livestock and Fishery subsectors): Single-sector project designs can provide tangible short-term results if specific sectoral constraints are targeted or where policy and institutional environments are not yet conducive to integrated approaches. GTZ's particular strengths in the field include:

- Agricultural & Livestock Production and Diversification
- Agricultural Support Services Development
- Agri-Business and Rural Marketing Support
- Agriculture and Rural Development Policy Advice and Sector Reforms
- Irrigation Management
- Water-User Association Development
- Rural Financial System Development.

INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Integrated Rural Development: To alleviate poverty sustainably in the long run, appropriately designed integrated rural development programs have proven to be the most effective interventions. GTZ offers a comprehensive yet feasible approach for integrated rural development supporting rural livelihoods on the micro level, while building management and technical capacities at community and higher levels. Integrated approaches can be applied as Multisectoral Rural Development projects in any rural area or in specific, naturally defined regions such as Watershed Management or Integrated Coastal Zone and Aquatic Resources Management projects.

GTZ's integrated rural development concept offers clients a wide range of strategy components from which a specific set of multisectoral interventions can be selected in order to avoid overload. They provide guidance on how to deal with typical problems within given economic, institutional, sociocultural, and environmental con-

ditions: The four dimensions of rural livelihoods. Broad diagnostic and participatory analyses and planning prioritize specific fields of work. GTZ provides professional assistance for the whole range of possible interventions such as:

- Supporting on- and off-farm income generation (including market information and access systems, as well as micro-finance services);
- Strengthening self-help capacities and community organizations and promoting needs-oriented and pluralistic service delivery systems (government, private sector, and NGOs);
- Building social capital through improved health care and human resource development; and
- Building community-based natural resource management capacity.

Natural Resource Management: The rising demand for food, shelter, and income by growing rural and urban populations increases pressure on already distressed natural resources - resources on which rural livelihoods depend. Securing livelihoods on a sustainable basis depends on finding a balance between the acute everyday needs of the population and resource conservation. To this end, GTZ offers its expertise in managing terrestrial and aquatic resources and in developing an enabling environment by:

- Strengthening community-based natural resource management in forests, watersheds, coastal, and other naturally defined zones;
- Developing and implementing co-management concepts and innovative financing mechanisms for the management of protected areas, e.g. forest and biosphere reserves and buffer zones;
- Building capacity on national and local levels for environmental policy reforms and the implementation of international environmental regimes;
- Professional training and knowledge dissemination in sustainable natural resource management and biodiversity conservation.

Governance issues are central to sustainable natural resource management. Highly diverse interests vying for control over scarce resources often result in limiting access of the poor to land and other critical resources. GTZ's services consequently include professional advice and guidance on developing sound regulations for user rights and benefit sharing, as well as capacity building for conflict management, stakeholder dialogue, and participatory monitoring.

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Dimensions of Rural Livelihood Improvement

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Application of lessons learned and adaptive management

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Dynamic networking and coordination at all levels

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GTZ offers decades of operational experience worldwide, working with developing country partners, bilateral donors, and international organizations. The GTZ network of offices in 67 countries, with 13 in Asia, guarantees effective cross-fertilization of knowledge and skills, enabling effective on-site coordination, professional backstopping, and monitoring of everyday project management. In summary, GTZ HQ together with its offices and networks provides:

Highly qualified expert staff with international experience, intercultural sensitivity, flexibility, and high communication skills
→ for professional expertise and optimal collaboration with partners.

Professional technical and financial project planning, management, and backstopping, including procurement and installation support
→ for sound project design and smooth, hitch-free operations.

A blend of advisory services and capacity-building
→ for tangible, sustainable, and cost-effective results.

Participatory multi-stakeholder approaches and target group-driven services
→ for broad-based ownership and sustainability.

Monitoring and evaluation concepts and tools
→ for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.



IMPACTS

Better Opportunities to Build a Better Life

Since the early 1970s, GTZ has worked with its partners in 19 countries throughout South, Southeast, and East Asia to combat poverty and promote economic growth through rural development. The following examples demonstrate the impacts generated through the cutting-edge practices and approaches applied by GTZ and its partners:

Cambodia: By establishing a demand-oriented, accountable service system with government, NGOs, and private sector service providers, GTZ-supported activities led to a 25% reduction of poor households in two provinces. Within six years, three NGOs became sustainable micro-finance institutions and provided some 75,000 loans (USD 15 million) - with a repayment rate of 96%. The clients, 90% women, successfully increased family income. About 40,000 small farmers almost doubled their rice yields with new seed varieties and improved cultivation techniques. In addition, newly licensed private veterinary service providers were making their living from this new profession, helping to stabilize and increase incomes from animal production province-wide.

India: In India, the participatory and decentralized watershed management concept championed by GTZ has been institutionalized in new national government guidelines. Moreover, improvements in cooperation and coordination among government agencies and local NGOs, new evaluation systems, and strengthened grass-root level organizations enhanced the impact of government investments (USD 25 million+ annually). Whereas the main purpose of the project was to develop models and best practices, and incorporate them into standard government strategies and programs, GTZ directly contributed to livelihood improvement for approximately 62,000 rural residents on a natural resource base of more than 21,000 hectares.

Nepal: In Nepal, since 1996, GTZ helped create new employment opportunities for about 50,000 food deficient households through participatory Food-for-Work and Cash-for-Work programs. This included labor-intensive and environmentally-friendly rural infrastructure schemes, with 210 km of highland feeder roads and 245 km of lowland roads, providing access to markets and services for about 100,000 families. Hundreds of village development committees and self-help groups were formed, with about 20,000 families participating in productive micro-projects, including access to credit and community land.





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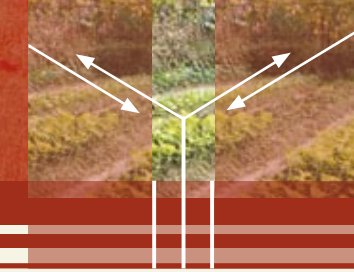
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