

## **KaR Project Follow-up Activities**

### **1. The KaR Project**

The DFID funded Knowledge and Research (KaR) Project entitled ‘Sustainable Use of Groundwater Resources in the Semi-arid Ribbon Valleys of Northeast Brazil’ started in November 2003 and is due for completion at the end of 2005. The study region for the Project comprises five rural communities in the Pesqueira and Jatauba Municipalities in the state of Pernambuco. The Project had four main aims:

1. Develop and disseminate clearly understandable and culturally appropriate guidelines for sustainable management land and water resources, primarily targeted at rural communities.
2. Facilitate and increase understanding amongst the rural population of the potential benefits that arise from sustainable and technically appropriate groundwater resource management, and to create awareness of the implications of overuse of the resource, in the context of seasonal and long-term variability in hydrological and climatic conditions.
3. Empower community representatives (farmers, farmer representatives and other local groundwater users) in the active monitoring and collective management of the groundwater resource.
4. To empower the younger members of the communities through active participation in environmental education and monitoring.

A final Project seminar was held on 17 November and was attended by representatives from the rural communities, NGO’s and representatives from Recife based organisations. During the seminar, the success of the project was voiced by many of the community representatives. The establishment of a Project Advisory Group, comprising representatives from all participating communities, as well as the organisation of teachers in the environmental education initiative have contributed to active cross-community collaboration and participation. The Project has valued opinion of the rural communities to the extent that Project activities have changed direction in response to community wishes. This has had a powerful impact on the way the Project has been perceived by the rural communities and on their commitment to continue with the activities started during the Project.

The duration of the KaR Project has been short and actual implementation of key Project activities, including the land and water focussed environmental education programme, and the capacity building amongst the rural communities, has been during the past year. Although tremendous progress has been made, there is clearly a need to keep the momentum of the initiatives going and to disseminate and implement the Project findings to other communities. The following section describes in outline the proposed follow-up activities.

### **2. Proposed Follow-up Activities**

Immediate and longer-term follow up activities have been identified. These relate to environmental education, to community capacity building in land and water resources management, and to institutional strengthening. The immediate follow-up activities, which are targeted to start in early 2006 are to a large extent inter-related and could be combined into a single follow-up project. These include:

- a) Extending and strengthening the land and water focussed environmental education programme. This requires external support from locally based technical and educational specialists. It would involve local teachers and teaching co-ordinators as well as local farmers as main drivers for extension and strengthening of the initiative within the local communities involved with the KaR Project. The farmers will act as supply teachers in relation to the practical aspects of the programme. The aim is to introduce the programme to a wider area, while the strengthening relates in particular to the monitoring activities included in the programme to ensure that monitoring results can contribute to better understanding of available water resources.
- b) Additional capacity building within the five rural communities is required to achieve the long-term aim of self-reliance and community control of management of land and water resources. The

external support would come from local technical experts involved with the KaR Project, while local community members would play a key role in the process. Support would also be available from continued academic research undertaken by the Brazilian universities, which will run in parallel with the proposed activities.

- c) Community organisation varies significantly in the five communities. The importance of organisation is in the adoption of and belief in the guidelines for sustainable resource management developed during the KaR Project, and also in the acquisition of financial support, which often depends on the existence of strong and formal community organisation. Again these activities would require local expertise and community support.

The longer term follow-up activities would relate to the dissemination of the environmental programme and the capacity building initiative to communities in areas beyond those included in the KaR Project. These activities would be on a larger scale and involve the lessons learned from the initiatives implemented during the KaR Project and the local scale activities listed above.

### **3. Project Implementation**

The success of the follow-up activities will, in our opinion, depend on the following:

- Adoption of an inclusive and participative approach similar to the one adopted for the KaR Project.
- Use of locally based experts with experience of the type of work involved with the activities and with knowledge of the local communities.
- Inclusion of community members (teachers, health agents, farmers) in the project activities.
- Continuation of the activities of the KaR Project Advisory Group, which met on a monthly basis and included representatives from the five rural communities involved with the KaR Project.
- Strengthening of the cross-community communication and knowledge sharing in relation to the project activities.
- Strong and transparent project management in respect of project administration, financial control and technical issues (technical in the broader sense of project activities)..
- Establishment of a culture of reporting, knowledge management and pro-active dissemination of project findings.
- Clearly established targets and milestones.
- Adequate monitoring and evaluation of project progress and outputs.
- A clearly defined log frame setting out the goal and purpose of the project, the project outputs and related activities.

It is proposed that the project is led by the two NGO's based in Belo Jardim, INFOC and Consu-Bitury. The activities of INFOC focus on sustainable development, water, gender and environment, while Consu-Bitury focuses on institutional development. Faculties within UFRPE involved with extension services would be part of the Core Team. Local community representatives and teachers would also form part of the Core Team. Collaborating teams would comprise representatives from the municipalities, SECTMA, CPRH and the technical faculties within UFRPE and UFPE. A proposed team structure is shown in the attached figure. The project would closely liaise with municipalities (in regards to the environmental education) and with the federal and rural universities of Pernambuco (in relation to the capacity building for sustainable resources management). It is further proposed that the locally based experts that worked for the KaR Project, Maria da Paz and Iran Neves Ordônio, are included in the project. Their knowledge of the KaR Project activities and their familiarity and trust with the local communities would be important assets.

It is believed that successful implementation of the project would take about three years and, in relation to the environmental education programme, the project should ideally start in early 2006. A staged approach could be adopted for the project, with initial focus on the five rural communities involved with the KaR Project, and expansion of the environmental education programme to rural schools within the Pesqueira and Jatauba Municipalities. Both municipalities have already expressed a keen interest in expanding the programme. Expansion is also anticipated for the Xukurú indigenous community.

### **Statements arising from the Project Seminar, held in Pesqueira on 17 November 2005**

I identified, in the discourse of women and men involved in the KaR/DFID Project, a satisfaction not only because they were part of the Project, but also because they felt part of a successful initiative. Among other important aspects present in the various speeches delivered, it was highlighted the desire for continuation of the project with the same focus and following the same lines of action. I also noticed the great importance in regards to its goals and focus on education. There was a great exchange of knowledge among different parties. The project also contributed to introduce several changes on the livelihoods of the local population.

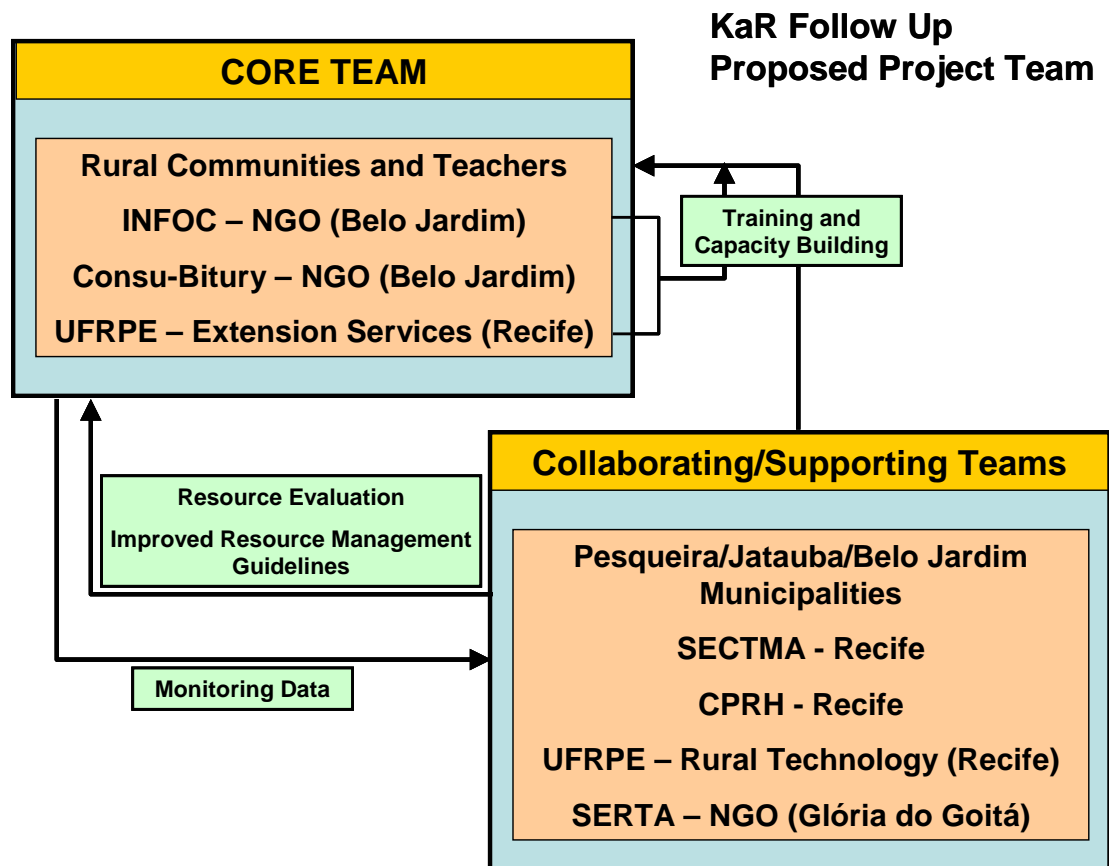
It is my understanding that the main elements which contributed to the success of the project were the legitimacy of the project from the effective participation of the involved parties, especially community members who gave their opinion about all aspects, including in decision-making. Once the population is involved to the extent they were, education plays a very important role as a permanent tool to multiply actions which, in this context, regard the important resource which is water.

*Prof. Ricardo Ferreira, Diretor do INFOC*

Due to the reliance on participative methodology, which is applied on this Project, I observed that the communities absorbed well all of the teaching and training done along the implementation of the Project. I also noticed that this was the most successful project among the ones in which I have participated and this is due to the high involvement of the communities in all of the actions of the Project. As a result of their participation, community members showed the desire to change, to exchange knowledge and to learn about practices that can be applied at their communities on a daily basis.

I believe that an important point about this work was that there was no paternalistic type of relationship involved and, on the contrary, there was a great intention to cause positive changes in the behaviour of the local population. It is more important to share knowledge about how to fish than to give the fish.

*Prof. Ronaldo Freire, UFRPE*



Project: R8333  
Sustainable Use of Groundwater in the Semi-arid Ribbon Valleys of Northeast Brazil  
Final Technical Report – Supporting Documents

Mott MacDonald  
DFID