**A REPORT ABOUT PHASE I to PHASE II OF THE DANCED PROJECT**

**The Integration of Environmental Planning into the Land Reform Process**

**Period of Activity: 12-23 February 2001**

**INTRODUCTION**
In 1998, there was a memorandum of understanding between DANCED and S.A. Department of Land Affairs to launch a project called, "Integration of Environmental Planning into the Land Reform Process".

Since its inception in September 1998, this project was to stretch for 2.5 years. As a result of some GAPS the project was extended by 6 months and is scheduled for completion in August 2001. By then the implementing agent was solely NDLA. The two demonstration Provinces that were chosen, were Mpumalanga and Free State. The idea was that, these trial areas, will then expand to other Provinces that will have a similar approach to that of two Provinces, so that the kind of methodologies that were used in those test areas could also be employed to the prospective projects.

During that reign, it was established that there was a lack of support from DoA (GAPS) to most of their land reform projects (though most of the projects are agriculturally orientated), to impart necessary extension service to the affected land reform beneficiaries who are poor, and still practice subsistence farming. In view of that, the two departments viz. NDA and NDLA submitted the project proposals from their respective departments to the Danish Embassy to declare a coherent support to the DANCED.

Following recent elections in December 2000, new boundaries are put in place which are expected to benefit from the project’s output, this is supported land development guidelines which incorporate environmental concerns (IDP) and therefore a phase II was a need.

**PHASE I OF THE PROJECT DESIGN MISSION (12-23 FEBRUARY 2001)**
The project design is divided into two phases. Phase I is an initial project preparation, II involves project design and III is the final project document to be submitted to the DANCED.

The principal mission of the design phase is to assist DLA and DoA in the preparation of one project document that will comply with the DANCED requirements (that will pin point environmental issues).

**Environmental concerns in the Land Reform Projects**
Great environmental degradation impact has been visible in the Land Reform projects due to limited or zero assistance to our destitute beneficiaries before and after the transfer stage and also because of inappropriate land use and lack of agricultural know-how.

Due to the former facts as noted above, the project is aimed at (within the context of agriculture):

Promoting interdepartmental co-operation in the land reform process, from planning to implementation (this is in line with LRAD document);
Developing appropriate extension messages, measures and packages to promote SNRM within the small scale farming to semi-commercial farming;
Increasing the capacity of provincial DoA’s Extension service to deal with land management issues;
Assisting land reform beneficiaries in developing or improving their quality of life.

**Project Preparation as stage I of project design**
Two Danish consultants, namely, Dolf Noppen and Anne Andersen who are contracted to DANCED visited South Africa for this purpose. At their arrival; Lala Steyn, Rick de Sagte’ and Thokozani Simelane were consultants who were again subcontracted to Dolf Noppen (leader).

-Lala Steyn: consultant to Ezemvelo KZN issues.

-Rick de Sagte’: consultant to DLA issues.

-Thokozani Simelane: consultant on agricultural issues.

An initial meeting took place at the ARC, ISCW offices chaired by Thelma Makoro of Danish Embassy, after the opening by Dr Koos Eloff (Director). Present in the meeting was the Director: LRM, Mr Taylor, Mr Selemela and two delegates from Directorate, FSD. The purpose thereof was to check if the ARC has the capacity to provide skill transfer on agricultural technology to Extension Officers and the land reform beneficiaries.

**A meeting at NDLA offices**
On 12 Feb 2001, a meeting took place at the conference hall which was opened by Sbu’ Xaba (Director, DLA). Both international facilitators outlined the purpose of the project design.

Mr Bonga Msomi highlighted to the panel the importance of embodying KZN to be the third test area, given its "bread basket to the country" like Mpumalanga. There was an anonymously agreement to this, seeing that restitution in the province takes place on Provincial parks (conservation areas). The meeting was about these findings, on how:

- capacity could be increased within provinces and other service providers, local authorities, private sector and land reform beneficiaries to integrate environmental issues into land reform.
- To provide appropriate agricultural extension support to the land reform process, from the preparation stage to the post transfer, which does not deviate from LRAD prescripts.
It was decided that two National competencies of both departments have to partake in all the three provincial visit to do stakeholder analysis who will then participate in the PPC meeting. Jonathan Diedericks (DLA) and Richard Selemela were branded to this task and as a gateway for the international guests to the provinces.

A field visit in FS Province
Field visit was done on the 13-14/02/2001. All the delegates plus one Municipal Councillor, visited a phase I projects of DANCED in Harrismith to do scoping phase and analysed environmental issues that are denying land reform beneficiaries a survival. Later on this day 13.02.01, we had a meeting with DoA in Harrismith office to gather the constraints to these projects. We slept at the Golden Gate at the Basotho culture, where there were nice geographical features surrounding us. The next morning we went to Bloemfontein.

In Bloemfontein, we had an initial meeting with 3 DLA officials; Deputy Director, Chief Planner and Planner. The delegates did hint to them about the constraints that are faced with the pro9jects in the eastern FS and agricultural offices in meeting the needs of the beneficiaries. Later at 14:00, there was an agricultural meeting comprised of Acting Chief Director, Deputy Director (Farmer settlement), Brandes Strauss, D: LRM Chief Inspector and the DLA reps as above. We mentioned that the Province has to send delegates to the PPC meeting in Pta for 23.02.01 and not DoA and DLA alone but also other spheres of service providers. The next day was Nelspruit.

**A field visit in MP Province**
On the 15.02.01, we held a meeting in DLA offices; composed of MP, DLA Director Mr v/d Merwe, Nontokozo Zwane and Alice Matsane, Principal Planners respectively. In this province it was easy for me because Mr Bonga Msomi had to lead me through. Later, in the afternoon we went to Schagen farm (restituted) to do similar activities of environmental study. The Next day we held a meeting with the Chief Director (DACE), Mr Jan Volschenk in his boardroom and Mike Menge, NDA. Later, with DLA consultant in MP, Greg Jacobs and the NGO TRAC (Julia Thompson) and who was the forerunner of this land reform issues in the province. Another field visit was done to Barberton area. The next Monday was KZN.

**A field visit in KZN (PMB) Province**
This was the most supportive and committed province we have met than the two. The mood was as if they had a DANCED project before. We had delegates from DLA, DoA, Ezemvelo and Land Claims Commissioner with her counterparts. The meeting took place on the 19.02.01 at DLA office and at 14:00 it was at Ezemvelo offices. We all slept at the Giant’s Castle nature reserve in western side of Escourt. The next day, it was a field visit to all farms, which were claimed with the Chairperson of the area. In this area of Amahlubi Trust, I found that there is a need for Soil Care project on agricultural land, which is under erosion, and the houses are affected as a result.

**PPC meeting in Pta**

It was attended by all stakeholders of three Provinces at Dirk Immelman Hall (23.02.01). Thokozani Simelane an agricultural expert was introduced by Mr B. Msomi.

**Issues that transpired:** 4 workshops will take place to bring about a project document.

A start will be with Provincial workshops i.e. 3. The three workshops will be facilitated by 3 local consultants in the absence of the international ones.

Upon these workshop, we will then have a National workshop to oversee the work that was done by the three Provinces to do one package.

3 Components were established viz. the one representing DLA, Sbu’ Xaba, the one on behalf of DoA is Keith Taylor or Richard Selemela and the one of KZN Ezemvelo is Zamo Hlela. All these components co-ordinators are to co-ordinate and facilitate all the activities required to generate a project document.

**Time frames:** 26-27 March 2001, will be the FS workshop.

29-30 March 2001, in KZN.

2-3 April 2001, in MP.

Backstopping Consultants: Thokozani Simelane will facilitate in the MP province that with agricultural connotation.

Lala Steyn will facilitate in KZN, that of Ezemvelo and Land Claims orientations.

Rick de Sagte takes on with FS, the one that addresses Land Affairs.

**What are WE workshopping in all three Components?**

**T. Simelane, DoA:** To develop an extension package of appropriate advice on land use and land management for land reform beneficiaries in the post transfer phase designed and implemented.
**Lala Steyn, Ezemvelo:** To develop models for collaborative management in support of the resolution of land claims to conservation land which include tangible community benefits, are designed and implemented.

**Rick de Sagte, DLA:** To develop guidelines for the integration of environmental concerns into land reform and land development are operationalised at the district level.

**Remarks:** Mawewe Landcare project, as being chosen as the demonstration area for DANCED has created the links between DoA and DLA. There is still a need to strengthen this ties in some projects to increase the space of agriculture. Regional Heads of NDA offices should not be sidelined in this move; they are the ones with the regulatory framework to the management of resources.

This DANCED project, being a holistic phenomenon (agriculture, environment, social aspect, housing, economic, risk aversion and food security) runs in parallel with Landcare Programme and together they can complement each other in arriving at the prime needs of our poorest community.

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**LIST OF ACRONYMS USED IN THE TEXT**

DANCED Danish Co-operation for the Environment and Development NDA National Department of Agriculture

DoA Department of Agriculture

DACE Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment

NDLA National Department of Land Affairs

DLA Department of Land Affairs

LRAD Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development

IDP Integrated Development Plan

SNRM Sustainable Natural Resource Management

KZN Kwazulu-Natal

PPC Project Preparation Committeee

FS Free State

Pta Pretoria

MP Mpumalanga

TRAC The Rural Action Committee

PMB Pietermaritzburg