

0201. Coolie Sangha Formation Application to Icco (Jul 1988)

First 3 year application submitted to Icco in July 1988.

Lists the Short & Long Term Objectives, Situation in which the Project is conceived, contains an Argumentation for the need of the Project, Profiles the 3 Extension taluks, typical Project Means, pre-Project Activities carried out thus far, Project Implementation Plan and the Budget.

1. APPLICANT ORGANISATION

Agricultural Development & Training Society (ADATS)

2. IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATION

Dairy Development Society (DDS)

3. LEGAL STATUS OF THE IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATION

Reg. No: 64/84-85 under the Karnataka Societies Registration Act, 1961

Union Home Ministry No: "094570002" under the Foreign Contributions (Regulation) Act, 1976

Account No: 3331 with Canara Bank, Bagepalli branch

4. FUNCTIONAL STATUS

A sister organisation of ADATS, Bagepalli, sharing the same programme direction and a common Project Director, Accounts Admn Assistant and Executive Assistant.

5. PROJECT TITLE

ADATS EXTENSION PROGRAMMES

> 3 year Coolie Sangha Formation Phase for Chintamani and Chickballapur Taluks

> 1 year preliminary Phase for Siddalaghatta Taluk

6. LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

- To expand the Area coverage and human base of the Coolie mass organisation that agricultural labourers struggling for their humanisation identify themselves with in Bagepalli Taluk by extending Coolie Sangha building activities to the neighbouring Chintamani, Chickballapur and Siddalaghatta Taluks of Kolar District.
- To ensure that the Area analysis, the Coolie Sangha building process, and also the village, Cluster and Taluk level forums that emerge as a result of these Extension Programmes remain relevant to the specificity of the Chintamani, Chickballapur and Siddalaghatta situations and that the Coolies do not get reduced to mere abstractions in a common denominator in our concern to build a larger mass organisation.

7. SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

- To initiate a 4 year Phase (April 1988 to March 1992) of educational and organisational work in 120 villages of Chintamani and Chickballapur Taluks and initiate the same process in 24 villages of Siddalaghatta Taluk so that the Coolies

in these villages may have a clearer understanding of their socio-political and economic environment and begin to aspire for their development.

- To build a human infrastructure of trained and efficient Village Level Workers (VLWs), women Village Health Workers (VHWs) and CSU Representatives in the 144 villages.
- To build the physical infrastructure of community halls in the central villages, *Prajakendra* and campus at the 3 respective Taluk headquarters, etc. that are required to support the Coolies in their organised struggle.
- To build 144 strong and viable Coolie Sangha Units in as many villages, set up 24 Cluster Meets and 3 monthly Taluk level Meetings in order to introduce a culture of self discipline and united action in the Coolies.
- To initiate an adult literacy effort to raise the literacy levels of the Coolies for functional purposes as well as for conceptual gains.
- To initiate a Community Health Programme to build a cadre of Coolie women in 144 villages and involve them in evolving their own development strategies within each Coolie Sangha
- To undertake skill upgrading, credit facilitating, collective manufacturing and marketing, and other small economic projects that may come up as a response to our organisational work, specially among Coolie women.
- To introduce internally evolved management systems and prepare for the withdrawal of outside paid Community Workers so that the trained Coolie cadre of VLWs, VHWs and CSU Representatives can, by themselves and with the help of the central core staff of DDS at each Extension Programme undertake larger development projects from the 5th year onward.
- To try and integrate the VLWs, Coolie Representatives, assets created in these 144 villages and the 3 Taluk Coolie Sanghas into a District level mass organisation so that Coolies from the different Taluks can begin to mutually draw strength from each other by the end of this 4 year 1st Phase of the project.

8. SITUATION IN WHICH THE PROJECT IS CONCEIVED

8.1. The Bagepalli Coolie Sangha

The greatest strength of ADATS was that when we started working in Bagepalli Taluk of Kolar District 10 years back, we did not pretend to have clear answers to any of the questions relating to Coolie development. Perhaps because answers did not exist and we intuitively felt that our intellectualism had failed, we were driven to reach out to the people in a complete and comprehensive way, in our search for solutions. We knew that our intellectualism needed to be complemented by the wisdom of the poor themselves. Our strength in those days was a conviction, softened with humility, to search.

We realised that this could be achieved only through involvement and in struggle. For the Coolies this was to be a struggle for land, wage, dignity and self respect. For us it was a struggle between our intellectual consciousness and the people's social consciousness.

We went to the people without packages and this met their deep socio-cultural aspiration for an identity since they were not treated as victims of our charity. This was the basis for a very strong relationship of mutual respect that soon turned to trust and has weathered many storms since.

In the early years of Coolie Sangha Formation, their struggles were always directed against external oppressors and exploiters - the landlords and the middle peasants. Were it not for our contribution, Bagepalli would have witnessed just another temporary rebellion or uprising that the history of any peasantry is abundantly chequered with. It certainly was our intellectualism which contributed to an inward reflection and led to a process of internal rectification in the Coolies' own culture to tolerate indiscipline and opportunism. Their intuition and wisdom was mature enough to realise that without this internal rectification they did not possess the strength to continue the struggle against external oppressors and exploiters, and thus was established a place and role for ourselves in what has turned out to be a unique partnership.

The BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA has to be understood not just as the culmination of a series of land, wage and other struggles, but in the background of this intellectual struggle that preceded its Formation. A struggle between our intelligentsia pitted against the native wisdom and cunning of the Coolies, in an atmosphere of deep and mutual trust; as the outcome of a partnership effort between a consciously humbled intelligentsia and a people who had hitherto only been credited with ignorance, fatalism, and a lack of the faculty to think at all.

The final step to form the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA was accompanied by a slackening in the tackling of issues against external exploitation. Land and wage issues took a temporary back seat and the safeguarding of their organisation against extinction become the Coolies' top most priority. A marked swing in favour of internal rectification marked the commencement of the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA. To make their fellow Coolie members stick to decisions they themselves had taken after lengthy deliberation, to make the individual realise that she or he had to sacrifice her or his personal view point in favour of the collective without, at the same time, crushing the minority with bullying by the majority, to develop structures which had built-in recall mechanisms to counter the concept of conventional leadership where the led were reduced to mere props, such were the priorities for Coolies who grappled with organisational issues and problems for many months.

After sufficient organisation was built up, Ryot exploitation was faced once again with a new strength based not just on unity, but through organisation and discipline. Issues began to be tackled more effectively and with a greater degree of success. To a certain extent, the excitement and thrill that is inherent in ad-hocism was replaced with almost boring hard work that hardly resembled the earlier struggles that were heavily spiced with hot words and pitched excitement. But yet, the achievements were far greater and of a more lasting value.

It was perhaps a quest for the lost excitement which led to the next Phase in the development of the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA as a cohesive unit embodying the fundamental political aspiration of the Coolies to be masters over themselves.

To capture power and rule over the Ryots was never a political consideration for the Coolies. Theirs was not a desire to counter oppression with oppression, but to offer an alternative to the culture of oppression. To capture a seat which would enable a few of their representatives to sit at a high position was never the ambition of the Coolies. Theirs was a dream to obtain a place of dignity and respect for each and every one of them in their respective villages. We who accompanied the Coolies through that important Phase were quick to realise the special and particular character of Coolie political aspirations and articulate it.

The Coolies wished, through the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA, to contribute a new culture to the practice of politics at the grassroots level. They saw the futility in trying to counter existing oppressive political practices with oppressive political practices of another brand. Instead they wished to contribute Coolie knowledge of Coolie suffering in an attempt to humanise and purify the body politic of civil structures. Following this very peculiar political aspiration, they made a heroic attempt to de-politicise local bodies and make them truly civic repre-

sentative bodies in early 1987. The fact that they were not able to succeed does not betray any naiveté in their vision but is, rather, an indicator of the nascence and limited coverage of their mass organisation, the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA.

The BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA is an organisation created, in this sense, by the Coolies themselves. It is a mass organisation of the Coolies which transgresses the political party while, at the same time, it goes beyond the conventional understanding of a bargaining platform. It is far more than the ganging together of a class of people in order to defend a common economic interest while, at the same time, it performs a trade union role. It does not owe its existence to an urban conceptualisation by intellectuals while, at the same time, it would hardly have come into being with our vital input. It does not take restrictions and limitations posed by village norms and values into considerations while, at the same time, it carves for itself a permanent niche not just in the villages with established CSUs, but also in the imagination of the neighbouring village Coolies, emboldening them with realisable dreams they dare to dream.

Today, the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA very definitely exists in about 150 villages in Bagepalli Taluk. Its village level forum, the Coolie Sangha Unit (CSU), allows very personal aspirations of individual Coolies to be met and respected, while the weekly Cluster Meets and monthly BCS Meetings permit the larger cohesiveness of the Coolie class to be projected.

Regular and formal membership lists, suspension and cancellation procedures, minuted weekly and monthly meetings, periodic Review Meets, annual elections, and the May 1st Coolie Pandaga (Coolie Festival) have given it a definite shape and form which is continually sensitive to and always adapting to new facets of the Coolies' existence which are increasingly coming under the purview of the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA every day.

The successful tackling of various issues which are relevant to Coolies at the village, Cluster and Taluk levels, have given the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA a clout in the Taluk and made it, and the Coolies as a whole, emerge as a serious force to be reckoned with.

By its relentless perseverance and commitment to processes rather than to expediency, following the twin principles of grassroots planning and Coolie participation, it has obtained an identity in the neutral population as a moral and just struggle of the Coolies. Through its sheer achievement in physical and qualitative terms due to the social control it exerts over Coolie members, it has earned the respect of the bureaucrat and the banker as an authentic and effective model of Coolie development.

Since the Coolies find an intuitive recognition in the model as something they themselves have contributed to the making of, they are attracted to form Coolie Sanghas by themselves.

And finally, due to the success of the fund raising call given to the Coolies to contribute 10% of their earnings to their respective CSUs in order to safeguard the posterity of their organisation, there is a guarantee of its relevance and continuity long after the total withdrawal of the promotional organisation, ADATS.

The BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA has stirred deep socio-cultural and political aspirations in other Coolies from surrounding villages. We cannot afford to be blind to this aspiration since it is this very participation that enriches and furthers the expanding ideology of the model, corrects lapses and mistakes, and thereby continues to shape the mass organisation on increasingly relevant and effective lines.

A measure of a viable geopolitical unit cannot, as in conventional terms, be an assembly or parliament seat or even a conglomeration of such seats when following the Coolie Sangha model of development. The BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA is not, as has been earlier explained, just a lobby in favour of the Coolies. It is the carrier of a new political culture, indeed a crucible for a wider movement that it has yet to give birth to. The model has a validity in the en-

tire semi-arid drought prone area description which characterises most of Kolar District. Therefore the whole District has to be viewed, at this moment, as a single geopolitical entity that it must cover.

After making such a statement, naturally, the actual capacity of ADATS, the systems it has developed, and its internal strengths and weaknesses have to be examined.

8.2. An Implementation Technology developed by ADATS

Like with other groups that started at that time, ADATS' main concern in late 1977 was a desire to be societal relevant, find a personal role and ourselves contribute. Therefore the emphasis was on the development of our group. Most of our efforts were directed at developing and spelling out of a place and identity for ourselves among the Coolies. Our involvement was a deep and personal one of total commitment in an atmosphere of intellectual honesty.

To make a proper analysis demanded a full documentation of minute experiences and observations, critical reflections, and a detailed recording of processes, progress and development. A sub-conscious realisation of the need to reproduce the model we were developing must have existed alongside with our effort to develop ourselves intellectually, and there perhaps always was a desire in us that ours should not be an exclusive accomplishment. Our daily diaries, Saturday Meetings, Progress Reports and various other papers which ADATS regularly brought out reveal an intuitively felt need to expand towards relevant and effective coverage.

This resulted in enhancing our clarity and the making of a statement on the political economy of the Taluk, and the evolution of the 3 working principles of economic contradiction, political unity and social neutrality between the Coolies and the Ryots.

From the very beginning we took a 2 Organisations approach, keeping the mass organisation and the NGO as distinctly separate entities. And in those early years the emphasis was more on the development of our organisation. The micro analysis we made still holds valid to the last detail for Bagepalli Taluk and its broader points of departure for any semi-arid drought prone economy in south India. But the 3 working principles were abandoned by the Coolies as soon as this early emphasis shifted, betraying the fact that they facilitated us more than they did the Coolies themselves.

This emphasis on theoretical self development lasted a full 7 years. But ADATS did not develop any managerial proficiency in that period since we were, essentially, still a group in character and functioning. Then a combination of events made us wake up to the fact that we had unleashed a very powerful process in favour of the Coolies, the logical consequence of which had to be squarely faced.

A leadership void, specially for the Coolies, women and the minorities, was created due to particular political developments that took place in the Taluk in 1984. Though we contributed only partly to this process, the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA got an opportunity to fill that gap in leadership. ADATS was forced by circumstances to facilitate this transition in the role of the mass organisation to assume a particular type of moral leadership, but was inhibited by its group-like internal organisational structure.

An organisational crisis propitiously occurred in late 1984 resulting in the group concept being totally abandoned and ADATS emerged as an organisation. This marked a watershed in the development of ADATS. We realised that our continuity was necessitated, and indeed would henceforth be dictated, by larger Coolie demands. We realised that the time for searching and experimentation was over, and we had to stabilise in order to play a clear role in Coolie Sangha building. This meant the developing of sound management systems within ADATS and the gearing up of ourselves to achieve tangible results in definite time spans.

By mid 1985 the accumulated experiences of ADATS were placed on a broad matrix which clearly defined inputs and objectives in a time perspective, and an implementation technology began to be developed.

Coolie Sangha building operations were divided into 3 distinct 3 year phases of Formation, Formalisation and Consolidation with ADATS paid staff pull out at the end of each Phase. ADATS inputs like adult literacy classes, cadre training, management skill training, legal aid, support and service activities like referral health and the Children's Programme, and small economic projects were planned for introduction and cut-off at definite points of time in this 9 year matrix in order to achieve maximum impact, based on our earlier experiences with each such input's role and particular contribution to Coolie Sangha building.

A paper on the role of economic inputs in Coolie Sangha Formation and Formalisation, clearly spelling out the non-economic objectives of economic projects, was brought out. This was followed up with other papers on individual economic projects. Another paper on the Sponsorship Model Framework was also brought out. Finally, a paper on the Coolie Sangha Model of Development itself was written.

An organogram was drawn up, clearly tracing the lines of reporting and control between ADATS and the Coolie Sangha, elucidating the tasks, positions, responsibilities and reporting procedures of various ADATS staff and Coolie Sangha functionaries. ADATS staff were appointed on mutually drawn up job descriptions that both agreed to after studying the various papers and this organogram.

Flow charts, reporting formats, minute books and various other management aids were specially designed and put into use in an attempt to make the entire ADATS operation simple, efficient and transparent. Special equipment was procured for the main office and Desk Workers were trained to provide the executive and field staff with updates, information analysis, and other administrative support.

Proven material for achieving adult literacy targets were packaged into books, charts, audio cassettes and examination schedules. New packages were developed and field tested for enhancing Coolie children's literacy and numeracy. Procedures were laid down for obtaining CSU and Cluster recommendations before extending legal aid and aid distress. Systems were developed to facilitate grassroots planning and CSU monitoring of an interest-free credit giving project, a large labour intensive project, etc.

Review practices were introduced and the weekly Cluster Meets became formal points of working contact between ADATS and the Coolie Sangha. The monthly BCS Meetings began to recommend and endorse policies and programme choices, ratify budget allocations, etc. ADATS stopped relating to the Coolies directly and our beneficiaries, in this sense, became the CSUs instead of thousands of Coolies in an individual or personal capacity.

ADATS expanded its activities to 60 more villages in September 1985 after a total staff pull out from the 30 older villages, and once again to another 60 villages in September 1986.

This implementation technology cannot be understood as just a series of tested actions to perform or proven packages to deliver in a particular manner, following a certain sequence, and within a defined time framework. These would merely constitute a technology.

An implementation technology has to be understood within a contextual framework wherein such actions, packages, sequences and time frames exist. This contextual framework demands clarity on the macro factors influencing the problem as well as a detailed micro analysis of the specificity of the locale, an ideological choice to contribute with a definite bias towards a particular class, a determined commitment to achieve results, along with the actual technology which spells out what has to be done, why, how and when.

An implementation technology demands transparency. To be clear is as important as to be lucid. No objective or technique can afford to be elusive and no hidden agenda can be harboured. The Coolies have to be very sure as to what the effort is aimed at as well as our personal motivation for making it.

An implementation technology thereby demands, as a pre-condition, a deep and shared concern that zest commitment at every level in the staff as well as in the Coolies, and creates a healthy work ethos of participation - the full sharing of credit and achievement even though each contributes only a small or large bit, theoretical or practical, to the total effort.

An implementation technology is, in a word, a state of the art. A management system which cannot survive outside the management milieu; a set of tools, techniques and sequences that will not produce results without the theoretical clarity, ideological choices, mental conditioning, and the human and physical infrastructure to support it.

Judging by achievements alone, ADATS has proved that such an implementation technology has already been developed at Bagepalli, and that it can be applied to the Extension Programmes in the 3 neighbouring Taluks with a fair assurance of achieving results.

8.3. Ways of increasing coverage

Before deciding on extending our work through 3 autonomous wings of the Dairy Development Society we explored all the other possible modalities for increasing Area coverage. The direct expansion of ADATS' Area of operation was the first choice we had. To depend upon a "natural" spreading of the model through the work of splinter organisations was another. Networking with other NGOs working in the Area was the third option we considered. We also explored the possibility of setting up 3 independent off-shoot sister organisations, 1 for each Extension Programme, with a separate and responsible Board for each organisation.

ADATS is fully aware of the dangers inherent in any single organisation growing too large. Too much money and a large annual budget attracts the negative visibility of, among others, the state machinery which has never been too comfortable with voluntary action and foreign funds. The annual budget of ADATS is already large at about Rs 7.6 million. In 1988 this figure has crossed Rs 10 million. Any further increase in our budget will definitely invite jealousies and suspicion.

Large organisations give an inherent justification for conspicuous life-styles ostentatiously justified by size and increased workloads. Even when this does not happen because of a conscious policy decision, the bare necessary infrastructure itself becomes conspicuous, cumbersome to manage, and invites criticism by its very size.

As the staff size increases, internal organisational structures have to necessarily be made impersonal, and this effects the work. Irrespective of the salaries paid or benefits provided, workers in the voluntary sector still join for the very personal reason of wanting to escape the alienation and dehumanisation of the commercial sector. The type of work we do in the villages continually provokes questions, raises nagging doubts and feelings of uneasiness at a very deep and personal level. Reacting to these moods and feelings of our fellow workers is often as important as working with the Coolies. A large staff size makes it impossible to achieve an intimacy and provide sufficient moral and intellectual support to fellow development workers.

But the most important argument against centralised expansion is that the Coolie Sangha building process should not become an impersonal exercise. The personal touch and the "calling by name" of each individual Coolie and village is the most vital contributor to the success of the Coolie Sangha model. Even the implementation of the broad matrix will need Area specific alterations. Matters like staff withdrawal, choice of economic input, etc. cannot al-

ways be executed in a mechanical and uniform manner. These decisions require an intimate knowledge and a subjective assessment of the field reality.

But as an organisation grows and management systems are introduced, such positive subjectivity gets scuttled in an anxiety to conform. To claim uniform growth and make a common statement becomes an obsession. This is bound to happen even when each expansion Area is clearly demarcated with independent and responsible staff handling matters and following their own logic. This is perhaps because the effort to preserve diversity is often so tiring and thereby irritating.

After having ruled out the advisability of expanding ADATS' direct coverage, the next logical alternative was to explore the possibility in "natural extensions", depending on ADATS staff who had left to start projects of their own when they felt that they had "learned the ropes". This has happened many times at ADATS, but none of them have achieved tangible results which could add to the strength of the Coolie Sangha.

This is because all of them felt an inner compulsion to discredit everything that their parent organisation stood for, mainly to justify their splintering, off shooting, and thereby their very existence. Even though they have all, without exception, later been able to re-establish cordial relations with ADATS, the result of this initial deriding has been that they have all had to start at the very beginning, first with their own stabilising as a working group, then with the evolution and adopting of a development philosophy, then a strategy, and finally begin to achieve results for the Coolies. This process takes very long and by the time concrete results are obtained, they are often antiquated since the Coolies' expectations from NGOs have, in the meantime, grown deeper and well as larger.

ADATS would naturally like to believe that the days of splintering are over and that our senior core promotional staff do not wish to leave us with any ill will or in a spirit of competition. We feel that we have more or less stabilised our functional composition and everyone recognises a value in staying together. But even if this were not so, we can very objectively state that splinter groups and offshoot organisations will not achieve larger results to widen the coverage of the Coolie Sangha.

We then examined networking with existing NGOs as a possible strategy for geopolitical coverage. In spite of very sincere efforts on this line, this too turned out to be not feasible for the practical reason that there are no NGOs with similar inclinations in these 3 neighbouring Taluks.

Our attempt to set up 3 independent Extension Organisations could not go ahead because we were not able to get FCRA Numbers for these organisations. Therefore it was decided to set up the 3 Extension Programmes as 3 autonomous units of a single Extension Organisation, the Dairy Development Society, which enjoys recognition under the Foreign Contributions (Regulations) Act, 1976. Thus this revised Project Application is being prepared in November 1988, clubbing all the 3 Extension Programmes into one.

8.4 The expanded organogram of ADATS and the 3 Extension Programmes

An appropriately developed organogram is a definite and vital component in any implementation technology. ADATS' most notable contribution to the development of an implementation technology was the clear division of functions and concerns between the Field Assistant/s and the Executive Assistant. While the Field Assistant/s pursued values as objectives, the Executive Assistant ensured accomplishments. Neither succumbed to the other's priorities while both appreciated the vital importance of each other's concerns.

With this particular organisational structure ADATS recognised that our work in the voluntary sector had to transgress the pursuit of targets alone and begin to contribute to the intro-

duction of positive values in society. At the same time, ADATS was mature enough to realise that an emphasis on value objectives should not be used as an excuse for mere talk and arm-chair revolution.

We will now trace the organogram developments at ADATS since early 1985, when the group concept was abandoned after the December 1984 crisis, to the date of writing this revised Project Application.

The teaming together of a group of workers is normally for the pooling of different abilities which complement each other. Such a unity is functional in character and the carriers of different talents and potential are essentially replaceable. This is a natural Phase which any group evolves into when it becomes an organisation. Personal involvement of the staff are contracted, time bound and dispensable. This description characterised ADATS for 3 years.

As the organisation grew in size as well as accomplishments and the stakes involved became high at a material as well as personal credibility level, the situation got ripe for crisis. In late 1987 we realised that it was not advisable to continue with a small core group heading the organisation and considering the rest of the staff to be dispensable carriers of various skills and abilities.

We had 2 options before us. The first possibility was to perpetuate the functional composition character of ADATS with a conventional management response to defuse the situation. This could have worked very well, but we knew that the organisation would henceforth be riddled with limitations which would face us over and over again. The other option was to alter the organisational structure and open the possibility for taking on much larger responsibilities even though this would involve a tremendous effort in developing our senior staff while at the same time, exposing us to the risk of being dependent on particular persons, their sincerity, seriousness and commitment. To make such a commitment to and, inter alia, depend on particular persons under these circumstances is never easy. But we realised that we had to reorganise ourselves to effect a larger and more relevant coverage if we were true in our commitment to the Coolies.

A conventional management response to such a situation would have been to introduce structures and systems that could have put everyone in their place, albeit in a comfortable and acceptable manner. Job descriptions could have been mutually re-negotiated and clearer lines of reporting could have been drawn up. It could have been made clear to the senior staff that they were responsible only to a certain point and that beyond that the final responsibility lay with the core group comprising of the Project Director, the Accounts Admn Assistant, the Executive Assistant and the ADATS Field Assistant - not to be confused with the Field Assistant/s (Area) - alone. There were 2 reasons why such a conventional response was seriously considered by us at that time.

The first was that ADATS had already gone through a 7 year Phase of self development as a group. This was done, even if in part, at the expense of developing Coolie Sangha forums and structures. To attempt appeasing everyone in ADATS could again be at the expense of the Coolies, even if the present staff were more action and accomplishment oriented.

Secondly, there was no indicator of the senior staffs' willingness to make long term commitments. Their uneasiness at being considered as dispensable could well be a discomfiture and affront to superficial sensibilities rather than a serious bid to make hard choices and commit themselves to the organisation and its work. Our making limited concessions in such a situation could amply satisfy their yet unarticulated demand for a limited recognition and limited respect. Theirs was not a desire to shoulder total responsibilities or make irrevocable commitments. They still wished, in this sense, to retain a private and personal part of their lives for themselves and still have a place of pride at ADATS and the voluntary sector.

The temptation to succumb with a conventional management response was very great for all of us. Debates and discussions among us became emotionally exhaustive since each one had to subjectively assess very deeply held beliefs of the other. Bringing the Projects Assistant designates into this debate only added more confusion to muddled minds. Emotional blackmail was freely used by one and all.

Only at the time of the first writing the Project Application, were we in a position to articulate the reasons why we, at the same time, intuitively felt that we did not have a black and white situation where clear choices could be made. After having stated the 2 main reasons in favour of a conventional management response, we will now list the 4 considerations which cried against it.

The first is that our work demands so much more than the mere carrying out of pre-planned tasks. It takes not just the improvisation and adaptation which any good and responsible management execution demands in the commercial sector. It takes the ability to conscientiously examine actions against values they will instil. Unless these values are practised by us, will we have the inner strength to project them in what we do?

Secondly, is it possible for us to follow 2 management principles side by side? A bourgeois orientation for systems and structures set up at ADATS, and an alternate philosophy to guide the internal evolution of a humane and principled management system for the Coolie Sangha? Dual standards would not only put our credibility at stake when facing the Coolies but also compromise us at an individual level, making it impossible for us to retain an intellectual honesty in any matter.

The third consideration is that it is especially true in the contemporary climate of India there is no guarantee of the funds continuing. And our quest is not simply to make the best use of the money for as long as it is available. Though the Coolie Sangha model of development takes external funding as an inevitable component, our personal motivation and mental conditioning has to be divorced from funds and findings. Though when the money stops there will be no difference in the plight of the one who is in this field for money and the other who is in it despite the money, it does make a difference during our present time involvement.

NGOs cannot base their entire management systems on the false strength of monetary stability. Not only because this would be a false boast when continued funding is uncertain, but for another vital reason. The contribution of development workers, even when it cannot, must in time transcend their contracted employment. Only such a mentality, even if unrealistic, will prevent an escapist attitude from developing and enhance commitment and thereby effectiveness.

The fourth and most important reason against putting people in their places, even if in a comfortable and acceptable manner, is that we do not have the intrinsic arrogance to claim to know all the answers and stake our prerogative to a position where we can judge our fellow workers and determine the limits to their contribution. At the same time, this does not mean that a carte blanche has to be issued for the Projects Assistant designates to do as they wish and their every whim and fancy be tolerated.

ADATS' involvement in 3 Extension Programmes is not a nursing through probation or flanking assistance being rendered to our senior staff to enable them to set up shops for the direct selling of wares of their choice. The objectives of the Extensions are very clearly to help the Coolies through an increase in Area coverage and to help the NGO contribute deeper in this enabling process. In this sense the Dairy Development Society -the Extension Organisation- can never be independent of ADATS as long as it is sincere in its intentions and true to its objectives.

It took us many months to articulate the pros and cons involved in choosing this particular type of organogram for ADATS' future. These were, as we have already stated, difficult months for all of us. Finally we realised that we have no option but to trust and relate to the sensibilities of one another if we want to take on larger responsibilities and grow. Indeed, we have placed ourselves in a fait-accompli of inter dependence.

We realised that if the pooling together is of our sensibilities and not just of our abilities alone, we will have a totally different organisational structure where different motivations, shared concerns, varying determinations and individual strengths merge to form a cohesive whole. The writing of the Project Application has served a very vital purpose at ADATS, opening up an honest debate on everyone's role and responsibility, seriousness and commitment.

We see the futility in a mere repetition of the Bagepalli achievements at other Taluks and consciously choose this form of decentralised extensions though it is fraught with risks and danger. We are aware that the mere duplication of the particular management effort and system which has worked in Bagepalli for the past 3 years will not suit the requirements of the 3 additional Extension Areas with a simple multiplication of the same effort and system by 4. New requirements will be necessitated, demanding more of everyone's largess. We are prepared to meet these new requirements, forgoing prerogatives we hitherto enjoyed and sharing responsibilities. These same considerations have also forced our senior staff to declare their long term commitment and willingness to take on larger responsibilities.

The simultaneous development of a healthy work ethos and the absence of a mood of competition will be the vital milieu for this new organisational structure to work. If, instead, specialised senior colleagues hold each other to ransom through their respective specialisation and constituencies, the same situation will be created as has been in some other NGOs which have suddenly grown large, and this will spell mutual disaster for everybody.

The new and expanded organogram we envisage for ADATS and the Extension Organisation is one that goes beyond a functional composition, without at the same time having to revert back to the group concept. We do not envisage all the senior staff together forming a core group where participatory equality is an affectation. Instead, at each Extension Programme, the Projects Assistant will relate to the common ADATS Project Director, Accounts Admn Assistant and Executive Assistant within a mutually agreed, defined and disciplined working framework.

8.5. Decentralised Extensions through 3 autonomous units of an Extension Organisation

Decentralised extensions, continuing to build on the evolutionary gains of ADATS' 11 years experience as a NGO but, at the same time, not expanding ADATS itself any further is the only sensible way of covering more villages that we can think of. That is why we decided to set up the Extension Organisation as a genuine and authentically independent body through a careful Board composition to preserve a directional unity and also permit a healthy diversity in each of the 3 Taluks at the same time. Each of the 3 Extension Programmes will be an autonomous unit of this Extension Organisation, the Dairy Development Society.

We decided that the ADATS Project Director will be the common and shared Project Director for all the Extension Programmes. His role and responsibility, however, will be split to be shared equally with the DDS Board and 3 full time Project Assistant who he will appoint, 1 for each Extension Programme. Since the model does not have mere theoretical postulates alone, but spells a strategy in greater implementation detail, the ADATS Accounts Admn Assistant and the ADATS Executive Assistant will assist the Project Director and share with him his responsibilities.

We realise that the organisational division of labour which is bound to take place as soon as the Extensions commence will be necessitated by the logic of growth rather than by any negative consideration and will help specialise functions and increase efficiency. It will be an inevitable development since it will be physically impossible for the Project Director to effectively wield the same comprehensive powers that he hitherto enjoyed at ADATS. Specialisation will take place not only in the role and functioning of the Project Director but also in that of other senior staff at ADATS as well as in the Extension Programmes.

The common Project Director will give overall programme directions to ensure that the activities undertaken by the 3 Extension Programmes are all within the philosophical and strategic framework of the Coolie Sangha model of development. He will relate to donor partners and finalise budgets for each Extension, and write the Progress Reports.

At a theoretical level, since he will continue to perform a similar role at Bagepalli, he will be able to strike at the commonality of all the 4 Taluks with Coolie Sanghas. In this manner, the Project Director will be in a position to realise, articulate and project the larger cohesiveness of the Coolie class and begin to perform a new role in the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA, furthering the socio-cultural and political aspiration of the Coolies as a whole and helping them evolve expressions for translating these aspirations. In the coming years, this is going to be a very important and vital role since structures to permit individual and collective Coolie development at the village and Cluster level have already been evolved and established.

The Projects Assistant will be in overall charge of the implementation of various programmes, projects and activities undertaken by their respective Extension Programmes. They will study and contribute to the finalisation of this and all other Project Applications of the Extension Programmes and such applications shall define the details and responsibilities they will commit themselves to. Similarly they will contribute to the finalisation of the Progress Reports of their respective Extension Programmes.

On their advice, the Project Director will appoint the respective staff of DDS at each Extension. All such staff will report directly to their respective Projects Assistant. They will also look after the day to day administrative and accounting affairs of their respective Extension Programme, operate the Project Bank Account and maintain the Project Books of Accounts.

The Projects Assistant will relate and report to the ADATS Executive Assistant, the ADATS Accounts Admn. Assistant and the common Project Director to enhance the cohesiveness and unity of the total effort at the different Areas and Taluks, bringing all of us under a common policy reflection forum.

In this manner the Coolie Sangha Model of Development which ADATS has evolved over the past 11 years will serve to give general directions without dictating programme detail or content. Area specific analysis will be evolved and programme details worked out in a relevant manner for each Extension Programme with all the 3 Extensions as well as ADATS mutually benefiting from each others' experiences.

8.6. The creation and absorption of a human infrastructure of development workers

Non governmental contributions to rural development had always been through social workers and their selfless dedication. Ironically the life-styles and efforts of these social workers received more laudation than their accomplishments. This Phase in the history of NGO effort lasted for many decades till about 10 years back.

The last decade has seen, all over India, a serious and concerted effort to evolve models of development, signifying a shift in emphasis from the self actualisation, and thereby self employment, of social workers to what we at ADATS call the development of an implementation technology.

This shift started with a desire to be societal relevant by aiming at structural transformation. The logic of this drive was powerful. It opened arenas which could hitherto never be considered because it created a milieu of intellectual honesty, needing more courage than physical bravery.

It humbled us at first, but with a different kind of humility from the one which preceded it, making our fore-runners conscious of their absence of pride. Then it built us up again from a deflated position without pretences find our true identity vis-à-vis the poor as members of the intelligentsia.

In this way it has today created a more natural and realistic identity for us in an economy which has begun to recognise under-development as a malady that plagues all the rich as well as the interventionist. It has removed elements of the sacrosanct and sacrifice which characterised our predecessors. It has created for us, in the Indian reality, a niche which is no more artificial, propped up or accidental.

The temporary nature of foreign funds and the arbitrary attitude of the state to it mitigates the foregoing, almost ridiculing it to be a lie. But this does not invalidate our position. Sectors in society are not born in comfort. We believe that the social work of yesteryears is in the process of giving birth to the voluntary sector, and social workers to a positive professionalism as development workers.

In this Phase of transformation, all sorts of people join NGOs. Confusion attacks the glib and smooth who see easy money and a life of relative comfort and power provided the right words are learned and proper mannerisms adopted. Positive professionalism gets mixed with professionalism per se and bearers of skills and tricks who wish to sell their know-how just about wherever they can get their price clamour to join. And finally there are the sincere who are driven by deep passion but unable to contribute for sheer lack of efficiency and work discipline.

To find the right persons to take serious responsibilities has always been a problem in NGOs. It is not enough to just train personnel and teach them analytical, functional and management skills. For them to develop a particular frame of mind, compatible morality and a personal character which fosters faith in people, clarity on personal role, desire to be societal relevant and aim at structural transformation is even more important. These personal developments require a milieu of intellectual honesty which can only be gained through involvement and struggle with the Coolies, through work in NGOs.

A geopolitical vision has to take this creation and absorption of a human infrastructure of development workers into account in its strategy.

Due to ADATS' 2 Organisations policy and the phased withdrawal of staff from the older Areas, experienced and committed persons are continually being made available. The Field Assistant (GEP), and the Field Assistant (CEP) along with a senior woman staff member were promoted and sent to the 3 Extension Programmes as Projects Assistants and 6 CEP Community Workers as Field Workers. This will satisfy their legitimate personal ambitions to take on larger responsibilities and claim credit for independent accomplishments without having to splinter or break away to gain an identity.

ADATS is very clear, however, that there can be no division at the mass organisation level. The CSUs and Cluster Meets which emerge in the new Areas will compulsorily be merged with the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA through the Taluk level Coolie Sanghas which emerge at the 3 Extensions. This is the reason why the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA has been so structured as to accommodate more (Taluk)CS Meetings and (Taluk)CS Secretaries and permit unrestricted variation at the village level for membership, priority and activity details.

The Extension Programmes, as we have conceived them, is the only strategy to ensure that the desires of project holders to develop their own base constituencies does not interfere with and adversely effect the larger unity, and thereby effectivity, of Coolies in a single geopolitical contiguous Area attempting to form themselves into a single mass organisation.

9. ARGUMENTATION FOR THE NEED OF THE PROJECT

9.1. Increasing coverage to benefit the Coolies

Any further impact using the Coolie Sangha model of development will be attained only if a contiguous and geopolitically viable coverage of many more villages is made. Chintamani, Chickballapur and Siddalaghatta Taluks lie to the south of Bagepalli and the model must be extended there in order to embrace Coolie aspirations in the neighbouring villages.

This increase in coverage is evidently necessary to widen the base of the Coolie mass organisation and make it an efficient lobby and bargaining platform, and also to give effective protection to Coolies in their struggle to find a place of dignity in a rapidly changing social, cultural, political and economic environment. This is the first argument in favour of extension.

9.2. Increasing coverage to further the Coolie Sangha Model of development

While increased numbers will contribute in a very obvious manner to geopolitical coverage, the increased workloads and an organisational division of labour with narrowed responsibilities and the resultant specialisation which will ensue in ADATS will contribute in a more profound manner to the further development of the model itself.

Coolie aspirations are 2 fold in character. The first is the need to fulfil individual aspirations that are personal and important to any human existence. These are satisfied through the village and Cluster level forums which we have helped them evolve and set up. The second are deeper socio-cultural and political aspirations which are collective in character and can find expression only in cohesiveness. It is in this expression that a class of Coolies emerges from out of an unorganised mass of people. Till then they remain as victims in the expression of some other class aspirations.

Just as in the case with the former aspiration, the evolution of a forum for expressing this larger Coolie class aspiration can be made possible only if a theory capable of encompassing it can first be evolved.

Extension will permit some of us to make this deeper contribution, as intellectuals who have chosen to accompany the Coolies, to the articulation of their socio-cultural and political aspirations, and the creation of new structures for expressing this cohesiveness. Indeed, it will force us to make deeper contributions since there will be neither the time nor the physical possibility for us to burden ourselves with mundane details at the CSU and Cluster levels. In this manner, extension will rid the Coolies of our nagging interference on structures we have already created at the village and Cluster levels, removing the petty bourgeois biases which we impose on them and making these forums more and more Coolie in character.

But what is Coolie in character? Is it really the proletarian purity that we sometimes think we glimpse at through the dense mist of opportunism in their crude struggle for sheer survival? Or are we merely entertained by the Coolies with a charade born out of compassion for our sincerity? Do the Coolies really believe that the broader currents of society can be countered with activist efforts of NGOs?

ADATS does not pretend to know these answers. In our work will always remain that hovering uncertainty that is inevitable when between 2 powerful forces. Our strength, we believe, is in not knowing the last and final answers and yet going ahead.

ADATS, as an organisation, is driven by forces within which compels us to extend for reasons less prosaic than the need to grow big for largeness sake or to repeat our success story for want of nothing better to do. This forms the second argument in favour of extension.

10. PROFILE OF THE EXTENSION TALUKS

10.1. Chintamani Taluk

Chintamani Taluk lies to the south east of Bagepalli and is part of Kolar District in Karnataka. The Taluk closely resembles Bagepalli Taluk with poor soils and scanty rainfall. Agricultural practices are obsolete with low inputs and lower returns, and the region forms the south eastern most boundary of the Rayalaseema desert belt.

The Taluk has a population of 1,98,632 persons comprising of 33,226 families in 336 inhabited villages and 1 municipal town. 80.3% of this population live in the rural area in an agrarian economy.

Of this rural population, landed and landless Coolies comprise 53%. Small peasants owning 1 to 2 hectares comprise 22% of the rural families and middle peasants owning 2 to 10 hectares comprise 24%. Only 379 families own more than 10 hectares each in this Taluk.

Landless agricultural labourers	3,800 families	(14.3%)
Landed labourers owning less than 1 hectare	10,367 families	(38.8%)
Small peasants owning 1 to 2 hectares	5,839 families	(21.9%)
Middle peasants owning 2 to 10 hectares	6,295 families	(23.6%)
Rich peasants owning more than 10 hectares	379 families	(1.4%)
Total rural household (80.3%)	26,680 families	(100.0%)
Total urban household (19.7%)	6,546 families	
Total Taluk population (100%)	33,226 families	

There are 60,199 literate in the Taluk, of whom 19,105 are women, and therefore the overall literacy rate is fairly high at 30.3%. But a further break-up shows that while 52.6% of the urban population in the 1 municipal town can read and write, only 24.8% of those living in the 219 villages are literate. The Taluk has 8 Secondary School and 230 Primary Schools.

Harijans and other scheduled castes total 42,391 persons and comprise 21.3% of the population. Scheduled tribes total 16,423 persons and 8.4% of the population. 101 villages in the Taluk are heavily Harijana populated with them accounting for more than one-third of their respective village population. Similarly, 24 villages in the Taluk have more than one-half tribal population.

Chintamani Taluk has a total area of 89,210 hectares of which 39,237 hectares (44%) is cultivated and 3,243 (4%) is with the forest department. But less than one-fifth the cultivated land is irrigated under tanks and wells. The average annual rainfall is 720 mm. The annual produce of millets and cereals is nearly 36,000 tonnes. The annual produce of groundnut is about 9,500 tonnes.

10.2. Chickballapur Taluk

Chickballapur Taluk lies to the south of Bagepalli and is part of Kolar District in Karnataka. Chickballapur town is situated 60 kms north of Bangalore on the Bangalore-Hyderabad National Highway.

The southern one-third of the Taluk receives fairly predictable rainfall and has a cash crop economy with flower gardens, potatoes, vegetables and grapes. Being close to the metropolis land value is also high.

The northern two-third of Chickballapur Taluk closely resembles Bagepalli Taluk with poor soils and scanty rainfall. Agricultural practices are obsolete with low inputs and lower returns, and the region forms the southern most part of the Rayalaseema desert belt.

The Taluk had a population of 1,40,393 persons comprising of 24,502 families in 219 inhabited villages and 1 municipal town. 78.6% of this population live in the rural area in an agrarian economy.

Of this population, landed and landless Coolies comprise 61%. Small peasants owning 1 to 2 hectares comprise 22% of the rural families and middle peasants owning 2 to 10 hectares comprise 16%. Only a mere 99 families own more than 10 hectares each in this Taluk.

Landless agricultural labourers	2,455 families	(12.7%)
Landless labourers owning less than 1 hectare	9,310 families	(48.4%)
Small peasants owning 1 to 2 hectares	4,288 families	(22.3%)
Middle peasants owning 2 to 10 hectares	3,101 families	(16.1%)
Rich peasants owning more than 10 hectares	99 families	(0.5%)
Total rural households (79%)	19,253 families	(100.0%)
Total urban households (21%)	5,249 families	
Total Taluk population (100%)	24,502 families	

There are 49,551 literate in the Taluk, of whom 17,140 are women, and therefore the overall literacy rate is fairly high at 35.3%. But a further break-up shows that while 50.6% of the urban population in the 1 municipal town can read and write, only 20.4% of those living in 219 villages are literate.

Part of the reason for this high urban literacy rate is the existence of 6 Teacher Training Institutes, 1 Polytechnic and 3 Colleges in Chickballapur town. The Taluk as a whole also has 7 Secondary Schools and 161 Primary Schools.

Harijans and other scheduled castes total 31,926 persons and comprise 22.7% of the population. Scheduled tribes total 9,978 persons and 7.1% of the population. 84 villages in the Taluk are heavily Harijana populated with them accounting for more than one-third of their respective village population. Similarly, 18 villages in the Taluk have more than one-half tribal population.

Chickballapur Taluk has a total area of 55,612 hectares of which 20,566 hectares (37%) is cultivated and 19,720 is with the forest department. But less than one-third the cultivated land is irrigated under tanks and wells. The average annual rainfall is 771 mm. Millets and cereals including paddy, Ragi and jowar are grown on 12,878 hectares and account for 63% of the cultivated land. The annual produce of these crops is nearly 23,000 tonnes. Groundnut is grown on only 3,180 hectares or 16% of the cultivated land and the annual produce in about 2,500 tonnes.

The Taluk has 5 Hospitals and 5 family planning centres. This includes the immensely popular CSI Hospital at the Taluk headquarters.

There are 14 commercial Banks in the Taluk, of which 2 are nationalised and 1 is a co-operative. 4 villages have post offices and 3 have weekly markets or shandys.

The Taluk is divided into 3 Hoblis for revenue administration purposes. For local Government and rural development purposes, however, the Taluk is divided into 9 Mandal Panchayats.

11. PROJECT MEANS FOR A TYPICAL EXTENSION PROGRAMME

This chapter on the Project Means is a point-wise recording of activities which will be taken up in the 4 year 1st Phase of the Chintamani Extension Programme. It has been broken quar-

ter-wise to facilitate monitoring. A matrix, graphically explaining these Project Means, has also been made.

For the 1st 6 months, till the 10 Community Workers, the 2nd Field Worker and the Desk Worker join Chintamani, a close monitoring of activities will be done by the Project Director and Projects Assistant. Once the weekly Staff Meetings commence, though the Project Director will continue to head them, a shift in emphasis will be made toward self monitoring of targets, achievements and variations.

It is necessary that the Projects Assistant and the others develop not only managerial proficiency but also a sense of independent responsibility, with the Project Director performing a larger direction giving role rather than chasing accomplishments and monitoring day to day implementation details. For this healthy practice to develop and all the DDS staff, at every level, to become responsible and self disciplined, transparency in an absolute precondition at 2 levels.

Firstly, appropriate management techniques, practices and systems will be introduced to share the contents of this chapter on the Project Means with all the DDS staff. Similarly the budget will also be made transparent and broken into quarter-wise figures to tally with the means in the matrix. Concerned DDS staff will be encouraged to make the weekly and quarterly budget realisation statements by themselves in a responsible manner.

Secondly, the long and short term objectives along with the reasons for conceiving this Extension Programme, will be shared with everyone through the cadre training sessions.

These below listed means should not, therefore, be understood as a rigid blueprint. They form a conceptual planning aid, apart from serving as a monitoring tool.

April to June 1988 (1st quarter)

- The Field Assistant (GEP) and a CEP Community Worker who are presently working in ADATS, Bagepalli, will be promoted and sent to DDS as the Projects Assistant and Field Worker, respectively.
- The DDS Projects Assistant and Field Worker will shift to Chintamani town, the Taluk head quarters, and live in a rented house-cum-office with the necessary furniture, office equipment, telephone and other infrastructure.
- A motorcycle will be bought for use by the Projects Assistant and Field Worker since they will be travelling together to all the villages of Chintamani Taluk.
- The Projects Assistant and Field Worker will together visit at least 1 village every evening to make a detailed socio-political survey of all the villages in Chintamani Taluk. They will independently record all their observations and experiences in their respective diaries and sit with Project Director once a week to analyse all this data. In this manner, an overall understanding of the historic, socio-political, economic and aspiration condition of Chintamani Taluk, with a special reference to the position to Coolies, will gradually emerge.
- The day times will be used by the Projects Assistant and Field Worker to gain contacts in Chintamani town, make special visits to villages, contact leaders, etc. to deepen their understanding of the specificity of the Taluk.
- The emerging picture of Chintamani will be visually transferred onto a Taluk map and onto charts.
- 10 central villages and Clusters will be tentatively delineated by the end of this 1st 3 month period.

July to September 1988 (2nd quarter)

- 10 local youth, preferably from Coolie families, will be gradually selected to live in the central villages and work as DDS paid Community Workers.
- The Community Workers will be exposed to the 3 stages of Coolie Sangha Formation, Formalisation and Consolidation at Bagepalli Taluk in small batches of 2 and 3. The Field Worker will accompany them during these exposure/orientation trips to ADATS.
- In the last 2 weeks of September 1988, all the 10 newly selected Community Workers will be given an intensive training in adult literacy techniques, folk songs, conducting meetings with minutes recorded, solving Coolie problems, liaison with Banks and Government departments, etc.
- A suitable plot of land will be bought in Chintamani town to build the DDS campus.

October to December 1988 (3rd quarter)

- The DDS Desk Worker, who is presently undergoing training in accounts, administration and desk support at ADATS, Bagepalli, will shift to Chintamani.
- Office facilities at Chintamani will be upgraded with more furniture, equipment, etc. to cope with the increased work-load.
- 1 more CEP Community Worker, whose 3 year contract with ADATS would have just got completed, will be promoted and sent to DDS as the 2nd Field Worker.
- 2 mopeds will be bought so that the Projects Assistant and Field Workers can all be independently mobile to visit the villages.
- The 10 Community Workers will be sent to their tentatively selected central villages and helped to settle down in rented huts and rooms in the poorer quarters of these villages. The 2 Field Workers and the Projects Assistant will visit them every day to help in this settling down process.
- Petromax lanterns, slates, books, tape recorders and charts will be purchased/procured to start the Adult Literacy Programme (ALP) classes and song sessions for adults, youth and children in 10 central villages.
- The 2 Field Workers and 10 Community Workers will maintain daily diaries and record not only the work done, but also their observations and personal experiences in these villages.
- Staff Meetings will commence on fixed days every week at Chintamani as soon as the Community Workers settle down in their central villages. These meetings will be headed by the Project Director.
- The daily diaries will be read out and an attempt will be made to deepen everyone's collective understanding of the socio-political and economic particularities of Chintamani Taluk.
- The DDS Desk Worker will minute the Staff Meetings accurately and completely.
- The Project Director will sit with the DDS Projects Assistant and the Desk Worker to scrutinise the previous week's accounts and prepare the next week's requisition. The Desk Worker will take this requisition to the ADATS Accounts Admn Assistant the next day. After a final verification, the next week's cash re-

quirement will be transferred from the main FCRA Bank Account of DDS at Bagepalli to the Project Bank Account at Chintamani.

- The Project Director will, in the days of his weekly visit to Chintamani, spend the evenings there and visit any village/s that the Projects Assistant feels he should.

January to March 1989 (4th quarter)

- ALP classes will continue in the central villages; Coolies from these 10 villages will be supported in their struggles against localised cases of cheating and petty corruption, and assisted to get works done in Government offices and local Banks,
- The Projects Assistant and the 2 Field Workers will continue to visit all the vil-lages on an every evening basis.
- A gradual expansion will take place from each central village and the Commu-nity Workers will each begin to cover 2 or more villages with the help of literate Coolie volunteers to conduct ALP classes in the central and peripheral villages.
- An Extension Worker, who is presently undergoing field training at ADATS, Bagepalli, will shift to Chintamani and take construction responsibilities at the campus and in the villages.
- 1 more motorcycle will be bought for use by the DDS Extension Worker.
- Work on the construction of the campus at Chintamani town to house the train-ing hall, office, residences, guest rooms, etc. will commence.
- Land will be identified, alienated and bought in the central villages to build community halls for conducting meetings, holding classes, etc.
- A draft and hypothetical statement on the political economy of Chintamani Ta-luk will be drawn up by the Project Director, based on the daily diaries and other observations of the DDS staff. The Projects Assistant will assist the Project Di-rector in the making of this applicable theoretical statement which will guide fu-ture activities of DDS and make its work societal relevant and applicable to the specific situation of the Taluk.

April to June 1989 (5th quarter)

- The adding of peripheral villages will reach an average of 6 per Cluster and DDS will be working in 60 villages from this 3 month period onwards.
- Volunteers, on proving their sincerity and efficiency, will be appointed as DDS paid VLWs.
- Coolies will continue to be assisted with legal aid, aid distress and liaison work to solve issues of exploitation and cheating.
- The weekly Staff Meetings will continue to be attended by all the 60 VLWs, 10 Community Workers, 2 Field Workers, Desk Worker, Extension Worker and Projects Assistant, but the emphasis will have fully shifted to reporting on work matters, taking decisions on DDS responses to various implementation prob-lems, etc.
- The practice of holding regular and weekly CSU Meetings with minutes re-corded and the previous meeting's decisions reviewed will be introduced in all 60 villages.

- The 2 Field Workers will continue to visit all the villages on an every evening basis to supervise ALP classes, etc. but the Projects Assistant will concentrate on educating the Coolies on the socio-political need to build Coolie Sangha Units (CSUs) through Cluster visits, public meetings, and other personal discussions. In this way, a specialisation and differentiation in functions between the Projects Assistant and the Field Workers will be to emerge in the organogram of DDS.
- Construction of 10 community halls in as many central villages will commence in this quarter.
- Construction of the training hall and office at Chintamani town will be completed in this 3 month period. Construction of staff residences and single occupancy rooms will commence on the campus.
- A jeep and trailer will be bought to cope with the increased travel and transportation needs of DDS.

July to September 1989 (6th quarter)

- Coolie Sangha Formation work will be completed in this 3 month period. Membership lists will be finalised in the CSUs, 3 Representatives (1 of them a woman) will be elected from each CSU and ALP classes will be conducted with attendance registers on a more regular and disciplined basis.
- The practice of holding Cluster Meets on fixed days every week will be introduced. All the CSU Representatives from the central and peripheral villages, the VLWs and their respective Community Worker will meet in the community hall of each Cluster, review the previous week's CSU Meetings, discuss matters that have taken place in the week, and take new decisions which they will abide by. This will, apart from providing basic records, introduce a discipline in the culture of tolerated indiscipline.
- The Projects Assistant will attend all the Cluster Meets at least every alternate week and develop them as points of working contact between DDS and the Coolies.
- The 2 Field Workers will have the DDS Area of operation delineated between them with each looking after 5 Clusters. The Field Workers will compulsorily attend all the Cluster Meets in their respective Areas every week and liaison between DDS and the Coolie Sangha.
- The weekly meetings will no more be attended by the VLWs. Instead, they will attend, along with their CSU Representatives, general cadre training sessions held at Chintamani for 2 days every month.
- Weekly Staff Meetings will, however, continue for the 10 Community Workers, 2 Field Workers, Desk Worker, Extension Worker and Projects Assistant.
- Construction of 10 Community Halls in as many central villages will be completed in this 3 month period.
- Construction of the residences and rooms at the Chintamani campus will also be completed in this 3 month period.

October to December 1989 (7th quarter)

- A qualified woman Health Visitor will be appointed at DDS to initiate a Community Health Programme.

- The CSUs will be asked to select women VHWs from among themselves and these 60 VHWs will be given a short orientation at a training organised by the Health Visitor before being sent back to their respective villages with basic maternity kits and first aid drugs to deal with pre and ante natal cases and render immediate assistance for minor ailments.
- The Health Visitor will visit all the VHWs in their villages at least once a month and conduct monthly training aimed at gradually enhancing their confidence and efficiency over the years. For DDS as an organisation, however, these VHWs will be human infrastructure for the programme to reach out to Coolie women and their special problems in a participatory manner. Health will, in this sense, be a point of entry and cover activity.
- The general cadre training for 60 VLWs and 180 CSU Representatives for 2 days every month will continue in this quarter.
- ALP classes, weekly CSU Meetings, weekly Cluster Meets and weekly Staff Meetings will continue as usual with the Projects Assistant and the Field Workers attending Cluster Meets and CSU Meetings.
- Coolies will continue to be supported with legal aid and aid distress.

January to March 1990 (8th quarter)

- The monthly cadre training sessions for CSU Representatives and VLWs will be stopped in this quarter. Instead, a special women's cadre training for the 60 VHWs and 60 women CSU Representatives will be started for 2 days every month.
- This will be in addition to the 2 day community health training organised by the Health Visitor, and in spite of the 60 women CSU Representatives already having attended the earlier rounds of general cadre training for 6 months in the preceding 2 quarters.
- Small, grassroots planned and CSU controlled credit giving and other economic projects with a special emphasis on Coolie women (which are a direct result of the women's cadre training sessions) will be started in all the 60 villages. This will be subject to a maximum DDS expenditure of Rs 10,000 per village.
- The DDS Extension Worker, who was hitherto looking after the constructions, will henceforth shift his emphasis to implementing these various small economic projects.
- ALP classes, weekly CSU Meetings, weekly Cluster Meets and weekly Staff Meetings will continue as usual with the Projects Assistant and Field Workers attending Cluster Meets and CSU Meetings.
- Coolies will be supported with guidance to tackle larger issues that come up in their discussions in addition to continuing DDS support with legal aid and aid distress for tackling localised issues as earlier.
- The final document on the political economy of Chintamani Taluk will be finalised by the Project Director at the end of this 2 year involvement of DDS.

April to June 1990 (9th quarter)

- ALP classes will continue every evening only for Coolies who wish to study more than just the basics. News-papers will be subscribed for and forums to read them out aloud set up. Books will be procured and a basic circulating library set up at each Cluster. Regular night classes for men will be stopped.

- A special effort will be made, using the small economic projects as incentives, to enhance literacy in Coolie women. ALP classes will continue exclusively for women.
- Weekly CSU Meetings and Cluster Meets will continue with the Projects Assistant and Field Workers attending them. So too will the weekly Staff Meetings for Community Workers, field Workers, Desk Workers, Extension Workers and the Projects Assistant.
- The Community Health Programme will continue with regular 2 day monthly training for the 60 VHWs at Chintamani. Basic medicines will continue to be supplied, appropriate kitchen gardens developed in front of each Coolie home, daily village visits will be made by the Health Visitor, audio-visual shows and other health education activities organised.
- A detailed family-wise socio-economic survey will be carried out in all 60 villages by the Community Workers and VLWs and the data which emerges will be studied jointly by DDS and the Coolie Sangha to draw up a larger and relevant Coolie development programme to be taken up in the 2nd 3 year (Formalisation) Phase of the Chintamani Extension Programme.
- Similarly, a detailed health survey will be made by the 60 VHWs under the supervision of the Health Visitor to chalk out a relevant Community Health Programme.
- The credit giving and other economic projects which were started in the previous quarter will continue to be implemented and monitored by the Coolies themselves, under the overall guidance of the DDS Extension Worker.
- All the 180 CSU Representatives, 60 VHWs, 60 VLWs and 10 Community Workers will be taken to the May Day Coolie Pandaga to the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA where over 10,000 Coolies assemble every year to celebrate their unity and cohesiveness. This will bring to the surface larger socio-political and cultural aspirations that exist in the Coolies of Chintamani Taluk.

July to December 1990 (10th & 11th quarters)

- All the projects and activities of DDS and the Coolie Sangha will continue as usual in order to introduce a culture of discipline and regularity.

January to March 1991 (12th quarter)

- A series of village and Cluster level meetings will be held all over the DDS Area of operation to review the 3 year effort. The Projects Assistant and Field Workers will compulsorily attend all these Review Meetings to plan the next 3 year Coolie Sangha Formalisation Phase of the programme, decide on activities to be taken up, make the detailed budget, etc.

April 1991 to March 1992 (13th to 16th quarters)

- This additional 1 year is being included when making this revised Project Application because we envisage that in the non-funded first 1 year, it is possible that progress is not at the envisaged pace. Paucity of funds, for example, has made the timely acquisition of material, full employment of staff, etc. very difficult. Yet, we have been able to make an impressive in-road in an overall difficult situation and stick to this Project Means to a very large extent. Therefore, the planned 3 Matrix for Coolie Sangha Formation has deliberately been extended

to add this 4th year to ensure that Coolie Sangha Formation objectives will be reached in all 60 villages by the end of March 1992.

12. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT AS ON NOVEMBER 1988

12.1. Chintamani

The Chintamani Extension Programme started in March 1988, 1 month ahead of schedule. This was because the taluk's political situation in very difficult and the Projects Assistant designate decided to begin preliminary work even when we were still finalising the Decentralised Extension plans. Along with him a Community Worker from the CEP Area also went to Chintamani.

Their initial difficulty was in finding a suitable house to take on rent for use as an office-cum-residence. In the process of finding accommodation, however, they were able to make a lot of useful contracts, gauge the town people's attitude towards ADATS, etc.

They then started going out to all the villages in the northern part of Chintamani Taluk which is adjacent to Bagepalli Taluk and contiguous to a block of well formed Coolie Sanghas, the CEP Area. They tried to gain an insight into the socio-political and historic details of the villages and thereby discern patterns. Though they were only able to obtain only a "windscreen impression" through these visits, they made a very interesting and deeply perceptive macro-analysis of the Taluk.

Chintamani has the characteristic of having a very violent politics with the entire Taluk split among 3 warring "leading families", all from the dominant Reddy caste. 1 Reddy family represents the Congress-I, another the Janata, and the 3rd the CPI(M). Since they have relatives in practically all the villages, the Taluk gives an appearance of being geographically divided along these lines with the Janata Party presently claiming a slightly larger share. But the division is so fine and balanced that none of these 3 "leading families" are ever quite certain of the outcome of any election to the Legislative Assembly.

As a result, the eastern one-third of Bagepalli Taluk (Chelur Hobli), which happens to be attached to the Chintamani Legislative Assembly Constituency, is the key deciding factor to swing the favour to any one side. Chelur is a stronghold of the Coolie Sangha and is popularly referred to as ADATS' home constituency.

Chintamani has yet another particularity. It is the only Taluk in Kolar District with a strong Dalit Movement. The division in the upper caste Reddy's on the one hand, along all these divided Reddy's' hesitance to be labelled as being anti-Harijana on the other, is cleverly exploited by the Dalit leadership, and this has led to a spectacular and highly visible growth for their organisation. But such an unchecked growth has created a false bravado and moulded them into a ruthless reverse-discriminatory force in the Taluk which harasses even poor and middle class caste Hindus on the pretext of seeking vengeance for past years of caste humiliation. By and large, the Harijana population of Chintamani do not overtly identify themselves with the Dalit movement. But schooled and educated Harijana youth in these same villages form the hard core "brown shirt" cadre for the Dalit Movement. Their surprise lightning strikes with lorry loads of them armed with clubs and chains swooping in the night on unsuspecting and hapless caste Hindus in exaggerated retaliation for alleged and minor casteist actions stir more sympathy for the perpetrators of caste offences than for the victims.

But more importantly and at a deeper level, as a direct consequence of these incidents, the caste question assumes a very confusing manifestation in Chintamani Taluk. Real life, village level, day to day acts of oppression and exploitation that subjugate the Harijans and keep them at a very low level of sub-subsistence get a back-seat in even the neutral population's

and local bureaucracy's popular attention. Instead, the focus of everyone's concern is clearly on the Dalit Organisation.

As a result of the unbridled, unchecked and unbalanced growth of the Dalit movement, Chintamani does not have that normal, subtle level of a nagging caste discrimination which most other parts of the country experiences; which acts as a kind of safety valve for disgruntlement on both sides to be let out from time to time. Instead, when eruptions do take place, they are violent orgies of backlash that far surpass any conceivable or normal anti-Harijana sentiment that we could ever have suspected the upper castes of harbouring. Harijana villages are razed to the ground, their possessions destroyed, and they are "put in their place" in a cruel and brutal manner. Though this happens only once every few years in some isolated corner of the Taluk, it provides the Dalit organisation (which stays helpless and inactive during the actual happening of such orgies) with fresh propaganda material to further their activities, giving them a more attractive argument to recruit still more youth into their ranks. The cyclic recurrence of the next spate of orgies continues, and all this only adds to Chintamani's description of having a very violent politics.

When our Projects Assistant and the Field Worker entered, there was a hushed anticipation as to which side these existing balances would now tilt with our appearance on the scene. On the one hand, all the 3 Reddy families collectively said, "Oh, another pro-poor headache!" On the other, they did not want us to develop any alliance with the Dalit organisation. And finally, they all knew that we held the key to their electoral chances with the Coolies of Chelur Hobli firmly on our side. As a result, they decided to not oppose our entry into Chintamani Taluk. They even made a sincere attempt to control their village henchmen, though they were not always successful in preventing expressions of village level opposition to our entry.

The first months of our involvement in Chintamani Taluk were, for the reasons explained above, relatively easy and not entirely unpleasant. But we were able to see through the calm; that it was the same kind of forced self-control that was exercised with regard to the Dalits; that it could explode if we did not correctly gauge the situation or overplayed on our easy entry with any foolish show of exuberance.

We capitalised on all our chances and openings, but never let our guard down for even a moment. Our strategy in Chintamani is to maintain a low profile and not do anything which can be interpreted as a boast of a strength that we do not really possess. This will continue till we succeed, in some tangible measure, to actualise a larger unification of an enlarged poor, cutting through a placed and dated narrow definition of Class on the one hand, and also across ethnically opportunised Caste factors on the other.

In the meantime, our efforts are to promote "safe activities" like adult literacy, children's classes, etc., to settle our Community Workers in the central villages, identify young Coolies who can become VLWs and VHWs, conduct regular cadre training, and thereby develop a human infrastructure of sincere, effective and committed people in 60 villages. Our Area coverage has to be contiguous and effective, without leaving any dangerous gaps in the single block we have identified. We will introduce systems and procedures which make routine Coolie Sangha practices like regular night classes and weekly meetings a normal, natural, accepted and familiar practice in the villages. We will take up only non-radical popular economic issues like struggles against petty corruption, etc. A strict policy of social neutrality between the Ryots and Coolies will also be followed with no caste issues being taken up.

9 Community Workers -local youth who have all undergone intense field training for 3 months at Bagepalli- have already settled down in the villages. But of them, 2 have had bad experiences and were thrown out, bag and baggage. 18 Volunteers have been identified and 24 ALP classes started in as many villages.

Financial uncertainty and the need to spend so much energy in liaison with possible donors has had an adverse effect on our work. But now that we have a fair assurance of certainty with ICCO, this Extension Programme promises to make some very deep, mature, and sustainable progress.

12.2. Chickballapur

When compared to Chintamani, the story of Chickballapur is relatively tame with hard work and management systems yielding positive results. The Taluk is characterised with “political poverty” because of its being a reserved constituency for a candidate from the scheduled castes for representation in the Legislative Assembly. However much the leadership and patronage of any one from the upper castes is developed, it is brought to nought during an electoral contest. As a result, none of the political parties are interested in Chickballapur Taluk. An amusing consequence of this political disinterest is that all the big shots in the Taluk instead compete with each other through the setting up of private, profit oriented, capitation fee based educational institutions! But Chickballapur provides some other very interesting problems and poses very intrinsic theoretical questions to the development worker.

The Field Assistant (CEP) who was involved in the building up of 60 village level Coolie Sanghas from almost the very inception, shifted to Chickballapur as the Projects Assistant in May 1988. Along with him went another erstwhile CEP Community Worker who had built up a Cluster of 6 strong CSUs in a very difficult political situation. Together they visited all the villages of the Taluk and were able to discern 3 broad geographic patterns which determined 3 totally different political economies in 1 single Taluk.

The first is the Area contiguous to and adjacent with southern Bagepalli Taluk. Here the lands are dry and production relations are middle peasant dominated, just like in Bagepalli. Cheap labour and stark subjugation of the Coolies form the backbone for the dry land cultivation economy. Middle peasant families in this belt, which constitutes more than one-half the Taluk as well as our Area of operation, have very good connections with their counterparts in Bagepalli Taluk. They are, therefore, sceptical about ADATS’ entry into their villages and willing to invest fairly seriously to resist our coming in. ADATS’ entry was marked with sporadic violence, threats and intimidation. But the Coolies are also equally aware of the gain they will get with the building of Coolie Sanghas and therefore willing to fight back to assert their right to establish Coolie Sanghas. All this spells a very familiar scenario that our strategy readily identifies and is comfortable with.

The second pattern is found in villages which lie to the north western one-quarter of the Taluk in the hills. Here the villages are isolated, cut off, with no all-weather roads, often with no bus convenience or even electricity. Leprosy is rampant in many of these villages, and health services appalling. Cultivation levels are primitive with relatively lower levels of economic exploitation. Oppression of a cruel and subjugating variety does not characterise the relationship between the Coolies and the largely weakened middle peasantry. But superstitions are rampant and Nature seems to be the main oppressor. Try as we did, it was difficult to find that harmonious and sustaining life-exchange system which we often picture hill people of having. This may be because the Taluk does not have a Tribal population, and the culture of the indigenous caste people may somehow not be suited for “wild” living in hills and forests.

The remaining one-quarter of Chickballapur comprises of “capitalised” villages where flowers, potatoes and grape gardens are the main crops. Farmers seem to prefer relatively small holdings of land on which they invest heavily and cultivate intensely. Wages are very high, averaging rates which exist on peripheries of a metropolis (Bangalore is now much closer than the earlier 60 kms distance from Chickballapur), being situated on the national highway,

and the presence of an up-coming ancillary industrial estate at the Taluk headquarters are some of the evident reasons for this capitalisation having set in.

As a natural and emotional reaction to their relative prosperity, we discarded the idea of working in these villages. All of sudden, waves of representations started coming in from the Coolies in these richer villages. We were jolted out of our liberalism when they asked if we thought that the Coolie Sangha had nothing to offer Coolies who happened to get relatively higher wages as part of the rich farmers' design to increase their production for selfish profit-oriented reasons. Did not the Coolies want something more than just an increase in wages, they asked. Did we think that a level of material well being changed the Coolies and altered the values they cherished and desperately wanted to project onto a deaf village milieu as their contribution to the humanising and purifying effort? Could we not develop an appropriate unionisation strategy which did not chase mere economism?

When it came to the actual selection of villages, the Projects Assistant displayed strategic and management astuteness, balancing the 1st 2 regions in representation but completely ignoring the capitalised Area. Instead, he recruited young people from this 3rd Area to work as Community Workers so that they would, in a very deep and personal way, react against all forms of semi-feudal relic which they instinctively rebel against because of their own value background. At the same time, they will be sensitive to and engaged in a deeper quest for theoretical and strategic answers to questions raised by these "richer" Coolies from the capitalised Area. In this way, by the time the Chickballapur Extension Programme is in a position to expand to another 60 villages after 3 or 4 years, a sound and mature strategy and tactic capable of responding to the particularity of these cash cropped areas will have emerged.

Today, Chickballapur gives a refreshing impression of a programme which is being well managed to optimum efficiency. Systems are introduced, there is hardly any ad-hocism, and everyone is clear on what has to be done, when, how and why. But all this prompts a certain "taking it easy" and an almost fetish faith in the ability of management interventions alone to solve complex problems is subconsciously developed. It is easy to forget that the dividing line between positive professionalism and professionalism per se is very thin. Through the development of an overt professionalism, the entire Coolie Sangha building strategy can unintentionally get converted into a mere push button package technology which is expected to yield results.

We have to make our people internalise a more holistic perception of the implementation technology which we have developed at Bagepalli and soften the implement of the intervention strategy. Disturbing theoretical question have to be raised and a more personalised and emotional involvement of the staff in their work has to be consciously fostered. This will happen only when the Projects Assistant and all the staff of the Chickballapur Extension Programme increasingly involve themselves in collie struggles.

12.3. Siddalaghatta

Siddalaghatta lies to the exact south of and is adjacent to Mittemari Hobli – a part of Bagepalli Taluk where there are no Coolie Sanghas. The northern two-third of Siddalaghatta Taluk has a terrain and political economy which is identical to Bagepalli. Siddalaghatta town, the Taluk headquarters, lies in the southern one-third of the Taluk which is much richer. The town is noted for its frequent outbursts of communal disharmony. During these unfortunate occurrences, the violence even spreads into eastern Chickballapur and western Chintamani Taluks.

Our involvement in Siddalaghatta has a special feature. A senior woman staff member of ADATS opted out of desk and office work and deliberately chose to get into the Field, wanting to involve herself in actual village level activities to build the Coolie Sangha. Stepping

into “male” shoes has caused her a lot of trouble at the work as well as personal front. This only added to her initial handicap which came from Field inexperience. Yet she chose to fight it out in a region noted for religio-chauvinistic and violent trends.

In a recent review of the 3 ADATS Extension Programmes, where mature and valuable contribution was made by a well-wisher, we decided that it would be prudent to temporarily tone down the size and pace of our involvement in Siddalaghata, limiting ourselves to just 4 Clusters comprising 24 villages for the next 1½ years, till March 1990. At that time, a review will be made and the Siddalaghata team’s ability to take on a very difficult task in an overall dangerous climate. We also decided that these 4 Clusters should overlap into “safer” Mittemari Hobli of Bagepalli Taluk where adjacent Coolie Sanghas can help out. The objective of this 1½ year preliminary Phase will therefore be to expose the equip the Projects Assistant and her team, and also to make a more detailed appreciation of a very complex and difficult situation. In the meantime, the Siddalaghata Projects Assistant’s valuable contribution will be utilised at both, the Chintamani and as well as Chickballapur Extension Programmes, to conduct cadre training for women and build a strong human infrastructure of Coolie women.

13. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR A TYPICAL EXTENSION PROGRAMME

13.1. Socio-political Survey

Immediately on going to Chintamani and settling down in the rented office-cum-house, the Projects Assistant and Field Worker will together visit all the villages of the Taluk. They will spend time with the Coolies in these villages, introduce themselves to School Teachers and other educated youth and acquaint themselves with the realities of each village. Approximate figures on land holding, land utilisation pattern, irrigation facilities, wages paid in the different seasons, annual migration patterns, existing crafts and other non-agricultural employment sources in these villages will be individually studied and recorded. They will also find out about existing village amenities like drinking water, condition of the houses, distance to the Primary School and who attend, health care, etc. An impressionist observation on caste and religious practices, extent of segregation, etc. will be recorded. After getting friendly with some village youth, they will try to ferret out the villages’ history of struggle. An appraisal will be made of the aspiration status of the Coolies; whether they genuinely aspire for better living conditions, better wages, better lands and better employment provision; if they are prepared to struggle for all these.

Reciprocally, the Projects Assistant and Field Worker will explain the 10 year history of ADATS in Bagepalli Taluk through narration which strike them as having bearing in particular villages of Chintamani Taluk. They will explain that their effort, through DDS, is to form similar Coolie Sanghas which can strengthen the Coolies and enhance their collective bargaining power.

Naturally, all this cannot be done in just 1 visit. The Projects Assistant and Field Worker will not simply tick off villages they have visited and feel that the socio-political survey has been completed. They will strike friendships with individuals and groups in these villages and visit them at their homes as often as possible to acquaint themselves fully and thoroughly. Though their initial visits will be in the afternoons and evenings, later re-visits could well be in response to invitations at meal times and during village functions and festivals.

At Chintamani town, the Projects Assistant and Field Worker will develop contacts with bankers, honest village functionaries of the Government, etc. to obtain a broader picture of the Taluk. They will also try to meet various self professed village touts and leaders to assess how villages are represented and relate to the Taluk headquarters.

All their observations and impressions will be recorded in daily dairies and shared with the Project Director once a week when he visits Chintamani. Together, they will go through the data to see if general patterns or specific features emerge. They will also go through statistical data that the Projects Assistant will collect from various Government offices to study variations and conformities at different villages.

After a few months, once the Projects Assistant and Field Worker feel that they are comfortable in their knowledge of the Taluk, they will tentatively delineate central villages and possible Clusters. The Projects Director will visit these Clusters along with them and contribute with his own intuitive reactions.

This socio-political survey will continue for many more months through an analysis of everyone's daily dairies during the weekly Staff Meetings, the Projects Assistant's own assessments during village visits, etc. Only by March 1989, after 1 year of involvement, will the Project Director sit to write a tentative and hypothetical paper on the political economy of Chintamani Taluk. Such a statement on an applicable theory encompassing the broader reality of a Taluk is a vital pre-requisite for any development effort to be effective and societal relevant.

13.2. Selection of Central Villages and Delineation of Clusters

During the 1st quarter socio-political survey, the Projects Assistant and Field Worker will tentatively delineate central villages where the DDS Community Workers can live in and work from. Their choice of central village will be determined by receptivity and convenience. Slightly large villages with bus conveniences and being in the centre of a Cluster of 5 or more poorer villages will be the Primary criterion. The Coolies' willingness to invite a Community Worker to live admits them by providing him with a rented room or hut in their section of their village will be the second criterion.

The Project Director will, on the evenings of his weekly visits to Chintamani, accompany the Projects Assistant and Field Worker to such possible central villages, meet with the Coolies, and offer his own suggestions.

In the 3rd quarter of the 1st year, once the Community Workers have actually settled in their respective central villages, they will visit the surrounding villages and assess the possibilities of starting ALP classes and Coolie Sanghas there. The Projects Assistant will personally satisfy himself before any new villages are added to form the 10 Clusters in the DDS Area of operation.

13.3. Selection and Training of Community Workers

In the course of their 3 month socio-political survey, the Projects Assistant and Field Worker will have developed many contacts with educated Coolie youth aspiring for both, a job as well as authentic leadership. These youth could well be form the villages and also form Chintamani town.

Based on their subjective judgement alone, the Projects Assistant and Field Worker will recommend 10 of them to be appointed on probation as Community Workers. The ADATS Accounts Admn Assistant will do so and send them in small batches of 2 and 3 for exposure at Bagepalli. The Field Worker will accompany these probationary Community Workers to Bagepalli.

At Bagepalli, ADATS is working in 3 Areas which are at different levels of maturity. The GEP Area is only 2 years old and Coolie Sangha Formation work is going on; the CEP Area is 3 years old, just entering into the Coolie Sangha Formalisation Phase; the old village are 10

years old, well into Coolie Sangha Consolidation with a total ADATS staff pull out and the Coolies managing everything by themselves.

The probationary Community Worker designates of DDS will be exposed to all these 3 Areas through CSU Meetings and Cluster meets they will attend and discussions they will have with ADATS staff, Coolie Sangha functionaries, and ordinary Coolie member. They will study the various programmes, project and activities that ADATS and the Coolie Sangha have jointly taken up. They will be related the history of land and wage struggles which have tempered the Coolie Sangha in Bagepalli.

In this way, not only will they be trained and exposed, but all ADATS staff and the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA functionaries will get a chance to make their own individual assessment of the DDS Community Worker designates. The Project Assistant will hear all these opinions before recommending some or all of them for permanent appointment as Community Worker in Chintamani.

In September 1988 all the 10 Community Workers will be given an intensive training on ALP skills, singing and teaching songs, tackling issues, liaison with the Government and Banks, holding meetings with minutes recorded, etc. They will also be explained the details of this Project Application and the expectations herein.

In a series of joint sessions with the Projects Assistant and the Project Director, their job description will be collectively and mutually drawn up. Such a job description, with targets interposed, will form the basis for their 2½ year contracted employment in DDS.

13.4. Adult Literacy Programme Classes

Unlike in many other NGOs, adult literacy is not seen as a mere entry point or as an initial excuse to do something and gain a place in a new village. DDS believes that literacy is a vital component without which Coolies cannot organise themselves or gain a lasting power. Therefore the ALP has been conceived as a serious input.

Specially designated bi-lingual material which has proved its effectivity at Bagepalli will be used in Chintamani since this Taluk faces the same peculiarity of having Telugu as the people's mother tongue and Kannada as the official state language.

In the 1st weeks of October 1988, when the Community Workers settle in their respective central villages, they will start ALP classes for all Coolies who are interested and wish to learn. Petromax lanterns, slates, blackboards and Primary books will be supplied to the villages. After a few months, note books and pens will also be supplied to the learners.

It is our experience in Bagepalli that while incentives do help, force does not. Therefore it will not be made compulsory for the Coolies to attend to get Coolie Sangha membership. The ALP classes will become a regular and every night feature in the 60 villages and continue that way for 1½ years till march 1990. At that time those who have already learned the basics and wish to practice their literacy skills will be further encouraged with newspapers, simple books, etc.

In the last 12 months of this 3 year Coolie Sangha Formation Phase, DDS will concentrate on making as many Coolie women as possible literate. The small economic project will be used as incentives to encourage them to attend the ALP classes

DDS does not believe that ALP classes should be conducted endlessly without a dead-end date. Adult literacy should not be conceived as an excuse for continuing to pay VLWs forever.

13.5. Selection of Coolie Volunteers and their appointment as Village Level Workers

In the last 3 months of 1988, when the 10 Community Workers settle in their respective central villages, they will enter into a dialogue with the Coolies and start song sessions and ALP classes every evening.

A few literate and schooled Coolie youth will, naturally, come forward to assist the Community Workers and befriend them. The Community Workers will encourage their involvement and take them along to the surrounding villages. By being involved in this low key and bare foot “campaign” to spread the Coolie Sangha idea, these village youth will get increasingly involved and motivated.

When the Community Worker has to increase his frequency of peripheral village visits, he will in a very natural way entrust the running of the ALP class in the central village to 1 of these youth and thus will be appointed the first Volunteer in the DDS villages.

Similarly, literate and schooled Coolie youth from the peripheral villages will also be attracted by the Community Worker’s visits to their villages. After at least half a dozen such visits to each village, and the Projects Assistant has personally satisfied himself on the advisability of taking the village, the Community Worker will ask 1 of these youth to start ALP classes and song sessions in the village.

In the 3rd quarter of the programme, all these volunteers will be invited to attend the weekly Staff Meetings at Chintamani where concrete ALP targets will be mutually decided upon to assess their work effectivity. Those who meet these mutually imposed targets will be appointed, in the 4th quarter, as DDS paid VLWs.

13.6. CSU Meetings

The first meetings in the new villages of Chintamani Taluk will start when the Community Workers move into their central villages. They will sit with the Coolies and explain why they have come and what the objectives of DDS are. Coolies will respond with a narration of their woes and a dialogue will start. Later, when the evening song sessions and ALP classes start, more discussions will take place on problems which the Coolies face and ways by which these could be solved. Very soon a need will be felt to record all these informal discussions and make the meetings more formal.

From the 5th quarter onward, once the CSU membership lists are made, the practice of holding regular and minuted weekly CSU Meetings will be introduced in all the 60 villages. The 2 Field Workers, who would have divided the DDS Area of operations among themselves, will attend as many CSU Meetings as possible to introduce a uniform system and discipline in them.

Two-third the membership strength will be the minimum quorum for holding CSU Meetings. All deliberations and discussions will be recorded in the CSU Minutes Books. Matters discussed at other informal forums and groups will not be considered to be binding or of any consequence. Follow up actions arising from the previous CSU Meeting’s decisions will be monitored.

Each CSU will elect, from among its members, 3 Representatives and 1 of them will compulsorily be a woman. CSU Representatives will represent their village CSU only outside the village. Within their village, they will have no special place or privilege higher than that of any other Coolie member, except that 1 of them will be the Cheque Signatory to operate the CSU Bank Account.

The village level CSUs have been so designed as to not have a hierarchical structure with either a President or Secretary or Treasurer. This has been done to permit unrestricted opportunity for each and every Coolie member to express her opinion and view point. Though deci-

sions can be taken on a majority basis, DDS staff will encourage the Coolies to arrive at unanimous decisions through consensus on all matters.

Later, the Community Health Programme, small economic projects, and all other DDS activities will be monitored in the weekly CSU Meetings, enhancing the Coolie management skills and abilities.

CSU Meetings will not have only DDS related matters on their agenda. Besides monitoring the ALP classes, other Coolie issues and problems will be discussed and minuted, not only with a view to obtain DDS assistance, but as matters concerning the Coolies themselves.

13.7. Cluster Meets

From the 6th quarter onwards, 1 month after the practice of holding CSU Meetings is introduced, the practice of holding regular and minuted weekly Cluster Meets will be introduced in the DDS Area of operation. These will be in addition to the weekly CSU Meetings.

All the elected CSU Representatives and other DDS staff from the villages will meet on fixed days every week at the central villages of their Clusters in the presence of their respective Community Workers.

The CSU Meeting minutes of all the villages in that Cluster will be read out by the respective VLW. The reactions of other Representatives, advice they may have, and other comments will be recorded. The weekly Cluster Meets will, in this manner, serve a self monitoring purpose, allowing the Coolies to themselves keep a pulse on progress and variations.

The Field Workers will compulsorily attend these Cluster Meets and the Projects Assistant will attend them every other week. Cluster Meets will be developed as practical points of working contact between DDS and the Coolie Sangha since the village is, from a logistical point of view, too small a unit to effectively deal with.

A month after the Cluster Meets are introduced, VLWs will stop attending the weekly Staff Meetings at Chintamani since all DDS responses to Coolies requests will be decided in the Cluster Meets itself, in the presence of all the other VLWs and Representatives of the CSUs in the Cluster. The Projects Assistant will discourage Coolies from approaching DDS directly in an individual capacity, by-passing their CSUs and Cluster Meets. All requests for DDS assistance will compulsorily first be discussed and recommended by the Coolies in their forums before we react.

The Cluster Meets will, apart from fostering a unity and cohesiveness in Coolies living in a particular locale, also enhance the Representatives' management skills and abilities by introducing a culture of formality and discipline.

13.8. Cadre training

Cadre training is the pivot around which the relevance of any community organisation effort rotates. To build a sincere and effective human infrastructure of Coolie representatives in each and every village is a more realisable target than to immediately and at once try to instil a positive attitude and practice in each and every Coolie member.

To a large extent the syllabus for a general cadre training to expose the Coolies to their socio-political, cultural and economic environment has already been incorporated in our specially designed ALP material through lessons, charts and songs. But to follow a non-participatory pedagogy has its limitations and the ALP classes, by the very fact that they pursue a functional skill target of enhancing literacy, cannot be as fully participatory and discussion oriented as we would like them to be.

It is for this reason that 6 rounds of general cadre training for 2 days every month have been planned in the 7th and 8th quarters of the Extension Programme. The Project Director and Pro-

jects Assistant will conduct these cadre training for all 180 CSU Representatives, 60 VLWs and 10 Community Workers, using a participatory approach. The village cadre will enhance its analytical clarity through these sessions. They will also learn to apply what they have learned to tackle their problems with a clear ideological stance.

In the 9th quarter of the programme, 3 rounds of 2 day cadre training will be organised for women. These sessions will be conducted by an all-women group which is working exclusively for rural women in one of ADATS' Extension Programmes. The 60 women CSU Representatives, 60 VHWs and any other Coolie women who wish to attend will participate in these discussions where they will decide on special actions that can be taken up for Coolie women in the villages of Chintamani Taluk.

13.9. Issues and struggles

The first 6 months after the Community Workers settle in their respective central villages, in the 4th and 5th quarters of the programme, they will be busy with the ALP classes, song sessions, identifying Volunteers and training them to be VLWs, and in expanding to the peripheral villages. The Community Workers will also, in the meantime, be attending weekly Staff Meetings at Chintamani and enhancing their functional skills.

During this period Coolies will surely approach them with various problems which have no direct bearing to DDS activities. The Community Workers will liaise with Government offices and local Banks to try and solve these problems. But they will desist from taking on a leadership role and instead encourage the Coolies to themselves go forward.

Later during this period, on seeing their usefulness and sincerity, Coolies will approach the Community Workers with issues of middle peasant cheating, petty corruption of village level officials, and exploitation of contractors. These problems cannot be solved with mere liaison or representation work. They can be solved only through collective discussions and joint action. The Community Workers will encourage Coolies to struggle and promise that DDS will stand by them in all just and legal Coolie struggles, irrespective of localised consequences arising from alienating the powers that be.

The Projects Assistant will, during his village visits, openly encourage the Coolies to make critical appraisals of the injustice, humiliation and lack of dignity which they live in. He will provoke the Coolies to discuss and act on situations which they have hitherto tolerated in a fatalistic manner.

This is because DDS believes that struggle has to remain at the centre of any true educational effort since struggle is the greatest teacher. It is only through struggle that the village level forums of the Coolies will become more than mere beneficiary organisations begging participation to implement our pre-conceived packages, and instead be tempered to become the basic units of a Coolie mass organisation.

While no gradation of issues into minor or major will be made by us, it is natural to expect that smaller issues will be brought up by the Coolies in the initial stage of our involvement. But if the Coolies directly come up with larger land and wage issues sooner than we expect, DDS will not shy away from them.

All issues and struggles will be thoroughly discussed and recorded in the weekly Staff Meetings with all 10 Community Workers and 60 VLWs present. This is not only so that everyone can benefit from each other's experiences but also to draw moral and material support from each other. The recording of issues and struggles will also help to get a deeper micro insight into the Taluk and make an applicable statement on the political economy of Chintamani. The form and extent of discretionary assistance like legal aid and aid distress to support Coolies in their various struggles will be decided in these weekly Staff Meetings.

13.10. Bringing deeper socio-cultural and political aspirations to the surface

In the 9th quarter of this Extension Programme, on May Day 1990, all the CSU Representatives and DDS village staff will be taken to Bagepalli where the BAGEPALLI COOLIE SANGHA celebrates a *Coolie Pandaga* every year. Thousands of Coolie members from about 150 villages gather every year on May Day to celebrate their unity and organisation. These *Coolie Pandagas* are shows of strength not only to impress others, but also to boost the confidence of their fellow Coolie members.

Attending the *Coolie Pandaga* will have an electrifying effect on the Coolies of Chintamani, demonstrating to them what they can do with their Coolie Sangha. In this way, a deeper socio-cultural and political aspiration in them will come to the surface and the remaining 10 months of the 3 year 1st Phase of the Extension Programme will not be quite the same in Chintamani.

DDS will, however, discourage any pre-mature adventurism which may be forced on the Coolies by over enthusiasm. Instead, all guidance and moral assistance will be rendered to hold mini *Coolie Pandagas* in the villages of Chintamani Taluk and encourage the Coolies to reflect on their position as a class. Should any CSU Representatives from Chintamani wish to attend the 2 day BCS Meetings at Bagepalli where nearly 500 CSU Representatives and 26 elected Cluster Secretaries gather every month to read out their Cluster Reports, DDS will even arrange the logistics of travel and accommodation.

13.11. Community Health Programme

As soon as the Representatives are elected and regular CSU Meetings and Cluster Meets start in the villages, the Coolies will be asked to select, from among themselves, a woman to be trained and appointed as Village Health Worker (VHW) in each of the 60 CSUs. The Coolies will select a person who is inclined to do community health work.

DDS will, in the beginning of the 7th quarter, appoint a qualified Health Visitor and expose her to existing Community Health Programmes at other NGOs which are not curative oriented and believe in using health activities to facilitate the involvement of women.

The 60 VHWs will undergo a short initial training and be sent back to their respective villages with basic medicines. Every month, for 2 days, they will come back to Chintamani where the Health Visitor will receive their reports and give a fresh supply of basic medicines.

These monthly 2 day training for the VHWs will be used to enhance their skills and impart the concept of preventive and alternative medicine. Gradually, they will be de-schooled from their belief that curative and allopathic medicines are the only possible option and rid themselves of the negative definition of health a mere absence of disease.

DDS will make efforts to further the many sincere attempts already being made in the voluntary sector to build a village based and self-reliant health care system. The Health Visitor will be much more than a technical person or administrator. The Project Director will make a special effort to help her identify and promote useful indigenous health practices in the villages of Chintamani.

The Projects Assistant, Field Workers and Community Workers will, in the meantime, use the health activity to gain a deeper understanding of the situation and position of Coolie women in Chintamani Taluk. They will provoke women's participation by giving an over-proportionate importance to these health related activities in CSU Meetings and Cluster Meets.

The Community Health Programme along with the Women's Cadre training and small economic projects we have convinced, will evolve relevant and effective actions in favour of Coolie women in Chintamani Taluk.

13.12. Small Economic Projects

DDS will encourage the grassroots planning of CSU controlled small economic projects as a response to problems and issues which the Coolie raise. These projects will be initiated in the 8th quarter of the programme and be subject to a maximum DDS contribution of Rs 10,000 per village. It is likely that grants to their CSUs are used to meet petty productive and consumption credit needs or to set up small income generating activities at an individual or group level.

ADATS is implementing a very effective Coolie Credit Fund (CCF) project in Bagepalli Taluk but is hesitant to enforce it in the same form and manner in Chintamani Taluk. We believe that the greatest strength of the CCF in Bagepalli is that it is planned in the CSUs of Bagepalli, monitored and controlled by the Coolies themselves.

It is important, therefore, to permit a similar grassroots evolution of the details of their economic project at Chintamani also. It is possible, however, that their planning is influenced by what they see working well in Bagepalli. But this does not justify our imposing the same content and detail. DDS will, however, influence the CSUs to pay a special attention to the needs of Coolie women.

13.13. Family-wise Socio-economic and Health Survey

In the 9th quarter of the programme, a detailed family-wise socio-economic and health survey of all the Coolie member families will be made in the 60 villages.

Details on family size, wages, land holding, other sources of earning, health and nutrition status, etc. will be conducted by the VLWs and VHWs. This data will not, however, be collected through a door to door enquiry. Instead, all the Coolies will be invited to gather together and information will be volunteered by each Coolie member in front of all the others.

In this way, not only will authentic data be collected on sensitive matters like land holding, family income, number of miscarriages, etc., but the methodology will also demystify the whole question of surveys and statistics since a lot of questions are bound to be raised as to the why and whereof.

Similarly, the analysis of all this data will also be done in CSU Meetings where the Coolies have as much right to draw conclusions which they find are relevant as we have. The Projects Assistant will take personal responsibility to conduct these village and Cluster level Meetings where inferences are drawn.

Though this participatory survey is slated to be held in the 3 months of the 9th quarter, it is possible that the exercise continues for many more weeks. Plans will be made, discussed, reformulated, etc. by all the Coolies and DDS staff in genuinely participatory exercises.

The family-wise socio-economic and health survey will be a major step to make the 2nd 3 year Phase of Coolie Sangha Formalisation as transparent as possible in objectives, means, as well as budget through a full and unreserved equal participation of both the partners.

13.14. Review Meets

Review Meets have been planned for the last 3 months of this 1st 3 year Phase of Coolie Sangha Formation. The Coolies will, by themselves and in the presence of DDS staff, run through all that has happened in the past 3 years at Chintamani.

Since the planning for the next 3 year Phase will already have been completed these Review Meets will not be mere grumbling sessions. Instead, they will be a series of serious efforts to critically appraise past Coolie attitudes, DDS staff responses and actual accomplishments to identify areas which need correction, strengthening and change.

The Review Meets are planned to be an honest introspection to end the 1st Phase and launch the 2nd 3 year Phase of the Chintamani Extension Programme with the Coolies and their forums taking a greater responsibility in the attempt to gain control over their lives and environment.

14. PROJECT BUDGET

14.1. Chintamani Extension Programme

1.1.	Training, support, adult literacy and health	644,200
1.2.	Stipends	630,000
1.3.	Salaries	516,200
1.4.	Vehicles	205,000
1.5.	Small economic projects	420,000
1.6.	Running costs	396,000

14.2. Chickballapur Extension Programme

2.1.	Training, support, adult literacy and health	644,200
2.2.	Stipends	630,000
2.3.	Salaries	516,200
2.4.	Construction	415,000
2.5.	Vehicles	205,000
2.6.	Small economic projects	420,000
2.7.	Running costs	396,000

14.3. Siddalaghatta Extension Programme

3.1.	Training, support, adult literacy and health	31,900
3.2.	Stipends	57,600
3.3.	Salaries	67,200
3.4.	Vehicles	15,000
3.5.	Running costs	18,000

3 Year Total

6,223,500