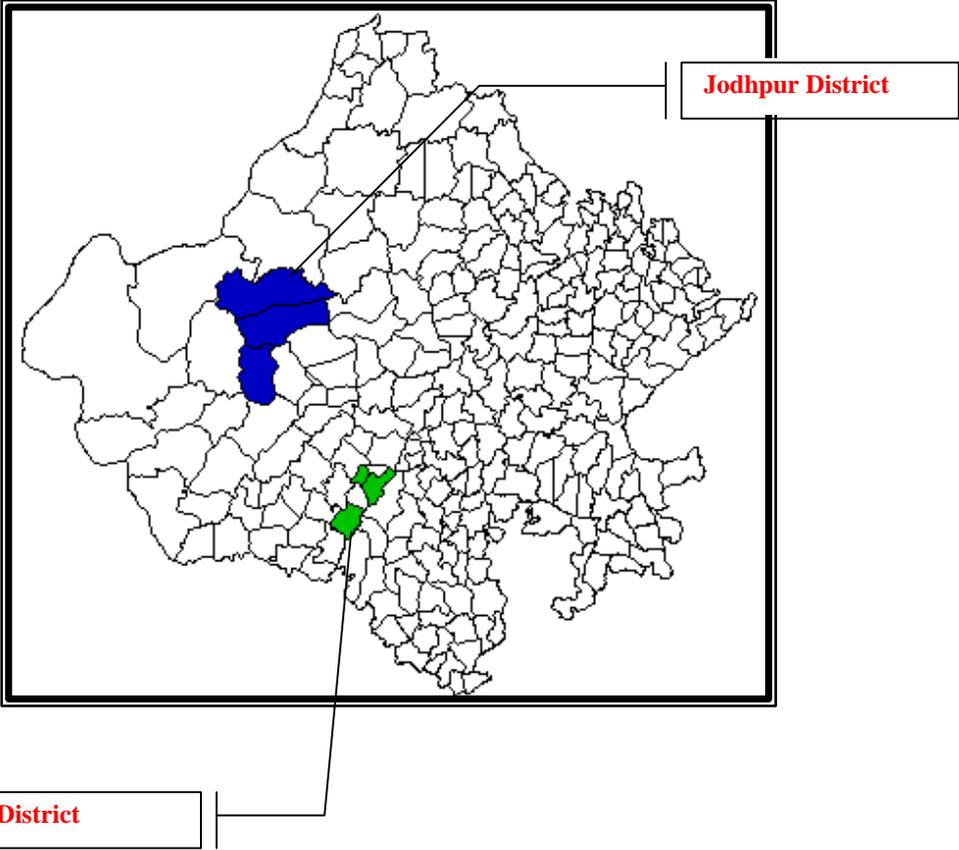


FINAL NARRATIVE AND FINANCIAL REPORT

Date:	October 24, 2000
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Program Title:	Rajasthan Water Harvesting (Emergency Relief Program)
Cooperative Agreement/Grant #:	386-G-00-00-00103
Country (ies) / Region(s):	India (Rajasthan State), Asia
Disaster/Hazard:	Drought
Time period covered by this report:	28 June to 27 Sept. 2000

Project Operational Area



Rajasthan Water Harvesting Project

June 28th – Sept 27th 2000

I. Executive Summary:

In order to provide relief to the drought affected population of Rajasthan, CARE started its relief operation using own emergency funds along with USAID provided food with effect from 25 May 2000. In order to expand the scope of intervention, Office of the US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) was approached to grant additional funding. OFDA was kind enough to provide additional funding to the tune of \$ 409,552.

With the additional funding from OFDA, CARE in partnership with government and non government organizations mobilized communities and implemented 'Rajasthan Water Harvesting Project' for three months effective 29th June 2000 in six blocks of two districts namely: Jodhpur and Pali with the support of 6 NGO/CBOs in western Rajasthan.

The objective was set to reduce the vulnerabilities of 12000 families in 150 villages of six blocks through infusion of cash. In order to meet the objective and realize the set goal, a three pronged strategy was employed. The cash for work programme was to be implemented through partner organization while focussing exclusively on revival/rehabilitation of the existing water harvesting structure. Second, work closely with NGO/CBO partners demonstrating competence in effective implementation of cash for work programme and finally, monitor work measurements, cash disbursement, technical aspects, ensure transparency and accountability.

By all accounts, the project has achieved all of its objectives with a fair measure of success. It has been completed without any cost and time overrun and the funds have been fully utilized. It goes without saying that major challenges were encountered in the accomplishment of the task. However the professionalism, team spirit, dedication and commitment of CARE staff and partners coupled with the intimate support of the communities enabled effective, timely and appropriate implementation of the project. Some of the major accomplishments of the project are summarized below:

1. A total of 196293 labour days were generated under cash for work program in 180 villages.
2. 232 water-harvesting structures of different types were either renovated or constructed in a record period of 90 days.
3. Out of 232 assets raised, 76% were Nadi's, 8% Diversion bunds, 5% consisted of khadins & loose stone check dams and 6% were Waste weir, Anicut, Wells & Earthen dam.
4. The funds have been fully utilised.
 - An amount of USD 314,502 against an allocation of USD 307,148(102 %) has been spent towards Cash for Work.

Activities Planned vs. Accomplishments

S. No.	Planned	Accomplishments
1.	Rapid survey will be completed and 150 villages will be identified for CFW	Rapid survey was completed and 180 villages identified for Cash for work programme.
2.	Number and status of existing water harvesting structures (WHS) will be ascertained and report produced	Number and status of existing WHS was assessed, resulting in selection of 232 works.
3.	Detailed site specific cash for work plans will be produced	Detailed site specific cash for work plans of 232 works were produced.
4.	One member of at least 12,000 households of the targeted village communities will receive employment for 15 days under cash for work program	A total of 196,293 labour days were generated in 180 villages. Since the works were of short duration and labour intensive, more works had to be identified and larger number of villages covered. On an average, each family in the project area received 9 days of cash for work..
5.	Accountability and transparency in cash disbursement will be ensured	Successfully achieved.
6.	At least 90% of the planned works connected with repair/ rejuvenation/ new construction will be completed	96.6% of the planned water harvesting works were completed within the project duration.
7.	Minimum wages as laid down will be paid	Payment of minimum wages ensured
8.	No cost or time overrun will take place	Project completed on time and without cost overrun.
9.	Funds will be fully utilized	Cash for work component fully utilized and in fact exceeded..
10.	Monthly and final report will be submitted	Submitted
11.	Mid Term and final evaluation will be conducted and report produced.	Completed and produced

II. Program Overview

A. Project Goal and Purpose:

Reduce vulnerabilities of the targeted population from recurring water scarcity due to drought conditions in the state of Rajasthan.

B. Profile of Target Population:

The project was aimed to assist the poorest and the most vulnerable segment of the targeted communities living below poverty line, being land less and/or marginal farmers/ shepherds.

C. Objectives

To provide an infusion of cash to the most vulnerable population in order to improve household livelihood security as an immediate relief intervention in the selected 150 village communities in six blocks of the districts of Jodhpur and Pali and decreasing their vulnerabilities to recurring water scarcity.

D. Geographical Location and Beneficiaries

The project was designed to benefit 12,000 households of the target village communities in the districts of Jodhpur and Pali in the State of Rajasthan, through cash for work program. In addition it was perceived that the revival and construction of new water harvesting structure would result in marked improvement of availability of water to the target communities.

III Program Performance

Strategy Adopted:

1. The cash for work programme would exclusively focus on the revival / rehabilitation of existing water harvesting structures and on the construction of new structures where required.
2. CARE would work closely with the local NGO partners, who have competence and bring in intimate ground knowledge resulting in efficient and quick accomplishment of cash for work program relating to water harvesting.
3. CARE would ensure overall programming strategy, provide close monitoring of work measurement, cash disbursement and technical aspects and ensure transparency and accountability.

Activities Undertaken:

1. **Collection and sharing of relevant and scientific information:** Resource atlas, topographic information, watershed and ground water atlas were collected from different sources namely CAZRI (Central Arid Zone Research Institute), SRSAC (State Remote Sensing Application Center), Watershed Department and Survey of India, the Govt. of Rajasthan and the

community. Information was accessed using above material on socio-economic aspects, demographic and physiography of the area. The information thus collected was shared with project partners and personnel, to enhance their understanding of water harvesting.

2. **Meeting with Govt. Officials:** Meetings were organized with officials of Government of Rajasthan at regular intervals viz. CAZRI, SRSAC, and Dept. Of Agriculture, Dept. Of Soil and Water Conservation to obtain their inputs in smooth implementation of the project. The Govt. support was sought for:
 - a. Information sharing
 - b. Avoid duplication of work
 - c. Conflict resolution
3. **Appointment of Project Staff:** Project staff was appointed on a regular basis in the project. Besides the regular employees, four Technical Consultants were also hired in the project. Being retired engineer from Government Departments, all the four technical consultants demonstrated competence in the area of Watershed Management. In addition to the project staff, existing CARE Raj. Staff and from other states was also obtained in the implementation of the project.
4. **Project Orientation:** All the project personnel were imparted orientation training in order to familiarize them about the project goals/ objectives and the modalities of project implementation including their roles and responsibilities. In the orientation training, the project personnel were also introduced to the concept of water harvesting and basic technical knowledge required for its implementation and monitoring.

5. Identification of Project Partners:

While four NGO/CBO were involved in the implementation of Sanchita project (Project launched by CARE using own Emergency funds), two more organizations were identified for partnership in RWH project. Table 2 gives the list of the organizations involved and their area of operation under RWHP:

Table 2 List of Partner Organizations

S. No.	Name of the Organizations	Contact Person	Address	Operational blocks in RWHP
1.	Gram Vikas Samiti	Mr. Khushbir Singh	Gram Vikas Samiti Desuri, Jojavar, Pali, Raj. – 306022 Ph: 02935-45021	Rani/ Desuri in Pali District
2.	Vikas Samiti Care Bali	Mr. Chandan Singh	Vikas Samiti (Care) Bali Zone, Boya, Pali – 306701 Ph: 02938-22566	Bali in Pali District

3.	Morarka Foundation	Mr. Mukesh Gupta	M.R. Morarka Foundation, RIICO Gem Stone park, Tonk Road, Jaipur- 302011 Ph: 0141 – 720202	Rani/Bali/ Desuri in Pali District
4.	Gramin Vikas Navyuvak Mandal	Mr. Laxman Singh	GVNM, Village laporiya, Dudu, Jaipur – 303008	Desuri in Pali district
5.	CECONDECON	Mr. Sharad Joshi	CECOEDCON, Shilki Dungri, Chaksu, Jaipur – 303901 Ph: 0141- 44248/44074	Bap/Phalodi in Jodhpur District
6.	Jal Grahan Vikas Sansthan, Tibna	Capt. Roop Singh	JGVS, At & Po. Tibna, Tehsil Shergrah, Jodhpur	Shergarh in Jodhpur District

6. Preparation of Micro-plans:

By using PRA technique information on needs of the village community, status of existing water harvesting structures, requirement of additional water harvesting structure in the villages was ascertained. Based on the information collected, proposals were prepared and submitted for approval by the partner organizations. The technical feasibility and cost estimate of each structure with the BSR on site before recommending technical and financial sanction was assessed by the Technical Consultants.

Altogether 180 villages were selected for project intervention. Out of 180 villages, 103 and 77 villages were selected in Pali and Jodhpur districts respectively. The number of villages identified by each partner NGO/CBO for implementation of project activities is shown below in table 3.

Table 3 Number of Villages Identified by each Partner

S. No.	Name of the Partner	Particulars						Total
		District Pali			District Jodhpur			
		Bali	Desuri	Rani	Shergarh	Phalodi	Bap	
1.	M.R. Morarka Foundation	18	9	13	-	-	-	40
2.	Gram Vikas Samiti, Desuri	-	29	16	-	-	-	45
3.	Vikas Samiti Care Bali	15	-	-	-	-	-	15
4.	Jal Grahan Vikas Samiti. Shergarh	-	-	-	21	-	-	21
5.	GVNM, Lapodiya	-	3	-	-	-	-	3
6.	CECOEDCON	-	-	-	-	28	28	56
	Total	33	41	29	21	28	28	180

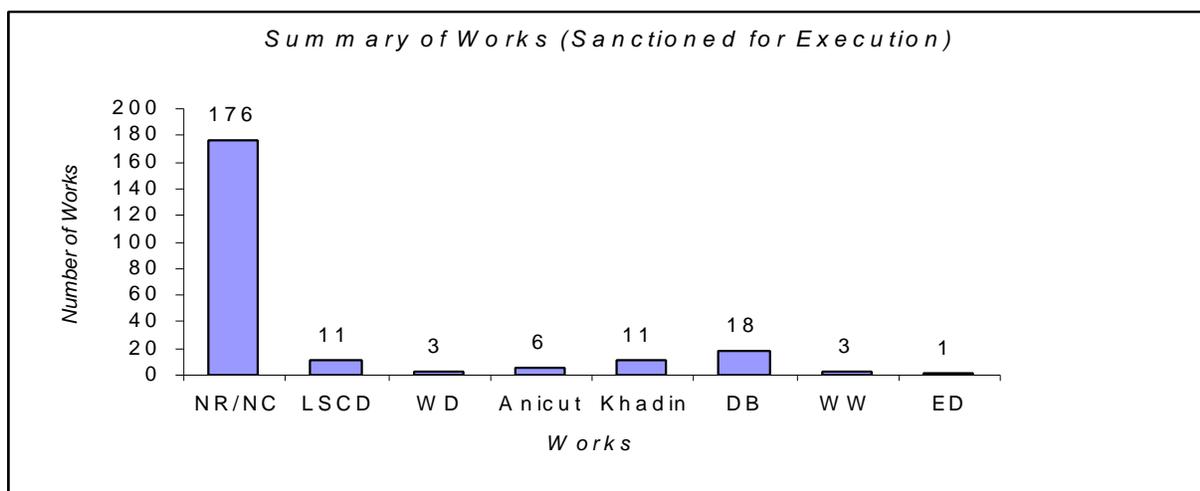
During the course of the project a total of 232 works in 180 villages were surveyed, vetted and approved for implementation (details Appendix 1). Table 4 summarizes the details of type and number of structure approved under cash for work program for each organization.

Table 4 Summary of works approved for Execution

S.No	Organization	Villages	Works								
District Pali											
			NR/NC	LSCD	WD	Anicut	Khadin	DB	WW	ED	Total
1.	Morarka Foundation	40	34	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	42
2.	Gramin Vikas Samiti, Desuri	45	39	2	4	4	-	-	-	-	49
3.	Vikas Samiti Care Bali	15	13	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	17
4.	GVNML	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
	Sub Total	103	87	10	3	4	2	2	-	-	111
District Jodhpur											
1.	CECOEDCON	56	65	-	-	2	9	16	3	1	96
2.	JGVS, Tibna	211	24	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	25
	Sub Total	77	89	1	-	2	9	16	3	1	121
	Total	180	176	11	3	6	11	18	3	1	232

Legends: NR- Nadi repair, LSCD-Loose stone check dam, WW- Waste Weir, DB-Diversion Bund, WD- Well desilting, NC- Nadi Construction, ED- Earthen dam.

The Table below gives graphical representation of different types of structure approved for construction/ renovation during the project implementation as numbered in table 4.



As evident from above graph, 176 (76% of the total) works pertaining to Nadi's (village ponds) were approved for implementation. Work on the Nadi's were selected as these are labour intensive, require little or no material and provides drinking water to cattle as well as humans in a cost-effective manner.

7. Community Mobilization, Awareness Building and Organization:

The NGOs/CBOs representatives were assigned the responsibility to form village level committees and mobilize involve communities in identification of Water harvesting structures, identification of beneficiaries, monitoring, supervision and cash disbursement through village level committees. The NGOs were successful in mustering the support of Panchayat representative and reputed village persons.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation of Project Activities

- a. Monitoring System:** For the purpose of monitoring the progress of the physical activities on site and ensuring smooth financial management, daily and weekly monitoring formats (Appendix 2) were developed and disseminated to the project personnel's and implementing organization. Systems were set at the field level to access information about the work in progress, labor days and utilization of budget. The information collected daily was shared by fax or phone with the state office, wherever feasible.
- b. Mid Term and Final Evaluation:** Contract for mid term and Final Evaluations were finalised and signed with the consultancy firm. As per the scope of work, mid term evaluation assessed the efficiency and appropriateness of the intervention model for incorporating mid course correction. Based on the recommendations made in the Mid Term Evaluation report, mid course corrective actions were introduced in the project. The final evaluation has been submitted

To quote, some of the significant observation of the Mid term Evaluation are:

i. Breath of life for poor

'RWHP cash for work intervention has provided critical support to the rural populace in 180 villages in three blocks each of Jodhpur and Pali especially at the time when Govt. stopped its famine relief works in the area with the arrival of monsoon. With no avenue of gainful employment available to the local community, RWHP came as a breath of life for poor and needy'.

ii. Appropriate selection of the site/village

'The selection of the site/village is adequately appropriate and was done as per the criteria laid out in the project document'.

iii. Formation of village committees

'Village committees have been formed in the target villages. These committees have local Panchayat representative as their members. While the role of village committees in site selection was limited, they played an important role in the progress of work at various sites'.

iv. *Involvement of district administration*

‘District administration is involved in the drought relief interventions undertaken by CARE’.

v. *Payments to the laborers as per BSR*

‘Payments are made to the laborers on all sites as per the quantum of work done by him/her calculated as per the BSR. The cash earned by the laborers is used to buy food grains, to pay school fee of the children and to buy fodder for the animals’.

vi. *Increased water holding capacity*

‘The renovation of nadis has increased their water holding capacity and will provide immense support to the people and animal’.

vii. *Capacity building of NGOs/CBOs*

‘The NGOs/CBOs involved in the implementation of RWH project have developed considerable understanding of the water harvesting activity as well as of community in the area. CARE’s decision to grant project responsibilities to small up coming CBOs in these districts is commendable, since it has led to enhanced capacities of these grassroots organization’.

viii. *Post construction maintenance of raised assets by Panchayat*

‘In the target villages, new local committees formed or Panchayat have come forward to maintain the constructed water harvesting structures’.

ix. *RWHP as model for wider dissemination*

‘Mechanism and models can be developed on the basis of community based resource management experience for wider dissemination of the results and more fruitful utilization of its learning. It would be interesting to document the experience gained from the project and share them with state government. It should be advocated that Govt. should manage its future relief in drought affected areas of the state, on similar lines’.

Final Evaluation

The task of conducting the final evaluation was entrusted to an organization called “ARAVALI”, i.e. The Association of Rural Advancement Through Voluntary Action and Local Involvement, headquartered in Jaipur. This organization has been established by the Government of Rajasthan as a teaching and consultancy organization to assist in government strategy formulation for promoting voluntary action and participation in rural development.

They have expertise in the areas of Natural Resource Management for livelihood development and are members of the State Level Watershed Implementation and Review Committee in Rajasthan. ARAVALI has served as a consultant organization with various national and international organizations, such as the UNFPA, Rajasthan Council for Primary Education and so on.

The major high lights of the final evaluation are given below:

- The project has done exceptionally well in terms of villages covered and the utilization of funds. 230 different sites selected for repair/construction and all payments were made fully and on time. The community has been highly appreciative of CARE's effort.
- The community utilized the money for purchasing foodstuff, fodder, and essential household survival items and for repaying loans.
- In the communities visited by the evaluation team, at least 50% of the households had benefited from the project.
- Full transparency was maintained at all levels in the project. The NGOs kept the community well informed on various aspects of the project. The site and activity selection was done in consultation with the community.
- Payment of wages was done in presence of CARE officials, NGOs and the village community.
- CARE took the help and worked in collaboration with various government agencies, research and training institutions (Central Arid Zone research Institute, Center for Remote Sensing in particular) which enhanced the quality of project delivery.
- The project did help in reducing migration of the population. In one sample village the team ascertained that as against the normal migration of 70%, this year only 30% men had migrated due to the CARE project.
- The project is expected to have an indirect but positive impact on agriculture through rise in ground water level. The area did not receive adequate rainfall after the construction of water harvesting structures the villagers were confident that in normal rains years these structures would be able to hold water for atleast 8 months.
- The most immediate impact of the project has been on the community mobilization. Local leadership, the Panchayati Raj institutions and the community were fully co-opted and people got the knowledge and understanding of the problem and the possible solutions.

Recommendations of the final Evaluation

Some of the Recommendations made by the Final Evaluation Report are:

- CARE could consider taking up **Pastureland Development** activities in Pali district. Work taken up on these lands would generate cash under relief programs and would also solve the local fodder problem through development of productive grazing areas.
- Finally the report concludes that **considerable experience has been generated** among all levels of actors through this project. On the basis of this experience, **models for community based resource management can be developed for wider dissemination and also for sharing with the government.**

The detailed Final Evaluation Report is enclosed with this report.

10. Process Documentation:

The process documentation was aimed at tracking the processes evolved at each stage of the project cycle, record the processes and the methodologies of the project implementation so as to

derive lessons for future interventions of this nature. While the Process Document is being finalized, the draft Executive Summary has been submitted.

Some of the highlights of the Process Document prepared by external consultants are:

- The findings of the assignment highlighted **that CARE had developed a detailed planned process** that set out operational directives for selection and orientation of staff, financial guidelines for release of funds and administrative procedures. A prioritization criterion was developed to identify and select beneficiaries and the establishment of village committees. Finally, monitoring and evaluation systems were developed with partner CBOs/NGOs to ensure transparency and report on the progress of the project.
- While RWHP faced many challenges during its planning and implementation stages, mostly related to the paucity of time and procedural delays from banks, the project had several positive benefits. It was **able to achieve its main objectives of provisioning of cash for work and rehabilitation or construction of water harvesting structures**. As a result of RWHP, distress migration from villages in the project area was checked.
- Due to the developmental approach planned of establishing community based organizations to manage and maintain the water harvesting structures, **strong and active CBOs were created in the project area**. This provides CARE a strong community foundation on which to start any new project in the future. The project has also been successful in motivating villagers to gain a sense of ownership. As a result a large number of the villages in the project area have highlighted the need and potential for micro watershed development projects in future. RWHP has also **resulted in establishing a good rapport between CARE and the concerned government departments** at the state district and block levels as well as with the communities.
- The process document **recommends** that the RWHP villages in Jodhpur and Pali have a strong potential for **watershed development**. It is also suggested that the micro-watershed addresses the issue of protection of the resources and access funds from the PRI as well as the MP and MLA funds for development in their areas.

IV. Resource Utilization/ Expenditure:

The funds have been fully utilized. The Financial report is attached. For cash for work component USD314,502 has been expended as against the budgeted amount of USD 307,148. The tools and other items purchased for the Project have been handed over to the partner NGOs/CBOs.

Challenges Encountered

- A. Extraordinary Time Constraint:** The project was to be completed within 90 days between 28th June to 27th Sept 2000. The recruitment, orientation and deployment of the project team took some time. It was found that to get the suitable candidates with the necessary skill and experience for such a short term project was difficult.
- B. Team Building:** The working together of personnel from different background, experience and perceptions is always a challenging task. In this case personnel from govt. departments, research institutions, CARE, grass root level organization etc had to be knit together as a team in a very short duration for achieving difficult targets. Such a situation accentuated the inherent pressures and posed a challenge from management perspective. Since some personnel were new to CARE style of operation and did not know each other, it took time for them to acquaint and adjust themselves to the organization set up.
- C. Limited Capabilities of NGOs/CBOs:** It was found that even proven NGOs who had earlier demonstrated their competencies in undertaking developmental project needed a lot of training and capacity building, especially in disaster related project. Some of them despite working in the State for long time did not have detailed knowledge of the ground and the community in the selected area of the project. Thus they took time to familiarize themselves with the area and build rapport with the communities. The CBOs on the other hand had very good rapport with the community; however, they had limited experience and capacities of undertaking such a short-lived assignment. CARE had to spend a fairly substantive effort in the training and capacity building of the partners. Their limitation resulted in certain problems which are given below:
- **Timely submission of detailed micro-plan:** At the time when project was approved, it was planned that the implementing partners would submit the micro plans by 15th July. However, due to inadequate capacities of the partners, the process of preparation and submission of micro-plans got delayed. To meet this challenge, the CBOs were provided with technical personnel.
 - **Verification of technical viability and budget estimates of each structure.** Even though the partner NGOs/CBOs had their own technical personnel for preparation of designs and budget estimates for structures, often our technical consultants found that the plans and the budget submitted were not viable and/or correct. Thus, it became essential for CARE appointed consultants and staff to physically verify each plan and the budget, before the go ahead could be given for the work. The above process adversely impacted on our time planning.
 - **Excess Expenditure or Savings on works:** Since partners had limited knowledge of the area, deviation occurred in the cost estimates prepared for each site and when the work actually got completed. The deviation in the work cost generated savings or excess expenditure, which resulted in modification to the overall plans.

D. Climatic Conditions: Sudden but expected changes in the climatic conditions also created stumbling blocks in the implementation of the project. Some of the challenges posed by the climatic conditions were:

- **Change of Few Technically Approved Sites:** Due to rains in some areas some of the work sites had water accumulation which resulted in temporary stoppage of works at those sites. These were taken up again after the site dried up. Such interruptions caused delay. In addition, some sites had to be abandoned, as it was not possible to continue to work at such places.
- **Redesigning of Cost Estimates:** Since earthwork was calculated on the basis of BSR of hard soil, the onset of rains changed the soil characteristics, which consequently affected the cost estimates already prepared. After the rains, due to transformation of hard soil into soft soil, quantum of work done by each laborer increased manifold as against expected design of cost estimates. Observing the structural variation, the cost estimate had to be remade.

E. Vast Spread of Project Area: Due to spread of project sites implementation and monitoring of works posed a great challenge. The disbursement of payment to the laborers in fact got delayed on few sites due to the above reason. This problem was however resolved by employing additional staff in the project from within CARE resources.

F. Transfer of Funds. Even though money was available with CARE, the bank rules and processes delayed realization and encashment of money by NGOs /CBOs where ever inter- bank transaction was involved. Consequently payments to laborers were also delayed. In order to tackle the problem some NGOs/CBOs opened their bank accounts in the same bank where CARE has its account.

Highlights of the Project:

- The project has successfully achieved its laid down objectives in a record time of 90 days without cost and time overrun.
- Constant support rendered by CARE employees mobilized the NGO/CBO to actively get involved in the project. The commitment and hard work of the staff has resulted in achieving the desired project objective within the stipulated time.
- Continuous interaction of project staff with technical consultants has helped in building their technical expertise in water harvesting. The present staff is now fully equipped to tackle any similar future eventuality
- The employment of technical consultants in the project rendered immense support to the staff members as well as the implementing organization.
- Leadership and decentralized decision process allowed field personnel to make decisions as and when situation demanded.
- The monitoring system ensured transparency in the implementation of the project. Full payments in open forums were made to the laborers as per the BSR of relief department and quantum of work done by each individual. Due to continuous emphasis on ensuring

transparency in the system, labor turnouts on work sites greatly enhanced and large number of families benefited from cash for work. The leadership role that CARE played in this coordination effort enhanced its visibility among the population and government agencies.

- Wherever site supervisors had tried to discount the labor payment either by means of pressure tactics or cheating, they were taken to task by the local communities.
- Members of Panchayati Raj Institutions were involved in planning and implementation of the project. Agreement was reached with PRIs to administer post construction maintenance of the raised physical assets.
- The NGOs/CBOs involved in implementation of RWHP project have developed considerable understanding and capacities of the water harvesting activity as well as the communities in the project area.
- During the entire project cycle, CARE successfully solicited support from Govt. line departments, research institution and Panchayati Raj Institution. Coordination committee was formed comprising scientists from CAZRI, SRSAC, Govt. officials from Watershed department and NGO/CBO representatives. The formation of coordination committee has helped in accessing relevant scientific information and their expertise.

Major Lessons Learned

- A. Back-up for communications systems are essential for relief operations, particularly in vulnerable areas. Use of mobile phones in future will reduce dependence on landline based systems that are prone to collapse and enable the team to work more effectively.
- B. Formation of a core group of trained disaster response staff at state levels is necessary for overall coordination, response and planning. A panel of external resource persons with expertise in disaster management should also be prepared, whose advice can be sought during time of emergencies when the internal staff needs additional support. The formation of core team would enable completion of the preliminary work required before the launch of the relief program.
- C. Local NGOs understand the local customs, situation and enjoy greater support of the community. It is learnt that local NGO/CBO are better equipped to respond to the emergency situation provided simultaneous efforts are made to build their capacities.
- D. Systems for procurement and finance should be made flexible as per the requirement of the project to better support emergency operations.
- E. The support of research institution and Govt. line department clearly facilitates in realization of project objectives and such support should be solicited whenever required.
- F. For a project of this magnitude, a time line of 3 months is inadequate and results in unwarranted pressures on the project staff as also on the community.

Conclusion

It must be put on record that timely and prompt support received from OFDA was instrumental in CARE facilitating to reach out to the people of drought affected areas quickly and with appropriate assistance. The fact that the assistance provided by CARE has been widely acclaimed both within the government and the community, owes a lot to the OFDA. The cash for work support for three months helped in preventing migration of the people in search of employment to other areas. The reports coming in from the field indicate that employment generated through cash for work has in fact-increased purchasing power of the poor people.

CASE STUDIES

An illustration of the Human Interest Stories documented is given below:

Story of Mongibai of Amla Village in Phalodi Block

Amla village is an average size village with a population of 150 families facing two major problems of drinking water and employment. There was no drinking water source in the village as the government installed hand pumps were all dry. The common tube well for five villages that was installed had stopped functioning sometime back. The only source of drinking water for the village was a Nadi 2.5 Kms away.

The site for cash for work was selected on the basis of remote sensing maps available from the SRSAC Jodhpur. Before selecting the site local knowledge was also considered.

Mongi Bai and her family of ten are residents of Amla village. Here life revolves mainly around rearing of goats and sheep and casual labor in and around the village. In Mongi Bai's own words, "My family and I have had a 'hand to mouth' existence for the last several years. Our animals are also dying. We used to have a herd of 75 goats and sheep. The opportunity for casual agriculture was also ample as we had good rains. But now, for the last several years because of drought, agriculturists also are on the look out for alternative source of income. The herd of sheep/ goats we used to own has reduced to less than half as we have been selling them to survive.

It seems that God is punishing us for bad doings in our previous birth. We do not know when our sufferings will end. The government also does not do anything to help reduce our suffering. In the last three years the only source of drinking water has also gone dry and there is no attempt to repair it.

In these times of suffering, the work on the dam has come to us as a 'godsend' gift. This employment has given us relief for at least a month. Though we are not being paid Rs.60 per day as promised but that does not matter to us. We are getting Rs.51 per day, which is anyway, more that we expected. We pray to God that we get employment for the next four/ five months to come"

Story of Ajmatbai of Bhojka village in Bap block

Bhojka village is a small village consisting of 75 households of mainly Muslim families living below the poverty line. The village, 25 Kms from Phalodi town, has for the last several years been reeling under severe drought conditions. Though agriculture is practiced, it is basically for the villager's own consumption. People subsist on casual labor and by rearing sheep and goats. In drought situations like this, these animals are sold for income.

The village has only one drinking water source i.e. a tube well constructed by the government 6 years ago. Due to the drought there is a major problem of employment in and around the village forcing villagers to migrate to nearby major towns in search of employment for at least eight months.

Ajmat Bai is a resident of this village and lives with 6 members of her family. She owns a herd of 15 goats and 10 sheep.

"I am a widow with six children. My eldest son is 16 years old and has gone to Jodhpur in search of employment. The other son, who is 14 years old, works in a shop in Phalodi. The other three children are girls who stay in the house when I come to work here. My herd of sheep is reducing as I sell them to a contractor who comes to our village once in six months.

If this work had not started in my village, I too would have migrated to some other place in search of employment with my three young daughters. I am very grateful to you all for starting this project in my area. At least for the next one month I do not have to worry for my family. I have already got my first payment of Rs.60 per day, which is unbelievable because we have worked on other government run relief work programs, and we never got more than Rs.40 per day, no matter how hard we worked. The Nadi work is almost over. We do not know if any other work will start. We would be obliged if you could extend this work or may be start new work. There are a lot of such sites in and around the village that can be taken up for similar kinds of programs. If that happens, we do not have to worry for next 2 to 3 years and I can pay up the entire loan amount I have taken from the local money lender."

Story of Goranbai of Siyanda village in Shergarh block

Goranbai belongs to a scheduled caste family of six of Siyanda village. Her daughter also works on the site. Goranbai is a landless casual laborer who picks 'Sonamukhi' leaves when no employment is available in or around the village. Sonamukhi leaves are sold to the local trader @Rs.5 per kilo. She picks at least five kgs of leaves per day.

"We are very poor people. We subsist on labor since we do not own any land. Owning land is also worthless unless it rains. My 12 year-old daughter also works on the site. My husband also wanted to join me for this work but was not allowed, as employment is also required for other families. He goes to dig sandstone in a quarry that is 19 Kms away from our village.

The government, through the society in our village had started similar projects in the last three years and because of that we got employment for at least 10 days in a month. We are happy that the society in our village has got this work in such times where feeding our children is a problem.

Why don't you start similar work in other villages, as conditions of villages nearby are worse than ours? Please do something for them also."