

Sustaining Livelihoods in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Theme: Local and Community-Driven Development:
Principles and Evolution

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Editor's notes

Community-driven development (CDD) is an approach to development that recognises the poor and their institutions as fundamental to a sustainable development process. Experience has shown that given clear rules of the game, access to information and appropriate support, poor men and women can effectively organize to provide goods and services that meet their immediate priorities. Not only do poor communities have greater capacity than generally recognized, they also have the most to gain from making good use of resources targeted at poverty reduction. In this edition we go back to basics and remind ourselves of the emergence of community-driven development (CDD) as a key component of achieving sustainable livelihoods and development of the approach. Our thanks to Hans Binswanger, recently appointed Khanya-aicdd Board Member and long serving CDD practitioner and World Bank consultant for writing this edition.

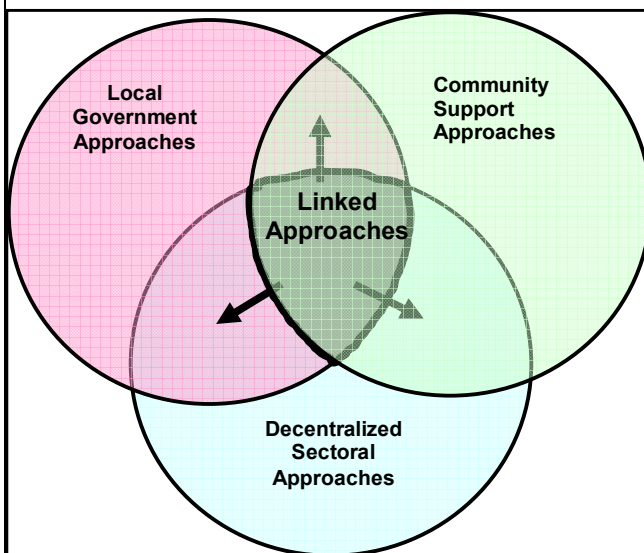
Introduction

Involving communities in their own development has deep historic roots. Mahatma Gandhi advocated rural uplifting by fostering communal harmony, economic equity, social equality, abstinence from alcohol, promotion of *khadi* (hand spun and hand woven cloth) and village industries, sanitation, health care, education and empowerment of

women. In the last sixty years developing countries have struggled to implement this vision. Many ways have evolved in which governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) support local communities. In retrospect these can broadly be grouped into three models:

1. Under the '**service delivery model**' government agencies or NGOs consult communities but operate as direct service providers. This model is particularly widespread in the provision of health and education services and agricultural extension. In order to produce the services, permanent staff is needed, with the associated management, incentives, and fiscal sustainability problems.
2. Under the '**intermediary model**' government agencies or NGOs work with communities but take a strong management role in community efforts, including in project design, the contracting of service providers, and in the management of funds for the community projects. In practice the model often tends to limit community empowerment. Government organisations or NGOs need significant staff resources and managerial overheads to implement this approach.
3. Under the '**empowerment model**' the government agencies or NGOs operate primarily as facilitators and trainers to enable communities to identify their own priorities and carry them out. Communities are heavily involved in the design and choice of technology for their project. They usually manage the project money and directly contract for goods and services. The successful Aga Khan Foundation programs in Pakistan and India, and the *Onchocerciasis* eradication programme in Africa utilise this approach. **Community-driven development** as discussed later in this paper uses this approach in hundreds of programmes all over the world.

Box 1: Linking community empowerment, decentralised governance, and sector approaches to local development



A decentralised and integrated approach involves organising interventions around local territorial units such as districts, municipalities or communes. Community-based organisations (CBOs), local governments, and deconcentrated sectoral agencies as well as private organisations, such as NGOs and firms, should be linked more coherently in order to support improved empowerment, governance, service provision, and private sector growth. A spatially framed approach, *which links such local organisations through their respective roles and relationships at local government and community levels* [emphasis added], promises to improve co-ordination, synergy, efficiency, and

responsiveness in local development processes.

Source: World Bank, Local Development Framework Paper, 2005a

Community-driven development does not exist in a vacuum. It is a component of broader local and national development. Box 1 provides excerpts from the Local Development Framework Paper written for an international local development conference held in Washington DC in June 2004 (World Bank 2005).

The consensus articulated in Box 1 makes community-driven development an integral part of local development, and involves the support of sector agencies and programmes. The consensus can no longer be captured by the term 'community-driven development' but instead is best characterised as 'local and community-driven development (LCCD)'. This consensus took a long time to develop and the remainder of the paper reviews how it came about.

Historical experiences with community development

The Comilla Model of Rural Development

The Comilla model of Bangladesh is the most famous of early development programmes that intended to empower local communities. It was designed in the early 1960s by the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) led by Akhter Hameed Khan. The assumptions – still valid today - were that: (i) the problems of rural development should be approached from the villagers' point of view, because they have the best understanding of their problems; (ii) villagers are capable of bringing about changes in their conditions if they have been provided with the means for development; (iii) agricultural development should be made an essential step in initiating a broader rural development process; (iv) training, research and demonstration are essential in promoting rural development (Banglapedia 2005).

The most important element of the Comilla approach was to create an institutional base in rural society and then integrate the basic development programmes into this institutional base. The institutional base consisted first of a two-tiered system of agricultural co-operatives to encourage farmers to generate capital by thrift deposits, help them to get supervised credit, and to encourage farmers jointly to adopt technological innovations. Other institutional features included: (i) involvement of both public and private sectors in rural development; (ii) development of a cadre of institutional leaders in every village, such as the manager, model farmers, women organisers, youth leaders and village accountants; (iii) prioritise decentralised and co-ordinated rural administration with due co-ordination between officials of various government departments and the representatives of people's organisations. The Thana Training and Development Centre (TTDC) was designed to be the locus of the co-ordination. Thana is a local area.

In 1972 the government put in place an Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDPP) to replicate and expand the Comilla Model in other parts of the country. Later the programme was transformed into the Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) that

became the largest government organisation. The BRDB was involved in production-oriented schemes, expansion of the two-tier co-operatives, a large number of target group oriented projects such as the rural women projects and projects for the rural poor (*ibid*).

For implementation these programmes relied on central agencies and later also on national NGOs. These used the service delivery or intermediary model for supporting communities. Government introduced elected local governments but never gave them full autonomy. The programmes never transferred financial resources and implementation responsibility either to communities or to local government and therefore failed to empower them. The BRDB programmes therefore lost many of the decentralised and empowerment features of the Comilla model. This adverse evolution of the programme on scaling up also characterised the Indian Community Development programme of the 1950s and many of the integrated rural development programmes financed by donors between the 1970s and the 1990s all around the world.

Integrated Rural Development and Area Development Programmes

By the early 1970s the initial successes of the Comilla Model, and the failure of the Green Revolution to reduce poverty in all but the most agriculturally suitable areas, provided inspiration for the creation of many Integrated Rural Development Programmes (IRDPs) or Area Development Programmes (ADP). The ADPs were rural investment programmes often designed to serve the rural poor in previously neglected and degraded rural areas. They included agriculture and other sectors, such as rural infrastructure, health, education, water supply and small scale rural industry. By 1992 the World Bank had assisted nearly three hundred such projects, 45% of which were in Africa, and the approach was also used by other donors.

The World Bank Rural Development Policy of 1975 emphasised that rural development should be participatory, decentralised, embedded in a favourable agricultural policy regime, and based on good available technology. However most of the area development projects financed by the World Bank did not follow the Bank's own policy guidance. Most projects were prepared in a hurry by teams of agricultural professionals with little involvement of the beneficiaries. Project preparation teams prepared the area plans, not the beneficiaries and those to be involved in implementation. A rare exception was the participatory planning process followed in Zacatecas, Mexico. Implementation of the different programme components was entrusted to central or regional government agencies in charge, such as the extension service, the irrigation department or the ministry of education. These inevitably used the service delivery approach. Even in Mexico decentralisation did not go beyond the level of the state. This was in clear contradiction to the policy which recommended a decentralised approach and strong local institutional development. The central agencies often had priorities which were not necessarily those of the project designers or the affected populations. In the PIDER project in Zacatecas, for example, what was delivered at the community level by each agency was rarely in line with the priorities of the community identified at the elaborate planning stage. Implementation by central agencies gave rise to a major co-ordination

problem, which the World Bank tried to solve by strengthening project units, often staffed by expatriate advisors.

The Operations Evaluation Department of the World Bank reviewed these programmes and summarised the lessons in 1993. The Agricultural and Rural Development (ARD) portfolio's performance was significantly worse than that of other agricultural projects financed by the World Bank, or of projects in other sectors, and was especially poor in Africa. Overall half of area development programmes failed, and in Africa it was two thirds. Projects were more successful where government commitment was strong and where the agricultural policy environment was better. Project benefits were rarely sustainable and projects attained little institutional development impact. Central co-ordination of the sector agencies never worked. Locally proven technologies were often not available, and project-specific technology development components set up to remedy the situation usually failed. Monitoring and evaluation was often poor or non-existent. All in all the projects did not follow the institutional development approach of the Comilla model, or the core strategic elements of the World Bank's own rural development strategy. In the early 1990s the World Bank abandoned the area development project approach.

Key Lessons

These historical experiences bring out a number of common patterns and lessons:

1. Many large scale programmes for community development and poverty reduction started out with strong ideals of community participation and empowerment, co-ordination of development efforts at the local level, flexible and responsive local planning and implementation mechanisms, and decentralisation of decision-making and financial responsibilities. They were often introduced into policy and institutional environments that were hostile to agricultural development, decentralisation, and community empowerment and were scaled up before these could be reformed properly. As a consequence many efforts ended up as programmes of centralised bureaucracies which stifled participation and empowerment, were unable to co-ordinate implementation of various sectors effectively and choked on their own bureaucratic procedures.
2. The large scale programmes paid little attention to reforming the institutional environment or the devolution of functions and financial resources to local governments or communities. While India created elected local governments as early as the late 1950s, it only started supporting them in earnest in the 1990s. Similar experiences of creating elected governments, but then not devolving authority and fiscal resources to them occurred in Zambia, Ghana, Tanzania, Mexico and other developing countries.
3. When the central sector agencies failed to implement the programmes on the ground many governments turned to NGOs to help with implementation. It is striking that most NGOs used the 'intermediary model' and the 'service delivery model' rather than the 'empowerment model' for supporting communities. Therefore they often substituted their own staff for the latent or actual management and implementation capacities of communities and service users.

4. Participatory planning was introduced in many programmes but often ended up as planning by experts for communities and local areas. Even when, as in Zacatecas, the planning was truly bottom up, the central agencies failed to deliver on these plans and instead focused on their own priorities. Participatory planning is not enough to ensure empowerment!

The early leaders of community development fully recognised the dangers of elite capture in their environments and tried to build programmes which would mitigate these dangers. Many governments created specially-targeted programmes for weaker groups and poorer areas. These were managed from the centre or started to involve NGOs in programme administration. These programmes had mixed results in reaching the poor.

Local and community-driven development since 1990

The failure of the ADPs was the context within which the first CDD programmes were designed by the World Bank.

Mexico

The Decentralisation and Regional Development Projects (DRD I and II) were implemented between 1990 and 2002. The DRD I project piloted a Municipal Funds component in four southern states of Mexico and quickly became its most successful component. The municipal funds introduced a large number of innovations in World Bank practices:

- The Municipal Funds programme worked directly with rural municipalities as the co-ordinators. A Municipal Development Council (MDC) was formed to co-ordinate and supervise the programme. It functioned under the guidance of the elected municipal council, the *cabildo*. The MDC was headed by the elected mayor and included the heads of localities in the municipalities, representatives of existing committees and the *cabildo's* budget officer.
- A formula based on a municipal development index was used to allocate a fungible investment grant to the municipalities. In order to ensure that rural localities received a fair amount of money, the amount going to municipal headquarters was restricted, again using a formula.
- Projects emerged from community priorities and followed a clear project cycle up to approval at the MDC level. The MDC and the community then signed a contract and a technical implementation plan was prepared. The municipalities then put the implementation responsibility and the money into the hands of communities.
- New disbursement, procurement, and accountability procedures had to be developed which were simple, yet provided safeguards for the proper use and accounting of the resources transferred to the communities.
- Most community projects were small in size and usually less than the maximum of US\$50,000. Communities made contributions in cash or in kind, ranging from 20% to 40%, and achieved fast completion of the works.
- Municipal Funds activities used a learning-by-doing approach across all levels of operation — federal, state, municipal and community levels.

Between 1995 and 1997 DRD II implemented around 106,000 projects in building or rehabilitating classrooms and schools, potable water, rural roads, support to production, electrification, sewage systems, pavement, urbanisation and others. In addition Mexico used its own funds to scale up the approach all over Mexico. Between 1990 and 2000 over half a million community projects were executed in this way. Poverty targeting to municipalities was much better than under previous approaches. Projects were in line with community priorities, generally of good quality, and about thirty percent cheaper than projects implemented via state agencies. Many of the innovations introduced in the Municipal Fund approach have been incorporated into the Fiscal Co-ordination Law of 1998, thereby fully integrating the approach into Mexican institutions.

Sustainability of the sub-projects remained a problem partly because the communities were not yet legal entities capable of charging for services. Municipal performance varied widely depending on management capacity. Participatory monitoring and evaluation remains weak and there exists no rigorous impact evaluation of the programme.

The programme was introduced at a time when the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) had already ruled for sixty years. Corruption was widespread and rural areas were dominated by local strongmen, the so-called *caciques*. In spite of a decentralisation law and elected state and municipal councils and chief executives, Mexico remained a highly centralised country in which central government collected over ninety percent of fiscal revenues. Despite this the CDD programme was a success and contributed to the advance of institutional reforms since then. This suggests that African countries with similar political and social structures as Mexico in the early 1990s could also benefit from the approach.

Brazil

In 1993 World Bank-supported rural development projects in ten northeast Brazilian states were in crisis, suffering from many of the problems of ADPs. Most components either used the service delivery or the intermediary model for supporting rural communities, and about 55% of project resources were being used for the management of the projects at the federal, SUDENE, state and state agency levels. The projects, however, contained a successful pilot component - the *Apoio às Pequenas Comunidades Rurais* (APCR) - which provided matching grants to small rural communities. These projects functioned very much like the community-driven projects under the Mexican Municipal Funds. The ten development projects were therefore restructured to eliminate a number of intermediaries and all the project resources were located to support the APCR approach. The intermediary model of community support was replaced by the empowerment model. The redesigned projects became one of the largest and most successful CDD programmes in the World Bank at a total cost of US\$1.43bn and benefiting 37,592 communities comprising 2,540,733 beneficiary families over the past twelve years (Barboza *et al* 2006).

The redesigned project introduced municipal development councils similar to those in Mexico in about fifteen percent of the municipalities, the so-called FUMAC approach. These councils focused on identification, sub-project approval and supervision. They did not manage money, which was directly transferred from the state to the communities.

At the time of writing the FUMAC model has been generalised across almost all municipalities and the municipal councils have become involved in co-ordinating implementation of other federally-financed programmes.

The Northeast Rural Development Programme as a whole now has been improved progressively by systematically addressing criticisms and concerns. A recent synthesis of evaluations conducted (Amazonas *et al*/2006) included the following:

1. The loan resources actually reaching the communities have risen from around 45 percent to over ninety percent. At the same time the costs per sub-project have fallen by around thirty percent. This means that for every dollar of total programme costs about two and a half times as much project work can be implemented at the community level than before the redesign.
2. The program has created significant social capital at both community and local levels.
3. As in Mexico the programme is well targeted to poor municipalities and to poor communities, although it does not generally reach the poorest of the poor.
4. Project quality and sustainability is high.
5. The programme had significant impact in improving water supply and electricity in poor communities of the Northeast, and has reduced child mortality and the incidence of a number of diseases.
6. While rates of return to productive projects are high, they tend to have a higher failure rate and lower sustainability than social and infrastructure projects.
7. The programme has not had a significant impact on the net wealth of beneficiaries.

Brazil implemented CDD more cautiously than Mexico and provided less fiscal resources to the municipal level. It did not generalise the approach across the entire country by mainstreaming it into the intergovernmental fiscal system. As a consequence the number of projects implemented under the programme remains much smaller than in Mexico. The challenge for Brazil and the World Bank is to take advantage of this experience by institutionalising it more fully at all levels: community, municipality, state and federation.

The social and political environment at the start of the CDD programme was not particularly favourable. Brazil was under a military dictatorship until 1986 and approved a new democratic constitution in 1987 which introduced a radical programme of decentralisation to states and municipalities. Under the new constitution municipalities were to receive 22% of public fiscal resources. The new dispensation also enabled community and civil society participation in development. Nevertheless, at the time of the programme redesign, municipalities and communities were still considered to be dominated by small, self-serving elites and most observers expected a high level of elite capture if they were empowered with responsibility and fiscal resources. The successes of the CDD programme were achieved despite these unfavourable conditions and also helped to gradually change them.

Towards Local and Community-Driven Development

The considerable success of the two programmes discussed above came at a time when the World Bank also became more in favour of decentralisation and when sector-specific projects also started relying more heavily on community participation. Intensive debates took place inside and outside the World Bank between proponents and practitioners of the community empowerment, decentralisation and sector approaches to local development discussed in Box 1. These debates eventually led to the synthesis articulated there. The first full articulation of the vision of an integrated Local and Community-Driven Development programme was produced by the CDD working group in the Africa Region (World Bank 2000). The vision states: "The five main dimensions of CDD are: empowering communities, empowering local governments, realigning the centre, improving accountability, and building capacity" (*ibid*, 9). Realigning the centre was understood as a reform effort of the centralised sector agencies so that they would devolve responsibility for delivery of most services to local government and community levels. Khanya-aicdd has fully adopted this approach.

In 2000 the World Bank formed a CDD working group that adopted a clear definition of CDD and developed guidance on how to implement. CDD clearly is built on the empowerment model and is defined as 'programmes in which the communities have control over their own projects and resources'. Consultation and participation in maintenance of community projects is no longer sufficient to classify as CDD. In addition the working group adopted the ten key design principles reproduced in Box 2.

At the same time the CDD Group started developing implementation tools. It has assembled the existing experience of CDD in post-conflict settings and in urban development. The World Bank Participation Sourcebook provides a comprehensive overview of methods to enlist the participation of stakeholders at various levels from the community to local and national level. The Online Sourcebook on Decentralisation provides a comprehensive overview and practical guidance on how to move forward in this area. CDD has also been adapted and used for combating HIV/AIDS, managing natural resources, water supply and many more. All these tools are available on the website www.worldbank.org.

Box 2: Design Principles for CDD

1. Establish an enabling environment through relevant institutional and policy reform.
2. Make investment responsive to informed demand by providing knowledge about options and requiring community contributions to investment and recurrent costs.
3. Build participatory mechanisms for community control and stakeholder involvement by providing community groups with knowledge, control and authority over decisions and resources.
4. Ensure social and gender inclusion.
5. Invest in capacity building for CBOs.
6. Facilitate community access to information.
7. Develop simple rules and strong incentives, supported by monitoring and evaluation.

8. Maintain flexibility in design of arrangements.
9. Design for scaling up.
10. Invest in an exit strategy, including permanent institutional and financing arrangements at an affordable fiscal cost.

How well are the vision and tools being implemented?

It is not surprising that transforming the vision and guidance for LCDD into sweeping reform and integrated programmes in countries is still lagging significantly behind the consensus and intellectual guidance which has been developed. It has proven very difficult to merge the various approaches being pursued by different sectors at the individual country level, as well as build the necessary consensus with the central government entities and with programmes financed by other donors.

In a review of projects with community participation, the independent Operations Evaluation Department distinguishes between Community-Based Development (CBD) and Community-Driven Development (CDD). It is only the latter that fully use the empowerment approach to supporting communities, while CBD gives communities less responsibility and emphasises collaboration, consultation or sharing of information on project activities (World Bank 2005b). Since 1989 the share of projects that include CBD/CDD components grew from two percent to 25% in 2003. Within that portfolio there was a progressive shift from CBD to CDD. From 1994 to 2003 the outcome ratings of CBD/CDD projects have been better than for non-CBD/CDD projects and sustainability ratings have improved over time.

But the interventions still often have failed to provide consistent and long-term support or institutional change needed to achieve long-term sustainability. The projects have done better on quantitative goals, such as construction of infrastructure, than on qualitative goals such as capacity enhancement. The increased access to service delivery infrastructure such as schools and health centres does not always translate into effective service delivery. The poorest may not always have benefited from these projects (*ibid*).

World Bank-supported projects have enhanced the capacity of government institutions to implement participatory interventions, but few governments have yet adopted the approach more widely in their development programmes. A key recommendation of the OED report is that CBD/CDD projects still need to be integrated better into an overall country's assistance strategy (*ibid*). By 2003 the project portfolio still fell short of implementing the design principles discussed in Box 2. The most glaring shortcomings were the area of institutional reform, full empowerment of communities, monitoring and evaluation, failure to truly scale up and development of exit strategies.

Conclusion

Over the past half century progress towards a true empowerment approach to local and community-driven development has been slow and marked by repeated failure to achieve the goals envisioned by the pioneers of these programmes. Time and again empowerment was subverted in the process of scaling up. It is only recently that large scale programmes in Mexico Brazil, Indonesia and a number of African countries have been able to escape this trap. Although much has been achieved to develop effective participatory approaches and spread them, rigorous application of the CDD guidelines on institutional reform and development is still inadequate. In most countries there are still too many sector-specific programmes using the service delivery or intermediary approach which are not effectively contributing to broader policy and institutional

changes. Strengthening the political will to effectively implement decentralisation, realign central agencies, devolve fiscal resources and empower communities remain the main challenges.

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Barboza et al 2006

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World Bank 2005a "Local Development Framework Paper: Linking community empowerment, decentralised governance, and public service provision through a local development framework." World Bank, Washington DC

World Bank 2005b "The Effectiveness of World Bank Support for Community-Based and -Driven Development." Independent Evaluation Group, Washington DC

Useful resources

World Bank Community-Driven Development

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/EXTCDD/0,,menuPK:430167~pagePK:149018~piPK:149093~theSitePK:430161,00.html>

An excellent website on Community-Driven development containing a wealth of relevant information, resources and useful links. Most of the resources below are available from the site.

World Bank: Sourcebook for Community Driven Development in Sub-Saharan Africa. Washington, 2002.

World Bank: Community-Driven Development: A vision of poverty reduction through empowerment.

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FUMAC – Municipal Fund for Community-Driven Development Projects in Northeast Brazil http://poverty2.forumone.com/files/14827_FUMAC-web.pdf

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<http://www.professor-frithjof-kuhnen.de/publications/comilla-approach/1.htm>

Scaling-Up Community-Driven Development

This project aimed to identify core features and factors contributing to successful scaling-up of Community Driven Development (CDD) initiatives, in order to draw lessons on how to stimulate and support the scaling up of CDD in different situations. Case studies from India, Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal, Malawi, Zambia and synthesis report are available.

www.livelihoods.org/lessons/project_summaries/comdevcdd_projsum.html?em=0706

Upcoming SL-related activities/programmes

CDD Training

In October Khanya-aicdd is piloting some training in Community-Driven Development with participants from a number of southern African countries. If you are interested in hearing about subsequent training opportunities in CDD please register your interest with Khanya-aicdd by emailing kena@khanya-aicdd.org

Advanced Conflict Transformation course

25th September to 27th October 2006, Johannesburg, South Africa. Hosted by the Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA), this course covers diverse aspects of conflict transformation and peace building and is aimed at building the capacity of participants. <http://www.copafrica.org/conflict-trans.htm>

Past editions of SLSA - available at www.khanya-aicdd.org

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16	Sept 2005	FAO's work on People-centred development with a livelihoods perspective (PCD-L)
15	July 2005	Shelter and livelihoods
14	Sept 2004	Community-based management
13	June 2004	Learnings about the sustainable livelihoods approach
12	Feb 2004	Sustainable livelihoods and small-scale mining
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