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Madhya Pradesh Social Forestry Project

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PROJECT ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

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MADHYA PRADESH SOCIAL FORESTRY PROJECT

Project Assistance Completion Report

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MADHYA PRADESH SOCIAL FORESTRY PROJECT (MPSFP)
PROJECT ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

I. INTRODUCTION

A. OVERVIEW

The Madhya Pradesh Social Forestry Project was a six year, \$25 million effort to establish an extension wing of the Madhya Pradesh (MP) Forestry Department whose mission would be to encourage and develop the abilities of panchayats to manage community resources (woodlots) as well as encouragement of private forestry efforts.

The goals of the project were to produce fuel for rural dwellers, provide employment for them, and to reduce the rate of deforestation. The Social Forestry Directorate (SFD) reported growing and distributing in excess of 300 million seedlings for planting on public and private lands. Of these, over 200 million were reported distributed to private landowners. If a significant number of these seedlings grow to marketable age and size, then certainly the jobs and fuelwood would have been produced. So also would the reduction of deforestation have come about because each tree cut from social forestry promoted plantations will help alleviate pressure on the natural forest to meet that demand.

The Social Forestry Directorate, at the PACD, elected to drop further efforts at working with community development and stick to extension activities in support of private forestry. The Social Forestry Directorate has been institutionalized and its scope of activities expanded to all the districts in the state (from just over half during the project). SFD disenchantment with the community management component will be explained in the text. To make community management palatable to the SFD would take several policy changes in the working of the Government of Madhya Pradesh which are unlikely to be made in the near future.

B. DISCUSSION

~~The world over~~ Scientists are seeking ways to address the rapidly dwindling supply of fuel for the world's poor, and at the same time the disappearance of forests in the world's tropical and semi-tropical regions. Because most of the poor use wood for fuel, the two situations co-exist over the pan tropic region.

In the early 1980s USAID saw the opportunity to address both situations in India through tree planting on lands which had traditionally been left out of tree planting programs. These lands are private lands and the

common access lands (now Forestry Department lands) administered by the various levels of government from central (military and other public reservations) to state and local organizations (Revenue land and village common lands.)

In view of the haste in which the MPSFP was designed, the mixed success with which it has met was predictable. Success on the public lands has been spotty if not poor. However, progress on private lands has been remarkably good all over India and it is the same in M.P. However, the third year of severe drought which has much of M.P. in its grip is naturally causing the failure of a significant number of project plantations across the state.

The MPSFP was five and half years under implementation, September 1981 to March 1987. The total planned value was U.S. \$50 Million, to be financed equally by the Government of India/Madhya Pradesh State and USAID. The US\$ 25 million was \$24 Loan and \$1 million grant funds. The loan funding was for tree production and planting, including supporting activities. The grant funds were for training, research and relevant special studies, and technical assistance.

The project purpose was to "Create the institutional capacity to assist villages to manage communal and private lands for increased and sustained production of forest products through:

- a. establishment of a forestry extension organization.
- b. institutionalization of communal plantations on village common and government wasteland.
- c. production and distribution of seedlings for reforestation on private lands."

Toward this purpose the Social Forestry Directorate was formed in 1981 as a wing of the Forest Department.

The project goal was to:

1. Increase the supply of firewood, fodder, fruit and small timber for domestic use at the village level on a sustained basis.
2. Increase rural employment, and
3. Reduce the rate of deforestation.

The project has made significant progress toward the project goals. Perhaps most importantly, 300 million trees were reported to have been produced and distributed, two thirds of them to approx. 1.25 million private landowners. The survival is estimated to be good, in the range of 50-80% except in areas where drought conditions have existed since shortly after planting. These seedlings have been planted in farmers fields, around homes, and frequently on lands which have produced little or nothing for years. They represent a cash crop for farmers which is stabilizing the soil and increasing groundwater recharge. In recognition of this high value of trees, seedlings were planted in some of the most fertile land in the state and are being carefully watered and protected.

In addition to the private plantings, 47,665 ha of community lands were planted. As opposed to private plantings, the common lands planted were usually the most degraded in the villages. Production in most of these plantations will not meet project expectations. However, where there is interested community participation they may well meet the need for wood of a significant part of the local population. In the process of the planting 23.8 million person days of rural employment were generated, about half of which went to women.

Although the designers assumed that the project would address the domestic wood needs of the rural populace, in fact, most rural villagers who have participated expect to sell what they can for urban use and retain mostly the non-commercial parts of the trees for fuel etc. This situation, although it is different from the anticipated goal, still meets a part of the felt needs of the participants. It still reduces pressure on the natural forest through the substitution of plantation produced wood for natural forest produced, and it does meet part of the energy needs of rural dwellers.

The SFD did try hard, at first, and later on in pockets around the state, to make the village woodlot component work. Establishment of 47,665 ha. of community woodlots took great effort. Those that survive will be testaments primarily to the extension work done by those foresters who had a deep personal interest in working with people. This situation should highlight the necessity of selecting for the SFD, personnel with a desire to work in social forestry rather than appointing just anyone up for transfer. Action should be taken to change the state level personnel policy.

Three hundred million seedlings were reported planted and grown in six years. About a third are on community land and have a low survival rate but they will produce some wood, fodder etc. The other 200 million were planted on private lands and are producing sizeable quantities of wood, jobs and income for thousands of villagers.

What hasn't the project accomplished? Although a public forestry wing has been created and appears to be becoming institutionalized, the cadre remain mostly untrained. The few who have received training are imperfectly trained and have little esprit de corps. Continuity in leadership has been lacking; 6 directors in the 5 1/2 years of the project is not a good model of how a brand new agency with an important task should be managed. Because of the rapid turnover of staff there was only limited continuity of direction and institutional memory. In-service training is inadequate and shows no signs of improving, i.e. becoming more relevant to the needs of an extension service. The instructors need training in how to be trainers, and the curriculum needs revision towards extension (sociology and communication skills).

Until the time the GOMP alters the administration of this program, appoints a long term director, and provides proper training for the staff, there is little chance of the S.F. Wing becoming institutionalized as an extension organization except at a marginal or sub-marginal level of performance. This in turn means that USAID must change its way of doing business and deal more with the state secretaries, ministers and politicians to influence changes of the above type which are apparently more policy than procedural changes.

The project logical framework (page 6) includes objectively verifiable indicators by which to assess the extent to which the goals and purpose were achieved. Roughly 75% of the goals were met numerically (see chart on page 5) but the quality of extension work was substandard and many of the community plantations will not produce anything near the wood volume estimated in the PP. Poor site quality is one reason, but a bigger factor is that few of the villagers took an active part in planning or implementing the plantations, and they have little interest in what becomes of them. Without energetic public participation the community plantations will fail to meet expected production and many will disappear. Some already have.

Of the eight assumptions important for achieving the purpose, only numbers 2 and 8 proved correct (see Log frame page 6). These two are directly connected to the private planting (a minor) component of the project and are: (2) nurseries able to supply a large quantity of seedlings on schedule (although quality is not as good as it might be), and (8) demand for seedlings for private land increases.

Below is a comparison of the planned and actual project inputs and outputs.

<u>INPUTS - Financial</u>			
	<u>Planned</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
India	Rs. 200,000,000	Rs. 195,763,000	98%
USA	\$25,000,000	\$18,142,000	73%

<u>OUTPUTS</u>			
<u>Type</u>	<u>Percent Achieved</u>	<u>Planned</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Ha. of community plantations	75%	63,450 ha	47,665 ha
No. of management plans written (No. of panchayats)	81%	940 plans	764 Plans
No. of Villages entered	62%	6,000 villages	3,720 villages
No. of Districts entered	75%	28 Dists.	21 Dists.
No. of person days of labor generated	79%	30,000,000 days	23,778,000 days
No departmental nurseries/		unspecified	371 (in 1986)
No private nurseries		unspecified	1,588 (in 1986)
No. farmers receiving seedlings		unspecified	1.25 million
No. seedlings produced	200%	150 million	306 million
No. (staff housing) building constructed	38%	1,852	696
No. staff trained overseas	70%	20	14
No. staff trained in-country	17%	2,000	330
No. villagers trained		unspecified	3000 apprx.

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Annex 2

Life of Project: From FY 82 to FY 90
 Total U.S. Funding: \$30 million
 Date prepared: June 28, 1982

Objectives	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions																														
<p>1. Increase yields of forestwood, fodder, fruits, and building materials in rural areas, and increase employment in rural areas.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4,300 villages actively involved in management of plantations providing fuel, fodder, fruits, and building materials over average 20 year life of plantation. 51,700 ha. of land reforested. 30 million days of employment provided. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maharashtra Horticulture and Social Forestry Department records. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Social forestry extension program will gain support of villagers. Labor-intensive methods for nurseries, plantations, and harvesting continue to be used. 																														
<p>2. Increase production of forest products in Maharashtra.</p>	<p>Level of Forest Status (EOPs):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Forest forestry organization is fully staffed and operational. Successful to supply 20 million seedlings of satisfactory quality a year. Social forestry extension staff covers 4,300 villages. Farmer demand for seedlings for private lands increasing. Increased amounts of village land available for reforestation. 81,000 ha. tree plantations established yielding average of 10M per ha. per year. 8,000 management plans completed by Gram Sanikayats. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maharashtra Horticulture and Social Forestry Department records. AID monitoring and evaluation reports. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Qualified indigenous personnel recruited and trained in sufficient numbers. Current forestry department staff who have skills and experience to initiate program made available. Farmers deem planting of seedlings on own land profitable. Villagers believe communal land forest products will accrue to them in accordance with the accepted management plan. 																														
<p>3. Increase and stabilize plantations of firewood, fodder, fruits and other products in rural areas.</p>	<p>Management of 3 types:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 100,000 ha. planted 2,000 ha. of nurseries 1,000 private nurseries 700 trained extension staff 150 research reports 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maharashtra Horticulture and Social Forestry Department records. AID monitoring and evaluation reports. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Villagers have and are willing to commit portions of their common land for woodlot plantations. Severe climate conditions (monsoon failures) do not occur. 																														
<p>4. Increase employment in rural areas.</p>	<p>Implementation Targets (\$ million)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>U.S. FY</th> <th>82</th> <th>83</th> <th>85</th> <th>86</th> <th>87</th> <th>88</th> <th>89</th> <th>90</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Loan</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>8.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grant</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>1.0</td> <td>8.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	U.S. FY	82	83	85	86	87	88	89	90	Total	Loan	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	8.0	Grant	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	8.0	<p>AID reports</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Highly motivated persons with technical skills required can be recruited. Qualified candidates for training are available. GOI financial resources provided.
U.S. FY	82	83	85	86	87	88	89	90	Total																								
Loan	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	8.0																								
Grant	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	8.0																								

II. PROJECT ELEMENTS

A. MANAGEMENT

1. Project Management

The management of the project was possibly the most debilitating of its problems. There were six directors in five years. The longest term was 18 months, the shortest 24 hours. Four of the six directors retired at the end of their terms. There were two periods - one of two months, one of six months, when there was no director.

The position of SFD director was very senior with one of the highest salaries in the Forest Department (F.D.). Only very senior officers were considered, and they were sometimes assigned despite their protests. These people performed at best with mediocrity. Only two directors showed more than nominal interest in the project. Personnel in the final year or so of their service spend much of their time and energy chasing paper to ensure their retirement proceeds smoothly. The obvious result is minimal attention to the duties of their last position.

The project was managed throughout with little skill. Field reports were usually late, (often by months) yet no effective corrective action was taken. The head office often did not know the current status of field work. The project officer repeatedly advised the SFD to allow the Chief of the MEU to do his job, but his other duties, and lack of support staff, occupied most of his time. The management system of the GOMP (and other governments) give little opportunity to take corrective personnel action for poor performance. After November 1984, the number of field trips by the head office declined and field officers complained that requests for info or assistance were often not even acknowledged. Many line officers were demoralized because of this and the lack of interest demonstrated by the director.

The HQ staff positions were filled by foresters, most of whom had no experience at their assigned jobs. Training, research and publicity positions were particularly hobbled by this because GOMP foresters have no training or experience in these areas while in the F.D. The department refused to hire professionals or to get other departments to depute staff to the SFD.

Frequently the head office staff had several jobs assigned to them in addition to that described in their position description. The monitoring and research officers were unable to do their primary jobs because of this. Also, (as regularly occurs in India) some officers were transferred out of S.F. with practically no prior notice after one year, or just after training. This was at the whim of the State Forestry Minister.

The Forestry Department transferred people into the S.F.D. without determining if they wanted to go or if they were suitable for such work. Extension forestry requires people who like to work with people and who are interested in the job. Many were assigned to the SFD who simply did not want to come.

Recommendations:

The following points should be addressed in the ProAgs or in Project Covenants so that the mission has some leverage to try to get the points adequately addressed.

- a. The GOMP should keep all positions in the SFD staffing pattern filled so that the officers have time to perform their assigned duties.
- b. Extension agents should be responsible for only extension activities, not for all the organization and administrative work of establishing village woodlots. Those are participating villager duties. With a reasonable amount of work, contact with villagers can be made, working relationships established, and worthwhile management plans developed.
- c. New and innovative projects of all kinds need high quality leadership and continuity of that leadership. The director of this project should have served in that position for a minimum of three years, and preferably four or five.
- d. The H.C. should not be allowed to pour significantly more money into projects or to load project staff with significantly more and/or greater duties than called for in the project design. If additional money or duties are imposed on the project, additional staff must also be provided if project goals are to be met.

2. Community Management

A problem in management of village woodlots was the heterogeneity of the panchayats. The Panchayat was identified in the project design as the administrative body to manage the village woodlots. Unfortunately for the project, the panchayats in M.P. are composed of three to six individual villages which are usually of different caste, affluence, political persuasion, etc. It proved nearly impossible to get the villagers to work together as a management body for the woodlots.

To compound matters, each village has definite area boundaries. Villagers with woodlots planted in their village did not want to share the produce with outsiders when their land had been removed from grazing etc. while the wood was growing. The evaluation team in 1985 visited one panchayat in which several battles had been fought between member villagers over the issue. One man had been killed, and the sarpanch had been severely wounded in these frays.

This issue was not settled during the project because there is no legal governing body at village level, the lowest is at panchayat level. No one at the state level would agree to deal with traditional elder groups at the village level. Suggestions were made to do so, but S.F.D. activity and interest had begun to wane and except for isolated individual efforts, the matter was not pursued.

A related problem which was never solved was how to get some sort of written agreement that the poor and landless would receive a part of their basic fuel and other wood needs from communal woodlot produce. The eventual result was a vague statement in the management plan that some of the produce would be earmarked for the poor and sold to them at concessional rates. There was never acceptance of giving the poor anything free. It was often stated that the poor got the labor jobs connected with the woodlots and that was their share. Few people really believed there would be much to distribute to anyone. What was produced would be sold within or without the panchayat and the proceeds used for "the betterment of the village" in classrooms, improved water sources, roads etc. Such improvements are most often placed in the more affluent or higher caste parts of town and the poor have little or no access to them.

The project paper called for management plans to be written for each community woodlot established. The plan was to be prepared collaboratively between the SFD extension forester and the panchayat. Although many plans were written, there was little if any collaborative effort involved and the plans included primarily statistics about the community. How to manage the woodlots was not a part of the plans, nor was distribution of produce other than to mention that it would be decided later.

In: SFD staff had only a vague idea of the purpose of a plan and since they had little time to spend on such a low priority effort, little effort or thought went into writing them. They were considered a waste of time.

Recommendations:

- a. In H.P. do not attempt to work with the entire panchayat ~~at least~~ on matters concerning land use, if a consensus is needed for action. Try to work with villages or even small (caste) divisions, if they exist. *gentle*
- b. Require that the contents of the woodlot management plan be reviewed at a general village meeting ~~to~~ ensure that the poor have a chance to hear about the existence of the woodlot, its reasons for being, and the provision of some part of the produce for their consumption. Otherwise, the record shows they may never get the message and, consequently, never get, or claim, a share of the produce. *this will*

3. Technical Management

The technical management of the project was ^{completely} generally good. The primary fault with the field practices, in the opinion of the project officer, was the nursery practice of leaving the seedlings in their plastic bags too long. The result was often that the seedlings' roots were curled around the bottom of the bag or "J" rooted, or in some instances grew through the bottom of the bags into the soil underneath and were damaged when moved from the nursery to the planting site. Also, the seedlings were not sized before planting so that in the field, small seedlings were planted alongside large ones which resulted in the small ones being overtopped by the larger ones as they grew and therefore they were repressed and often stunted. The SFD silviculturalist prepared and distributed a booklet of proper nursery and planting practices which, if followed, would have corrected these and other problems. Unfortunately, his advice was not always taken and he was assigned other administrative duties which kept him in the Headquarters Office most of the time and unable to make adequate field visits.

Field planting was generally done well. Some of the district officers took the initiative and used water harvesting and soil conservation methods to improve the survival of the seedlings in their often harsh new environment. These methods enabled the seedlings to establish where otherwise they would have died the first year. Coincident with the third year of the project, the worst drought of this century began, and MP was hard hit. Had the villagers been keenly interested in the woodlots, survival may well have been good in spite of the drought. (In those villages where the people were involved, seedling survival was often very good.)

Recommendations:

- a. The SFD should ensure that the Headquarter technical officers such as the silviculturalist have time to monitor field operations to be able to give appropriate guidance to field staff. Headquarters should monitor operations adequately to be sure field offices use the sound technical advice provided.
- b. A study of tree survival should be made sometime in 1988-1990 of both the community and the private planting. These efforts would probably give the best results if they were correlated with the degree of villager involvement with the extension personnel in preparing the woodlot management plan and subsequent operations.

B. LAND AVAILABILITY

The project design team estimated there were 2.6 million ha. of land available for community plantations. This land was Revenue Department controlled "wasteland". Most villages in M.P. have some of this wasteland around the village which is considered the common property of the villagers and which comes under control of the panchayat. Actually

title and control is with the Revenue Department whose local representative is the patwari. The patwari makes and keeps all land records, including maps, approves all allocations of Revenue Land for distribution and surveys that land.

The social forestry personnel were tasked with trying to have significantly large percentages of land around the villages reserved by the Revenue Officials for tree plantations. The patwaris and the system often were not cooperative in surveying these lands and setting them aside for permanent tree plantations. During the last two project years, the Minister of Forests was concurrently Minister of Revenue. Even that arrangement failed to facilitate things.

Coincident with the beginning of the social forestry movement, state and national programs of distribution of revenue lands to the landless and other poor were stepped up. Informal encroachment on public land by many different elements including the wealthy tied up large areas. State programs of replacement of inundated forest land and relocation of people displaced by water impoundments (for irrigation, power, etc.) made other large areas unavailable. The villagers themselves refused to plant all their common lands since their livestock grazed there, and they collected firewood etc.

The result of all the factors was that although land was legally available, it was much more difficult than anticipated, to get suitable quality land allocated for community tree plantations. In fact most land allotted for planting was so badly degraded that only pebbles or rock outcrops were on the surface, or the soil was paper thin (only a little subsoil remained). Tree survival under those conditions has been poor and growth slow. Also livestock often entered the plantations in the summer when grazing is scarce to browse, along with herders who hack the trees.

Recommendations:

For projects dealing with the use of Revenue lands, discussions must be held with the Revenue Department during the planning stages, and possibly written agreements signed between the Revenue and Forest Departments if Revenue land is to be allotted to the project in a timely manner. State Planning Departments should also be included in project planning.

C. EXTENSION AND TRAINING

The regular forest department personnel get no extension education or training in their preparation for departmental duty. They do little or no extension work during their careers as traditional foresters so they have no experience. Yet the success of the community forestry component of the project depends on the amount and quality of extension work done by SFD personnel.

To address the situation the Social Forestry Training Institute at Shivpuri was set up. It was staffed with foresters from the M.P. forest department who had no training as teachers, no knowledge of or experience in extension activities, and as it developed, they had little incentive to develop expertise in the field. Although the Institute's Directors were interested and well intentioned, their teaching staff had been assigned there, in their opinions, as a penalty for one thing or another. As can be expected, faculty morale was low. The curriculum allotted a tiny percent of time to anything to do with extension, but was heavy in traditional forestry courses - dendrology, engineering, silviculture, etc.

Attempts were made by USAID to change the curriculum. These attempts made some significant change in time allotted and curriculum. However, without a change in teaching staff the paper changes had little chance to make effective impact on either trainees or their field performance after graduation. Both former trainees and their supervisors freely admitted that the subjects taught at the institute had little relevance to their duties. Efforts to get qualified trainers failed. Efforts to get interested forest department staff as trainers also failed due to the forest department policy (or lack of it) regarding personnel assignments.

Conversely, the department did some very good villager training. Farmers and Panchayat members were transported to demonstration plots and given 2-3 days of indoctrination on the benefits of tree growing. Results were good with private landowners, many of whom took the advice. The training worked less well with those who were to manage common access lands. Perhaps they knew the advice was technically sound, but less socially applicable.

From a year or so after project start-up the Central and State Governments saw this popular program as an easy way to spend money for jobs for rural people who needed work during the off-seasons in agriculture. They began dumping money on the S.F.D. to be used only to pay wages; none could be used for vehicles, supplies, etc. or for additional staff. Eventually money from 14 schemes was available to the SFD. Along with the money came achievement targets, normally in numbers of trees and ha to be planted. All with no additional staff. Consequently the span of control of the field staff was quickly exceeded. The first duty to be shed was extension work which they knew little about and were ill prepared to do in the first place. This situation was often reported to the Project Officer by field officers. The situation remains the same today.

Recommendations:

USAID be specific in the ProjAg about the types of people to be hired or assigned for the jobs at hand, and that if additional workload is assigned to the implementing agency, that staff adequate to do the extra tasks be provided along with any extra money. All these provisions must be maintained for the LOP, not just at the start of the project to get funds released.

The ProAg should specify 1) the types of institutions at which training is to be given, 2) the qualifications of the trainers, 3) that adequate training aids are provided, and 4) the type of syllabus to be used.

Perhaps CP to each reimbursement status should be given to the above provisions since they are part of the basis on which the sustainability depends.

D. COMMUNITY AND PRIVATE MANAGEMENT IMPACT ON THE TARGET POPULATION

In the areas where the SFD was able to get community land, area planting targets were generally met. Trees were planted on community land by local villagers under direction of SFD Staff. All work on almost all the plantations was paid for by the SFD. The plantations were watched over by locally hired guards hired and paid by SFD. The work had a significant short term impact on poor family income, and will raise the future income of village participants.

The community development component of the project was not a success because very little extension work was done with participating villagers either before or after plantation establishment, for reasons mentioned elsewhere (see extension). The private landowner planting component was greatly exceeded because the Project Paper underestimated the popularity of private planting. Many small, middle sized and large farmers participated voluntarily and today continue to plant and protect the seedlings provided by the S.F.D. Their future incomes will increase to sale/use of the products.

At least one private consultant has emerged in the Bhopal area and one around Indore, who provide seedlings, and plant and do all the work of maintenance till seedling establishment.

Community management of woodlots on common access land will not be a viable option for S.F. in India until good extension work is done and until the country develops the political will at all levels to support the rights of the lower castes and the other poor to a significant amount of the benefits accruing from those woodlots. Only when these less advantaged groups perceive that they will get some benefit at harvest time, will the trees be allowed to grow and produce. Until that time the villagers will remain mostly indifferent to the status of the woodlots.

E. CONSTRUCTION

The construction component was made part of the project with the intent of providing the field staff with good, affordable housing nearby their place of work. To be effective, the houses were to be constructed at the start of the project and used far into the future. Due to financial mismanagement by State Officers the entire state budget was thrown into disarray during 1984. In 1985 money was needed for drought relief and was taken from statewide budgets. In 1986 the state made no attempt to adequately finance the project. So, not all the housing was built.

The project officer attempted to get the SFD to hire contractors to do the work or at least to obtain the services of a qualified engineer to guide the construction (which was being supervised by the SFD personnel themselves). Although overall construction is of an acceptable level, the 17% of buildings with foundation cracks needing immediate attention probably could have been avoided if an engineer had been available during construction on a regular basis. (Some district officers did use PWD engineers on a casual basis for difficult problems.)

The major problem with construction was the lack of adequate funds on a timely basis. The problems with maintenance can be minimized if the recommendations of the inspecting engineering firm are followed. Completion of houses already under construction should be done as soon as possible to avoid the loss of the investment made to date. The houses not yet begun should be constructed for the morale of the SFD field staff. The repair of cracks in the walls and foundations are critical and should be done immediately. The repairs of roof leaks, sanitary facilities, etc. are important and should be done as soon as possible, as should the installation or provision of electricity where available. Water sources should be made available at all costs.

A copy of the report of the inspection of construction, performed by Gurbachan Singh and Associates, 9-24 March, 1987 is in the mission files. Two copies were made available to the GOMP as soon as the reports were received by USAID.

Recommendations:

- a. A study should be made as soon as possible to determine to what extent the SFD followed the recommendations in the report on the engineering inspection performed in March 1987 and given to the GOMP on 2 June 1987.
- b. The SFD should use professional engineers to supervise all construction works. The engineers could be hired or taken on deputation from another government agency. An engineer's signature should be on the records of the buildings at each site, particularly for approval of the construction site prior to start to ensure a sound foundation.

F. RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Government of Madhya Pradesh appears disinclined to allot much attention to research, even when 100% funded by foreign aid. Rhetoric in the press indicates change, but this did not help the project. The one million dollars in grant funds for research, studies, T.A. and training went largely unused.

The SFD itself installed five species and spacing trials, but when the officer-in-charge of research was transferred out of SFD/HQ, measurements stopped. The data is in the files of the SFD in Bhopal.

Although several proposals for technical assistance were made by the SFD to the state none was approved for funding. No reasons were ever given. A great deal of USAID Staff work went into drawing up specifications for TA after SFD efforts failed, but the GOI failed to act upon them.

Recommendation:

Provisions for ensuring the research should be made, as for training. Perhaps a CP for each request for reimbursement is the method that should be used to ensure funding and implementation.

III. MISSION ACTIONS

A. FINAL EVALUATION

There will be no final evaluation performed for this project. The last evaluation was made in December 1985 and little changed after that time. Included in this PACR is a reference to a report on the final status of the construction component. This report was prepared by an engineering contractor which made the field inspection.

B. ACTIONS MISSION SHOULD TAKE TO ADDRESS
POST PROJECT USAID MONITORING RESPONSIBILITIES

The GOMP needs to monitor and report on the growth and production of project financed village and private woodlots. They should be able to do so with little inconvenience since the SFD is continuing in an extension mode. The following actions are recommended with the assumption that the USAID will finance follow-on activities in support of social forestry possibly as part of a National Social Forestry Project. Therefore, the recommend activities would be funded with grant funds and be monitored by the project Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (MEU).

Recommendations:

Implementing
Agency

- | | | |
|----|--|---------------------------|
| 1. | The new Secretary of Forests showed some interest in a wholly grant funded follow on project to include research, training, etc. but no planting. | USAID/I |
| 2. | <u>Studies</u> need to be made to determine any project impact on rural life in the areas where the project was implemented. | Contracted
Institution |
| 3. | <u>Studies</u> are needed to determine the market situation of and for the produce from this project. Nothing has been done yet with this, but the GOMP should be interested in seeing such a study done, especially if it is free to them, i.e. grant funded. | Contracted
Institution |

4. Monitoring of the distribution of the produce from the community woodlots needs to be done and evaluated. Most of these wood products won't come on line for several more years (considering the effects of poor sites and the statewide drought), but fodder and fruit distribution is already underway. MEU
5. Some basic research in species adaptability and growth was started. To abandon these research plots and the already compiled data would be a waste. It needs some follow thru from the SFD and/or the F.D. State FRI/
Jabalpur
6. Monitoring of the impact of wood produced by project plantings on the exploitation (headload and pole removal) and preservation of natural forests should be done as a check on the extent to which the project met its goal of reducing the rate of deforestation. Contracted
institution
7. Monitor the construction to ensure the recommendations of the Engineer report are carried out. Contracted
institution
8. The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of the SFD must be adequately funded, staffed, trained and given time to do its assigned job. GOMP/SFD
9. There should be follow-on funding for the software aspects of socialforestry possible through an add-on to the National Social Forestry Project. USAID

C. PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE OF MADHYA PRADESH IN SOCIAL FORESTRY

The GOMP does not want to continue on in social forestry in collaboration with USAID, at least not in field planting or in work on community plantations. They are, however, interested in our assistance in the software side of the equation which appears to fit in at this time with the Mission's overall strategy. The project officer, with the blessings of the mission at that time, agreed with the Secretary Forests in May 1987, that the USAID would collaborate further with the GOMP in developing a grant financed, follow-on project

D. LESSONS LEARNED

1. During project design, or before, mission should be careful to make sure the high level state policy makers have both the willingness and the ability to implement the project in the spirit in which it was designed. Although the technical level officers saw the need for and were usually willing to manage the MFSFP properly, the higher level state officers refused to change their time tested policies and methods to accommodate the needs of the project. This resulted in, among other things, six different project directors in five years.
2. When designing agriculture/forestry extension projects, some members of the design team should have considerable extension experience. In this case, no one on the design team had extension experience (although all or most were foresters) and the project goals did not contain extension oriented goals.
3. India gives low priority to training and research and expatriate T.A. Innovation is not high on the ladder either. Therefore, if training, research, T.A. or equipment is really needed, then some arrangement for funds outside the ProAg should be made (and in fact mentioned in the PP).
4. The PP and the ProAg should be translated into the local language if one expects the project staff to be familiar with them and to follow their guidelines. This should be a budget line item.
5. If the mission wants the project goals or anything else in the project to be subject to "rolling design" (implementation flexibility), wording to that effect should be a part of the ProAg. Otherwise procedures, etc. provided as only illustrations in the ProAg will be "set in concrete" as far as the host country is concerned.
6. Source of origin for international training (grant funds) should be all countries of the world because more and more observation and other sorts of tours in China and other such countries are being offered and attended by third world people as well as by Americans. Leaving these countries out of our ability to finance is non-productive and sometimes embarrassing. Code 935 is the next best alternative if world wide clearance cannot be obtained.

7. Because M.P. panchayats are run by power groups usually centered in only one or two of the 3-6 villages comprising the panchayat, concerted village action in support of panchayat rulings is very difficult to get. Therefore, projects aimed at working with rural people which are land area based or which require a consensus of the local ruling entity, should have the village as the decision making level.
8. Because government departments do not usually coordinate well, any plan to work with Revenue land should be worked out and agreed to with the Revenue Department not with the Forestry Department. Or the land in question should be surveyed and handed over by Revenue to Forest as a C.P. before reimbursement is made.
9. CPs should require a MEU which functions properly L.O.P.
10. CP should require supervisory professional engineer on construction projects prior to reimbursement of costs and his signature obtained for each building.
11. USAID/India should obtain state government assurance that the directors of projects are well qualified to do their job, and that they will serve in the director's position for 3-5 years in order to provide continuity to the program.
12. USAID/I should develop a system to hold the GOI to its obligations in the ProAg.

E. COVENANTS

SECTION 6.1 Except as the Parties may otherwise agree in writing, the Cooperating Country agrees that the following actions, in form and substance satisfactory to both parties, will be undertaken:

- (a) Establishment of an evaluation program as an integral part of the Project, which includes the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation unit within the Social Forestry Directorate by June 1982, which will be adequately staffed by the end of 1982. The program will include, during the implementation of the Project and at one point thereafter (1) evaluation of progress toward attainment of the objectives of the Project; (2) identification and evaluation of problem areas or constraints which may inhibit such attainment; (3) assessment of how such information may be used to help overcome such problems; and (4) evaluation to the degree feasible, of the overall development impact of the Project.

- (b) Establishment of planning and research unit for the Project by April 1982 which will be adequately staffed by March 1983, and development of a research plan by May 1982;
- (c) Development of a training plan by June 1982 under the Social Forestry Directorate;
- (d) Submission to A.I.D., by October 1982 of sample agreements and guidelines indicating the relations between the Forest Department and Panchayats as further described in Annex 1, Project Description; and
- (e) Agreement that there will be no recovery of costs by the Government of Madhya Pradesh for the establishment of Panchavans, as more fully set forth in Annex 2, Project Description.

The five covenants were met as follows:

- (a) The evaluation unit was established and staffed in 1982 with the Chief of the unit concurrently the planning officer. It was a big job to do both tasks and monitoring/evaluation was skimped most of the time. It was finally agreed that the evaluation work would be that of the joint SFD/AID evaluation teams. Monitoring followed somewhat the all India "Red Book" M/E manual, but suffered from lack of field personnel.
- (b) The planning and research unit was established in 1982 but the research plan was not accepted until 21 November 1983 by a memo of understanding to the files. Research never reached the levels spelled out in the plan, and the researchers were given other jobs concurrently. The main researcher was transferred out in early 1986 and his files are on record.
- (c) The training plan was accepted 13 September 1983 by a memo of understanding to the files. The plan was generally followed, but the training staff were inadequate for the job.
- (d) Mission received English language copies of the first village management plan prepared in the state. The remainder, fully met the requirements, but few were prepared in true collaboration with the villagers.
- (e) The management plan mentioned above contained a clause stating that the GOMP will not recover the costs of plantation establishment from panchayats. The clause meets the requirements of the covenant.

4. If the NSI project is to provide the funding for some of the studies that are mentioned as follow-ups, etc. I think that this should be clearly stated in the PACT. Of course, you'll need to provide appropriate caveats of getting GOI concurrence/approval etc.
5. You might want to review my marginal notes in the draft and reconsider the wording or just omit certain passages which indicate a certain scepticism about the honesty of GOI reports and/or provide editorial sarcasm about government officials that may in fact not be 100% true. This report may someday get back to the GOI (In fact we might want to give it to them for their own use) and with such comments in it there may be an adverse result rather than the constructive impact that it might otherwise have. Besides, all that really doesn't improve the report nor are these points important to any conclusions that the reader might draw.
6. Lastly, I liked your point about the translation of the PP etc. into the local language of the people that are to implement the project. We did this in Nepal and it really helped the Project Officers get things accomplished. It puts everyone on the same playing field. Good idea!

My understanding of what happens next in this process is that you provide AID with a final copy of the PACT. PRJ will then set up the meeting of the AID to review and approve the report for AID/W distribution. After all that perhaps we can get this report out of the mission.

ATTACHMENTS

A. DRAFT (draft)

DRAFTED BY: PRJ; SPREUNDLICH, 12/8/87, DOC. # 4558C

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