The University of Reading Agricultural Extension and Rural Development

Department **Conceptualising Conflict in Natural Resource Development**

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*" Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? ...* you *covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures"*

New Revised Standard Version Bible, 1989; James 4:1-3

Executive Summary Purpose

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the MA Social Rural

Development 2000. In answer to the title. four main questions run through the work as follows:

- What is understood by conflict?

- Why is conflict a concern at this time?

- How can conflict be conceptualised in the natural resources development context?

The work aims in particular to expose the partial rature of conflict through an examination of power and
culture in relation to perceptions of and responses to conflict. It asserts that development interventions often
cause conflict. Yet pessimistic associations are challenged because conflict is inevitable while development
remains concerned about evolving sustainable livelihoods. Development agencies are recommended to
develop better ways of recognising conflict and to allocate time and resources to understand the underlying
reasons for the conflicts they see, especially at the front-end of interventions.

*Content*

A summary of each section follows: <u>Introduction</u>

This section introduces the main themes of the dissertation. It shows in brief how conflict is viewed in this work
and why the use of the word `conflict' can be confusing.

<u>Section One</u>

This section traces four literary themes to examine why conflict is currently an emerging concern among

rural development, particularly in reference to natural resource contexts. It concludes that different

approaches to development will determine different approaches to defining conflict and reacting to

conflict events.

<u>Section Two</u>

This section develops the conceptual reasoning about how conflict can be defined as occurring

at in terms of competing interests over assets.

*Methodology*


The methodology comprised of a structured reflection of material from four sources as described below:

1.  A review of published literature
2.  Previous work experience especially on the Northwest Fisheries Extension Project in Bangladesh
3.  A field study conducted in Sri Lanka
4.  Personal correspondence and unpublished papers


*Word-Count*


This dissertation comprises 13,222 words.

# Contents

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## *List* of *Acronyms*

| | |
|---|---|
| NR | Natural Resources |
| CBNRM | Community Based Natural Resource Management |
| DFID | Department for International Development |
| CARE | The name of an international NGO |
| FO | Farmer Organisation |

**Introduction**

Conflict is a notion and a reality as ancient as the origins of human history. On a micro-scale, Cain slew his brother Abel in the first biblical story about a family, and globally, the boundaries of our nations have been determined by battles. More specifically, `conflict' is recently emerging as a priority issue among writers and practitioners of development. Peace building is a distinct development objective in many wars affected areas, and this concept is entering wider development discourses. In the context of humanitarian aid, among the bereaved, and wounded survivors of bloody battles, peace is the hope for "cessation of war; freedom from disturbance", and "stillness; silence" (Chambers Dictionary, 1998). Here, conflict is regarded as the antithesis of peace; an absolute negative requiring the antidote of peace building.

Although responses to conflict in the NR development arena may bear resemblance to the techniques employed by 'peace-builders', the situations and the perspectives towards conflict, are generally less extreme. In the context of this study, conflict is not discussed in reference to war, but within the arena of mainstream natural resources (NR) development, where the aim is sustainable livelihoods. It is not beneficial to present either conflict or peace as an absolute end objectives within NR development. For this reason the term 'conflict resolution' which implies an ultimate solution to conflict is rejected in the discourse in favour of `conflict management' (Warner, Buckles). Sustainability is a dynamic which does requires amongst other conditions, social attitudes and structures which can continue to deal with visible conflicts and manage unexpected challenges. Conflicts can be a means of expressing problems. Seeking the underlying causes at an early stage may inform the development process, leading to deeper understandings in relationships, and more sustainable technical solutions. There are normally several ways to reach the same aims and conflict management can help secure options that are widely agreeable.

Skills to recognise the dangers of conflict and maximise the opportunities it presents need to be developed quickly Beyond the battlefields and official 'trouble-zones', implementers and managers of NR interventions often find themselves on the `front-line' of social conflict. They are faced with difficult decisions about how to proceed when diametrically opposed interests are recognised such as that between an opportunity to improve the productivity of an aquatic resource and the risk of alienating marginal fishermen from the waters. Political disputes can disrupt planned activities. Emotional and mental tension are unpleasant symptoms known both to direct disputants and by those in positions of responsibility for governing, advising or mediating in the

situation. In the text of post-intervention evaluation reports, "conflict" has been sited as a factor that limited the potential for positive impacts, as a barrier to sustainability, and even as a negative outcome in itself, resulting from development.

This ambitious thesis is a very personal reflection about why conflict is an issue when planning, implementing and reviewing poverty elimination strategies. It presents some original insights in to how conflict can be defined, and managed thus challenging some of the fears that surround negative perceptions of conflict. The reader will find several perspectives and reflections on conflicts that are placed like tiles in a mosaic; individually significant and becoming meaningful in the context of the whole document.

Special emphasis is given to rural aquaculture, and to case studies that focus on the development interventions at the community level interface. Many of the arguments have universal appeal because conflict is experienced within and between individuals as well as groups the person in the field, through to levels of strategic policy formation.

In summary, language associated with the word `conflict' is typically negative. It is important then, to elaborate that conflict is also an expression of change, and a force that can lead to creativity and transformation. This dissertation conceptualises conflict as a healthy function, as well as a dysfunction of the development process; it is a dynamic means of communicating difference that can be used to creative as well as destructive ends. Conflict is an inevitable part of change and will occur wherever there is development. It is the collision of different ideas or directions. It is partial, multidimensional, and dynamic. Conflict is about both to the visible expressions of disputes and the interaction causing the dispute. Conflicts are a means of establishing boundaries and discovering a path forward when parties with different ideas, feelings or practices coincide. Development has a role in recognising conflicts for what they are and responding appropriately each unique situation, and according to their interpretation of `right' needs.

**Methodology & Background**

This dissertation comprises a structured reflection of material from four sources:

1. A review of published literature
2. Previous work experience especially on the Northwest Fisheries Extension Project in Bangladesh
3. A field study conducted in Sri Lanka
4. Personal correspondence and unpublished papers

The field study was an opportunity by the Institute of Aquaculture in Stirling to spend almost four weeks during May and June in three small cascade settlements (Pahala-Diulwewa, Andarawewa, Dandullawewe) in the Northwest Province of Sri Lanka. Participatory tools were used to investigate "Social management of watershed resources: co-operation and competition in the Purana Complex". This dissertation does not attempt to present the findings of that study in their entirety, but reflects on relevant findings and experiences in order to bring life to the central themes.

## *Purana Complex*

The Purana complex is a traditional sihhala settlement. The word 'purana' is translated to mean `from the beginning' and is often associated with the term `paraveni', meaning `ancestral' (Leach, E 1971:11) (p] 1). Purana complexes exist in contrast to settlement villages around perennial water tanks, which were planned and initiated by the government. Settlement villages are less than 50 years old and were initiated with land being distributed among settling families on an equal basis. Occasionally whole village populations were transported to new locations, however in the majority of cases, various people were brought together at the point of settlement.

The purana arrangements did not experience the temporary 'levelling' of land ownership through the government settlement scheme and the opportunity to begin again in a "unique experiment" establishing new power, economic and cultural relationships between villagers (Khodhuwaku). This does not mean that traditional customs, practices or beliefs have evolved uniformly in response to internal and external influences, 'statistical facts' of particular cases always "possess a structural pattern which is independent of any ideal paradigm" (Leach, E 1971:9). Typically settlements have evolved up the cascade to more seasonal tanks to accommodate second and third generation children. People in the upper cascade retain close links with family

in the base tank, however in the Andarawewa cascade lateral relations between the people living around the two upper tanks was strained. (Map 1 & Map 2)

## *Inland Fisheries and Watersheds*

Inland fisheries has a speckled history in Sri Lanka, with levels falling from almost 40,000 tons in 1989 to around 18,000 in 1996. This was partly due to lack of government support and, "... the over-reliance placed on newly set up village co-operative societies most of which were not able to channel benefits such as subsidies to the fishermen. This put fishermen who opted not to join to join a co-operative society at a great disadvantage" (Femando, C. 1998:128) The project however determined "simple techniques used have largely been developed by farmers and impressive levels of indigenous knowledge have evolved" (memorandum of understanding, Dec 1999:10)

Watersheds present a diverse and complex environment in natural, social and political terms. A typical catchment area covers pasture, irrigated land, water bodies, and homesteads. Water flows rapidly, and so interventions in one location can have rapid and dramatic effects both upland and downstream. In The Case Of Sri-Lanka, is one where the waterbodies are classed as a common resource, although the people who own land directly below the tank undertake the legitimate governance of the resource. The water has multiple uses; agricultural irrigation, watering of livestock, bathing, fishing. There may also be benefits to groundwater and soil moisture through seepage and percolation from irrigated areas ( Bakker, M. et al 1999).

Cultivation of paddy is the main social and administrative concern. In 1978 the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) established the Agricultural Development Authority (ADA) to "revitalise and reconstruct the rural sector economy" (Ratnayake, D. 1998) in the face of "rising unemployment" and "economic stagnation". In the dry zone, attention was turned to "rehabilitating ... small reservoir communities" in order to "increase food production" and develop communities around the ancient tanks (Minister of Agricultural Development and Research, June, 1993 in F.F.H.C. articles). After a series of experiments the Government formally transferred responsibility for the operation and maintenance of minor irrigation schemes, mainly in the dry zone, to farmer organisations (FOs) which become a legal entity once registered with the department of Agrarian Services (Samad, M. 1999).

MAPS

*Field Study Sites: Andarawewa and Pahala Diulwewa Cascades*

By house hold,
69% of poor live in
around the upper tanks
0% of rich live around
the upper tanks
29% middle live
around upper tanks
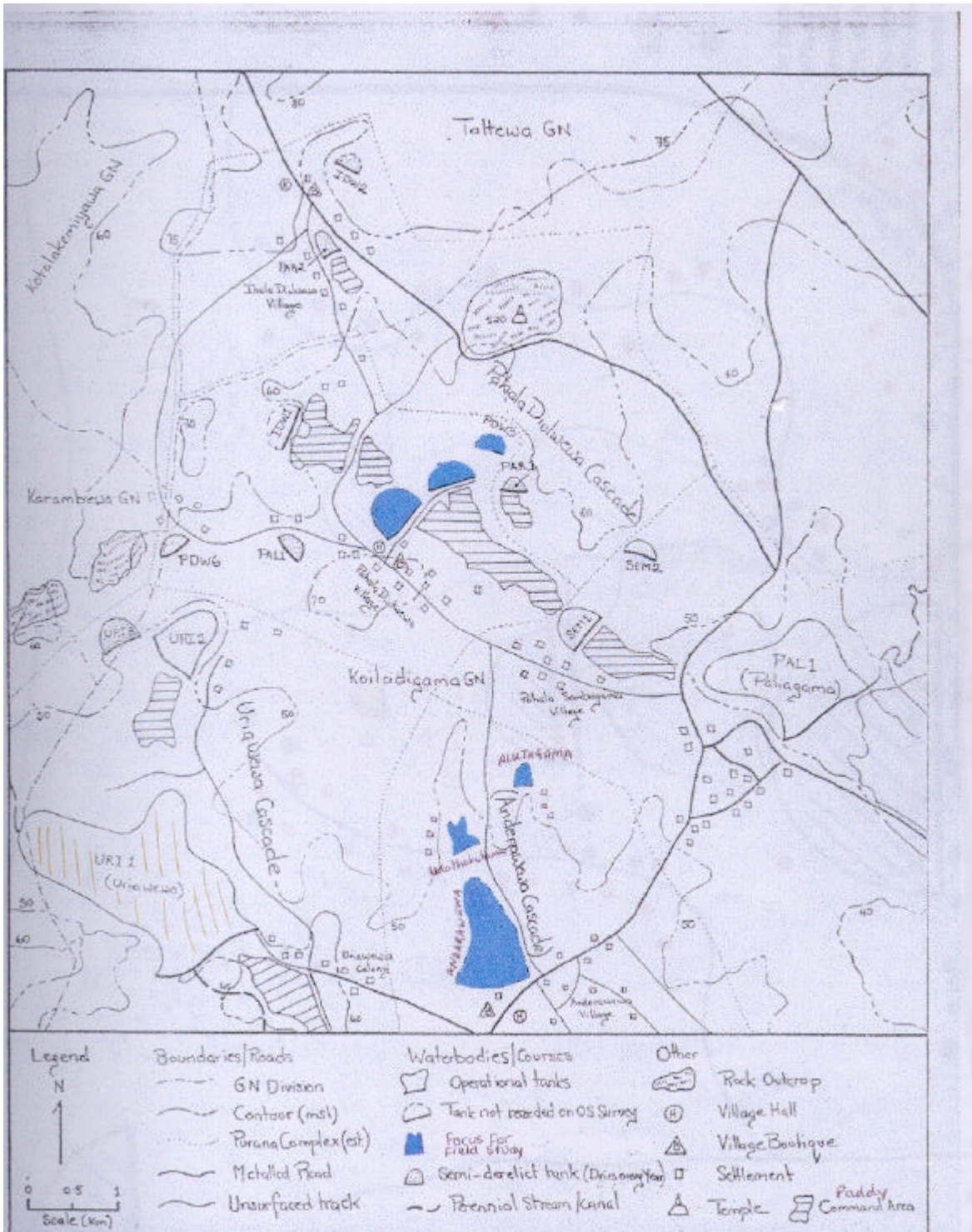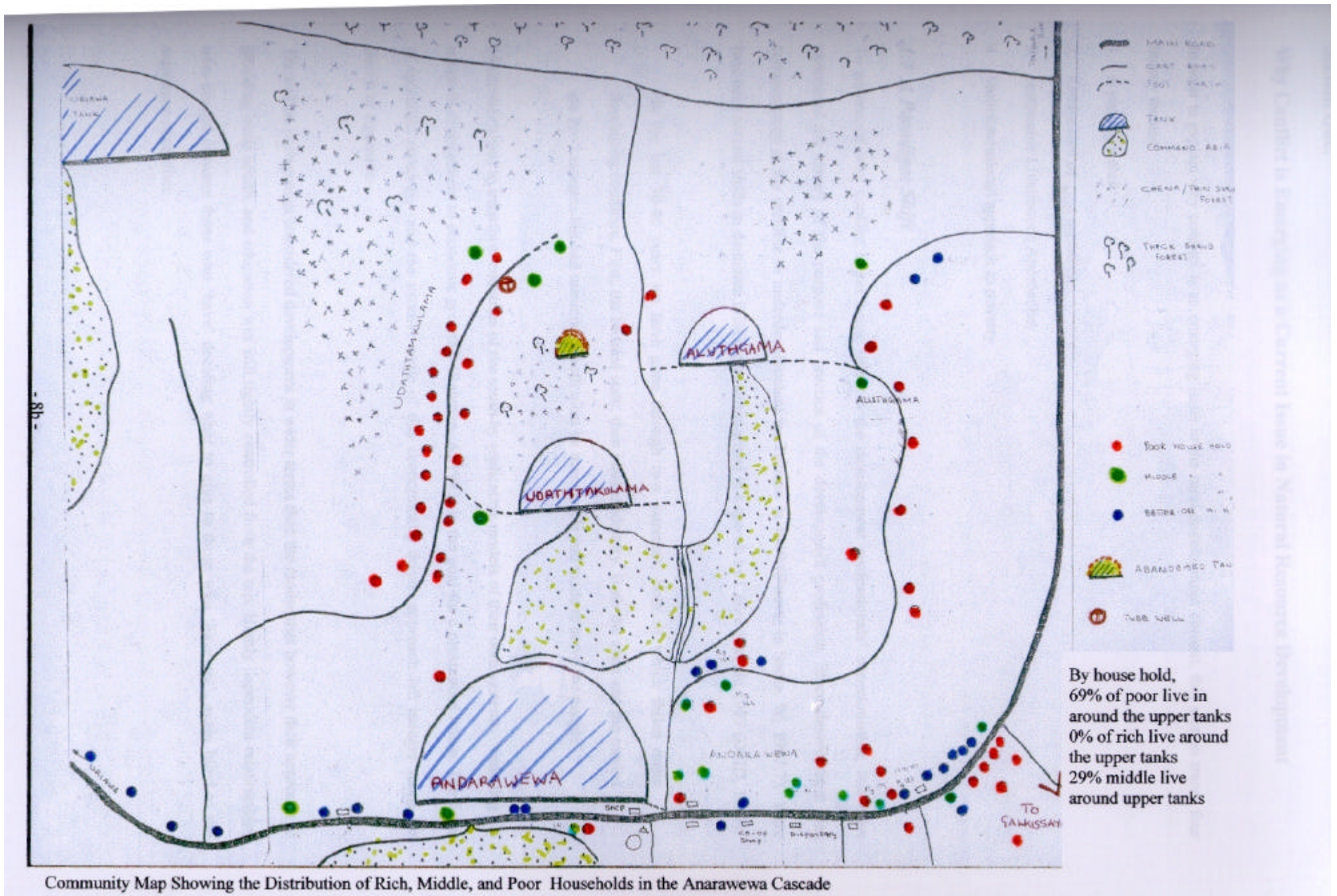
Community Map Showing the Distribution of Rich, Middle, and Poor Households in the Anarawewa Cascade

**Section One:**


**Why Conflict is Emerging as a Current Issue in Natural Resource Development**


In order to explain why conflict is an emerging issue in the rural development context, this section traces four literary themes:

1. A paradigm shift
2. Recognition of past mistakes
3. Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches
4. Multidimensional approach to poverty

## *1.1 A Paradigm Shift*

To understand why conflict is yet being lifted in the development professionals' consciousness, one must understand the history of the purpose and practice of the development profession. Since development was communicated as the antidote to underdevelopment by Truman in 1949 (Esteva, in Sachs, W, 1997:7), there have been several shifts in dominant thinking as summarised in a speech by Claire Short in 1997 (DFID, 1999):


> "In the last 30-40 years we have gone through two extremes, both of which failed many
> developing countries. First, the bloated state, then market idolatry. Both the state and the market
> are good servants but bad masters ... both must be transparent and made to serve the people"


Modernists hoped to transform countries of the south by replicating models of their own systems, `reducing the notion of development to economic growth' (Rahman, A. 1993) in the goal for a prosperous future. The force of optimistic certainty, and the massive scale of this economically driven approach left meagre scope for dissent or argument.


The welfare protagonists considered development in wider terms than the modernists however their approach to providing basic health, and education was still tightly controlled from the top. Highly dependent relationships were created between those who 'have' deciding what to give to those who 'have-not', again blind to the expression of conflict.

Radical writers have criticised development as a "hoax" (Norberg-Hodge, 1991:141-156) powered by the capitalist powers in the North to seduce the peripheral South with an inappropriate materialist ideology . Increased numbers of authors from the south are publishing in developed countries, some dooming "the unburied corpse of development... to extinction" (Esteva, in Sachs, W, 1997:6). Other practitioners acknowledge that previous efforts did not succeed as planned and enthuse about new approaches. Academics that embrace more complex definitions of poverty speak of a transition or shift in dominant thinking. (Jazairy, 1 et al, 1992:5-25, Chambers, R. 1993:2, 1997:188-209).

The transition is from a single, economically driven approach to one that embraces diverse disciplines from the social sciences. New theories such as Heisenburg's uncertainty principle, fuzzy logic and the relationship between order and chaos have popularised "public scepticism about science and scientists" (Lean, G. 1999) and thus confidence to challenge singular explanations from the `experts' has increased. Bottom-up or "putting the last first" reversals (Chambers, R. 1983:168) popularising concepts of increased levels of participation (Pretty, J. et al. 1995:60-62) by the poor themselves. Mainstream critics of the idea, claim involving "the rural populations in decision-making, implementation, benefits and the evaluation of development action, ... quite unrealistic [considering the] structural and bureaucratic modifications" required (Oakley, P. 1991:21). More people at more levels are being invited to contribute to research and decision making giving scope for more provocative voices. The transition itself is causing conflict as new people, ideas, and practices jar with established structures and increase uncertainty. New approaches and new questions reveal conflicts that had previously existed but remained unrecognised. The physical limits to the sustainability of land and water use, continue to be tested by a growing population and increasing consumerism. The development process itself "can skew access to natural resources, accentuate existing levels of competition, and concentrate degradation within small areas", and "awaken ...structural inequalities" (Warner, M. 1998), indicating to development professionals that the changes resulting from their work are often outside the boundaries of their control.

## 1.2 Past Mistakes

The truth that development approaches of the past have not achieved the elimination of poverty and environmental degradation have led to searching impact assessments and project reviews to determine ˙successful' and `unsuccessful' approaches, sometimes with shocking findings. For example, the DFID funded FAP 17 study in the early 1990s (NARSIS, CD Rom.1997), demonstrated unforeseen effects of the Flood Action Plan in Bangladesh. Flood-control and drainage devices that irrigated high yielding variety rice - 10-

damaged the overall floodplain fisheries; Reduced catch, reduced species diversity and reduced fish habitat outweighed the positive fishing effort inside drainage canals (FMS, 1997:12).

Such studies have raised concerns and awareness that the impacts of projects go far beyond planned environmental, social, and economic boundaries. In particular, technically biased, single-sector projects have been criticised, and greater emphasis is now placed on cross-sector co-operation such as at the interface between agricultural and aquacultural interests. Broader human and social analysis of complex realities and "multi-level partnership[s]" are also encouraged through the sustainable livelihoods frameworks adopted by DFID, Oxfam, UNDP and CARE (Carney, D. et al Nov 1999).

## *1.3 New Sustainable Livelihoods*

Sustainable Livelihoods (SL) is a systematic framework which tries to combine traditional and radical perspectives into "a set of principles, backed up with a set of tools" (Ashley, C. & Carney, D. 1999:9) around which rural development initiatives can be planned and operational sed. It has a holistic focus which helps to "highlight ... conflicting socio-economic interests" (Ashley, C. & Carney, D. 1999:21-22). Conflicts are revealed because the framework focuses attention on critical points of difference and interaction. For example, the SL framework focuses on poor people's vulnerability to trends and shocks. This is a dynamic interface between people, and the wider environment in which they live. It is an interface where conflicts can occur. "One can be poor; however, one is not simply 'vulnerable' but vulnerable to something" (Boudreau, T. 1998) These things may be trends in population growth, land availability, commodity costs and availability, market demands, and governance. In these terms conflicts can occur *defensively* as people react and adapt to external *threats*. The framework also focuses on assets (human, social, financial, natural, and physical) which can be employed in the pursuit of diverse goals. In this respect, conflicts can occur opportunistically as people seek to increase their assets, or use their assets in different ways in pursuit of their goals.

SL approaches are still evolving and development practitioners are now being faced with how to respond to emerging challenges. For example, in January 1999, Sewa Lanka Foundation (an NGO in Sri-Lanka) conducted a participatory appraisal with Mahagalwewa community, and 'uncovered' the nature of relationships in the fisheries co-operative society (FCS). In brief the FCS comprised both fishing and non-fishing members. The latter, local farmers from the village (literate, land-owning and relatively wealthy) poorly understood the fishing members needs and had no real interest in fishing. They lived in a separate part of the village from the fishers

yet by dominating the FCS had become the de facto representatives of the interests of the fishermen (illiterate, landless and poor) and wanted to influence any development initiated in the area. The Sewa Lanka team were concerned about working with an community organisation which seemed divided into two parties, and considered the risk of their proposed work meeting the `wrong' party's needs. The methods of pre-project analysis they had previously used may not have generated such awareness of the social-political context at the proposal stage. Discussions about how to proceed created tension and confusion in the NGO.

Such experiences are not unusual. A recent review of SL to date revealed that SL may not bring about changes without the help of "conflict resolution, capacity-building and negotiation" (Ashley, C. & Carney, D. 1999:21-22). Indeed, these were precisely the skills Sewa Lanka want to develop.

## 1.4 Multidimensional approach to poverty

Greater research into the multidimensional nature of poverty, and holistic approaches towards securing sustainable livelihoods has presented donors with new challenges, and has revealed how development does not always benefit the poor, even if they can be identified. The bilateral Northwest Fisheries Extension Project (NFEP) in Bangladesh used a poverty ranking system to identify the poorest farmers within communities. It worked by asking a few randomly selected farmers to compare (using their own judgement) which of two given pond-owners `live more comfortably'. The process was repeated for every pond-owner in the community. Questions about preselected criteria such as seasonal food shortages and cash surpluses helped to weight each pond-owner into one of three wealth categories: rich, medium or poor.

The shortfall of this system was that the farmer judgements did not permit comparisons between villages, and farmer perspectives were only considered once a local government officer had selected their village. Community members undertook a participatory process that generated detailed poverty mapping of the area by household, according to new socio-economic ranks they defined themselves. The result was three different levels of poor (Socially Poor, Helpless Poor, and Bottom poor) thus enabling the "poorest of the poor" to be identified (See Appendix one).

Very few NFEP activities are not suitable for the helpless poor and the bottom poor because aquaculture demands access to natural capital resources such as ownership of a pond or secure access to a waterbody.

"These [cages and happa trials] have some potential if water rights to open water bodies can be secured for the poorer households. Unfortunately, a number of these open water bodies are being controlled by the rich and powerful, restricting access to the very poor, i.e., those who need access to these resources the most. Until use rights can be secured for the poor, cages and happa trials are not likely to have much impact on the poor." (Frankenberger, T. 2000:iv)

Another constraint is the staff capacity of the Ministry of Fisheries. The bottom poor and helpless poor are more likely to show up in larger numbers in physically and environmentally disadvantaged areas, and characteristically lack social capital through connections to patron-client networks which them more difficult for government staff to reach.

Sometimes justification of interventions was verbalised in terms of the real benefits to middle level households and the socially poor; who are still relatively poor in global terms. It is important however to investigate if rather than failing to help the bottom poor with their problems, these programmes are not actually damaging their very survival strategies. DFID advises deep and extensive analysis.

"The fact that marginalized groups are highlighted does not mean they are necessarily the target beneficiaries. However it is important to understand who they are and how their livelihoods are constructed in order to assess how they will be affected by development activity. It is also important to understand if other groups will become marginalized as a result of planned activities." (DFID 2000: Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance sheets: Section 4. l)

Such a reality was highlighted when one member of the NFEP review team (Tim Frankenberger) was interviewing a man classed as helpless or bottom level poor. During their discussion they were interrupted by a public announcement broadcast from a rickshaw by loudspeaker. It told that all fishing of the local lake was henceforth prohibited. This was as a result of a development intervention by an NGO, which had stocked the lake for (upper level) poor beneficiaries to manage in a community-based way. The man being interviewed was distraught; this initiative removed their last source of fish protein for his family (personal correspondence with review team). Conflicts have diverse origins in the 'external' environment including institutional as well as social factors. Development activities, between organisations (and even 'other' projects under the same organisation) often have overlapping interests either in the content or the context of their work. These can compliment or contradict each other.

In summary, the identification of `the poor' is complex. The problem is not only that there exists more than one level of poor. Workable categories inevitably compound a number of people who will have different needs at different times. A group consists of social interactions between members who are unlikely to `fit' formally defined boundaries. Categorisation imposes simple static criteria on a dynamic social, political and economic situation, thus representing an "abstract" not a "reality" (Foell, J. 2000). In regard to one development issue, several members may concur, and in regard to another the very same members may be in direct opposition with each other. The group will be subject to internal and external pressures with members who may be divided or bonded by location, age, gender, ethnicity, occupation, political alliance, kinship, religion, friendship, etc. They are likely to be active in various roles, in various social groupings, in different locations, at different times, which sometimes overlap, sometimes are separate, and are always changing.

## *1.5 A Matter of Perspective and Approach*

The conclusion of this section is that whilst conflict is a fact in a constantly changing world, how conflict is recognised alters with different development paradigms and approaches. The need to assess and manage conflict may be couched in neutral terms, however a dynamic range of normative values and prejudices will be inherent in the purpose and approach of any intervention. Presenting in table 1 overleaf, contrasting descriptions of how one might view a conflict `event' and respond to it, reinforces this point. The views are associated with two major development paradigms: The left hand column hypothetically represents a centrally planned project approach, rooted in modernisation theory, and the right hand column represents a process approach that encompasses people-first values.

In reality, conflict is visible in many forms, and invokes a variety of complex responses. These may not all be negative. The determination of a conflict as a creative or destructive force can be assessed by how well the conflict achieved its aims to alter or preserve the existing order.

Table 1

| Perceptions of Conflict | |
| --- | --- |
| Efficient & Effective | People First |
| Barrier to implementation | Inevitable due to negotiating diverse livelihood |
| Disruptive to planned activities | priorities in a complex environment. |
| Subversive | Necessary part of any change process |
| Time wasting | Required to redress inequalities |
| Costly | Proceeds sustainability |

| Responses to Conflict | |
| --- | --- |
| Efficient & Effective | People First |
| Minimise | Enable |
| Subdue by force, influence or material incentive | Support |
| Ignore | Acknowledge |
| Tolerate | Provide time, space and resources for discussing |
| Discourage | conflict |
| Abandon "difficult" actors | Develop human capacity to negotiate |
| Control the process towards predicted outcomes | Identify and expose the real needs and fears of |
| | participants |

**Section Two: Unseen Conflict, Politics and Power**

The previous section concluded that different agencies might view conflict events in different ways. There is however more to conflict than `meets the eye' in that behind any conflict, a history of reasons can be found, and varying thresholds of expression are likely to have already passed. Terms that discern the implicit and explicit nature of conflicts such as "active" and "latent" (Warner, M. & Jones, 1998: 3) acknowledge this, but do not capture the subtlety of the `hidden transcripts' of resistance that the poor may actively employ in the absence of public representation.

## *2.1 Conflict: Privately Defined or Publicly Recognised?*

It is important to discern that conflict goes deeper than readily observable clashes. An apparent absence of conflict does not guarantee that tensions of opposing interests do not exist, it may simply mean they are not articulated in a recognisable form. We can instead categorise conflicting interests as an observable subject:

?? Privately Defined

?? Publicly Articulated

?? Publicly Recognised

These categories begin to communicate to how widely the conflict is recognised. How many stakeholders are aware there is a problem, to what extent the conflict is expressed, and how is it being acted upon? This can be a rational assessment. Different people may express their grievances in different ways. Expressions of conflict I encountered in Sri Lanka included formal complaints, damage to property, fighting between persons, threats, petitions, withdrawal of services/benefits and application of sanctions. These were conflicts being articulated in the public arena, however it must also be considered what may be occurring `behind the scenes'. Chevalier and Buckles for example, draw on Nader *(Nader, L. 1990, Harmony Ideology, Stanford University Press, USA)* to describe notions of peace as a "thick cloak" that can be used to hide motives of "social control" (Buckles, 1999:18).

It is an issue that needs to be considered in the NR context. Increasing the productive values of aquatic or land based resources can result in the better-off people quietly securing access and control of those resources for themselves, whilst the poor quietly accept they will need to adapt an alternative survival strategies.

## *2.2 Conformity and Quiescence*

In his vivid anthropological study of power relationships between `coal lords' and other residents in a North American Valley, John Gaventa questions why conflicts do not emerge more often when he

> "had read the theories of democracy, about how victims of injustice ... are free to take action upon their concerns, about how conflicts emerge and are resolved through compromises amongst competing interests."
> (Gaventa, J. 1980: v)

He supports the three-dimensional description of power proposed by Stephen Lukes that examines decision making power, non-decision making power and also "the various ways of suppressing latent conflicts within society." (Lukes, S. 1974:57).

The powerful are able ensure the representation of their own interests because they:

1) Have greater resources with which to bargain the resolution observable conflicts

2) Placed to decide the rules of the game, and *which* issues will be raised

3) Dominate communication processes which bring meaning of legitimacy to their own decisions

The position of the power-holder is protected by the non-participation of the powerless in political decision making. This may be because the poor do not even recognise the situation in terms of their real needs, and if they do, their action may be inhibited. As Freire describes that through a history of social inequality, the powerless are locked into their disadvantaged position by a "culture of silence" for which awareness raising "concientization" is the first solution (Freire, P. 1972:81).

Grievances of the poor may not be defined because:

?? The powerless may not identify the origins of their problems are due to lack of information

?? Perceptions are shaped by the dominant (powerful) voice to the extent of "engineering of consent" (Milliband, R, 1969:181), and redefining their needs and wants.

Grievances of the poor may not be publicly articulated because:

?? The powerless may not know who to target and how

?? The powerless may not have the resources (assets) to express their grievances clearly

?? The vulnerable suffer fear and stress to a greater degree and for longer, following an articulated conflict

?? The powerless may fear real or imagined sanctions

?? The powerless are constrained by patronage relations

?? Immediate needs such as job seeking or food-poaching may take priority

?? The previous requests for political action may have failed, so belief in the possibility of change is low

Articulated Grievances may not be acted upon because:

?? Those needs are not viewed as important

?? Failure to accommodate those needs does not incur sanctions

This means conflict articulated in the public arena has been validated and edited by the existing power order. The poor may protest, but using less recognised means in less visible locations. Their means include "gossip, character assassination, rude nicknames, gestures, and silences of contempt" in the "backstage of village life" (Scott, J. 1985:xvii). However, the existing order is unlikely to be one way domination by force. Elites are mutually dependent on the co-operation of the poor in terms of labour-employment and the exchange of status for material benefits.

## *2.3 Partisan Approaches to Conflict Management?*

The poor can internalise the social values expedited by the powerful, and adapt to familiar proof of their powerlessness through formal structures and their own beliefs. One must be careful however, not to assume the passive innocence of poor victims of poverty. This is the subject of Vaclav Havel's first speech as elected president of the new Czech Republic. In reference to 40 years under a communist regime he says to the people,

"We had all become used to the totalitarian system and accepted it as an unchangeable fact and thus helped to perpetuate it. In other words we are all - though to differing extents - responsible for the operation of the totalitarian machinery; none of us just its victim; we are all also its creators .... We have to accept this legacy as a sin we committed against ourselves. If we accept it as such, we will understand it is up to us all, and up to us only, to do something about it." (MacArthur, B ed. 1996:495-6)

The poor also contribute to the social order in which their poverty exists. One must also be careful not to assume deliberate victimisation of the powerless by the powerful or even that the elite are concerned only with their own interests, to the detriment of and discrimination against the poor. Lukes discusses both the methodological options in exerting power over another, and the motive (or interest) driving that application. He distinguishes "coercion", "force" and "manipulation", from "encouragement" and "persuasion" because the latter provide more scope the less powerful exercise a reasoned choice which he calls "autonomous acceptance" of the powerful party's suggestion (Lukes, S. 1974:32). He also asserts that it is possible for a party (such as the development agency) to use its power to represent the "real interests" of another party (such as marginal fishers) in the short term. He assumes that once the real interests are recognised in the public realm, the paternal power-relation between the development agency and the poor "is self-annihilating". He adds, "different conceptions of what interests are associated with different moral and political character" (Lukes, S. 1974:33-34) about which each agency and individual should be deliberately aware.

The mere presence of a development agency with the power it brings (through influential people, resources, and information) may serve to alter the actual or perceived power relationships in the working area. The development agency must consider the potential and limits of its own power and influence, in addition to power relations already at work. An objective to "To build institutional capacity that empowers the poor, with an emphasis on securing rights of access to and mitigating conflicts over water resources." (Murray, F. 1999 quoting from Soussan 1998) acknowledges inevitable conflicts and inherent power issues in bringing about development change. Working only at the level of publicly articulated conflicts is likely to reinforce existing bias. However, the existence of power is not the cause of poverty or the suppression of equal human rights, rather it is the use and abuse of that power.

This understanding raises dilemmas for agencies interested in promoting aquaculture as a means to improve sustainable livelihoods, in regards to how far the existing power order is embraced or challenged. A partisan

approach does not mean discriminating against the participation of the wealthy in the development process but it is about the agency being clear about what interests (i.e. poverty elimination) they represent. "Pro-poor" is perhaps a misleading term and should not be seen as prejudice between individuals according to their relative assets, but as a mandate for all to work towards eliminating the causes and effects of poverty, and enhancing processes that contribute to that aim. This important distinction shows the importance of development agencies developing clear principles and an unfolding vision on which staff can draw in the midst of conflicting messages and demands. Their door may be open to a variety of political actors, but with their special interest made clear. The late Archbishop of El Salvador voiced this purpose when he said,

> "When we say `for the poor' we do not take sides with one social class, please note. What we do according to Puebla, is invite all social classes, rich and poor without distinction saying to everyone: Let us take seriously the cause of the poor as though it were our own - indeed, as what it really is" (Romero, O. 1995:163)

Community level politics is a reality encountered by development practitioners. Research findings from the coastal zone management project in Sri-Lanka state "a project that ignores political realities might encounter unexpected obstacles that seriously undermine stated objectives at a later stage". Poor people often have their security invested in relations with patrons, which may constrain their ability to assert their interests in relation to the development activity. " They [the very poor] might not only find it difficult to participate but even have their interests compromised through the dominance of more articulate groups that are better positioned to influence project design". In this project, it was however observed that decision-makers within the community could be influenced. "If and intervention has a large number of beneficiaries who back its activities, a patron's will can be defied through strength in numbers" (Foell, J. et al. 2000:39-43).

The research, definition and articulation of the interests of poor people is required because those interests may not be naturally articulated within the existing order, and are effectively prevented from entering a public arena of conflict where changes can be accomplished. If the role of the development agency is to raise awareness of the interests of the poor, they are in effect bringing more conflicts to the public arena.

**Section Three: Cultural Perspectives**

## *3.1 Unintentional Conflict: A clash of cultures*

Articulated conflict has been viewed as the deliberate and conscious action in opposition to or suppression of another party either in pursuit of one's own interests or rights (opportunistic) or against threats to existing interests or rights (defensive). This next section conceives of conflict arising from the different ways people think feel and act. Conflict can occur even when parties may be deliberately engaged with the sole purpose of co-operation. Their relationship may be highly valued and their goals shared, however conflict can occur unintentionally though the inability to exchange meanings. In this respect conflict arises out of the method or `how' of an interaction, rather than the 'what' or purpose for that interaction: a clash of culture.

Culture can be defined as the common or predictable values and practices of a group of people. It is distinct from individual (inherent) personality in that it is learnt through a process of social interaction. Culture can be attributed to categories of people who share common features such as age, occupation and gender, or to groups of people who have contact with each other, such as members of the same household. Cultural values operate at a sub-conscious level and are normally only identified by contrasting rituals, heroes and symbols between different groups (Hofstede, G. 1991:8).

This whole area is one that causes confusion, and is still being integrated into development frameworks. For example, the perception of culture within the DFID Livelihoods framework has recently changed. At the inception of this framework culture was presented as part of the vulnerability context (Carney, D. 1998:5), having now been 'moved' to being considered a transforming process (DFID Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets 1999:2.4.2). This same shift is one that can be contemplated for perceptions of `conflict' within the rural development context. Like culture it can be considered primarily as "constraint" to be overcome (Carney, D. 1998:11). However it can be said to be about "the way in which structures - and individuals - operate and interact" and "overlap" (DFID Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets 1999:2.4.2).

## 3.2 Management of Conflict: Culturally Sensitive Solutions

I can relay a personal example of how a difference in culture over the management of a problem, effectively served to hijack the initial conflict by creating a New one. Whist serving on The Northwest Fisheries Project in Bangladesh a conflict arose over the `proper' use of project vehicles. A driver had used his own initiative to drive into town for shopping, despite being told on several occasions that all intended movements had to be recorded before leaving the site, and that vehicles were exclusively for business use. We were left in Need of a vehicle, with No idea where it had gone or when it would return. IN the absence of the project manager I referred to a project operations manual and followed the disciplinary procedure written there. I discussed the circumstances of the incident with the driver, then issued a formal written warning to him in reference to his misconduct. This action was culturally Naive; we should have consulted one of the Bangladeshi managers who'd been with the project for some time. To issue a formal letter was popularly viewed as a great injustice to the driver. It was also an insult to the status of the project manager who Normally and `rightly' acted as the sole signatory of any official letter. Our management approach had been 'wrong' and this cultural-clash completely overshadowed the original problem.

## 3.3 Cultural Values Affect Conflict

In his book `cultures and organisations' Hofstede explains the findings from a detailed empirical study of the similarities and differences between people, according to national and organisational categories. Differences in national culture are attributed to `value' that are listed below and summarised in more detail in appendix two.

Value Dimensions of National Cultures

| | |
|---|---|
| High power distance | Low Power distance |
| Individualism | Collectivism |
| Masculinity | Femininity |
| Strong uncertainty avoidance | Weak uncertainty avoidance |
| Long term | Short term |

It must be stressed that there is No good and bad in terms of the cultural dimensions Hofstede describes. Extreme differences exist between neighbouring countries and the number of dimensions make individual

profiles complicated. Each culture has evolved over a long history *of* social adaptation to human problems, through choices that are proven to work. The cultural orientation will effect how conflicts are expressed, which conflicts are `valid' and how they should be managed. Our own preference too, is likely to be influenced by our national identity in childhood and organisational history.

"to those within a society its own solution is natural, rational and morally right" (Hofstede, G. 1991:xii)

The example in the previous sub-section can be attributed to features of Power distance and the collectivist/individualist dimensions. My actions reflected a low power difference/individualist approach found in the UK, and the response, a high power distance/collectivist prevailing in Bangladesh (Appendix Two).

## 3.4 Expressing Conflict: Cultural Tendencies

Culture can affect how culture is articulated through the way aggression and feelings are `normally' expressed. Hofstede deduces that a combination of national collectivism and strong uncertainty avoidance and masculinity increase the likelihood *of* violent conflict regardless of other conditions. Research into the occurrence of war also supports the opinion that the named causes of conflict are not sufficient explanations in themselves,

"Socio-economic factors such as low growth rates, poverty and even inequality were found not to be significantly related to the occurrence of [armed] conflict. They can, however, be aggravating factors that leaders and political entrepreneurs can use to mobilise support for identity politics" (RRN 15, 1999:37).

Four possible collectivist-individualist and uncertainty avoidance preferences are generalised in table 2 overleaf, adapted from Hofstede. In zone 1, collectivist-weak uncertainty avoidance, different groups are tolerated and often complement each other. Inter-group conflict in countries in zone 2 will tend to "eliminate group conflict by denying it and either trying to assimilate or repress minorities". Countries in zone will try to integrate minorities and support their equal rights. Those in Zone 4 will "harbour prejudice" towards ethnic, religious or opponent groups but will counter this a state that ties to respect individual rights (Hofstede, G.1991: 126-130).

**Table 2**

| | Weak Uncertainty Avoidance | Strong Uncertainty Avoidance |
|---|---|---|
| *Collectivist* | Zone 1:<br>Tolerant of differences (e.g. Singapore) | Zone *2:*<br>Violent (e.g. Pakistan) |
| *Individualist* | Zone 3:<br>Rights integrated (e.g.UK) | Zone 4:<br>Antagonism countered by rights (e.g. France) |

## 3.5 Culture and Development

Although to categorise between developing and developed countries across all Hofstede's dimensions would be to determine false assumptions, his analysis does conclude two generalisations about donor countries. Countries with a higher GNP tend towards individualism. Of these countries, the allocation of funds to development varies considerably however there is a correlation between higher femininity scores and greater spending on development, %GNP. This has two likely consequences. Firstly, donors will tend towards "certain categories, like small farmers" whilst "receivers will want the aid to benefit certain in-groups" by affiliation. Secondly the allocation of funds is determined by the "psychological needs" of the donor, rather than the material needs of the receiver, thus making it likely that funds will be tied to the political priorities of the donor citizens. (Hofstede, G.1991: 218-219)

Culture can have practical implications on people's normative behaviour. Uncertainty avoidance determines attitudes towards rules and expertise. The weak uncertainty avoidance cultures will have explicit written rules, changing the rule if most people do not follow it. Strong uncertainty avoidance cultures will have implicit, traditional rules and will venerate 'experts'. Friendship and personal convictions have to be compatible; whereas in weak uncertainty avoidance cultures colleagues remain personal friends in spite of different

professional opinions (Hofstede, G.1991: 130-134). "citizens in strong uncertainty avoidance cultures have also been shown to be pessimistic about their possibilities of influencing decisions made by authorities. Few citizens are prepared to protest ... dependent on the expertise of the government" (Hofstede, G.1991: 127).

## *3.6 Organisations and Cultural Difference*

"Most organisations would be better off if conflict could be eliminated forever"

Hofstede correlates this quote with strong uncertainty-avoidance culture (Hofstede, G. 1991:122). His own approach however, is that "culture is more often a source of conflict than synergy. Cultural differences are a nuisance ...but ... there is no way around them so we better take them for what they area." (Hofstede, G. 1991:xii)

An organisation is a sub-culture that can act as a bridge between different societal groups. The distinguishing features of organisations lay in their practices rather than values. 'Practice' orientations are summarised from Hofstede below:

Practice Orientation of Organisations

| | |
|---|---|
| Process oriented | Results oriented |
| Employee oriented | Job oriented |
| Parochial | Professional |
| Open system | Closed system |
| Loose control | Tight control |
| Normative (customer driven) | Pragmatic (market driven) |

These practices make up "the rules of the game" by which members play. The practices may reflect the values of the individual founders and significant leaders of the organisation but these have been converted into observable and tangible practices. In contrast to social values, operational practices can be judged according to how well those practices can achieve a desired direction. "A cultural feature that is an asset for one purpose is unavoidably a liability for another" (Hofstede, G.1991: 218-219). Organisational cultures need to fit the task,

25

and that culture needs to be workable for the people therein employed, especially if those people comprise a group with which they already identify.

## *3.7 Cultural Conflict: A practical problem*

"one of the reasons why so many solutions do not work ... is because differences in thinking among partners have been ignored. Understanding such differences is at least as essential as understanding the technical factors" (Hofstede, G. 1991:4).

An awareness of conflict may serve a caution against driving through, the universal application of popular approaches. Instances where local NGOs are said only to pay 'lip service' to a particular approach to secure funds, may be explained in cultural terms. The intent of that approach may not survive the cultural translation process and so seems meaningless to their activities. The power distance and uncertainty dimensions of culture in particular may relate to participatory approaches.

DFID states that "culture is not an area for direct donor activity" (DFID Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets 1999:2.4.2) which is wise when it is far more difficult to change culture than strategy.

An NGO needs to understand its own culture, and that of the social context in which it is working. Different sub-cultures may require different approaches. Strategies need to be technically and financially feasible, and moreover compatible with the culture of the society in which the change is intended to take place. It is human to apply unconscious value judgements however co-operation and practical solutions can be agreed between parties without each needing to think or act in identical ways. This means establishing a suitable organisational structure, communication processes, control processes, processes for dealing with conflict, and the employment of separate `technical experts' and 'social diplomats' on equal terms (same level to secure mutual respect). Capacity building should only commence once the 'need' is 'felt' by the trainees, or change will not be secured. Context specific adaptation of approaches requires the investment of time and skilled staff at the front end of projects that should not proceed if "failure is [becomes] predictable" (Hofstede, G.1991: 121)

Photograph: 4
H M Nishankau is working on his father's paddy. The sluice gate is opened to release water into irrigation channels. The "key" is allocated to specific members according to a pre arranged schedule.

Photograph: 5
Water flows through specially dug channels to the designated plot.

Photograph: 6
Land which is not irrigated will not produce a crop.

**Section Four: Do Nothing Scenarios**

Long-standing conflicts have often evolved customary solutions that may or may not be supported by institutional and legal structures. Where existing approaches maintain order, and can evolve quickly in response to new problems, there seems little purpose in external agencies intervening. This is termed a `do-nothing' scenario. It is an important option when existing customary, institutional and legal approaches can manage the conflict or could "organically materialise within an acceptable time-frame" or if the short term costs of the conflict are outweighed by long term social reform brought about by the conflict (Warner, M. & Jones, P. 1998:1-6).

## *4.1 An Example of a Customary Solution to Conflict over Land Use*

Vulnerable groups may be disadvantaged by an existing order. However in many circumstances that order is based on mutual benefit. An example of an indigenous solution to an access and distribution problem is found in a traditional Sri Lankan management practice called `bethma'. Bethma is a specific management system that is used to overcome competition for irrigated land in the dry 'yala' season. Although land in the purana complex is usually privately owned, farmers rely on water from the ancient tank, which is a usually a common property resource, for irrigation. Plots that are not irrigated are not cultivable (photo 6) so the amount of water in the tank determines the area of land that can be irrigated in each season. The area of cultivable land under small tanks is much reduced in the yala season, and is non-existent under tanks that dry out completely (photo3). In areas of reduced irrigation capacity, the potential for conflict over the use of water is great. An unmanaged scenario could result in random competition for water across the entire area, and result in failed crops for all landowners under that tank.

The solution employed under bethma is that the area of cultivable land for the coming dry season is calculated according to the volume of available water. That area is sub-divided by the number of plots farmed in the wet season. Ownership boundaries are effectively handed over to a management committee for the duration of the season. This committee is called a Farmer Organisation (FO) which is officially registered and has the legal status to control and allocate water and apply sanctions if allocated work is not carried out. The crop type, planting times, and allocation of water by time and volume is all decided and controlled by the FO. This system keeps land ownership intact, and helps the land owning community to survive through sharing the natural

resource, labour and harvest. It can be contrasted to a capitalist approach where the landowner in the prime spot could hire the labour of some of the other farmers to work on his plot at the lowest possible rate. That farmer's empire might extend as other farmers entered a downward spiral of debt and sell their land. The major landowner however would be left with the problem of how to deter and control `renegade' use of the water. In this situation local customary practice is succeeding in managing underlying conflicts, and distributes the benefits of the natural resource mutually, among landowners and agricultural tenants. It is a `do nothing' scenario as long as this customary practice is able to adapt to challenges.

## 4.2 Local Control

It is possible to release water `illegally' from the tank to land below by breaking down the earthen bund at the foot of the tank. This happens occasionally, however the system is upheld by traditional ethics, and social relations as well as legal sanctions. An anthropologist working in a village in the dry zone in observed "individuals who work the land served by the same irrigation channel have an inescapable obligation to co-operate" (Leach, E. 1971:65). The decisions of the FO in regard to water use are finalised at a public meeting and witnessed by local government officers. The levying of fines or demand of labour work is the legitimate authority of the FO for non-conformance to decisions; problems and disputes were normally contained at the local level. The GN commented that in cases where the police had been involved, this had not been followed through because relatives rarely give court evidence against each other. This comment concurs with Leach's, "while the Pul Eliya villagers are likely to go to the law on the slightest provocation, none of them really expects to settle disputes by this kind of reference to external authority. Litigation is simply one among the many possible ways of making things awkward for one's opponents" (Leach, E. 1971:41)

## 4.3 Changes in Leadership

The official committee members of the Udathankulama FO had changed recently due to a conflict over control. The president of the previous committee had allowed the `horovva' or sluice key (Photo 4) to be taken by force by a farmer who thus obtained extra water for his own plot. Control of the sluice key has symbolic as well as practical influence. Previously control of all aspects of water management was vested in one man, the `velvidani' (irrigation-ditch headman) who was also the holder of the sluice key. A new committee was elected whilst the original committee retained ordinary membership of the Udathankulama FO. This shows the group evolving in response to problems, and changes in political influence among the leadership.

The Quarry at Danduwellawe.

Local people appreciate employment at the quarry but they are concerned that dynamite blasts have damaged the local tank.


Photograph: 7


Photograph: 8

## 4.4 Constitutional Rules and Decision Making

The rules of the FO constitution are clear. Membership consists of one representative for each plot of land. Traditionally it was a committee of owners, however tenants of land under each tank now also have membership rights for the duration of their tenancy. In the case of Udathakulama FO, decisions were often the discussed by FO Officials in advance. The president told me that only half the members attended meetings or joined in discussions to approve decisions. She rated these members as having more influence over the resources of the tank when we conducted an influence ranking exercise with her. Radical decisions often required additional meetings with greater attendance. In Udathakulama this season, the FO had decided to try cultivating groundnuts for the first time. In this instance special meeting was called with the full FO membership in attendance, in order to gain agreement and co-operation for the changed practice and watering regime. One man had opposed the idea of ground nuts in favour of chilli however the tank could not support the more frequent watering this crop requires. Land allocation was also altered after the meeting. One man requested a change when he identified a more suitable plot that was not otherwise being used. The president granted this, indicating flexibility around formal decisions. The committee indicated the plots would be allocated by a lottery system in future years, rather than by consensus discussion however this had not been attempted in practice.

## 4.5 An Example of "Do Nothing" in Response to Political Opposition

There is evidence that initial conflicts in reaction to a development intervention may 'burn-out' over time, if left alone. There may be situations when conflicts are best circumvented rather than being tackled directly. Monitoring over a passage of time will show if the conflict is escalating or diminishing. Mr. Wimal Attaduwage from CARE told me that whilst directing the Sarukheta Project in the late 1990s, a local politician resisted their presence in 'his' village. He posting public notices that warned villagers not to attend meetings hosted by the NGO, resulting in only six of the expected forty households attended the next farmer group meeting. CARE continued working with the six households despite the opposition. Given time, neighbours saw the group members benefiting without any threat or disturbance to their own activities.

A recent report by GTZ showed that when a minority group of non-plantation farmers in rural Sri Lanka improve their commercial position, there is no negative affect to other farmers in that area (Silva, K. T. et al

1999:19). Some conflict is based on a perceived threat rather than a real experience. This may reduce in time, when other matters become priorities and original fears are placated by visible benefits in the community. It takes time to gain support and trust for development initiatives. A move away from large financial incentives means that participation and co-operation are not secured as a short-term condition in exchange for material benefits. The aim is towards securing a mutual direction, which means an investment of staff and time in early stages of planning, and intervention.

## *4.6 An Example of Did- Nothing*

Development approaches that predict the long and short term impacts of different action plans and communicate these widely amongst stakeholders can provide a forum for improved planning before interventions are implemented. Investment in early conflict analysis may help to mitigate later damages that incur a far greater cost in financial, social and environmental terms. In Danduwewa village I met a farmer called B. M. Herethbanda who showed me a private quarry (photos 7 & 8) that had opened locally three years earlier. The farmer said the village had been pleased to co-operate with the rich outsider. He was viewed as a benefactor who had bought thirty chairs for the village hall and had provided water pipes to the temple. Many people in the village gained by employment, and those who sold chenna land (home garden often originally obtained by cutting or burning the jungle) financially benefited. He was concerned however that the water in the tank had reduced year on year since the opening of the quarry, and claimed the dynamite blasting was the cause. Irrigation wasn't the main concern because he and several neighbours farmed as tenants under larger system tanks. There eighty bushels of rice per bushel of seed so remained more profitable (after the 25% payment to the landowner) than farming the local paddy land which yielded only twenty bushels of rice. His concern was directed at the loss of livestock and bathing facilities. However, they had not taken a long-term view. The man said "We are poor and are not in a position to influence. Now we are too late".

## *4.7 Doing nothing because the task is overwhelming*

Conflicts are often occur at the boundaries and interfaces where people meet. Conflicts may operate at several levels and involve both material and social concerns. Where people are conflicting over natural resources boundaries can often be defined geographically. This is complicated however when ownership and use of the resource are under the jurisdiction of different people. Warner makes this distinction by employing three

categories:

?? community owned, community managed

?? community owned, outside managed

?? outside owned, community managed                     (Warner, M. & Jones, P. 1998:3)


This distinction however does not account for the multiple users of the small tanks in Sri Lanka. Farmers organisations would be classed as community managed but they can not be said to represent the interests of all the community members. A ranking exercise was used to determine community perceptions about who had influence over issues around the tank, and the fishers were unanimously listed lowest from the names provided. The people with most influence were those who held positions of 'office' in the FO followed by members who showed interest and regularly attended meetings (Appendix Four).

Fishing activities are generally ranked as low priority among the competing uses of tank water, after irrigation and bathing (IMWI, Murray). The position of capture fisheries in small tanks is low within both social and structural hierarchies of Dry Zone Sri Lanka and is thus currently disadvantaged by under-representation. Representation of fishers among village organisations was very poor. Access to the Farmers Organisation was formally limited by lack of land ownership and the age profile of the fishers was not in practice, compatible with membership of the Death Donation Society. Even the written complaints held by the GN showed priority towards landowners concerns. Fishers by no means would be guaranteed of representation should aquaculture development be promoted in the small tanks.

At tank level, fisheries are also poorly perceived. Authority over the tank and the water is given to the farmers organisation. During an informal discussion an explanation that the fishers were too young to own- land was dispelled when we later did a rapid survey, asking which of the fishers' parents owned lank under the tank. The fishers and their families tended to be poorer, and fishing was an activity undertaken when alternative employment was not available.


Management decisions were being made on a tank by tank basis by the GN and by the FOs, which, makes a watershed approach a new cultural, and organisational concept. Fisheries within watersheds present unique possibilities for conflict due to the migratory nature of fish, and the flow of water; this means an intervention at any single point of the `system' may have positive or negative impacts both upstream and downstream. A watershed approach considers land and water interfaces throughout the changing season and involves social co-

operation in the management of common and private natural resources. Fishers' activities extended away from their home villages up to a distance of about 7km. The boundaries of their activity appear more fluid than the farmers' however, this is only because records of land ownership and tenancy appear on a tank by tank basis. Several farmers cultivated land in more than one location, and thus multiple FO membership. Mobility of fishers was an issue in terms of defining boundaries of operation. Several fishers mentioned occasional fights either because they were fishing during a ban, or because they were not on welcome territory. There was a definable rift between the fishers in the neighbouring tanks of Udathankulama and Aluthgama. Although we did not research all the social networks of the people living in Udathakulama, it is still interesting to record that farm labour was solicited from friends and relatives from the `colony' (a government settlement in the area) rather than from immediate neighbours who were unemployed. It is possible that in some circumstances, proximity and similarity can act as a barrier to co-operation due to personal competition.

A further consideration is why the young men fish. Fishing by the young men in our study was indicated as a marginal activity, secondary to other sources of employment. It was undertaken locally for consumption by friends and family and in larger neighbouring tanks when the season permitted a catch, and other labour opportunities were not forthcoming. One young man was pleased that he no longer fished with his friends. "He doesn't need to, he's got a job as a driver" the friends said smiling. By this, we might deduce the young men's primary need is for regular employment, or a secure livelihood and fishing might not be their first choice if other options were feasible.

The investment required in socio-political analysis and management in the study area would be hard to justify in terms of low input aquaculture. However scope exists for aquaculture to compliment existing programmes such as those involved with tank rehabilitation for irrigation, or other options to supplement livelihoods and develop organisational capacity among sub groups of the community. Combined programmes can create synergy. For example a review of participatory management projects in the Sri Lankan irrigation schemes revealed,

> "Management transfer alone did not result in significant improvements in agricultural levels ... Neither did rehabilitation alone create significant effects. However, in schemes where both management transfer and rehabilitation have occurred, significant effects on agricultural productivity levels and economic returns were observed."
> (Samad, M. & Vermillion, D. 1999:27)

Photograph: 9 & 11
Women use the water to wash clothes.
Most villagers bath in the tank



Photograph: 10

These farmers work together to erect a fence.
They seek a solution that protects their crops
and is compatible with their Buddhist beliefs
that animals should not be harmed.





Photograph: 12

Art and inscriptions reveal a
longstanding association between
the Buddhist Temple and fishing,
despite the popular stigmatisation
of fishing we encountered.



Photograph: 1 3
Men from a neighbouring village come to fish here. The local landowners are tolerant and don't take
much interest in this margin activity. It would be difficult to control because of the jungle-cover.

**Section Five: Do Something Scenarios - Management Strategies**

## 5.1 Five Conflict Management Strategies
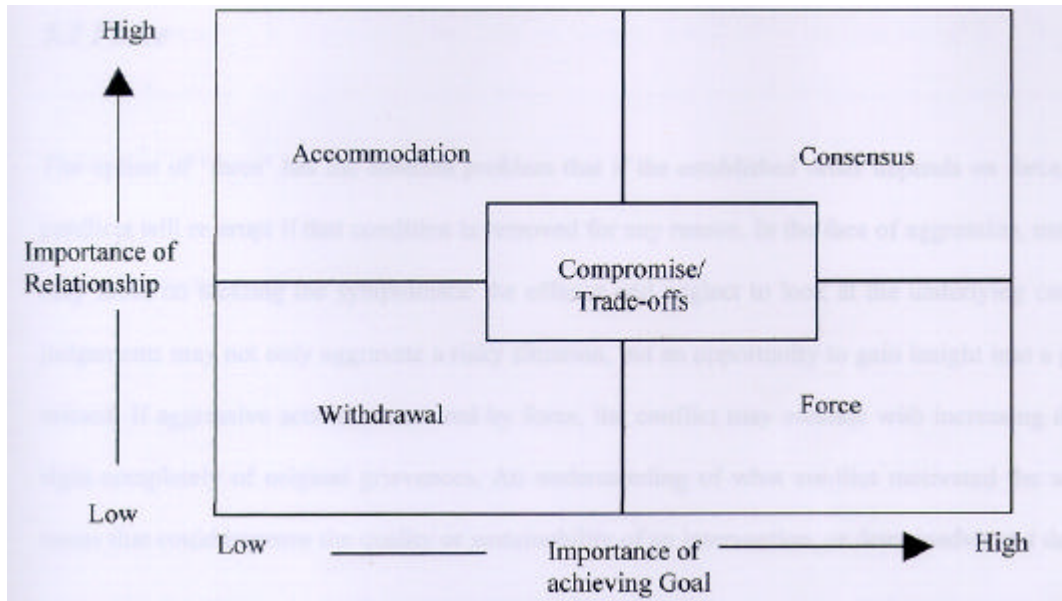


Warner (2000: 10) expresses five "do something" management options available in response to visible conflict as shown below

**Five Conflict Management Strategies** -'Taken from M. Warner, 2000: 10, original author unknown

Warner elaborates on the each of the five options shown above and elaborated in Appendix three. The five management options are useful in demonstrating a range of possible responses to conflict, and showing that conflict is related to goals (or interests) and human relationships. The simple linear function between relationship, goal achievement, and choice of management options may be misleading. This model does not discriminate between different causes of conflict or the different ways that conflict can be expressed. Different management tactics may be required in the short term, in response to a conflict articulated by physically violent attack compared with that articulated in a formal letter of complaint. Conflicts may require different management approaches at different times, and goal-relationship priorities are dynamic over the short and long term.

This model does not capture the multidimensional nature of articulated conflict or the political and power dimensions of interaction between parties. It implies rational and conscious decision making rather than emotional responses or those based on cultural preference. In particular the diagram does not begin to resolve the issue that many parties may be involved who hold opposing goals, or assign different priorities to similar goals . Articulated conflicts may represent layer upon layer of discriminatory attitudes and competitive interest. This is where technocratic resource management which `solves' how to allocate access and resources between

alternative uses and users of NR may not be prudent, especially if underlying political contests at the local level are not exposed. Material and social assets can be more persuasive than government policy if the 'tools of the state" are seen to be "lopsided" and "lacking legitimacy" (Tyler, S. in Buckles, D. ed. 1999:265).

## 5.2 Force

The option of `force' has the inherent problem that if the established order depends on force, then underlying conflicts will re-erupt if that condition is removed for any reason. In the face of aggression, management efforts may focus on tackling the symptomatic the offence and neglect to look at the underlying causes for it. Hasty judgements may not only aggravate a risky situation, but an opportunity to gain insight into a problem could be missed. If aggressive acts are countered by force, the conflict may escalate with increasing destruction losing sight completely of original grievances. An understanding of what conflict motivated the act may highlight issues that could improve the quality or sustainability of an intervention, or deter inadvertent damage.

For example whilst I worked for NFEP, a batch of newly hatched fish were killed by someone throwing poisonous crystals into the water. It was important to determine the reason for that destructive act. If the intruder had been a local trader of fish seed, or a nursery owner who believed his business was threatened by the project, then it would have indicated our interventions were causing real or perceived harm, and corrective action would be required. In fact, the individual was taking vengeance for being recently dismissed from the project. The project upheld the reason for the dismissal and demonstrated their force through improved night time security. Force was appropriate as a short-term deterrent.

## 5.3 Withdrawal

Withdrawal is a stand-off position. Direct damage is avoided however 'better options' are unlikely to be created. It can be a tactic used by groups to force an appreciation that their co-operation is needed.

## 5.4 Accommodation

There are many situations when a `tolerance' or accommodation of development activities by influential parties in the locality might be preferred to their active engagement in consensus. Where multiple parties are involved,

the option of accommodation among some can help reduce the number of active participants to a manageable level. The respectful disinterest of the wealthiest member of the Udathankulama FO allowed other members to take active office. At Paha H M Nishankau, the son of an important landowner, said he was not interested in the "silly work" of fishing so he had no objection to outsiders coming from Pramakamba and Polyagama to fish in "our lake". It is precisely this lack of interest, which often protects marginal activities, and it is this 'accommodation' that can be threatened when development initiatives transform a marginal activity into a more lucrative livelihood.

## 5.5 Consensus

Warner favours the technique of `consensus'. This is a logical preference, when the condition of the self satisfying model concludes that the conflicts in this zone are correspond with <u>important</u> goals and highly <u>valued</u> relationships. It is a simple framework that represents a singular approach and does not attempt to reconcile the reality of multiple relationships and objectives. Warner's approach draws heavily on writings from North American authors such as Fisher, aimed at the management sector. This is not to disparage consensus; there are lots of valuable insights to be gained from consensus based approaches. Consensus can be extremely constructive, as it seeks the creation of new options to answer real needs, and promotes relationships based on deep, mutual understanding. It also targets 'decision-makers' and so is operable within current power structures. Consensus management skills could enrich the capacity of development staff at all levels, especially those involved with participatory planning. The approach however can take a considerable amount of time, and skill. As it lends itself well to third party intervention, a caution is necessary against the `export' of alternative conflict management strategies via a new generation of 'fix-it' consultations, that are not sensitive to local preferences and unique socio-political contexts.

Photograph: 14 & 15
Traders bring fish from marine sources, and from bigger reservoirs by bicycle.
Fish caught in the local tank was essentially for 'home consumption' i.e. sharing with family and friends.
During fishing bans some fishing is carried out at night under the cover of darkness.
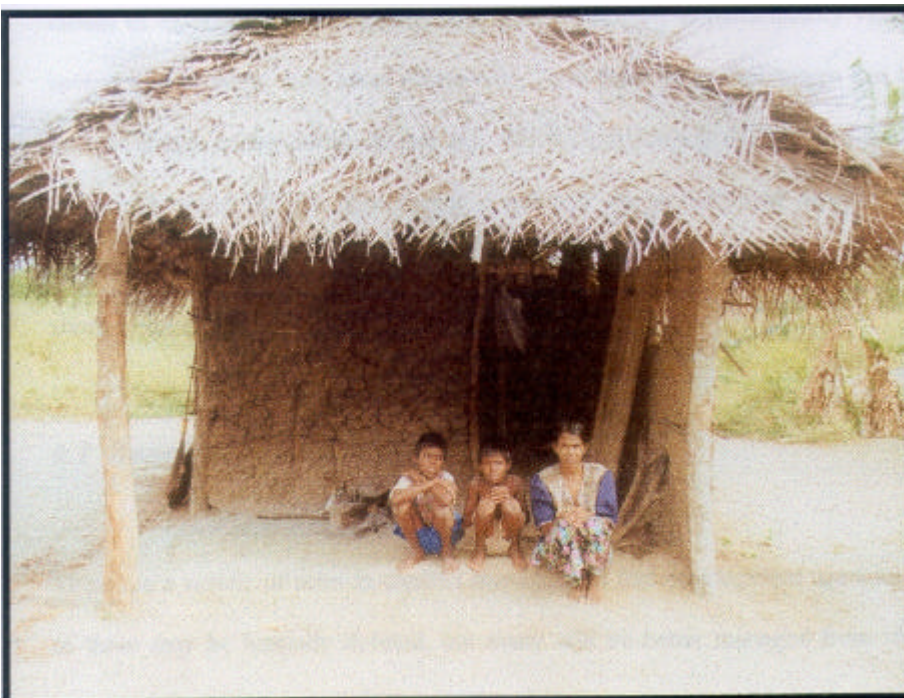


Photograph: 16
The people who were identified as regular fishers in the Udathankulama tank were among the most marginal people in the village. Children described the father in this household as an "alcoholic" and the mother as suffering from "mental distress".



Photograph: 17 the fishers are typically young men of about 17 to 35 years old. Some younger boys also fish in secret. Parents often forbid their children from fishing even if they Fish themselves. This is partly because they don't want the children's schoolteacher to see them, and partly because fishing is associated with alcohol consumption.

**Section Six: Do Something Scenarios - The Use of Third Parties**

Sustainable livelihoods approaches bring together concerns for the sustainable use of natural resources with an interest in improving the livelihoods of marginal people. This requires the interpretation of 'conflicts' from the perspectives of various stakeholders. This often termed "walking in other people's shoes' (Slocum, R. et al. 1998:78-81, Fisher, R. 1994:19-41). It can be done as an intellectual exercise by a third Party in order to better understand the conflict situation, or it can an exercise to build empathy between opposing parties. In both cases the aim is to understand how various parties define their own needs, interests and actions, and how they perceive the needs, interests and actions of others. Rural development agencies have a role in building a cross party awareness that can be done through questioning, by sharing information. It is often useful to establish a means of externalising perceptions onto a medium such as participatory video, in order that participants can review and re-work their ideas objectively. Here third party facilitators can help to consider how well each party is able to communicate its interests which is particularly useful when dealing with vulnerable groups. It is essential however in these processes to ensure that 'the environment' as a key asset is treated as a single 'party' so that the sustainability of this 'natural capital' is represented. It is also important that both long term and short-term perspectives are considered.

## *6.1 Benefits of Third Parties*

There are a variety of roles in conflict management that development agencies can become involved in. Some of these may be formally defined, but many will be better managed from 'behind the scenes'. The areas of intervention can be termed the research, substance, process and impact as described below. Conflicts can be caused by as well as affect the progress of an intervention so the development agency must continually monitor itself as a party in the situation. Confusion or uncertainty can particularly arise in three areas: definition, direction, process, substance, and impacts.

## *6.2 Definition of the Problem*

A detailed understanding of the situation is required by the agency, and conflict situations need to be researched from multiple perspectives. Such information is "vital information for the practitioner in the field and should not be hidden away" (Foell, J. et al. 2000:40). Conflict management is discretionary by nature and development agencies need to retain an awareness of their own cultural bias whilst retaining loyalty to the principles of

improved livelihoods for the poor, and environmental sustainability. Researchers must be prepared to critically look for the less visible indicators, and more private indicators of conflict. To quote Vaclav Havel again, " I always objected that society is a very mysterious creature and that it is not wise to trust only the face it presents to you" (MacArthur, B.1996:496-7) There will be many aspects the agency can not control or influence. Defining the problem involves both articulation and interpretation. It may not be possible to reach a single definition, but each party should agree that their perspective is represented and understood.

A summary of possible entry points are: -

By means of articulation        - formal, informal, threatened, applied

By Level of recognition        - Personal, Household, Local, Regional, or National

By stakeholder group        - People contributing to or affected by the problem (historical & present)

By origin of differences        - Assets, structures and systems, or cultural identity

By motive                - Opportunistic or Defensive (needs and interests of each stakeholder group)

Belief or reality?            -  Stated 'ideals' of the law, or observed `norms' of practice

## 6.3 Direction

Interventions may only begin to proceed when there is the political will among participants to find a way forward. Time and interpersonal skill needs to be targeted at gaining the trust and support (or accommodation) of decision makers, both locally, and at higher administrative levels as a safeguard against possible opposing trends in the wider context. Generating agreeable design options of an intervention is an essential part of gaining commitment to support that intervention. The development agency has a role in providing information about different technical options, as well as facilitating parties to generate alternatives for themselves. "success thus depends on a large extent on the political skills and pragmatism on the part of project representatives" (Foell, J. et al. 2000:44). As may be the case with the part-time fishers living in Udathankulama, separate

initiatives may be required to meet the needs of the most vulnerable groups, aside from developments of natural resource management.

## 6.4 Process

Enthusiasm for finalising plans, and pressure to start major activities can mean initial rapport and trust building with the community is rushed. The agency and agency staff' brings with them a culture, identity, and set of values that will influence their ability to communicate their needs or interpret the needs of their partners. Conceptually, technical and management issues are often separated into separate areas of expertise, personnel can also be employed according to those distinct disciplines. A social diplomat can be an invaluable asset. The time and `soft' manpower required in strengthening relationships, and promoting a common interpretation of goals is a costly investment. The justification is the avoidance of 'hard' damage that may result from conflict or the loss on investment if the development is abandoned because true co-operation had not been secured. Practical inputs may be in the form of hosting meetings, developing tools that parties can use to focus on the problem rather than each other, suggesting appropriate communication forums/media, facilitating meetings and the use of tools, monitoring the conflict management process.

## 6.5 Substance

Participants and stakeholders will often be concerned with the practicalities of who will be involved, to do what, with what resources or support, and when. Boundaries need to be drawn, and legitimate authorities, rules and sanctions established. Establishing new organisations that try to resolve conflicts at the community level can lead to emotional stress for staff. At the Seventh Common Property Conference it was communicated that "agents drop out from the scheme" because "they can become the *objects of conflict* rather than the mediators" (Hartmann, W.D. *et al 1998:12)*

Timing and sequencing of events can be critical. Experiences from DFID's work in Western Orissa show that a careful analysis of resource conflicts helped to adjust the sequencing of planned investments. It was predicted that the benefits of "land-based" micro watershed rehabilitation would be captured by elite "moneylenders and merchants" who "controlled input and output markets, and monopolised access to external resources such as

opportunities for seasonal migratory employment." The poor in that area had limited access to common natural resources, so priority was given to "domestic water supplies" whilst other activities were delayed. Often minor details which are not of great technical relevance can serve to harm or strengthen relationships with the agency's partners. Simple adaptations to accommodate local preferences in the way things are done can strengthen relationships, and avoid superficial conflicts. One villager in Andarawewa expressed at great length his dissatisfaction with CARE. The source of his vexation was not really to do with the main substance of the tree planting project in the area, but because the CARE field workers had brought packet lunches from a nearby town when his cousin had spent the day preparing snacks for the meeting. A flexible but pragmatic approach is required. Experiences of conflict management in Brazilian reservoir fisheries indicate the constant "tinkering" and "fine tuning if fisheries agreement" was "confusing and contradictor" which resulted in a "weakening of its impact" (Hartmann, W.D. et al 1998:11-12). Investment in personal relationships at an early stage is a vital element in the avoidance of conflicts based on misunderstandings about the `nuts and bolts' of implementation of changes.

## *6.6 Impact*

The probable effects of the development options need to be worked through in order to question who will benefit from the development, and what costs will be incurred in both the short and long term. Wide access to this analysis is vital; fears may be alleviated, and unexpected parties may wish to engage with the agency. Far too often assessments by a development agency are never communicated back to the people who contributed to the findings, when this type of communication can help establish a greater conviction towards sustainable management than short-term returns. Even when participatory techniques are used, with immediate feedback in regards to a particular session, there is scope to better communicate composite findings. Verbalised or demonstrated conflicts may be defensive or opportunistic so it is vital to ensure assumptions are challenged, and interests based on need are distinguished from those based on want. Impact assessment is therefore something of an ongoing monitoring process rather than an end event. Impacts need to be both predicted in advance to inform the design of the intervention, and monitored so adjustments can be made.

Photograph: 18

Susanthe prepares his new net. It was purchased with his own money, plus a small loan from a friend. They will travel by bicycle to fish in large tanks such as Uriyawa (near the bank, away from boats) for fish that can be sold locally. The net should last about 2 or 3 years.

Photograph: 19

Mrs W M Premawathie was recer selected to be President of the UK FO 19?? She was involved in an incid damaging and confiscating Susanth fishing net. After police involvement, village decided she should replace the to end the dispute.

Photograph: 20

This GN has made a home in Andreawewa after being there for 8 years. He covers 7 villages with both large and small tanks, and reports to the AGA (Assist. Govt. Agent) for Anamaduwa region.

He is often called to deal with troubles but is constrained when local politicians are involved. E.g. when timber is cut illegally by the politician's friend there is little he can do. The politician secures patronage through the "samurdhi" a system of state benefit in return for manual labour.

Fishing is considered a small offence. It is not against any individual and it is undertaken for food rather than business. Sometimes he asks fishermen not to go into the tank with nets during bans. Often they will return at night.

## *Conclusions*

Conflicts are inevitable because people need to constantly redefine their material and social boundaries. Neither people or the environment in which they live can remain unchanging.

The underlying causes of conflict may be rational or emotional, and may be about material gains such as land ownership, or non-material gains such as political position. Reasons may be defensive or opportunistic. The poor may tend to adapt to changes rather than directing the changes. Opportunities or threats may be factual or based on belief.

The way that conflicts are articulated varies. It can not be assumed that a larger and more aggressive expression of conflict represents a more important cause. Different groups will express their grievances in different ways. Cultural norms, their belief in a possible change, the balance of potential risk and gain, and the asset base (skills, information, social support, political influence, wealth, physical strength) they have to support their argument, will affect how and where grievances are expressed. Whilst conflict may be observed in objective terms according to how opposing interests are articulated, the interests underlying the conflict are inherently subjective.

Conflict management is also inherently partial. Development agencies can influence the outcomes of disputes towards their goals, however management by force or incentive is not sustainable. Several parties may be involved each with their own agenda and various sources of influence. Transparency is a principle, which encourages trust, however it is not easy to achieve in practice. Communication between parties can be difficult; meanings are understood through the interpretation of symbols and mutual understanding is not simply achieved by conveying information. Empathetic analysis, 'standing in the shoes' of different parties can help needs, motives, and bias to be identified.

Conflicts may constrain development activities by engaging people away from development objectives. Development may cause conflicts intentionally by challenging existing practices, structures and beliefs. Development may also cause conflict unintentionally by raising fears and confusion. Development agencies bring power. influence, resources, and incentives that can raise competition, or undermine existing projects in the area.

An assessment of existing conflicts can contribute to pre-project analysis. This analysis should try to define the underlying causes of the conflict and review what coping mechanisms have already been tried. It will inform both the technical substance and human processes. If mutual understanding is gained then unintentional conflicts may be mitigated.

Conflicts can escalate into dead-lock situations where assets are being destroyed without benefit. Detecting conflicts early, and responding to the underlying causes, can minimise damage. Third parties can help parties to unlock from a clash, and seek new solutions to their problems.

Conflicts can help to pinpoint problems which might be solved by development options. An understanding of local conflicts and the reasons behind them can inform project design. Working to find mutually workable solutions to conflicts can lead to deeper or more tolerant relationships and comprehensive solutions.

It is not always practical to reach a consensus that will satisfy the advancement of all local peoples' interests in the full variety of roles they undertake. Targeting the most vulnerable groups will not always be compatible with the most sustainable development of natural resources.

It is not clear that there is more conflict in heterogeneous groups. The success of community based management organisations working well in `homogeneous' communities may be dependent on specific cultural homogeneity rather than a universal fact. Closeness may increase local competition and in certain instances, situations of assured disinterest between parties are an asset. Relationships of mutual tolerance and acceptance at a respectful distance, may be a condition in which parallel activities can be established and continue. Organisational cultures need to be appropriate to the particular development aims, and that culture needs to be workable by its membership.

Development agencies should be aware of the secondary impacts of their interventions. Development agencies can delay giving technical advice and resource support until they have confidence the impacts will not negatively affect vulnerable people in the area.

Customary and legal conflict management mechanisms may not work towards the same aims as the development agency. Patronage relationships need to be mapped and understood at the early stages of

intervention. Patrons can be supportive of agency aims, and they may be influenced if the agency is generally well regarded. Site specific research and relationship building requires dedicated attention and resources. Social diplomats need to be employed alongside technical experts from the outset, as the political will to manage inevitable conflicts to creative ends is essential. Sustainability requires an ongoing co-operation across natural, institutional, political, social and economic interfaces.

Development agencies are not neutral. Objectives and values can affect the way a conflict is judged. A conflict that secures positive outcomes such as more sustainable interventions may be viewed as creative. A conflict that undermines existing assets without providing alternative livelihood strategies may be viewed as destructive. Short and long term impacts of intervention substance and process need to be predicted as well as monitored.

Third party intervention can be formal or informal. Several informal activities with different parties can occur simultaneously. Combinations of workable options need to be established and the decisions of influential people targeted.

Development practitioners need a new range of skills and tools to draw upon because development approaches are changing. Conflict management can be stressful, and development agencies need to provide a clear framework of support to field staff.

National development agencies can use the findings of conflict assessments to search for complimentary activities that can be co-ordinated between different sectoral programmes. Where structural inequalities are causing problems, development organisations have an advocacy role.

Organisations can bridge the gap between conflicting parties by establishing practices to which members can subscribe, without their personal values being threatened. The challenge is to minimise the physical and social damage that can be caused by conflict, and utilise the focus of energy to establish deeper social relations and creative answers to the underlying problems.

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# *Appendix One: NFEP Poverty Ranking*

The poor are ditlerentiated below according to their own criteria. The main criteria include: land ownership, food security, housing condition, employing or selling tabour, and social networks. The percentage of people found in each of these categories will vary by village and geographical location.

Rich Households

These are households that have large land holdings (5-100 acres); have cattle and draught power; produce surpluses: employ wage labours; have houses that are constructed of brick and tin; may have access to a tube well; can pay for medical care; can get bank loans: can bear the cost of educating their children: and dominate the local Ix)w¯cr structure.

**Middle level Households**

These households have moderate access to land fir farming (1-2 acres); have cattle and access to draught power; never sutler from food deficits. however do not produce much surplus: have good houses but not as nice as the rich households. can have two sets of clothes; can bear the cost of education and health costs, have access to credit and do not borrow money for consumption.

**Socially Poor Households**

These households have limited access to land (.3-I acre); they can meet 2-6 months of their food needs in a year. during food deficit periods they can manage 2 regular meals: they adopt various alternative livelihood strategies to meet their needs: they will sharecrop as well as work as wage tabour-. they have homesteads but the housing structures are not that good: they do not have good access to water and sanitation facilities. their clothing is generally poor, they are considered trustworthy due to their connections to the rich and middle households for work (sharecropping and wage labour); seek loans from the rich during times of need and repay these loans regularly: and receive government and NCJO relief assistance during crisis periods due to their links with NGOs and interactions with the wealthier households.

**Helpless Poor - (upper level of extreme poor)**

These households are either landless or functionally landless-they may own homestead land; often live on other peoples' land: live in dilapidated houses: have no food security and can sutler from continuous food deficits: wage tabour and sharecropping are the main sources of income, accept low wages during the lean periods: can not bargain with employers over wages because they are in need of food; women work for wages; illness of wage earners makes these households extremely vulnerable; do not own cattle and do not have domestic resources to fall back on during crises: are indebted to money lenders; rarely get access to bank loans but do get NGO loans that are difficult for theta to paN back: do not have much Social capital with the rich or middle households; very difficult to get help from neighbours because they have defaulted on previous loans; usually have very poor clothing; do not have good access to health care and education; can not offer dowry and can not entertain guests.

**Bottom poor - (lower level of extreme poor, sometimes referred to as the hated poor)**

These households are landless, owning neither homestead land nor arable land; they live on borrowed land or has land. their houses are very poorly constructed and they live in constant fear of eviction; they may be headed by a widow or an aged man, having no able bodied income earners: for those households that are male headed. the wages earned are not enough to adequately support the family: these households are always hungry and food insecure; women are engaged in manual labour; both women and children are engaged in food foraging and collecting fuel; begging is a common occupation: they have a high prevalence of illness due to poor food access, unsanitary conditions, and inability to pay for medical costs. can not get access to loans because they can not repay them: NGOs do not usually work with these: groups-they are considered too much of a credit risk. they have no social capital-very little assistance is provided to them from their neighbours; they do not send their children to school because of poor clothing and the need to have children work; very few people in the conununity view them as important or even part of the community; they may even be left out of participatory wealth ranking exercises.

The proportion of households who are bottom poor has increased in all areas that are ecologically vulnerable

Adapted from Northwest Fisheries Extension Project, Livelihoods Review, 2000

# *Appendix Two:*
# *Summary of Differences, adapted from Hofstede's Five Cultural Dimensions*

### *General Norms: Collectivism-Individualism (Hglctcde, G. 1991:67-73)*

| **Collectivist** | **Individualist** |
|---|---|
| • Groups protect people in return for loyalty | Persons are independent |
| • Identity is based in social-group networks: "We" | Identity is based in the individual: "I" |
| • Direct confrontations are avoided, for harmony | One speaks one's mind, for honesty |
| • Offences lead to public shame and loss of 'face' | Offences lead to guilt and loss of self-respect |
| • Degrees provide entry into higher status groups | Degrees increase self-worth |
| • Employers are perceived in moral terms | Employers are perceived in contractual terms |
| • Recruitment is based on group relations | Recruitment is based on skills and rules |
| • Management focuses on groups | Management focuses on individuals |
| • Relationships come before tasks | Tasks come before relationships |

### *Politics and Ideas: Collectivism-Individualism*

| **Collectivist** | **Individualist** |
|---|---|
| • Collective interests prevail | Individual interests prevail |
| • Groups have right to enter the private life of members | Personal right to privacy |
| • Opinions reflect group membership | Opinions are personal |
| • Laws and rights differ according to the group | Laws are supposed to apply to all equally |
| • Low GNP per Capita | High GNP per Capita |
| • Power is exercised by interest groups | Power is exercised by voters |
| • State control of the press | Freedom of the press |
| • Imported economic theories don't deal with particular, collective interests | Native economic theories are based on the pursuit of self interests |
| • Ideologies of equality prevail | Ideologies of freedom prevail |
| • Harmony and consensus in society are ultimate goals | Self actualisation by individuals is an ultimate goal |
| *Example  Countries* Taiwan, Thailand, Pakistan, India | UK, France, Germany, USA, Sweden Denmark |

### *General Norms: Power Distance (Hofstede, G. 1991:37)*

| **Small Power Distance** | **Large Power Distance** |
|---|---|
| Inequalities between people should be minimised | Inequalities are expected and desired |
| Parents treat children as equals | Parents teach children obedience and respect |
| Experts transfer impersonal truth | Experts transfer personal widom |
| Decentralisation is popular | Centralisation is popular |
| Subordinates expect to be consulted | Subordinates expect to be told what to do |
| The ideal boss is a resourceful democrat | The ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat |
| Privileges and status symbols are frowned upon | Privileges and status symbols are expected & popular |

### *Politics and Ideas Power Distance*

| **Small Power Distance** | **Large Power Distance** |
|---|---|
| • The use of power can be `good' or `bad' and should be legitamate | The use of power resides in the powerful; might over right |
| • Skill, wealth, power, and status need not go together | Skill, power, wealth and status should go together |
| • The middle call is large | The middle class is small |
| • The powerful try to act humbly | The powerful try to impress |
| • Power is based on formal positions, expertise, & incentives | Power is based on contacts, charisma, & force |
| • Political systems change by evolving new rules | Political systems change by replacing the leaders |
| • Violence is rarely used in domestic politics | Political conflicts often lead to violence |
| • Pluralist govt. based on majority of national votes | Autocratic or oligarchic govt. based on cooptation |
| • Small income differentials in society | Large income disparity |
| • Systems stress equal opportunity | Systems stress stratification & hierarchy |
| • Native management theories focus on the role of employees (power sharing) | Native management theories focus on the role of managers(power struggle) |
| *Example Countries* | |
| UK, Germany, USA, Sweden, Denmark | Taiwan, Thailand, Pakistan, India, France - 52- |

### General Norms: Uncertainty Avoidance (Hofstede, G. 1991:125-134)

| Weak Uncertainty Avoidance | Strong Uncertainty Avoidance |
|---|---|
| • Uncertainty occurs and accepted as it occurs | Uncertainty is a continuous threat to be fought |
| • Low stress: subjective feelings of well being | High stress: anxiety |
| • Aggression should not be demonstrated | Aggression and emotions should be vented properly |
| • What is different is curious | What is different is dangerous |
| • Comfortable with unusual situations | Fear of unfamiliar risks and ambiguous situations |
| • Lenient rules on what is taboo | Tight rules on what is taboo |
| • Learning is concerned about good decisions | Learning is about right answers |
| • Rules should be kept to a minimum | Emotional need for rules, even if not practical |
| • Work as required - achievement oriented | Need to be busy - security motivated |
| • Precision and punctuality need to be learned | Precision and punctuality come naturally |
| • Tolerant of deviant ideas and behaviour - innovation | Suppression of deviant ideas and behaviour - resistant |

### Politics and Ideas Power Distance

| Weak Uncertainty Avoidance | Strong Uncertainty Avoidance |
|---|---|
| • Few, and general rules | Many, precise rules |
| • Rules are changed if they are not generally respected | If rules are not respected, repentance is called for |
| • Citizens are competent. Belief in generalists and common sense (many nurses) | Citizens are less competent than authorities. Belief in experts and specialisation (many doctors) |
| • Positive towards institutions and political process | Negative towards institutions and political process |
| • Tolerant, moderate, regional and international focus | Conservative, extreme, xenophobic, national focus |
| • One' group's truth should not be imposed on others | There is one truth, and it is known by us |
| • Tendency towards relativism and empiricism. Scientific opponents can be personal friends | Tendency towards grand theories. Scientific opponents cannot be personal friends |

*Example Countries* UK, USA, Sweden, Denmark, India    Germany, Taiwan, Thailand, Pakistan, France

### General Norms: Feminine-Masculine (Hofstede, G. 1991:103)

| Feminine | Masculine |
|---|---|
| • Value caring and preservation (warm relationships) | Value material success and progress (Money and things) |
| • Everyone should be modest and tender in relationships. Both men and women deal with facts and feelings. | Men should be assertive, ambitious, tough and factual. Women should be tender in relationships and deal with feelings. |
| • Fighting is avoided. Crying is permitted. | Girls cry, boys fight. |
| • Sympathy for the weak | Sympathy for the strong |
| • Average students are the norm | Best students are the norm |
| • Work to live | Live to work |
| • Managers use intuition, and seek consensus | Managers are decisive and assertive |
| • Conflicts resolved by compromise and negotiation fighting | Conflicts are resolved by strength and |

### Politics and Ideas: Feminine-Masculine

| Feminine | Masculine |
|---|---|
| • Welfare society ideal | Performance society ideal |
| • The needy should be helped | The strong should be supported |
| • Permissive - small is beautiful | Corrective - big is beautiful |
| • High spend on development low on arms | Low spend on development high on arms |
| • More women in elected positions of power | Less women in elected positions of power |
| • Main religions stress gender complimentarity | Main religions stress male prerogative |
| Sweden, Denmark, Taiwan, Thailand, France France | UK, Germany, USA, India, |

### Short Term - Long Term Orientation

| Short-Term | Long-Term |
|---|---|
| • High regard and respect for traditions | Adapt to modern context |
| • Pressure to `keep up with the Joneses' | Thrift and sparing use of resources |
| • Quick results are expected. | Perseverance towards long-term results. |
| • Save little | Save more for later investment |
| • Concerned with possessing the truth and keeping `face' | Concerned with the demands of virtue |

# *Appendix Three: Five Strategies For Managing Conflict*

Proposed By Michael Warner & Phillip Jones in "Assessing the Need to Manage Conflict in CommunityBased Natural Resource Projects", Natural Resource Perspectives, No 35, July 1998, ODI, London, UK Force-Conflict can be managed through 'force' when one party has the means and inclination to win regardless of the consequences for the other party, and whether the process of winning causes damage to one's personal or professional relationships. Not all will be able to use the same force. It will largely depend upon the power that one party holds relative to another. In some cases recourse to the legal

system is a form of `force' in that one party can use their superior resources to 'buy' better advice or raise the stakes (for example, by taking a lost case to an appeal court).

Withdrawal-This approach is suited to those parties whose desire to avoid confrontation outweighs the goals they are trying to achieve. The power of 'withdrawal' should not be underestimated, not least since it can be used as a threat to force reluctant and sometimes more powerful parties to negotiate in a more consensusal fashion. However, disadvantaged groups may also withdraw out of a feeling of helplessness. Accommodation-There are occasions when one party values a strong and continuing relationship with one or more of other parties above the attainment of its own goals. In these cases the party may elect to `accommodate' the other parties, conceding to all or most of their demands. Although such outcomes may look as though they have been the result of 'force', the difference is that rather than losing outright, the accommodating party perceives itself to have gained by way of securing good relations, accompanied perhaps by an element of 'good will' and the option to achieve some greater goal at a future date. Compromise-Compromise is often confused with consensus. To compromise in a negotiation may

sound positive, but it means that at least one of the parties perceives that it has had to forgo something. In the planning of community-based natural resource projects, compromise-and in particular the notion of 'tradeoffs'-is now prevalent, spurred on by the perceived 'tragedy of the commons' and the need to make rational resource allocation decisions. Stakeholder analysis is an example of the compromise approach. The tool is used to analyse the potential distributional impact of a project between the various stakeholder groups, thence to feed into project design so as to minimise sacrifice and trade-offs.

Consensus-In a consensus approach the synergy of collaborative negotiations is used to widen the basis for decision-making, thereby avoiding trade-offs altogether.

# Appendix Four: Influence Over the Tank: Ranking I

Influence over the tank was defined as:

Can control personal access and use of the tank and associated resources Can influence others access and use of the tank and associated resources Can influence the distribution of benefits from the tank

| Rank | Name (age) | Land Owned acres | Position "thathwaya" | Resources "sampahth" | Charisma "kemeththa" | Confidence "athma wishwashaya" | Expertise "weshasha denuma" | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | W M Suburatne (35) | 0.5 UK 1 GaL | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Water controller & FO Treasurer. Active natural leader. Previously a fish vendor |
| 2 | J M Nawaratne (50) | 1 UK 0.5 col | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | FO Secretary, has respect, and can communicate with others. His house is next door to the tank. Had previous experience in this role. |
| 3 | W M Premawathie (51) | 2 UK | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | FO President. Has the job of summarising final decisions. Confident to visit government offices. |
| 4 | Priyantha Warnakula-sooriya (29) | 0.25 UK | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ Experienced | Policeman in Chillaw |
| 5 | J A Thilakaratne (37) | 0.75 UK 2 GaL | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ Experienced | Wealthy Shopkeeper (credit relations) Gives good ideas and can speak clearly |
| 6 | W M Wijeratne (55) | 0.25 UK 1 GaL | | ✓ | | ✗ | ✗ Poor schooling | Good house and continuous income. Quiet, but always attends meetings and shows a lot of interest. Takes part in collective fishing |
| 7 | Kamalaratne (40) | 2 UK 1 GaL | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ Agriculture | 2 employed children. Previous key holder. No 8 took the key from him by force. Has good ideas and can speak clearly. Lives outside. Takes part in collective fishing. |
| 8 | Nissanka (42) | 0.75 UK | | ✓ | ✗ | | ✗ Political tendancies | Owns a tractor. Takes part in collective fishing. Drunken. |
| 9 | K M Ranbanda (50) | 1 UK | | | ✓ | | | Leases land from No 9 |
| 10 | W M Ratnayake (50) | 0.75 UK | | | ✗ | ✗ | | Takes part in collective fishing. Lives outside now. Drunken. |
| 11 | Manuel Warnakula-sooriya (60) | 2 UK 0.12 AND | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ Agriculture | Teacher. Previous FO president. Owns a vehicle and son in government job. Rarely participates in meetings, sometimes his wife comes |
| 12 | Sumitha Chandani (28) | 0.5 UK | | | ✓ | ✗ | | Half of her land is farmed by her cousin |
| 13 | Ungurala (75) | 2 UK | ✓ | | ✗ | ✗ | | Old and mature person. Rarely attends meetings. Complains often. |
| 14 | Sooraya (32) | 1 UK 1 GaL | | | ✗ | ✗ | | Rarely attend meetings. Lives outside now. Selfish. |
| 15 | W M Wijesooriya (52) | 2 UK 4 GaL | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ Agriculture | GS in a different area. Rarely participates in meetings and often uses others to farm his land. |

*Influence over the Tank: Ranking 2*

| Rank | Name | Position "thathwaya" | Resources "sampahth" | Charisma "kemeththa" | Confidence "ahma wishwashaya" | Expertise "weshasha denuma hekiyawa" | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | W M Subaratne | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Tank Key holder Treasurer. Authority given to him by other members |
| 2 | W M Pramawathie | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | President Lives close to the tank and supervises it closely. She transmits communication well among members by quickly distributing the message. |
| 3 | J M Nawaratna | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Secretary. Past experience in various organisations |
| 4 | Kamalaratna | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Former secretary. |
| 5 | Ungurala | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | Full time farmers who have spent their life doing that – actively participate in activities |
| 6 | W M Rathanayake | | | ✓ | | | Full time farmers who have spent their life doing that – actively participate in activites |
| 7 | W M Wijesooriya | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | GN – not in field but the sons do his cultivation Previous president. |
| 8 | W M Wijerata | | | ✓ | ✓ | | Full time farmers who have spent their life doing that – actively participate in activites |
| 9 | Jathilakaratne | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | Good experience in farming and knowledge but is new to the FO so not yet established. Time gives power. Recently bought land. Not so much contact with others socially |
| 10 | Nishanka | | ✓ | | ✓ | | New farmer. Associated with politics |
| 11 | M Warmakulasooria | ✓ police | ✓ | | ✓ | | Average interest. Good man but previous treasurer and misused some funds gained by hiring out the FO sprayer for 200 Rs per day and a proportion of the harvest. No accounts were kept. |
| 12 | P Warmakulasooria | | | | ✓ | | Average interest |
| 13 | K M Ranbanda | | | ✓ | ✓ | | Average interest |
| 14 | Sumithachandani | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | Average interest |
| 15 | Jayaratna | | | | | | No Land |
| 16 | Sumuratne | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | No Land Alcoholic |
| 17 | Upul | | | | | ✗ | No Land |
| 18 | Hemachandra | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | | ✗ | No Land Alcoholic |
| 19 | Suria | | | | | ✗ | No Land |
| 20 | Susantha | | | ✓ | | ✗ | No Land |
| 21 | Rathne | | ✗ | ✗ | | ✓ | No Land. Knows about timber. Alcoholic |

Rows 15 to 21 are fishers