

Intervention Report

- LOCA exercise in the Hingurakgoda Division of Polonnaruwa District –

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1. Background

LOCA¹ stands for “Local Competitive Advantage”. It is a tool to assess opportunities and constraints for small enterprise development in a local economy. Its participatory approach ensures a high degree of stakeholder involvement and ownership.

ILO Enter-Growth has trained so-called LOCA facilitators in all four of its target Districts², who are regular staff members of various BDS organisations. This LOCA in the Hingurakgoda Division has been the first such exercise in the Polonnaruwa District, and has therefore been an important learning experience for the Enter-Growth District Manager and his 8 facilitators as well as other local stakeholders who have been exposed to the approach for the first time.

The Hingurakgoda Division is situated in the western part of the Polonnaruwa District, which again is part of the North Central Province of Sri Lanka. Nearly 70,000 people live here, of which 14.1 percent live below the national poverty line – in numbers, these are 7,832 people.³ Main economic activities are in the agriculture sector (dairy, paddy farming, poultry, inland fisheries etc.) but the LOCA exercise also identified other sectors, such as home-based apparel industry, ornamental fish and plants, agricultural input supplies and small retail.

Though the Hingurakgoda Division is not the poorest in the Polonnaruwa District, it has been chosen for the following reasons:

- The District MSE Forum⁴ requested ILO Enter-Growth to conduct a LOCA exercise in that Division.
- With a poverty level below the Districts average, the LOCA exercise in Hingurakgoda Division is more likely to reveal opportunities for local economic development. This was regarded as an important criterion to generate a positive learning experience from the first LOCA exercise.

¹ LOCA is worldwide known as PACA – Participatory appraisal of Competitive Advantage. It is a product of Mesopartner. For more information see: www.mesopartner.com

² Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura, Kurunegala and Puttalam

³ Department of Census and Statistics (2002): Headcount Index and Population below Poverty by DS Division. The national poverty line in 2002 was Rs. 1,423/- per month, for 2007 it is Rs. 2,233/-.

⁴ MSE Forums are non-formal public-private dialogue bodies that meet regularly and discuss various matters that affect the performance of micro and small businesses. These forums have been set up in all four Enter-Growth Districts, and are now even replicated country-wide under the auspices of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce in Sri Lanka. For more information see www.entergrowth.com

However, the Hingurakgoda Division is also not the most developed Division in Polonnaruwa District.

- A number of business support services are available, which increases the chances of implementing proposals.

2. Enter-Growth action & plan

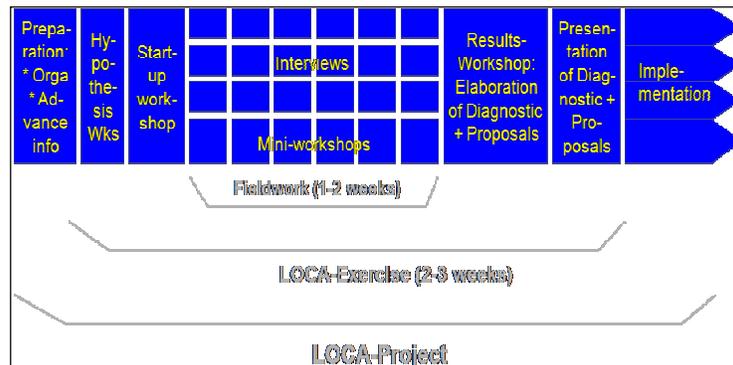
The objective of the Enter-Growth intervention based on the LOCA approach was to identify solutions to local economic development in the Hingurakgoda Division that are easy to implement with local resources and that show first signs of impact within a short period of time.

The intervention consisted of two parts:

- a) The LOCA exercise itself, a series of workshops and interviews to assess strengths and weaknesses of the local economy as well as to identify feasible solutions, ending with the presentation of proposals to the stakeholders (see picture below);
- b) The follow-up and implementation of proposals where individual work plans with groups of stakeholders were worked out and meetings were conducted to ensure the support and direct involvement of key stakeholders.

Despite being a research tool, the LOCA exercise itself should be seen as part of the Enter-Growth action to facilitate local economic development in the Hingurakgoda Division. The impact in terms of creating awareness for local economic needs and networking amongst local

stakeholders, BDS providers and government authorities should not be underestimated. However, this intervention report focuses on what has happened *after* the LOCA exercise: the follow-up and implementation of proposals.



The table on page 4 summarises the proposals that were generated through the LOCA exercise and presented to the stakeholders. Though not very specific, these proposals set the basis for all follow-up activities. As the implementation advances, and meetings are conducted with stakeholders, the details evolve and become clearer; in some cases work plans have been set up with individual stakeholder groups.

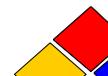
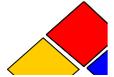


Table: LOCA action plan for Hingurakgoda Division (Polonnaruwa), December 2005

Ex p e c t e d o u t c o m e	1) Healthy cows, more hybrid cows through AI, reduce mortality rate 2) Higher milk production, better quality and price, better income	1 & 2) A better price, better income, better bargaining power 3) Direct relationship between growers and the market, bypassing of intermediaries, better price	1) Share experience, knowledge etc., to increase bargaining power, better quality 2) To expand the capacity of present producers, to provide new employments	1) Improve quality, increase demand, higher income. 2) Minimise influence of intermediate, increase bargaining power big	1) Increase (big) fish population, increase demand, increase income 2) Growing fish until they can reproduce	1) timely supply of seed paddy 2) A better market for seed paddy producers	1) Stable and continuous income for small growers. 2) Increase bargaining power, increase unity of farmers
R e s p o n s i b l e P O	District Milk Producers Coop Society	District Chamber of Commerce Human Development and Cultural Centre	Gemisaran a Maha Sangamaya Ceylinco?	District Chamber of Commerce	Fisheries Ministry of NCP District Fisheries Development supervisor	Local LOCA team Wickramasinghe and team	LG farm Framers in Giritale
P r o p o s a l s	1) Improve quality and availability of veterinary services – obtaining a veterinary surgeon and a team of A.I. technicians 2) Promoting fodder grass (CO3) production in a common farm and distributing among milk farmers	1) Establishing sales and exhibition centre for collected products of farmers 2) Providing technology by connecting to relevant institutions 3) Preparing a directory containing contact information	1) Forming a society of producers and others involved in the industry 2) Providing machinery and financial assistance by coordinating with suppliers and banks.	1) Providing technology and training by coordinating with relevant authorities. 2) Forming an association for the Division and by amalgamating it with the District Association	1) Fixing nets to overflow and out gates 2) Banning the use of small-eyed nets and educating Fishermen's Association on proper use	1) To provide parental seeds, information and seed certification services in time by organising seed paddy producers and connecting them with organisations 2) To form a pool of seed paddy producers and registering a brand name under which their seed paddy is sold	1) Strengthen and promote by-back system by connecting large to small growers. 2) Organising layer breeding farms by forming an association
W e a k n e s s e s	Shortage of CO3 grass for fodder; hybrid cows are expensive and not available; financial assistance; veterinary service; too many bulls; dairy seen only as secondary income	Lack of organisation; technology e.g. budding and grafting; intermediaries; prices are not stable	Lack of interest for technology; Financial services; large scale producers and distributors are a threat; Cost of packaging is high; Lack of full timers.	Technological know-how is weak; lack of organisation; collectors take value; inputs such as nets, polythene, fish feed adding to costs	Minneriya tank fishes are small – low demand; use of small-eyed nets; fish going out through over-flow gate canals of Kawudulla and Kantale	Necessary information, variety of paddy, parental seeds supply not timely; lack of coordination and relationship among producers; threat through bigger companies	Duopoly on supply; supply of chicken and eggs dominated by companies outside the District; quality of local producers; low profit of grower in by-back system



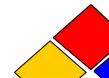
Strengths	Demand for milk is high; presence of large milk buyers; District Milk Producers Cooperative Society; many supporting institutions; village level farmers' societies	Popular at household level; supporting services are available; demand from Colombo and other urban areas very high; inputs (e.g. paddy straw manure) available	Many supporting institutions ; Singer Sewing School provides training and technology ; demand for school uniforms very high; other activities (e.g. fabric painting, patchwork etc.)	High demand; small initial capital investment ; high profit; favourable climatic conditions; established network of collectors; support services (NAQDA and Fisheries Ministry of NCP)	Demand is very high; about 600 families involved; fish filleting factory is available; support of NAQDA, NARA, and Fisheries Ministry of NCP	Demand is very high; many supporting institutions; Dept. of Agriculture provides advisory and certification services; Possible to get higher price compared to ordinary paddy	Demand for chicken and eggs very high; demand for poultry manure high; by-back system up to some extent; number of families involved is high.
Sector	Dairy	Ornamental Plants	Home-based apparel industry	Ornamental Fish	Inland Fisheries	Seed paddy	Poultry Industry



3. What actually happened

Following the presentation of the proposals above, a number of follow-up meetings were conducted with various stakeholders and groups to discuss their role and commitment. The objective of a LOCA project – as is also the objective of LED interventions in general – is to mobilise local stakeholders and resources for the implementation of proposals, rather than providing funding from outside. Successful implementation of proposals therefore depends entirely on local stakeholder commitment.

<p>Dairy</p>	<p><i>Proposal 1 (quality and availability of veterinary services):</i> Enter-Growth organised a meeting with the Chief Secretary of the North Central Province, at which also the general Manager of the Polonnaruwa milk cooperative participated. After presenting the case to the Chief Secretary, he promised to take actions to improve the quality and availability of veterinary services in Polonnaruwa District. The LOCA proposals were subsequently integrated into the annual plan of the Ministry of Animal Production and Health.</p> <p>Actions did not follow words. Though the recommended number of Livestock Development Instructors (LDI) for the North Central Province is 82, till present only 48 are employed. Though during the past year, one additional veterinary surgeon was employed for every Division, it is not clear whether this is a result of the meeting with the Chief Secretary. The availability and quality of veterinary services still remains a problem – new LDIs were not employed. The main reason cited for this, is a lack of funds to pay for additional staff and equipment (such as vehicles and mobile phones).</p> <p>Another obstacle that the District Manager and his facilitators faced was resistance from the Polonnaruwa veterinary service itself. It was proposed that the veterinary service should be privatised. This of course was ill received by the government officers. A discussion regarding this matter was held at a MSE Forum meeting. However, Forum members were reluctant to confront the veterinary officers, and therefore did not further pursue the issue.</p> <p>However, the LOCA exercise had identified some private technicians in the Division. One technician sought support from the project team for purchasing a new bike to carry out artificial insemination (AI) in the District. The Enter-Growth District Manager linked him to the Chamber of Commerce, which promised to support the technician in applying for a loan. However, he still drives his old bike today.</p> <p><i>Proposal 2 (CO3 fodder grass):</i> Several meetings were conducted with the farmers' society in Hingurakgoda Division to discuss the cultivation of CO3 fodder grass for their members. To present they do not have a land on which to cultivate grass. Though the District Manager and his facilitators tried to convince them of the benefits (higher productivity of cows, thus higher incomes), efforts remained fruitless. The board of directors consists of small scale farmers, with poor education and a lack of vision.</p>
<p>Ornamental plants</p>	<p>The local Chamber of Commerce in Hingurakgoda took over the responsibility of implementing the proposals for the ornamental plants sector. However, it was not seen as a representative body by the growers. The perception was/is that the Chambers of Commerce is only for the “big people”. The Enter-Growth District Manager therefore conducted several follow-up meetings himself.</p> <p>Two follow-up activities stand out: 1) A Provincial planning workshop for agriculture was held in Polonnaruwa, organised by the Provincial Agricultural Department. At this meeting the Enter-Growth District Manager presented the main findings and proposals for dairy, ornamental plants and seed paddy. 2) The Export Development Board (EDB)</p>



regularly organises the EDB forum, at which Business stakeholders can present various issues. The Enter-Growth District Manager also presented the LOCA findings and proposals to this forum.

Proposal 1 (Sales and exhibition centre): Though no exhibition or sales centre was established, the Agricultural Department got more aware of the needs of ornamental plant growers as result of the above mentioned planning workshop. The Agricultural Department assisted growers to form a society and organised a three-day exhibition in cooperation with the Bauer company, in September 2007. At the exhibition in Hingurakoda, growers were given the opportunity to display their products.

Proposal 2 (technology through linkages): At the EDB forum presentation, an exporter for ornamental plants became aware of the local growers in Hingurakoda. He subsequently requested the District Manager's support in identifying two or three growers which he could sub-contract for producing export varieties of ornamental plants. The company's Manager was therefore invited to a steering group meeting in Polonnaruwa, where he met two potential growers. After an informal agreement, the company provided various embedded services to improve technology, quality and productivity of the two growers. Today, these two growers directly supply to this export company. After introducing the exporter to the two growers in Hingurakoda, there was no need for Enter-Growth to further intervene.

Proposal 3 (directory): No action has been taken to create a directory for important contact addresses for ornamental plant growers, since the responsible person got involved in another project. However, the Chamber of Commerce now plans to take up the issue again. Furthermore, the Enter-Growth have already published a leaflet with relevant BDS providers for its Palama⁵ campaign. This leaflet provides also useful information for growers.

Home-based apparel industry

Proposal 1 (society): Since there was already a society, the intervention focused on capacity building. Though this society is not explicitly for home-based apparel workers – it rather sees itself as a welfare organisation for its more than 1,200 members – many of its women members work on garments.

After the LOCA exercise in Hingurakoda, a MSE Forum planning workshop for all four Districts was held (beginning of 2006), at which the members requested Enter-Growth to develop a garment training programme for trainers (TOT). After this training programme had been designed, a first TOT was conducted, to which also one of the members of the above society from Hingurakoda was sent.

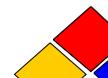
Proposal 2 (machinery and assistance through suppliers): There was no need for further intervention regarding this proposal. As the LOCA team found out after the results presentation, Singer – a large supplier of sewing machines – and some other companies already provides machines on a leasing/loan basis. It also offers training courses on how to use the machines.

Ornamental fish

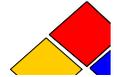
Proposal 2 (association): After the LOCA presentation of findings and proposals, a Divisional association of ornamental fish growers was founded with 19 members. This was done by the growers themselves – outside support was not required.

The Chambers of Commerce, which took over responsibility for implementing this proposal, later helped to replace the association through a "NUCLEUS" – a GTZ programme that focuses on increasing the capacities of small business associations. Within this NUCLEUS programme, the growers conducted a planning workshop at which further activities to strengthen the association were planned.

⁵ Palama is a social marketing campaign, by which business culture is promoted. A special form of theatre ("forum theatre") is used that also involved the audience directly in the play. For more information, see: www.entergrowth.com



	<p>Today the association in Hingurakoda remains largely inactive due to a stronger District-wide association that evolved out of a value chain project later initiated by Enter-Growth. However, progress reviews under the NUCLEUS programme still seem to be conducted every now and then.</p> <p><i>Proposal 1 (technology & training):</i> Under The NUCLEUS programme and with the support of the Chambers of Commerce, members of the growers association attended a training course at the training centre for ornamental fish in Rambodagala, belonging to the National Aquatic Development Association (NAQDA, government). This training course provided knowledge and information of good practices in ornamental fish growing.</p> <p><i>Further information:</i> The ornamental fish sector has also been identified as a sector with much potential for job and income creation in other LOCA exercises in other Divisions in Polonnaruwa District. As a result, the Enter-Growth project decided to initiate a District-wide value chain project on this particular sector. Further activities leading to new developments evolved out of this project, which will be subject to another intervention report.</p>
<p>Inland fisheries</p>	<p>A meeting was held at the Provincial Ministry of Inland Fisheries to present and discuss the proposals regarding inland fisheries.</p> <p><i>Proposal 1 (nets for over-flow gates):</i> The Ministry agreed that fixing nets to overflow gates, was an important measure to maintain the fish population in the tank. However, this proposal caught the attention of a few residents living at the gates, who make an extra-living by catching and selling fishes that escape through the gate. These residents expressed their protests towards the Minister, as a result of which the proposal was dropped.</p> <p><i>Proposal 2 (banning small-eyed nets):</i> After two or three follow-up meetings, the Ministry officially banned the use of small-eyed nets for inland fishery. Through its extension service, it initiated an awareness programme for fishers societies, educating them about the use and availability of larger-eyed nets and also explaining the potential benefit for them (more small fish = larger fish population in tank = bigger fish for catching = higher incomes on the market). The Ministry also introduced a special loan scheme, in order to support the purchase of larger nets.</p> <p>The Ministry of Inland Fisheries implements the ban rigorously: the fisheries instructor for Polonnaruwa District – who has an own boat – even goes out at night to arrest fishers who do not comply with the new regulation.</p>
<p>Seed paddy</p>	<p>An offer was made by the local Chambers of Commerce to provide farmers with a loan for a bag sewing machine. Although the proposals were made by the farmers themselves, they did not take them up – despite a few meetings that the Enter-Growth District Manager had with them.</p> <p>However, with the beginning of 2007, things have changed: New office bearers were elected to the board of the farmers' association, who were very keen on further developing their businesses. With support from the agricultural extension service, they have registered their seed paddy under a common trademark (branding), for which they developed their own logo.</p> <p>The branding of seed paddy includes high standards for quality: during the season, inspectors of the Agricultural Department control the quality of paddy and seeds (the end product) up to four times. In the meanwhile, this farmer group from Hingurakoda Division is known to produce one of the highest quality paddy seeds in the region. Their brand name stands for high quality – controlled and certified by the Agricultural Department.</p> <p>Currently, the group is seeking support again to purchase a sewing machine, in order</p>

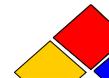


	to seal their seed paddy bags properly.
Poultry industry	<p><i>Proposal 1 (by-back system):</i> Without the support of Enter-Growth, some larger poultry farm owners took up the idea of sub-contracting smaller farmers for their production. They had become under increasing pressure from neighbours and authorities to reduce the negative environmental impact of their farms (noise and pollution). Sub-contracting parts of the poultry production to smaller farmers therefore was seen as a good solution to this problem. In this arrangement, they provide smaller farmers with chicks, feed, medicine and other equipment, and later buy-back the chickens to sell them in bulk. One large scale producer sub-contracts up to 25 small-scale farmers.</p> <p><i>Proposal 2 (organise farmers):</i> Already during a mini-workshop, layer breeding farmers got to know each other and decided to form an association, without any support from Enter-Growth. The association today tries to reduce farmers' input costs by using their bargaining power to strike special deals with suppliers of feed (e.g. buying maize feed in bulk for members).</p>

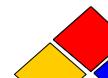
4. First signs of impact

After two and a half years since the Hingurakoda LOCA exercise, the following first signs of impact can be observed:

Dairy	<p>Though it is not clear whether the credit for the additional veterinary surgeons per Division can be attributed to the LOCA exercise (better services for farmers), it can be said that a general awareness for the needs of the sector has been created. This subsequently also set the stage for further Enter-Growth interventions in the dairy sector.</p> <p>Artificial insemination has also turned much into focus as a result of the LOCA exercise. A private AI technician recently interviewed for this intervention report mentioned that the demand for his services had increased after the LOCA. The average number of AIs he conducts per month has increased from 10-15 to 25.</p> <p>As a result of increased awareness (especially after further LOCA exercises and a value chain project on the dairy sector), banks are starting to offer special financial services – mainly loan schemes – for farmers: Lankaputra Bank now has a special loan scheme for dairy farmers; LOLC and Peoples Bank provide a loan to purchase highbreed cows; the District Rural Bank Society has planned to “develop” 5 dairy farms per branch (39 in Polonnaruwa District).</p> <p>The Enter-Growth project is currently carrying out a “regional value chain initiative” on the dairy sector, which includes North Western and North Central Provinces. This can be seen as an outcome of previous LOCA and Local-VCD projects that have high lightened the need for action in this sector.</p>
Ornamental plants	<p>As a result of the meeting with the Agricultural Department, the Department increased its attention towards the ornamental plants sector and is now offering information and training programme to growers. The availability of services has therefore improved and growers have better access to knowledge and information.</p> <p>Not much is known about the impact of the exhibition organised by the growers association and some input supply companies with help of Agriculture Department. It is assumed however, that this has further increased the attention towards the sector in Hingurakoda – commercially and in terms of support.</p>



	<p>One example of support is that the Agricultural Department has coordinated between growers and a compost production unit in Minneriya.</p> <p>Furthermore, thanks to the LOCA exercise, two growers have found an exporter, which has resulted in improvement of production technology through embedded services provided by the exporters and higher sales (income) for the two growers. One of them says that this has increased his capacity and enabled him to build 3 big scale polythene tunnels.</p>
<p>Home-based apparel industry</p>	<p>One woman from Hingurakoda was sent to the garment TOT mentioned above and has so far carried out 10 trainings for other members of the society, thus increasing the services provided to members. In total, she has trained 47 women to whom she has transferred knowledge from the TOT on new garment techniques and machine maintenance. Interviews with the woman and 3 of her trainees, indicate that her trainees, after six months of training have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved their technical skills in particular but also their business practices • increased the time spent on their business (some indicate approximately 1-2 hours increase) • increased their sales and productivity (some indicate by 10 percent) • improved their product quality (design, new products and better material) • increased their income (difficult to know by how much through these interviews) <p>However, none of these women has employed any people to their business but 4 women who did not have a business before the training were inspired and started their own business. The trained women are very satisfied with the association and its services provided.</p>
<p>Ornamental fish</p>	<p>It is assumed that the NUCLEUS sponsored attendance at the training programme of the Rambodagala centre has enhanced the knowledge and skills of the participating growers. One proof of this is that the fish breeding knowledge of growers has increased and therefore it is no longer a problem to obtain high quality fingerlings in the District.</p> <p>As result of a better organisation (first NUCLEUS, then the District association), the growers participated at the national aquatic exhibition in Colombo. The Provincial Ministry of Fisheries funded a 60 seated bus to transport all the growers to the exhibition. Joint marketing efforts of the growers in the District will hopefully contribute to increasing their sales and incomes.</p> <p>As a result of the LOCA exercise and the subsequent Local-VCD initiative, the Export Development Board (EDB), National Chamber of Commerce (NCC) and the National Aquatic Resource Development Authority (NAQDA) have become more aware of the needs of Polonnaruwa growers and have increased their presence and services in the District – thus increasing the level of support services. For example, 100 growers are selected for financial support of which 50 have received their grant.</p>
<p>Inland fisheries</p>	<p>The probably most effective action was taken in the case of banning small nets for inland fisheries. There is also an example of fruitful cooperation between the fishers and the authorities in this matter. The Fishermen's Society at Minneriya Lake is very powerful and work closely with the authorities to stop small eyed nets.</p> <p>As a result, fishers catch more and bigger fish (because fingerlings are not caught any more and therefore have time to grow). Bigger fish means a higher price per fish – a welcome increase for fishers' families who are mainly poor. This was confirmed when interviewing four fishers. They also confirmed that the Ministry of Inland Fisheries had provided instructions on this and most, but not all, fishers seemed to have received these instructions. Large-eyed nets are available in the shops but only one of these fishers seems to know about the special loan scheme offered by the Ministry to purchase these nets.</p>

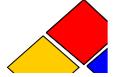


Seed paddy	Though delayed, the proposal to create a trademark for seed paddy with an integrated quality control system, shows very encouraging signs of impact. Almost all certified seed paddy growers in Polonnaruwa District have come under this umbrella after the intervention. By guaranteeing a consistent quality under their brand, the seed paddy farmers have increased their sales and can also demand a higher price for their product. The farmers say the price has increased more than 200 percent, but this also reflects the general price increase in paddy in Sri Lanka and worldwide.
Poultry industry	<p>The introduction of a buy-back system in which large poultry farmers outsource part of their production to small farmers was very successful and benefits both sides. In general, small farmers receive better (embedded) services through closer ties to larger buyers and have a secure market whereas large poultry farmers are under less pressure to improve environmental impact of their farms. Interviews with one large scale producer and five small farmers tell us that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The large-scale producer is satisfied with the new system and has entered into legal agreements with 25 small farmers. His own sales increased with Rs. 60,000-70,000 monthly. 2) Most of the small scale farmers (though not all) are satisfied with the large producer. Both their production and income have increased considerably (though difficult to say how much from these interviews). They receive services such as chicks, medicine, food (free of charge) from the large-scale producer. These small-scale farmers all work full time and two of them have employed two workers each, paying them 8,000-9,000 per month. Most of them want to expand with more chicken and some of them also want to employ more people. 3) A compost production initiative, using waste litter, has started recently.

4) Learning, conclusion & next steps

The learning experiences made by the LOCA team in Polonnaruwa for this first LOCA exercise can be summarised as follows:

- LOCA tries to mobilise local resources instead of making use of donor-funded interventions. Many local stakeholders however, expected Enter-Growth to also finance the implementation of proposals. For this reason, the District Manager and his LOCA team found it difficult to motivate people to take up issues by themselves. After having carried out further LOCAs in the meanwhile, stakeholders have become used to the approach and in fact appreciate Enter-Growths' efforts in bringing together local stakeholders and thinking about local solutions to business obstacles.
- Some of the proposals were not practical. The team learned that in order to mobilise stakeholders and resources, proposals need to be feasible on the basis of local resources and skills. "High-fly" proposals do not bring anyone any further, and are simply not taken up by the stakeholders.



- Follow-up action could have been more intense for this LOCA exercise. The team learned that a LOCA project does not end with the results presentation, and that proposals are not automatically taken up by the stakeholders. Implementation needs continuous follow-up and stakeholders need to be convinced.
- More time needs to be spent on the build-up phase of a LOCA. It is important to put together a good support team of people from the target sector, to start networking and also to collect some initial information about the target area and sectors. In subsequent LOCAs, this was improved.
- One of the biggest assets of a LOCA project is its networking function: Public and private stakeholders are brought together in various (mini-) workshops to discuss about common issues and solutions. Often this is the first time that public authorities meet with businesses and discuss their issues.
- The LOCA methodology has proven to be very useful to select potential sectors for a more in-depth value chain project. Based on its LOCA experiences with dairy and ornamental fish, Enter-Growth has carried out a Local-VCD initiative on both sectors for the Polonnaruwa District as a whole and is now even scaling up the dairy sector initiative to a “Regional-VCD project” that includes North Central and North Western Provinces.