



**WORKING
PAPER**

190

**SOCIAL CAPITAL IN FOREST
GOVERNANCE REGIMES**

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**INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE
2008**

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Abstract

This paper examines the relations between social capital (cooperation for collective action) and natural capital (sustainable use of community forestry resources) in three regimes with a view to understand the role of state and civil society. The paper argues that the government in Joint Forest Management (JFM) regime has adopted legal instruments (rules/constitutional status), individual or group incentives and training for accumulating social capital among villagers for developing and protecting the forests. While the social capital in Community Forest Management (CFM) has come mainly from the initiatives of the local communities, youth clubs, NGOs and network. In the Village Forest Panchayat (VFP), deepening of representative democracy with constitutional status and enlightened leadership is responsible for collective action.

Introduction

Social capital (co-operation for collective action on the basis of association, networks, norms, trust and reciprocity) is a pre-requisite for long-term improvement of natural capital (sustainable use of community forestry resources). Collective action can increase the provision of public goods such as irrigation, crop insurance and sanitation. It also improves the management of Common Prosperity Resources (CPRs) such as grazing lands, ground water basins, fisheries and forests (Anderson and Locker, 2002: 102). In recent years, social capital has been enlarged in participatory and deliberative institutions in sectors like watershed, irrigation, micro-finance, forest, health, education and such other activities throughout the world.

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The author acknowledges the IDPAD for providing financial assistance to carry out this study. The author also thanks Prof. M.V. Nadkarni, Prof. Michael Tharakan and anonymous referees for their comments.

Institutions/groups such as community, participatory, joint, decentralised, indigenous, and co-management accounting 4,08,000 – 4,78,000 involving 8.2 - 14.3 million members have been formed mostly in developing countries in the last decade (Pretty and Ward, 2001). Many such initiatives have been taken in India in recent years by both government and civil society organisations. The central government has initiated major programme known as Joint Forest Management (JFM) in 1990 to regenerate degraded forests and support livelihood systems of forest people with the joint responsibility of government and the people to share the benefits equally. Nearly 36,130 Village Forest Committees (VFCs) came into existence in all the states covering plantation area of 10.25 million hectares of forests during 1990- 2000, (Bahuguna, 2000; Murali, et.al, 2000; SPWD, 1998).

At the same time, civil society organisations like Village Communities, Youth Clubs, and Village Elders are also protecting vast tracks of local forests in different parts of the country. Most of these groups have come into existence in the last 20 - 30 years in a big number on the basis of self-initiative in response to the livelihood, biomass and other needs of the people (some of them in existence for the last 70 - 80 years without government recognition). Nearly 9,775 Community Forest Managements (CFMs) were protecting 3,34,205 hectares of forest in states like Orissa, West Bengal, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Haryana (Ravindranath, et.al., 2000; Poffenberger, et.al., 1996)). Along with this, van panchayats (forest councils) in Uttar Pradesh (UP) hills or Village Forest Panchayats (VFPPs) in Uttarakhand (UK) (Karnataka) are managing village forests on the basis of government Acts/or Statutes (Indian Forest Act, 1927).

Keeping this in view, the study examines the role of social capital in the management of community forest resources (CFRs) in three regimes (Andhra Pradesh (AP), Karnataka and Orissa) with a view to understand the role of the state and society. The main issues raised in this paper are: How village communities are being motivated to cooperate for collective

action of CFR management? What strategies are being adopted for inculcating the habit of cooperation among villagers for collective action? What types of governance institutions (policies, laws, regulations, rules, norms and networks) have been adopted for management of CFRs? What are the drivers for creating social capital? Whether the social capital can be created with the state and civil society intervention within a short span of time? What are the advantages and disadvantages of such capital on collective actions? These are the issues that have been examined with empirical evidence from three case studies representing JFM, CFM and VFP located in Andhra Pradesh (AP), Karnataka and Orissa. The paper has been structured into seven sections.

The second section deals with data sources and conceptual framework. Motivation for collective action is discussed in the third section. Fourth section focuses on socialisation of village communities for collective action. In the fifth section, laws, rules and networks for promoting collective action is covered. The sixth section covers with the drivers responsible for formation of social capital and finally, the paper concludes with the pathways for promoting social capital.

II

Data Sources and Methodology

Three types of cases representing JFM, CFM and VFP were selected, because of wide variations in their approaches, strategies and institutional mechanisms for collective action. Binjageri and Sulia (Magarabandh) to represent CFM clusters were selected from Nayagarh District, Orissa. The Binjageri represents a successful case of regenerating forest cover on barren land and brought lush green natural forest with the support of the local people from 22 villages since 1970. Sulia in the same district represents the effective protection and management of the existing forest cover of 3500 acres covering 17 villages since 1990. Rampachodavaram and Sudhikonda forest ranges - in East Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh, Haliyal, Gopshitta, in Uttar Kannada district, Karnataka were selected to represent JFM which was implemented with the World Bank and DFID

assistance respectively during 1995-2000. Kumta forest range in Uttara Kannada (UK) district, Karnataka was selected as a special case to study the eight decades old village forest panchayat. Three villages from each cluster/ forest range on the basis of performance (high, moderate and low) were selected. Information regarding socio-economic profile, membership, perceptions and involvement were ascertained from 15 respondents from each village through an interview schedule. Forest officials, NGOs, VFC members and academicians were interviewed; secondary data was collected from the government departments and NGOs.

Social Capital: Conceptual Framework

Social capital has been defined by scholars in a variety of ways (Arris and De Renzio, 1997). Woolcock and Narayan, (2000: 226) define social capital in terms of norms and networks that enable people to act collectively for mutual benefit. Putnam (1995) defines Social Capital as a social organisation such as networks, norms and trust that enable participants to coordinate and cooperate more effectively to pursue shared interests. Fukuyama (1995) describes social capital as “a capability that arises from the prevalence of trust in a society or certain parts of it. Trust, according to him, can be embodied in the smallest social group like family, as well as the largest of all groups like the nation, and in all the other groups in between. Inglehart interprets social capital as “a culture of trust and tolerance” (1997: 188). Social capital also can be classified into trust, reciprocity and exchange, common rules, norms and sanctions and connectedness, networks and groups (Pretty and Ward, 2001: 209).

In order to develop a general, coherent theory of social relations, Coleman uses the term in conjunction with the concepts of physical and human capital, drawing explicit distinctions among them. Physical capital according to him refers to investment in tools, machinery and other tangible productive equipments, while human capital refers to those, which are less tangible investments in the skill and knowledge of the individuals. Social capital is even less palpable because it stems from

changes in the relations among individuals that facilitate action (cited in Jackman & Miller, 1998: 48).

Social Capital and its Implications: Many scholars have highlighted the implications of social capital on polity, economy and society. Social capital is a necessary condition of social integration, economic efficiency and democratic or political stability (Arrow, 1972: 357; Coleman, 1988: 306; Ostrom, 1990; Putnam, 1993, 1995 & 2001; Fukuyama, 1995). Banfield (1958), Putnam (1993) and Fukuyama (1995) point out that interpersonal trust facilitates cooperation with the strangers, which is a pre-requisite for industrial development. Putnam asserts that social capital improves the efficiency of society and government by facilitating coordinated actions. Social networks (civic associations) and culture of interpersonal trust in North Italy were mainly responsible for high quality democracy and development (Inglehart, 1999: 89). Similarly, in his study *Bowling alone in U.S.A.*, Putnam finds the decline of social capital since 1960, which negatively impacted democratic participation. Social capital is highly correlated with good educational and health outcomes and good government (Helliwell and Putnam, 1995).

Fukuyama's (1995) highlighted the role of trust in economic performance. Political and economic development depends on values involving trust, ethical codes, and orientations to work and risk-taking (Harrisons, 1997). Inglehart points out that inter personal trust and membership in voluntary associations are "strongly associated" with stable democracy and economic development. Inter-personal trust is very low in non-democratic societies (Inglehart, 1999). Inter-personal trust, according to Almond and Verba, is responsible for less democracy in Italy and West Germany compared to Britain and U.S.A. Krishna (1999) finds co-relation between high levels of social capital and high development of performance of local government in Rajasthan villages.

Similarly, there is a corelation between trust and development. Trust may make a society healthy, wealthy and wise. When people trust each other, they are more likely to accommodate each others' preferences - and make for a more pleasant society with a better quality of life. Trust

lubricates cooperation (Putnam, 1993: 171). It reduces the transaction cost between people and so liberates resources. This saves money and time. It can also create a social obligation to reciprocate the trust. Trust prompts people to take active roles in their community to behave morally and to compromise. People who trust others are not so quite ready to dismiss ideas they disagree with. When they cannot get what they want, they are willing to listen to the other side. Communities with civic activism and ethical behavior, where people give others their due, are more prosperous (Uslaner, 1999: 122).

Trust sometimes matters a lot. Generalised trust in others encourages people to join voluntary associations (Putnam 1995; Brehm and Rahn 1997; Uslaner 1996). It also makes them more likely to engage in a variety of other collective actions such as voting, working on community problems, donating to charity, volunteering time, and willing to serve on a jury (Uslaner, 1999: 128). Trust no doubt takes time to build but can be easily broken when society is pervaded by distrust. Reciprocity and exchange also increases trust (Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 1993). It, in turn, contributes to the development of long-term obligations among people. Economic (labour, grain, market and so on), social and cultural exchanges are very helpful to promote mutual confidence and trust and thereby development. Communities endowed with a diverse stock of social network and civic associations are in a stronger position to resolve conflicts and confront poverty and vulnerability. For example, weak, hostile, or indifferent governments have a profoundly different effect on community life and development projects than do governments that respect civil liberties, uphold the rule of law, honour contracts and resist corruption (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000).

All forms of social capital are not good for the society. A society may be well organised with strong institutions and has embedded reciprocal mechanism and not based on trust but on fear and power, such as feudal, hierarchical, racist and unjust societies (cited in Pretty and Ward, 2001). Formal rules and norms can also harm and exploit some groups. Exploitation of women, children, and Scheduled Castes

(SCs) under the religious social order can be mentioned in this regard. Some associations can also act as obstacles to the emergence of sustainable livelihoods. They may encourage conformity, perpetuate adversity and inequality and allow certain individuals to get others to act in ways that suit only themselves (Olson, 1965; Taylor, 1982 cited in Pretty and Ward, 2001).

III

Motivation for Forest Development and Protection

Villagers' Perception and Local Initiative in CFM: People take initiatives to protect the forest provided the perceived benefits are higher than the costs. The acceptance of JFM is very high when people understand the significance and benefits from it. If people are convinced through the perception (education and empowerment), observation (observing good experiments) and through experiences (enjoying the benefits) that the benefits are higher, the interest in collective action is very high. When people's dependency on the forest for their livelihood is high, and the perceived scarcity and threat from such resources are also very high, people take initiative to protect the forests. Similarly, people who are nearer to the forests may evince more interest rather than persons who also depend upon forest but live far away.

In the CFM villages (Binjageri and Magarabandh), the initiative had come from the local people due to threat perception and depletion of resources. According to people's perception, the flora and fauna of Binjageri hill were virtually undisturbed till 1940. It was a thick forest with wild animals and a number of streams used to flow from it. It was subject to rapid deforestation since the Independence. By the late sixties, Binjageri was completely denuded. Streams dried up and fields were silted. The surrounding villages faced scarcity of fuel wood, water for irrigation and threat of loss of soil fertility due to increased soil erosion. 1978 was the turning point when the dead body of the poor man was thrown over the riverbed and eaten away by the jackals, when his brother failed to arrange wood for funeral. The entire village was shocked and

realised the importance of the forests (Shashikant et.al., 1991; Human and Patnaik, 2000).

Efforts for environmental awareness and conservation have already begun in this and surrounding villages by Dr.Narayan Hazari from Kesharpur village, a Reader in Utkal University. He started writing letters to villagers of Kesharpur expressing his concern for Binjageri hill and urging them to regenerate it. He used to organise Bhagpat (reciting religious scriptures like Ramayana and Mahabaratha for village people assembled in the evening) in villages around Binjageri during summer to educate about the environment. This gradually had some impact on some of the perceptive villagers.

As a result of these efforts, people of Kesharpur took a decision to protect a patch of Binjageri in 1976. These efforts have been further strengthened with the involvement of forest officials, local MLA and local college National Social Service (NSS) volunteers. The environmental awareness campaign (already initiated in early seventies in other villages) through padayatras, slogans and meetings motivated the other villages around Binjageri hill to protect the forest. This movement has eventually culminated as a federation known as Brikshya O Jeevan Bandhu Parishad (BOJBP) (Friends of Trees and Living Beings) with the representatives from 22 villages around Binjageri in 1982 under the leadership of Joginath Sahu and Vishwanatha (school teachers) and Udayanath Khatai (a marginal farmer).

Similar is the case with the villages in the Magarabandh cluster. It was in 1990, that Sulia was being continuously and thoroughly degraded. People started taking out the rootstocks. The FD officials remained mute spectators to the process of denudation. It was at the juncture that the initiative for the protection of the forest came from the village elders and later joined by the youth Raghunath Pradhan, a respected social leader and a group of young people from adjoining villages joined hands and traversed from village to village, held meetings and convinced the villagers of the need to protect forests. Representatives of the villages met 8-

10 times during 1990 and what finally emerged was a Regional Forest Protection Committee of 23 villages. This committee is known as Sulia Paribesh Parishad charged with the responsibility of protecting the Sulia Reserve Forest from pillar No. 180 to 201. It is now registered under the Society Registration Act of 1860.

Emotionalism and Democratic Culture in VFP

In village forest panchayat in Halkar, Uttar Kannada district, the motivation for promotion of forestry is more due to emotional attachment with the forest and democratic culture. Eighty-year old village forest is a pride for many villagers. They have a strong incentive to maintain the oldest democratic institution and village forest, while similar institutions had collapsed elsewhere. Their pride with these institutions has been further strengthened with the visits of outsiders (scholars, practitioners, NGOs and other villagers) to study the village forest. Secondly, the threat perception for the villages' forest from the outsiders and FD is also a strong cementing force for the villagers' solidarity. On many occasions, villagers stood strongly whenever there was a threat from the outsiders. Villagers won the case in the High Court against the Karnataka Government in 1986 when the village forest was merged with FD in 1979 under the New Karnataka Forest Act, 1963. Very recently, they even prevented the local MLA from encroaching the forest land adjacent to Kumta town for construction of houses in connivance with the officials. All villagers irrespective of party affiliation protested and demonstrated against MLA action. There were occasions when the villagers took a delegation to higher-level officials to protest against harassment from the local forest officials regarding the cutting of matured trees. Instances were also noticed when the villagers persuaded the revenue officials to hold elections and general body meetings, whenever there was some indifference or delay on their part.

Economic Incentives in JFM

Unlike CFM, the main initiative for promoting village forestry in JFM villages has come from the FD which had very little time to motivate the people

to develop the forest. The target set for the administrators to form VFCs under JFM was too high and the time given for them was too short. In order to adhere the targets, the administrators used economic incentives to form VFCs. In their preliminary interactions with the villagers, wide publicity was given about immediate individual and community benefits (such as gas stoves and wages for individual households and television sets, roads and so on for community) to motivate the people. In fact, many villagers conceived this programme in terms of wages, gas stoves, biogas plants, smokeless *chullas*, agricultural implements, community halls, schools, roads which were provided under JFM funds. Even lands with old plantation were given to harvest to get immediate income for villagers. (Saxena, *et.al.*, 1997: 37). FD gave Rs. 11.7 lakhs to 20 out of 308 VFCs in UK towards its share from harvest till 1999. Even it distributed Rs. 14,000 each to 7 VFCs in Haliyal division towards their share under NTFPs sales (Murali *et.al.*, 2000). This demotivated the people in some places to own the plantations after the decline of government funds.

IV

Socialisation for Collective Action (Forest Development and Protection)

Empowerment through Mobilisation and Education in CFM:

Mobilisation of people through padayatras and cultural shows etc. were the main strategies adopted in CFM villages of Binjageri and Magarabandh to bring awareness and promote green cultures among the villagers to protect the forests, wild life and plant trees. Firstly, padayatras, public meetings and protest movements were quite popular strategies adopted to motivate the villagers. This is evident from the increase of the villages covered with padayatras and meetings to around 100 in 1984 as against 34 and 4 villages in 1984 and 1970 respectively. Secondly activities like painting and essay competition, debates, dramas and other cultural events were also organised to attract the students and youth towards the environmental issues. In an exhibition organised in 1996, posters and balloons with messages on them - about the need for clean air, clean

water, economic use of fuel, protection of wild life and evils of dowry and untouchables were displayed. Thirdly dramas, plays and songs were organised to spread the message of forest conservation. Services of poets, novelists, artists and social workers were availed to spread the message of environmental awareness. A number of leaflets, posters and booklets in Oriya language with catchy slogans and moral message from religious texts were used.

Fourthly, interest in forest was created among the children by enacting plays, composing and singing green songs and organisation of green clubs, essay writings, debates and quiz competitions (Human and Pattanaik, 2000). This is partly responsible for children's involvement in green activities such as campaigning, raising nurseries, planting trees and also bring awareness in their families and communities of environmental issues. Fifthly Gandhian techniques like personal appeals, padayatras and fasting were adopted to promote solidarity among the forest groups. People who committed offences (cutting and stealing) were not penalised with harsh punishments like fines and so on. Instead, they were asked to submit an apology or asked to perform community service (planting and protecting trees). Sixthly, green culture has become main philosophy for people in Binjageri. No festival or religious ceremony take place without the planting of trees to mark the occasion. Many social and religious ceremonies such as marriages and funerals are marked by tree planting. Saplings are being used as gifts and prizes. In their greetings, local people quote, chant or sing slogans about trees. Solidarity has been maintained among the villagers to protect the forest.

Training, Exposure Trips and Interaction with Public Personalities in JFM

Training, Exposure Trips and Interaction with public personalities are the main instruments for cultivating habits of cooperation in JFM villages. Firstly Sensitisation of village communities through training, workshops and exposure trips has helped to develop positive attitudes and values among the people for collective action. Information on forest laws, policies, regulations, community rights, resource management, bookkeeping,

and thrift and conflict resolution was provided during the training. Nearly 381 orientation courses, 145 interaction seminars and 401 workshops were conducted in Adilabad district in Andhra Pradesh during 1994-99 (Rangachari and Mukerji, 2000: 140). During 1992-98, nearly 11,795 persons from FD, VFC and local NGOs were trained in Uttara Kannada district, Karnataka, under WGFP. Of these, FD officials constituted around 51 per cent as against 49 per cent belonging to VFC and NGOs. Field level officers like Range Forest Officers and Foresters gained maximum benefit and they accounted for 31 and 39 per cent respectively (Ravindranath, *et.al*, 2000).

Many NGOs also conducted training programmes, seminars and workshops with the support of OXFAM and other agencies. MYRADA, the largest and the popular NGO in Karnataka conducted 224 training programmes for VFC members, NGOs and FD officials during 1993-96 (Saxena, *et.al*. 1997). In Haliyal taluk, Indian Development Society (IDS) conducted 152 training programmes for 3,907 participants representing FD, VFC and village communities at the cluster and the village levels in 1996. Secondly, exposure trips were also arranged for VFC members to visit the successful management systems and interact with the public officials and important personalities. For instance, under JFM, 3,000 out of 863 VFC members in Adilabad district in Andhra Pradesh visited other districts during 1994-99, where VFCs were successful. VFC members and presidents were encouraged to interact with the top public official including the chief minister.

V

Institutions (Law, Rules and Regulations) and Networks

Laws, rules and regulations provide incentives for people to cooperate towards collective action. Laws relating to rights are critical for collective cooperation. For instance, rights relating to alienation (sale and lease of forest land and withdrawal of forest products), exclusion (demarcation of forest boundary, membership, withdrawal and transfer of membership in VFC), management (regulate internal use patterns and transform

the resource by improvements such as planting, thinning and harvesting) and withdrawal of resource units (permission for using, harvesting and restriction) are very vital for forest management. People have more incentives to form the groups, if they are given all the above rights under law. Similarly, conflict resolutions including penalisation can be clearly dealt with the transparent law.

Clearly established rights enhance the confidence of the communities to protect and manage forest lands. Clear tenure security rights enhance the authority of community management groups to carry out protection activities, especially when under pressure from neighbouring villages and private interest groups. When the outsiders question the authority of community groups for action against illegal felling of trees and smuggling of wood, the group can challenge the offenders if they are vested with the authority under law. In such a situation, they can approach the FD, police or courts for penal action against such offenders (Poffenberger and Chhatrapati Singh, 1996: 74). People's confidence in collective actions cannot be sustained if the FD alters the agreements reached with the people or bring about changes at the instance of the government without any proper mechanisms to account for the people for such changes (denial of agreed share of VFC's harvest to the people by the FD). Rights derived by law are more durable and sustainable than the executive orders and informal networks and arrangements.

In VFC in Halkar, all the above four rights have been given to the people to manage forest resources on the basis of Indian Forest Act, 1927, where rights are clearly established. Alienation and exclusion rights are very clear and transparent. Demarcation of boundary, membership on the basis of cattle and land, proportional representation to all the communities in the governing council and regular elections in the presence of Tasildhars are clearly mentioned in the Act. This provides complete autonomy to take decisions relating to regeneration, silvicultural, harvesting and other management practices for the last eighty years. The effective enforcement of these laws also enhanced

the confidence of the people in the institution. These rights were well protected from external agencies like neighbouring villages and government. Halkar VFC filed a case in the Karnataka High Court when government took away its rights over the forest land by merging with the reserved forest under 1963 Karnataka Forest Act after the reorganisation of the State. Villagers' confidence was further reinforced in the village forest after winning the case in their favour. Even this law helped them to prevent the encroachment of this land for construction of houses.

While in CFM villages, the rights over these forests were established by the people themselves when they started protecting the small patches of forest lands. Lands close to the villages were demarcated and developed regulations for protecting these forests and harvesting forest products with the consent of the people. Effective mechanisms were evolved on the basis of their traditional institutions. They negotiated with the neighbouring villages and reached agreements for realising their rights. For instance, many VFCs operating in south West Bengal negotiated with the neighbouring communities to clarify the rights and territorial responsibilities when they began to initiate protection activities. In many cases, these communities had the strongest incentives to avoid conflicts with their neighbours over forest rights and access (Poffenberger and Singh, 1996: 73). In Eastern India, many villages on their own or with the assistance of local government initiated negotiations with the neighbouring villages and reached agreements on forest management rights. In some cases, they formed federations for a group of villages and various institutions including conflict resolving mechanisms were developed. Even they were assisted by government and other external agencies in evolving appropriate rules. For instance, in Binjageri and Magarabandh, some forest officials were effective in creating opportunities for neighbouring villages to reach resource use agreements among themselves and ratify their decisions. Even FD recognised some of these rights and permitted transport of poles and other articles made out of bamboos at the check-post.

In JFM, there is ambiguity in devolving rights and many states had failed to provide long-term tenurial rights to the communities. Although VFCs were established under Societies Registration Act, the FD has unilateral powers to dissolve the VFCs. Besides, there was no mechanism to ensure that FD fulfils its commitments under JFM agreement. For instance, according to the original agreement, a certain per cent of the compounded fine on the smuggled wood (illegal cutting and transport) collected by the VFC goes to the VFC members. However, the FD has not implemented this. Similarly, the denial of rights over the collection of Non timber Forest Products (NTFPs) and their percentage to the VFC members also created some misunderstanding. Thus the ambiguity in formulating rules created distrust in some villages under JFM.

Networking

Networks played a very important role in promoting social capital among village communities. Both horizontal and vertical networks among CSOs facilitated free flow of information for strengthening their solidarity. Firstly, horizontal networks of NGOs facilitated the frequent interaction at the taluk, district and state levels to share information, coordinate their efforts, share experiences and articulate their problems. Secondly, networks also provided information to strengthen the solidarity of the movement. Information related to rights and responsibilities of forest people, policies and laws and successful cases were communicated to the forest groups through publications by state level NGOs and networks. Even some of the NGOs were bringing newsletters and other publications to empower the people with information. Thirdly, networks also brought solidarity by organising awareness camps, annual conferences and training programmes, which have been discussed elsewhere. Fourthly, the state level NGO networks in these three states were receiving assistance from external organisations like OXFAM, Ford Foundation, SPWD and so on to strengthen the NGO network at grassroots for organising conferences, awareness camps, training programmes, exposure trips, preparing monographs, conducting studies, printing of newsletters and so on (Sangita, 2004).

VI

Drivers for Promoting Social Capital

Non-Governmental and Peoples' Organisations: NGOs played a very significant role in motivating the people and promoting trust between the FD and villagers. NGO's familiarity and their good work in the villages helped them to gain the confidence and trust of the people. They secured villagers' confidence by tackling core problems like poverty, exploitation and other types of deprivation. The social capital thus accumulated over the years has been availed for motivating the villagers for collective action. For instance, Shakti, an NGO operating in tribal villages for the last 10 years in Rampachodavaram, AP addressed the core problems like land alienation, exploitation, poverty and so on. It helped in restoring their lands from the non-tribals and also in ensuring right prices for their NTFP. They presented tribal cases before the officials, courts and newspapers and got justice. Subsequently, Shakti organised thrift groups for improving the economic status of tribal women in a number of villages. On many occasions, they mobilised the people against illegal felling of trees, smuggling of wood and so on. Besides, Shakti recruited many tribal people as volunteers on a fixed honorarium to work for the tribal development. Some of their members subsequently became the presidents and members of the VFCs. The social capital thus accumulated by Shakti over a period of 10 years was availed by the FD to start VFCs in many tribal villages including our sample villages.

Similar is the case with many organisations associated with VFCs in AP. For instance, a freedom fighter, who was working in the tribal block, was instrumental in the formation of many VFCs in the Naxalite infected areas in AP. It was not possible for the FDs to start VFCs in the area without the cooperation of the NGOs. In fact, the NGO's involvement in forest protection activities increased in recent years. For instance, one-sixth of the VFCs in Rajahmundry circle, Andhra Pradesh was supported by the NGOs (Sangita, 2003). Similarly, 30-40 per cent of the VFCs in Uttara Kannada, Karnataka were supported

by the NGOs (Sangita, 2003). They were instrumental in establishing network with VFC presidents, NGOs and forest officials and organised many training programmes, workshops and awareness camps.

Women Self-Help Groups (SHGs)

Women Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Micro Finance Organisations (MFO) can play a very significant role in promoting VFCs. Apart from physical capital (productive income generating assets), SHGs can also create human-capital (education and training to develop skills, design, develop and manage the community or individual enterprises) and social capital (habits of cooperation, group solidarity and social cohesion). Studies found that in villages where SHG members met weekly as a condition for borrowing, communication among participants greatly increased the chances of successful collective action.

Van Bastelaer (1999) argues that social capital was created when MFOs like the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and its replicators required all members to show uniform behaviour every week, such as reciting the list of decisions that accompany group membership. This routinisation created a corporate culture, or cultural habit. Such cultural habits, in combination with strengthened allegiances among borrowers and their families, reduced incentives to behave in ways detrimental to the common good (Anderson *et.al.*, 2002: 99). As Ostrom and others noted, it took effort and energy to create social capital. Group based micro-finance could lower the costs of monitoring and enforcing existing rules and norms, and also the costs of crafting new rules (Ostrom, 1990, 1992). Regular meetings, frequent interaction, and common credit goals can facilitate the communication, knowledge about fellow actors, common understanding about the incentive structure and the required trust among the members to collective action (Ostrom, 1994: 532, cited in Anderson *et.al.*, 2002: 99). The presence of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in many of our sample villages were mainly responsible for starting of VFCs.

Leadership

Enlightened Leadership: In CFM village, the leadership was mainly responsible for motivating the people to protect and conserve forests. For instance, in Binjageri, the leaders like Joginadha Sahoo, a respected middle school teacher, Narayan Hazari, an important faculty member in Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, played a key role in motivating the people to protect the forest. In fact, the vision, commitment, simplicity, honesty and sincerity of these leaders were all mainly responsible for attracting thousands of people in hundreds of villages.

The survival of the Halkar VFP forest panchayat for the past eighty decades can be attributed to the enlightened and selfless leadership. The advocate, the retired inspector, the retired teacher and enlightened village elders are continuing the traditions that were established by their grand-fathers and fathers. On the other hand, the poor leadership was responsible for the collapse of a similar system in Kallabbe, which is 20 kms. away from Halkar. The president and the members of the VFP in Kallabbe started violating the rules by encouraging illegal cuttings for their personal benefit. Similarly, the factional leaders in some villages were mainly responsible for the decline of VFCs. We came across many such instances outside our sample villages, which were known for murder, violence and ultimate destruction of forest.

Administrative Leadership

Administrative leadership is also an important motivating factor for the village communities in forming joint forest management. Many forest officials in Uttara Kannada in Karnataka and Sudhikonda in Andhra Pradesh were responsible for creating interest among the villagers towards joint forest management. They were instrumental in building rapport with the villagers. Some of the FD officials spent long hours with the villagers while forming VFCs. They also maintained cordial relations with villagers by attending to their personal needs and family functions like marriages. In order to involve the people in the programme, some officials were very

generous and innovative in their approach. However, this rapport could not be sustained by the officers who succeeded them that ultimately led to distrust.

Social Capital in Villages

In many villages the existing traditional organisations (like village councils, village school(s), temple, village land, village ponds and so on), are instrumental for strengthening the functioning of VFCs. For instance, in Orissa, the informal village councils have been managing village schools, temples, village land and village ponds, grain banks as common resources. In fact, many primary, upper primary and middle schools were established by the villagers through their contributions in the form of money and labour, which was allowed by the Orissa government. Even in the heterogeneous villages, the presence of village development and festival committees were responsible for the success of VFCs.

However, certain type of community organisations played negative roles. For instance, the number of caste associations without any interaction among themselves through community organisations for festivals and development, youth organisations and political parties can be mentioned in this regard. In some villages, the non interaction among various caste associations, particularly SCs has affected the functioning of VFCs. Similarly, the village factions and political parties in some villages were responsible for the destruction of forests occasionally.

The cooperation based on patron-client relationship was also acting negatively. For instance, in some villages the forest officials and village elite were cooperating merely for their mutual interest rather than the mutual trust. The forester needed the cooperation of the villagers in forming VFCs to fulfill the target. On the other hand, the villagers needed wood from the forests for their agricultural implements. The second type of patron-client relationship was repression and fear. We noticed such type of patron-client relationship between the FD officials and VFC members in some villages. The tribal people were cooperating with the foresters to form joint forest management essentially for the power,

which they were using against the innocent forest tribals by implicating them in petty or false offences like cutting of a small timber and so on. But, the presence of naxallites is responsible for the collapse of patron-client relationship affecting the interests of the poor.

VII

Pathways for Accumulating Social Capital

The social capital has been accumulating mainly on two pathways, viz., state initiative and civil society initiative. The state initiative is mainly in the form of laws, rules, regulation, policies and their effective enforcement, networks and credible leadership etc. Firstly, the state laws provided the necessary conditions for village communities to promote collective action. In VFP, the statutory powers given to the people over the land, trees and tree products and their management were responsible for people's trust in the governance institutions. Boundary rules (membership on the basis of land and cattle, proportional representation in executive committee and regular elections) had been clearly stated in the Village Forest Act. The restoration of these rights by the Karnataka High Court when they were taken away by the state government further enhanced the people's trust in the laws. The absence of statutory powers and ineffective enforcement of promises and agreements was partly responsible for lack of trust between officials and villagers in JFM.

Secondly, the state can create social capital by partnership with village communities by joint planning, management and production. In JFM, village communities were given rights over the trees, tree products and control over the management. The state also provided expertise and finances for collective action. The frequent interaction and training of officials and villagers have resulted in building-up trust between the FD officials and the villagers.

Thirdly, the credible and responsive administrators were responsible for creation of social capital. The committed officers and their personal rapport with villagers were mainly responsible for starting

VFCs in JFM areas in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Such evidence came from forest protection experiments in east India, in Arabari, West Bengal. FD officials were instrumental in facilitating the formation of forest protection committees (FPCs) without special budgets and projects (Poffenberger and Mc Gean, 1996: 29). Both higher and lower level officials worked remarkably well and the forest growth was rapid and at the same time, the intensity of tensions and conflicts got minimised. The number of FPCs doubled each year increasing from less than 50 to nearly 2000 and covering 3.2 lakh hectares during the fifteen year period 1986-90 (Poffenberger and Mc Gean, 1996: 31). Similarly, the interaction of higher-level officials with the village communities in CFM villages boosted their motivation levels to protect the forests. Even the silent support given by many forest officials in the form of financial assistance for plantation, and training as well as permission to transport of bamboo articles and poles can be mentioned in this regard. The social capital created by the state is very significant particularly to protect the rights of village communities; it can spread to a wider area in a country like India within a short span of time. It can provide expertise and resources and protect the disadvantaged who depend on forests for their livelihoods. However it is very expensive and also causes wastage of resources.

The social capital can also be accumulated by the civil society. This comes mainly from two sources- endogenous and exogenous. People themselves started cooperating with each other to protect the small patches of the forest on the basis of their personal experience through the observations of their own forest and the loss they incurred in terms of fodder, fuel wood, NTFP, siltations of fields, low water tables and so on. People's interests to organise also originated when they observed the benefits derived by the neighbouring village forest protection. For instance, the initiative was started in Kesharpur and spread to other villages in due course of time through spread-effects. The individual motivation would be boosted-up with the dynamic leadership for the movement emerged within or outside the village. For instance, the role of teachers, youth clubs and elderly village leaders provided the necessary leadership

to get the momentum to the forest movement. Even the leaders from outside the village were also instrumental in strengthening the movement.

Fourthly, the external agencies also provided necessary inputs for strengthening the CFM movements in Orissa. For instance, OXFAM provided assistance to BOJBP in organising various training programmes, workshops, awareness camps and so on. Their assistance to RCDC helped disseminate information monthly through newspapers to forest communities about various laws, rights and other issues relevant to forest people. They conducted many studies and shared information with the CFMs. Their documentation also helped the forest groups to strengthen their organisational abilities and implementation practices. The visits by outsiders had strengthened further the people's movements. Fifthly, involvement of government officers with activities such as seminars, workshops, training programmes and plantations gave legitimacy to the CFM efforts in the absence of legal recognition.

Social capital generated through this process is cost effective, although it takes 3 - 5 years. This is based on local knowledge and local skills. It is much more credible since the institutions are designed by the local people through democratic processes. The institutions and the rules they designed have much more acceptance by the people. The major limitations of this social capital are in regard to sustainability. In the absence of legal recognition it is very difficult to maintain the forest in the context of bigger markets and parties (political parties, interest groups movements) that are interacting much more intensively with the village communities. It has not designed proper institutional mechanisms to resolve the conflicts particularly inter or intra village conflicts and conflicts between FD and CFMs. It has no legal status to approach police stations, courts and the FD to prevent illegal felling and cutting by the outsiders. The present conflict resolution mechanisms are mainly leader oriented, who are Gandhians. They are able to resolve conflicts through satyagrahas, fastings, prostrating and so on. The younger generation may not be quite familiar with such techniques. In the absence of

these mechanisms, the markets may encourage the individual villagers in connivance with the forest contractors and officials to cut the valuable trees for urban markets. Similarly, the party politics and village factions also come in the way of resolving these conflicts. In fact, we have come across instances where village politics and intra-village conflicts destroyed forests within a short span of time in some of the villages. On few occasions, many people were killed over the forest conflicts in Orissa villages. Such conflicts can be resolved via legal recognition by the state to some extent.

The social capital from the external agency is based on networks or partnerships among the civil society actors. External NGOs play a very significant role in promoting social capital among the villagers individually or in collaboration with the other bigger NGOs or the government. Firstly, NGOs like MYRADA and IDS, on their own encourage the villagers to take-up plantations on village lands. Secondly, NGOs also act as catalysts to bridge the trust between FD and village communities in the initial stages of VFC formation. The social capital which many NGOs built in the villages over the years through varied programmes (such as SHGs, employment, training, empowerment, health and rural development) was availed for the forest programme. Besides, they play a key role in changing the attitudes of the people for collective action through workshops, training programmes and awareness camps. Thirdly, they have established networks at the taluk, division, and district levels to interact and share their experiences and strengthen their articulation capacity. Even they have encouraged villagers to interact with the outside world to have better information. Fourthly, they have brought out literature relating to forest laws and rights, in the form of manuals to guide the village communities. Fifthly, they play advocacy role and act as a pressure group to influence the policies. External NGOs like OXFAM, Ford Foundation have also strengthened the NGO networking by providing financial and technical assistance to strengthen the NGO network and institution building.

The social capital accumulated through NGOs is very vital for forest movement in protecting the forest. They are not very costly. First of all it is very easy to reach vast sections of society through the NGOs' network, which has been built over the years. Secondly, the NGOs social capital is very vital when there is mistrust between the FD and village communities. Thirdly, this capital can be created at a lesser cost since many people are willing to organise. The main limitation of this social capital is its non-availability uniformly throughout India. It is mainly concentrated in urban areas. In fact, many of these organisations have been working in the villages having their offices located in the urban areas. Fourthly, many NGOs have come to avail the benefits from the government and the funding organisations. Such NGOs may destroy the social capital, which has been built over the years.

Pattern of Cooperation in CFM, JFM and VFP Governance Regimes

Activity	CFM	JFM	VFP
Initiation/ Motivation	Local, perceived benefits, experience	National & international	Ownership rights
Socialisation	Empowerment: religious & cultural discourse & Gandhian techniques	Training, exposure trips & interaction with public personalities	Participatory culture & inclusive democracy
Laws: Ownership rights	No legal rights, negotiated rights within & outside the village	Ambiguity in rights of ownership	Constitutional rights
Sanctions & conflict resolution	No legal rights, Gandhian techniques	Not yet evolved	Complete
Networking	Vertical & horizontal among CSOs	Vertical among government	No
Efficiency	Cost effective	Costly	Less cost
Equity	Low	High	Moderate
Sustainability	Not legal	Not economic	Sustainable

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