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**STATE, SOCIETY AND
INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE:
COMMUNITY FORESTS
IN ANDHRA PRADESH,
KARNATAKA AND ORISSA**

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**INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE
2008**

STATE, SOCIETY AND INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE: COMMUNITY FORESTS IN ANDHRA PRADESH, KARNATAKA AND ORISSA

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Abstract

The developmental state perspective argues that the autonomous, development-oriented state with competent bureaucracy and weak civil society is responsible for the inclusive growth in South East Asian countries and China. The social capital or civil society perspective argues that network of an associations or an autonomous and democratic civil society is instrumental for inclusive governance and development in north Italy. However, the paper argues that the relationship between the state and society is complimentary and promote inclusive governance and sustainable development. Inclusive policies (reflecting the preferences, needs and rights of citizens particularly disadvantaged groups) can be effectively formulated and implemented in both the collaborative and contesting State-society synergy. These issues are examined in the contexts of state-society synergy in the management of community forests in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Orissa.

Introduction

State-society synergy can be a catalyst for development. The norms of cooperation and a network of civic engagement among citizens can be promoted by state institutions and used for developmental ends (Evans, 1996: 1119). This argument can be related to the two contemporary theories of developmental state (state-led development) and social capital (civil society centered development). The developmental state perspective argues that the autonomous developmental oriented state with competent bureaucracy and weak civil society is responsible for a high level of economic and social development within a short span of time in countries like China and South East Asian countries (Leftwitch, 1994; Johnson, 1982; Kohli, 1987). The developmentally orientated political elite in these countries choose authoritarian political management to achieve superior performance and thereby legitimacy. The leadership in these countries is both despotic (creates its own rules in the interest of the people) and benevolent (its only motive being maximisation of citizens' welfare).

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Even scholars have underlined the significance of state institutions and policies for good governance. Government institutions that perform well are likely to have the confidence of citizens; those that perform badly generate feelings of distrust and low confidence. The virtuality of community networks and civil society organisations is largely the product of the political, legal, and institutional environment. The very capacity of social groups to act in their collective interest depends on the quality of the formal institutions under which they reside. Civil society thrives to the extent that the state actively encourages it. Rule of law, civil liberties and bureaucratic quality are positively associated with economic growth. Rampant corruption, frustrating bureaucratic delays, suppressed civil liberties, waste, inequality, divisive ethnic tensions and failure to safeguard property rights are major impediments to prosperity. Predictable policies and supporting laws facilitate Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) for collective action (Evans, 1996). An effectively ruled or governed environment strengthens the voices of the poor so they can protect their interests. In fact, such rule has empowered the weak to get their entitlements (Evans, 1996).

While scholars of the social capital perspective place emphasis on society or social relations (net-works, norms, trust and civic engagement) for development; Putnam (1993) posits that, societies in which citizens trust one another and are more inclined to co-operate give rise to more accountable and efficient governments. He found a positive relation between civic associationalism and institutional performance in North Italy (Robert Putnam, 1996). A strong civil society enables people to raise their voices through collective action and political presentation and influence state policies for their benefit. Pressures through different instruments such as voting, protest and other expressions of disagreement induces representatives to adhere more closely to their mandate (Renata, 1998). An autonomous civil society can articulate the interests, needs, rights and grievances of the people. They can challenge the executive and legislative authority to prevent arbitrary policies from being passed and expose governmental malfeasance (corruption, cronyism, and other wrongs).

The paper examines the state-society synergy for inclusive governance in the context of Community Forest (CF) management in three Indian states. The paper argues that neither the state nor civil society organisations can alone address the problem of community forestry regeneration and conservation. Both the state and civil society with mutual cooperation and contestation can produce more goods and services as well as generate natural resources.

The paper is based on the field data collected from Andhra Pradesh (AP), Karnataka and Orissa, which represent different patterns of state-society synergy and performance. AP represents a proactive state and a vibrant civil society of both collaboration and contestation with high levels of performance of Joint Forest Management (JFM) both in quality and quantity. While Orissa represents an autonomous and vibrant civil society with a strong network of forest communities and is a reactive state. Karnataka stands in between, with a moderate state and civil society and a moderate level of performance.

The paper is divided into six sections: The second section deals with the analytical frame-work. The nature of Government Organisations (GOs) and CSOs involved in CF resources is included in the third section. The fourth section deals with the mechanisms for the synergies between the GOs and CSOs. The fifth section deals with the implications of these partnerships on outcomes. The sixth section deals with the socio-economic factors responsible for their cooperation or conflict in management of CF. The final section concludes with the policy and theoretical perspectives.

II

Analytical Framework

State-society synergy and inclusive governance

Public policy is very effective and sustainable if citizens/stake holders are involved in the formulation of public policy. Such policy enjoys legitimacy, better compliance and prospects of successful implementation. Advocates of participation argue that the greater the participation, the greater the

potential for generating policy choices that reflect the needs and interests of ordinary citizens. Citizen involvement in the decision-making process enhances the acceptability of the policy and its prospects for better implementation. The involvement of intended beneficiaries in policy design and implementation results in better outcomes.

The nature of the synergy between the state and civil society (cooperation and confrontation) determines the character and the outcome of policy. In closed politics, policy making (the manner in which the policy is deliberated, formulated and implemented) is likely to be centralised, secretive and non-responsive, while in democratic politics, policy making is likely to be decentralised, dispersed, consultative and responsive. Policy making (agenda setting, choice of policy and implementation) in many developing countries has become the prerogative of a small closely knit group of technocrats, civil servants and politicians. The policy making in these countries is confined to organised interest groups such as the business class, rural rich and organised workers with economic and political power.

The synergy between GOs and CSOs in policy making takes place in two ways, viz., through collaborative and contesting synergies (Table 1). In collaborative synergy, CSOs are part of the policy network, influencing policy makers as insiders. In contesting synergy, CSOs influence the policy formulation and implementation by staying outside the formal structures and networks. Sometimes, this interaction is based on mutual antagonism and counter-claims on the basis of certain guidelines and rules. In this synergy, CSOs also prefer to avoid formal or informal relations with the government on the basis of ideology.

The collaborative synergy between the GOs and CSOs can be further classified under three categories on the basis of mechanisms through which public policies are formulated. The first type of synergy relates to the joint preparations of the policy document or report (which becomes a major source for policy input) by GOs and CSOs as equal partners. The second type of synergy relates to formulation of policy

through consultations, discussions and deliberations with the representatives of the CSOs, workshops, seminars, formal meetings or the media through which these interactions take place. The third level of collaborative synergy relates to formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policy through deliberative councils/committees and other fora with the representatives of both GOs and CSOs. Such committees exist at state and sub-state-levels. The NGOs' presence in these meetings and their critical comments and suggestions would help to identify the flaws in both policy and implementation for a corrective action.

The contesting synergy also can be classified under three categories. The first type of contesting synergy is NGOs' criticism against the laws and policies of the government through newspapers, seminars, pamphlets and other fora. These criticisms and suggestions are made on the basis of an objective analysis or a critical scientific study. Secondly, CSOs act as pressure groups and lobby with policy makers and political parties in articulating their demands. Taking a delegation to a minister, political parties or international developmental agencies like the World Bank, which favour or disfavour a particular policy, can be mentioned in this regard. Thirdly, CSOs take very critical stands against the forest department based on their distrust. In this, CSOs try to influence policies through protests and other civil disobedience movements. Some of these movements are violent. For instance, the people's war group (Naxalite) and Raithcoolie Sangha movements in AP and the forest movements in Orissa can be cited. All these interactions have a wide variety of outcomes. However, these classifications cannot clearly be made as there is overlapping nature in CSOs strategies in influencing the policies.

The synergy between the state and society depends on the endowment of social capital prevailing in society the type of government organisation that shapes state and society relations, the politics and political interests of the country (open political competition or contained by repression) (Evans, 1996).

III

Common Property Resources: State-Society Initiatives and Institutions

Common Property Resources (CPRs) like forest and village commons have declined or degraded over the years. The decline has an adverse impact not only on the livelihood systems and biomass needs of the forest-dependent population, but has also affected the regeneration and biodiversity of forests, which are vital for the maintenance of the ecosystem. In the last few decades, many initiatives have been taken by both the state (government) and CSOs to regenerate, conserve and develop local CFs. In this direction, the central government launched a Social Forest (SF) programme in 1980 to plant trees on public land to meet the fuel wood, fodder and small timber needs of rural communities and reduce the pressure on the forests (Agarwal, 2001; Ravindranath, *et.al.*, 2001). Subsequently, a major programme known as Joint Forest Management (JFM) was initiated in 1990 to regenerate degraded forests and support the livelihood systems of the people inhabiting the forests with the joint responsibility and management of the government and the people (CSOs) to share the benefits equally. At the same time, CSOS such as village communities, NGOs, youth clubs, women groups, religious and educational organisations and business groups were also protecting vast tracks of local forests in different parts of the country. Most of these groups came into existence on the basis of self-initiatives in response to the livelihood, biomass and other needs of the people. (Ravindranath, *et.al.*, 2000; Poffenberger, *et.al.*, 1996).

State (Government Organisations)

The government, mainly represented by the Forest Department (FD) is primarily responsible for JFM in all the three states. It formulates policies, guidelines and operational rules within the policy framework of the national government and international obligations of funding agencies (Table 1). While formulating policies, inputs from the cabinet, legislatures, judiciary, other government departments, funding agencies, stakeholders'

organisations and interest groups are taken into consideration. However, in the context of JFM, the inputs from funding agencies and CSOs are very critical for policy design since they play a very crucial role in the process. In states like AP, departments like Tribal Development, Panchayat Raj (PR) and Rural Development, Irrigation, Revenue and Animal Husbandry are involved in formulating and implementing JFM. The programme is mainly implemented through a separate wing or existing territorial divisions (circle, division and range) of the FD.

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

The main CSOs involved in forest activities are NGOs, forest communities, research organisations and funding organisations, political parties and forest movements. State-level CSOs with wide networks have come into existence to protect the forests and its people (although there is variation in their composition, organisational network, leadership styles, and interaction and mobilisation strategies). They are: the AP NGO participative committee in AP; Aranyavedika in Karnataka; and Orissa Jungle Munch (OJM) in Orissa.

AP NGOs was established in 1992 when 37 NGOs came together to lobby for participatory forestry. Subsequently, it emerged as a federation of 200 NGOs operating in 17 districts of the state. In Orissa, the OJM came into existence in 1999 with the organisation of a state-level convention with CF groups, NGOs, scholars and research organisations involved in the CF movement. This movement was a culmination and convergence of a number of processes initiated at different points of time in the latter half of the nineties during which the need for a state-level network was felt.

Aranyavedika in Karnataka, with the network of forest NGOs, was formally launched in 2000. Previously, forest management issues were represented by the Federation of Voluntary Organisations for Rural Development (FEVORD), in which a state-level network was established in 1984. It represented the interests of the forest people by serving in

the state-level steering committees and mobilising people on various issues to influence the policies at different times. In fact, it was instrumental in influencing the JFM policies in the Western Ghats, which was funded by the Overseas Development Agency (ODA).

The main objectives of state-level CSOs networks are: to provide a platform for a democratic and participative consultation and decision-making for all organisations involved in community forestry; to represent the interests of forest communities by acting as a pressure group; and mobilising people for pro-people's forest policies; to empower forest communities to fight for their rights with information regarding forest acts, policies and programmes; and to act as a watchdog by monitoring and reviewing the government forest programmes and suggesting modifications for improvement. However, the emphasis of these activities varies from state to state.

In AP and Karnataka, the membership of these networks comprise NGOs involved in JFM activities, while in Orissa it is mainly from the forest communities. These bodies are supported by research organisations and academic institutions (Centre for Environmental Concerns (CEC) in AP, Ashoka Trust in Karnataka and Regional Centre for Development Corporation (RCDC) in Orissa) to strengthen their articulations. These research organisations are, in turn, supported by the Ford Foundation, OXFAM and the Society for Promotion of Wasteland Development (SPWD). These organisations undertake documentation, research studies, publish newsletters, hold workshops and seminars and strengthen the NGO/forest group network/federations.

The state-level federations have adopted different tiers/organisational structures to manage forest problems. AP has adopted a three-tier structure, general body, state committee and steering committee, for its management. All grassroots NGOs involved in forestry management are members of the general body. Three to four members from each district (either elected or nominated by district level-committees) are represented in the state-level committee, which is responsible for

providing guidance and direction. The steering committee with three representatives from each region (Coastal, Rayalseema and Telengana), including a woman representative, is constituted to assist the state-level committee. The General Body meets once in two years and elects or nominates members of the state and secretariat committees.

Orissa has adopted a three-tier structure of governance at the state, district and community levels. The general council at the state-level is the supreme body. It consists of 120 representatives from 30 forest districts (four each, either nominated or elected) and 20 nominated members representing research groups, academic institutions, NGOs and forest groups. District-level federations/fora are comprised of elected or nominated members from CF groups. Similar committees are constituted at the sub-district or cluster level. Sufficient freedom was given to local-level institutions to decide the structures, composition and powers of the committee. Interference from state-level organisations in the internal functioning of local committees was minimal. Unlike in AP and Karnataka, the headquarters of the OJM is located at Nayagad district where people's movements are very strong. Aranyavedika also formed various committees to manage their day-to-day affairs. Besides state-level committees, it also constituted various sub-committees for activities such as research and policy inclusive documentation and publications, natural resources, legal issues, conflict resolution, finances and so on.

IV

Government and Civil Society Organisations: Interface

Consultation with CSOs over policy issues:

In all the three states, JFM guidelines were issued after consultations with NGOs and other research organisations, although the inputs provided by them varied. Consultations were held with CSOs through workshops and seminars to evolve appropriate strategies. NGOs were invited to interact with funding agencies like the World Bank, Department for International Development) DFID, and, Swiss International Development

Agency (SIDA) in AP, Karnataka and Orissa respectively through formal and informal interactions regarding policy issues. The extent of the relevance of the CSO's inputs and the extent to which they were taken into consideration while formulating policy documents are discussed here.

In AP, the synergy between GO and CSOs has come from state initiative (Table 1). The state has created the necessary conditions for CSOs to cooperate with the state. This has facilitated the adoption of collaborative synergy for policy formulation and implementation. Interactions through consultations, seminars and workshops are very dominant. Interactions are very often made through the statutory institutions (committees/councils) comprised of GO and NGO representatives at the state, district and sub-district levels. However, some CSOs outside the forest sector are adopting contesting synergies to influence the forest policies.

In AP, the synergy among GOs, CSOs and funding agencies appears to be very high. Firstly, there is an effective coordination among various government departments connected with the JFM such as forest, revenue, tribal, PR and so on. This has helped to pool the resources available under different programmes for undertaking soil conservation and silvicultural activities in an integrated manner. For instance, 'Food for Work', 'Neeru Meeru' (soil and water conservation) and tribal development programmes are integrated with JFM. Secondly, the good understanding between the state government and the funding agency (World Bank) facilitated the availability of funds for the second phase of the JFM, unlike in Karnataka and Orissa. Thirdly, the active collaboration between government and the CSOs has facilitated rapid extension of this programme. Nearly one-third of the total VFCs were formed with the assistance of NGOs.

Frequent interactions between GOs and NGOs through seminars, workshops and consultations provide opportunities for NGOs to point out the flaws in the policy design and for corrective action¹. Even these interactions enabled NGOs to point out the drawbacks of the programme

implementation². Regular meetings through the statutory bodies also helped CSOs raise the problems faced by field-level NGOs for corrective action³. These interactions helped develop mutual trust and cooperation for an effective formulation and implementation of JFM policies.

The contesting synergies from the forest NGOs have weakened in recent years, although they approached the courts and organised protest movements against the FD in the past. Nevertheless, CSOs like Raithacoolie Sangha (Agricultural Labourers Federation) and People's War Group (PWG) were very active in tribal villages. We came across instances in which these organisations instigated tribals to oppose plantation on podu cultivation lands and demand higher wages. There were even instances in which villagers, particularly the VFC president and the executive members, were intimidated and assaulted by the PWG for cooperating with the FD.

The frequent interactions between GOs and CSOs resulted in arriving at solutions to the following problems. Firstly, NGOs at the grassroots level are involved hugely in the JFM programme. They were motivating people to form VFCs and organised training programmes to build their capacity. The honorarium for NGOs' assistance to the FD has been fixed by the FD in consultation with the NGOs. Secondly, NGO demands regarding prices of Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) and payment of the compound fee to smuggle wood to the VFC were met. Thirdly, the fodder policy desired by the World Bank was withdrawn as a result of NGO criticism. Fourthly, the views of the NGOs were incorporated in the proposed amendment to the Forest Act, giving more powers to VFCs. Fifthly, the intimidation by radical movements helped protect the rights (wages, prices for NTFP, nonexploitation and so on) and needs (better access to food, water, health, education and less corruption) of the tribals.

In Karnataka, the synergy is of a more contesting nature, although complementarity between GOs and CSOs prevailed initially. The synergy has not been institutionalised in Karnataka in the absence of state-level political initiative. The synergy always depends on the

attitudes of the officials holding important positions in the FD. Radical officers who were sympathetic to the people's movement encouraged NGOs to get involved in policy formulation and implementation⁴. Similarly, sympathetic officers encouraged the NGOs participation in deliberations and their views were considered⁵.

However, the trust between GOs and CSOs has declined over the years. The CSOs felt that their voices had not been heard adequately in the policy forum. This is evident from the FEVORD's contestation of the Karnataka Forest Departments '(KFD's) request of ODA funds for the second phase of the WGFP through lobbies and networks. In July 1988, the KFD requested ODA funding for a tree plantation in the Western Ghats. This request, known as a 'red book', was circulated among interested parties, including FEVORD, and a seminar was held at Dharwad in June 1989 to discuss the same. FEVORD and others felt that there was inadequate provision for people's participation and suggested improvements in this regard. According to FEVORD, people were involved as beneficiaries or labourers and not as active decision makers. On the basis of these suggestions, a draft was prepared by FEVORD, which was discussed in the seminar held at the Centre for Ecological Sciences in September 1989. A revised draft known as the 'green book' was prepared and circulated among participants. This draft is an improved version of the earlier draft and some of the suggestions of FEVORD regarding participation were included. However, FEVORD was not satisfied with this and wanted to bring some more changes for the effective participation of village communities and NGOs in the project (Potter, 1998). Finally, the ODA project document was produced in April 1991 and approved. This document generally referred to locals playing a major role in the planning, management and protection of the forest and NGOs playing an important role in assisting the JFM process.

Many changes were suggested by FEVORD-K in the JFM Order of Karnataka, April 1993. They include: extending JFM to degraded lands to benefit tribals instead of restricting it to 25 per cent canopy criteria;

restricting the powers of the FD in nominating NGOs and dissolving VFCs; encouragement of women participation by including two members from each household instead of one; more autonomy to VFCs in conducting meetings and holding open discussions; simplification of procedures and transparency in sharing and disposing produce; and abolition of the 'tree-pattas' scheme (Potter, 1998). The FD overlooked many of these holistic proposals and converted JFM into a scheme with several restrictions and ambiguities, which, according to Saxena (1997), continues to constrain meaningful involvement of local resource users in forest planning and management. This, automatically, according to him, widened the gap between the FD and NGOs. The NGOs took a lead in criticising the JFM for its restrictive prescriptions. This distrust between GOs and NGOs remained even a decade after the JFM policy document was passed (Saxena, 1997).

NGO protests were noticed whenever their demands were not met through formal institutions. For instance, FEVORD expressed serious concern about the implementation of the SF programme in the late '80s. It was critical of eucalyptus plantation and lack of people's participation under SF. Even a joint memorandum (dated 28th November 1985) was addressed to the Chief Minister, the President of the World Bank and the head of the ODA in this regard. NGOs have also launched protest movement civil disobedience and other forms of non-compliance whenever their demands are not met⁶.

Nearly later a decade Aranyavedika, which represents all NGOs of the JFM network in Karnataka, insisted on a drastic change in JFM policy design and implementation. The differences between the FD and Aranyavedika have been further widened. The relations are not very cordial. State-level meetings between GOs and NGOs have been discontinued for quite some time, although district and sub-district level meetings are taking place. Their lack of trust with the FD is evident from the letter addressed to the Chief Minister highlighting the limitations

of the existing JFM due to flaws in its conceptual and implementation design. They suggested redesigning the programme to make it a truly participatory, sustainable, equitable and economically viable model of people's participation in forest management⁷ .

As a part of this strategy, they are organising rallies and public meetings at district and sub-district levels and collecting signatures with the help of their network to submit to the Chief Minister. They are availing this opportunity to involve political leaders, journalists, intellectuals and other prominent persons in order to sensitise the public and political leaders. Two rallies were held at Sirsi and Chickmagalur at which local ministers and MLAs addressed the gatherings. Even by they were planning to lobby, led the floor leaders and ministers with the help of the intellectuals and administrators of highest credibility, before submitting the letter to the Chief Minister. They were spreading this movement to other districts and an action plan was prepared in this regard.

In Orissa, the initiative for synergy between GOs and CSOs has come neither from the government nor from civil society. They are acting independently, although synergies prevailed in the past. The civil society on its own had taken many initiatives in protecting the forest. They were not interested in collaborating with the GO, fearing they might lose their autonomy and resources to the FD. In Orissa, the FD interaction with the OJM regarding JFM appears to be minimal. However, NGOs like Vasundhara and Agrabamee are represented in state-steering committees. They interact with the FD at seminars and workshops. In one of the workshops organised by Vasundhara and the FD between 30 and 31 July 1996, the importance of people's participation in forest management was highlighted. While inaugurating the workshop, the Minister for Forests emphasised the importance of forests, both in the global and local contexts. He observed, "while restoring bio-diversity the issue at the local level is more related to livelihoods of a vast majority of forest-dependent groups". According to him, "forest management should provide wider scope for

the better distribution of benefits and services. Forest management is no longer a technical issue alone, but is intricately linked to livelihood issues of the poor. Forest-dependent communities should have a definite say in this management." He emphasised that tenurial issues were of utmost importance and there existed a need for changes in the forest tenure. To ensure community involvement in forest management, it was important that exclusive rights over a particular (well-specified) forest area be assigned to a specific local community in proximity to the forest area.

Even the Chief Conservator of Forests expressed similar sentiments. He hoped that some of the outcomes this workshop would be able to influence policy decisions. He especially emphasised the need for a people-oriented NTFP policy. He has underlined the significance of people's involvement since they have knowledge about their environment and resources. However, some FD officials expressed doubts about the suitability of devolving more powers to local communities. Some of them felt that there would be more financial misappropriation at the community level and expressed doubts regarding enforcing accountability.

Notwithstanding these differences, the following recommendations have been made for the effective management of CF resources. NGOs should have an important role as facilitators in JFM. Some of the specific roles that were listed for NGOs were: documentation; providing training to members of CIs and FD staff to bring attitudinal change; NTFP value addition, processing and marketing; strengthening institutions at the community level; networking among community institutions, formation of federations of CIs and information dissemination.

Formal consultations with the OJM appeared to be less frequent in Orissa, although informal consultations at the individual level were prevailed. In Orissa, the CSOs were very strong in influencing forest policies since a large tract of forest land was managed by CF groups. They were resisting the implementation of JFM fearing that they would

lose the forest, which was maintained by them. This was one of the reasons VFC formations in some districts have not even crossed three digits. On the other hand, they were asking for legal rights over the existing forests. Whenever they were asked to interact with the funding agency, they were very critical of the manner in which the SF programmes were implemented by the FD under Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) assistance. In fact, one of the important leaders of the OJM had gone to the extent of telling SIDA representatives that 'it was better to sink their funds in the Arabian Sea than assist the Orissa SF programmes'. According to him, funds meant for SF programmes were being wasted and the people's rights over common land were being taken away.

NGOs mobilised people to fight for their rights by organising demonstrations in different parts of the state. The poster campaigns regarding wood tigers in the Nayagad district exposing the connivance of the forest contractor, panchayat presidents and forest officials in selling wood lots raised under SF programmes at a low price can be mentioned in this context. This campaign ultimately not only helped prevent hundreds of acres of plantation from being exploited but also strengthened the bargaining power of the people for obtaining fair prices for the trees ready for harvesting⁸.

Similar campaigns were launched by BOJBP and Mahasangha opposing the JFM resolution and its subsequent implementation in Orissa. In 1995, they started a signature campaign demanding changes in the JFM resolution. Their demands include providing more decision-making powers to village communities; withdrawal of forest officials from the managing committee and equal sharing of harvests between the FD and village communities. BOJBP also instigated people to oppose the implementation of JFM. In 1996 and 1997, members and staff of the Mahasangha traveled extensively to the areas and mobilised people against the introduction of JFM.

State-Society Synergy: Outcomes

In this section, the implications arising out of the interactions between the GO and CSOs are discussed. The JFM programme is very successful in AP. It has established the highest number of VFCs (6,575 VFCs covering 32 per cent of the total forest area) during 1990-2000. Even in terms of other indicators, the programme in AP appears to be a success in villages, where the programme is implemented with the active participation of people (Table 2). There was an improvement in the forest cover and water tables due to plantation and protection. Forest fires, illegal felling and smuggling of trees, encroachment of forest land and podu cultivation came down. Improvement in employment and the wages of women and the poor and empowerment was noticed; improvement of infrastructure (school buildings, community halls, bus shelters and so on) was observed since they were provided by the government as a part of the programme. People's trust in the local administration improved.

However, the programme has limitations due to the following reasons: firstly, the cost of generation and protection of the forest in JFM, particularly in AP, appear, to be very high. The government spent additional money to motivate citizens and NGOs to take up this programme in a big way to fulfill the target set by the Chief Minister. A large per cent considered this programme to be a form of employment generation and creation of assets for the community. Secondly, the wastage and leakage of funds appears to be very high. Many NGOs came into existence to avail the funds of JFM. There were even conflicts and counter-claims among NGOs over the distribution of resources available under the programme. Thirdly, the undertaking of soil conservation and clearing of forests by heavy machinery (excavators) instead of people failed to generate employment opportunities.

In Orissa, the mistrust between GO and CSO organisations has severe implications on JFM. The formation of VFCs is very moderate since there is resistance from CF groups. Only 3,704 VFCs, covering

20.33 per cent of the total forest area, have contributed. Even their coverage in some districts is very marginal. This is particularly so in districts where forest group movements are very strong. Besides, there is not enough budgetary support in the absence of funding from international agencies take-up the programme. Even the salaries of the social forest wing have not been paid for several months. They find it very difficult to run the administration with minimum infrastructural facilities. Added to this, the non-extension of the SIDA second phase regarding community forestry has further complicated the problems of the FD. In fact, we were told that the non-renewal of the second phase was due to adverse criticism by NGOs.

On the other hand, the formation of CFMs increased over the years. Even the number of federations has increased over the years. Most of the CFMs are better protected and more cost-effective. Biomass needs of the people are met. Infrastructural facilities are better provided. Bio-diversity has been maintained. However, there is no strong evidence of improving the living conditions of women and tribal. There is no evidence that the migration in and out of villages is reducing. The formation of VFCs is very low in Karnataka (1,212 VFCs covering 10.78 per cent of the total forest area) and even they are confined to the Western Ghats. The programme could not be extended further because assistance was denied under the second phase by the DFID due to strong opposition from the CSOs. The formation of VFCs under Japanese assistance is also slow in the absence of the CSOs active involvement,

VI

Factors responsible for State-Society Synergy

A developmentally-oriented political leadership, particularly powerful Chief Ministers (having a fundamental goal of economic growth) and committed bureaucracy is responsible for the success of the JFM in AP. The powerful civil society represented by vocal opposition political parties, people's movements, and powerful media is also acted as a check to counter the

new economic policies pursued by the government. Firstly, the Chief Minister, Chandra Babu Naidu, was very committed towards sustainable development (greening and forest regeneration) with women empowerment infrastructure development. Since he was the most powerful chief minister (with the support of the central government headed by the NDA and the undisputed leader of his party), he was very successful in mobilising support for the programme he conceived. He was instrumental in bringing a law relating to water, soil and trees for the first time in the country to boost forest growth. Secondly, effective coordination has been brought among various programmes and departments related to forests which enabled to pool resources to take-up the plantation in a big way. Fourthly, he was successful in getting uninterrupted World Bank funds unlike in the other two states. Fifthly, NGOs are motivated to participate as partners in the formulation and implementation of the JFM programme, particularly in establishing VFCs and training members. Sixthly, forest bureaucracy is motivated by incentives such as recognition of the merit and performance. Seventhly, the programme is being monitored regularly by the Chief Minister. The CM made it a point to visit VFCs and self-help group organisations whenever he was on district tour. Besides, CM did not miss the opportunity to interact with the presidents and members of the VFC during annual conferences and special occasions.

Even the political leadership is also compelled to be more responsive to the people's needs in the light of the strong opposition political parties and critical civil society organisations. Opposition parties and CSOs like Naxalites, Raithacooli Sanghas, intellectuals and trade unions are critical about the ongoing economic reforms, particularly in the power and infrastructure sectors. Even the forest bureaucracy is responding to the demands of political masters. Their promotion in the hierarchy depends on their performance. As a result, this programme has received support from the bureaucracy, his own party and CSOs.

However, the state leadership in Karnataka does not enjoy complete autonomy like the AP Chief Minister, since the leadership has

to work within the framework provided by the central political party as well as the state-level party pressures exercised by factional leaders. On the other hand, there is no strong pressure from the opposition party and civil society organisations as in AP. In the absence of a strong political will, the FD is not able to interact with CSOs to resolve various conflicts regarding conceptual issues and flaws in design. Even the existing interaction mechanisms such as the state-level steering committee has become ineffective due to lack of initiative by both the FD and CSOs. In addition, there are no strong movements by the CSOs against the government. This may be due to the people's dependency on forests being very low. Unlike in Orissa and AP, the tribal population depending on forests in Karnataka is low. The needs of the farmers in the Western Ghats are partially met by giving rights over Betta lands to collect manure for their fields. On the other hand, the Northern Karnataka region dependency on forests appears to be lower since a large part of farmers needs such as fuel, fodder and manure are met by agricultural operations. This is one of the reasons forest issues have not attracted the attention of the Raitha Sangha (farmers organisation).

The lack of interaction between the GOs and CSOs in Karnataka also can be partly attributed to the absence of a wide NGO network that reflect the interests of the people and displays dynamic leadership. In fact, the FEVORD was very effective till 1999. It was able to influence forest policies by organising people's movements through public litigations. This ultimately resulted in not being handled over to forest land to private organisations to grow eucalyptus. On another occasion, the CSO blocked overseas assistance to the KFD till it incorporated the necessary changes in the document. They even sought the cooperation of international NGOs and influenced the British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, in this regard. As a result, the JFM coverage is very low. Even interactions between the GO and CSOs appear to be very weak.

The other factors responsible for the lack of synergy between the government and civil society are: (i) conservative bureaucratic

culture coming in the way of expanding the programme in a big way. A large per cent of forest bureaucracy emphasised on the processes rather than the targets. Instead of taking up this programme with foreign assistance to expand the programme rapidly and concentrate on targets, it is better to focus on motivating people through mass campaigns. It is generally felt that more and more workshops should be conducted to develop trust between the GOs and NGOs. The programme should be implemented wherever there is a demand from the people instead of formulating programmes without people's interest. The CSOs are not in favour of taking loans for JFM projects and they have gone to the extent of saying that the loans taken by the government should be returned immediately; (ii) the non-renewal of the second phase Western Ghat can be attributed to poor interaction between CSOs and GOs.

The concept of civil society based on forest movements and networks is very active in Orissa. This is evident from their presence in quantity and quality. Their number has increased over the years. They have been able to influence policies relating to minor forest produce. Even many political leaders are sympathetic towards forest communities. The civil society is able to include issues related to forests in the election manifestos of political parties. The presence of civil society is mainly due to people's dependency on forests for their livelihood. A large per cent of biomass needs are met from the forests. Communities also protect forests to develop and support community infrastructure and activities such as constructing schools and temples and organise festivals.

The FD appears to be weak in terms of its presence and effectiveness. Firstly, there is no coordination between the different wings of the FD in implementing programmes related to plantation. They are implemented by SF programmes regular departments and the DRDA. Secondly, the FD is not able to respond to the needs of the people creatively. They evince very little interest in involving CSOs in their committees. In fact, in the JFM resolution, there was no mention about the involvement of CSOs. However, NGOs close to them have been

nominated in various state and district-level committees. In the process, the NGOs are not able to enjoy the confidence of the people. The state is also not able to take up many programmes without the budgetary support. They are not even able to pay their staff. Forests have not received adequate attention by the state. The forest bureaucracy also is not responsive.

VII

Conclusion

AP is able to achieve inclusive governance and better outcomes due to a strong and autonomous development oriented state and vibrant and autonomous civil society organisations. In fact, regeneration of the forest and women empowerment is the top priority of political leadership. The state has not only encouraged state society synergy to formulate inclusive policies with resources, but also effectively implemented them for better outcomes. At the same time, radical and pro-poor civil society organisations along with a strong political party and critical media played a significant role in articulating the voices of the marginalised sections of society. However, Karnataka has neither committed political leadership nor vibrant CF groups to take up this programme in a big way. The lack of sufficient rapport and trust between government and NGOs is responsible for the slow progress of the JFM. In Orissa, the autonomous and vibrant community forest network contested the government policies and actions and prevented the progress of JFM plantation. However, it has protected vast tracts of land with the effective participation of forest communities without state support. Such initiative has failed to protect the interests and rights of disadvantaged groups, particularly women, SCs and STs. Secondly, they failed to resolve intra and inter-village conflicts over sharing of natural resources in the absence of state support (in enforcing the rights by the police, forest officials and judiciary).

Notwithstanding these developments, programmes like JFM are very relevant in the present context to regenerate degraded forests and improve the living conditions of poor. It is evident from our study

that civil society alone cannot produce goods that are required by society. The spread of civil society organisations is not uniform throughout the country. Besides, they are not able to mobilise disadvantaged groups such as women and tribals in their forest programmes. They also have limitations in resolving various types of conflicts related to forests in the absence of government support. On the other hand, the government cannot take up this gigantic task without CSOs cooperation. The government initiatives are not cost-effective and sustainable in the long run. The argument propounded by various scholars is that an autonomous strong state and weak civil society or a reactive state and an autonomous vibrant civil society will not hold good in the present context. The strong state and the strong civil society with mutual cooperation and contestation can produce more goods and services (generate natural resources) as well as promote the interests and rights of disadvantaged groups.

Table 1: State (Government) and Civil Society Interface of Community Forest Governance in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Orissa

Description	Interface			Inclusive Governance				
	Andhra Pradesh	Karnataka	Orissa	Responsive	Transparent	Accountable	Efficiency	Equity
State Influence								
Political Leadership	H	M	L	A, K	A	A	A	A
Legislature	M	L	L					
Forest Administration	H	H, L	M	A	A	A	A, K	A
Courts	-	H, M	-	A, K				A, K
Police			L	A, K	K	A	A	-
Local Government	L	M	L	K	K	K	K	K
Funding Agencies	H	M	L	A	A	A	A	A
Civil Society Influence								
NGOs	H	M, H	H	A	A, K	A	A	A
Forest Communities	L	M	H	O	O, K	O, K	O, K	A
Research Institutions	M	M	H	A, K, O	A, K, O	A, K, O	A, K, O	A, K, O
International NGOs	H	H	M	A	A	A	A	A

Description	Interface			Inclusive Governance				
	Andhra Pradesh	Karnataka	Orissa	Responsive	Transparent	Accountable	Efficiency	Equity
Political Parties	H	M	L	A	A	A	A	A
Media	H	M	M	A	A	A	A	A
Modes of Interaction for Policy Formulation								
GO & CSO Statutory Council	H	M	N	A	A	A	A	A
Frequent Consultations	M	M	N	A	A	A	A	A
Seminars/Workshops	M	H	L	A	A	A	A	A
Lobbying by CSOs	M	H	H	K	K	K	K	K
Criticism by CSOs	H	H	H	K, O	K, O	K, O	K, O	K, O
Protests and Demonstration	*L	M	H	K, O	K, O	K, O	K, O	K, O
Implementation & Monitoring								
V & H Networking of GOs at State, District, & Sub-district level	H	M	L	A	A	A	A	A
V & H Networking of CSOs at District, & Sub-district level	M	H, M	H	A	A	A	A	A
GO & CSO Interaction at State, District, & Sub-district level	H	M, L	L	A	A	A	A	A
Conflict Resolution								
Conflict Resolution by GOs	H	M	L	A	A	A	A	A
Conflict Resolution by CSOs	L	L	H	O	O	O	O	O

Based on perceptions

H: High (above 60%)

L: Low (below 30%)

V: Vertical

M: Moderate (30-60%)

N: Nil

H: Horizontal

A: Andhra Pradesh

K: Karnataka

O: Orissa.

* Naxalites movements/protests not included.

Table 2: Regeneration of Forests in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Orissa

Activity	Andhra Pradesh	Karnataka	Orissa
Forest Stock	H	M	H
Plantation	H	H	L
Protection	L	L	H
Encroachment	H	H	L
Podu Cultivation	H	H	L
Water Tables	H	M	M
Bio-diversity	L	L	H
Soil Conservation	H	M	L
Coverage	H	M	L
Cost Effectiveness	H	H	L
Employment	H	M	L
Equity	H	M	L
Women Empowerment	H	M	L
Sustainability	L	L	H
Infrastructure	H	M	H
Good Governance	H, M	M	M

Based on perceptions

H: High (above 60%) M: Moderate (30-60%) L: Low (below 30%)

¹ For instance, this is evident from the AP NGOs' meeting with the members of the pre-appraisal team of the World Bank (extend to the second phase of the project) held at Hyderabad on 24th September, 2001. In this meeting, issues like eviction of tribals from the podu cultivation affecting their livelihood systems, low payment for beedi leaves, preference for industry, delays in bamboo harvesting, differences between working plans and micro-level plans and so on, were raised by the NGOs. There was even a proposal from an NGO for an independent study of the first phase of the programme to which the FD readily agreed.

- ² For instance, in a seminar held in Hyderabad, the NGOs raised various issues like overspending, overstaffing, irregularities, legal status to Village Forest Committees (VFCs), the 'nistar' rights existing in Maharashtra, the VFCs, role both in micro and working plans, Non-Timber Forest Product (NTFP), non-payment of compound fee, and so on. Forest officials clarified some of these issues and agreed to rectify the same. Even the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests assured that the corruption at the department level would be addressed. He promised that he would verify the complaints against erring officials and VFC presidents. He also mentioned that the FD would like to have more interactions with the NGOs to strengthen the JFM. According to him, the feedback from the NGOs and people was very vital in designing the second phase of JFM. The FD would like to be much more responsive and transparent to make JFM more effective.
- ³ For instance, the letter written by the AP NGOs' committee on JFM to the Chief Conservator of Forests on 5th August 1998 highlighted field problems such as non-demarcation of VFC boundaries, non-execution of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), non-issue of identity cards to VFC members, clearing of existing forests and felling of trees, mechanised ploughing through excavators, planting of eucalyptus trees, violation of norms, lack of transparency, non-payment of funds to NGOs, non-payment of compound fees and so on. While arguing with the FD, they presented empirical evidence containing the VFC and district-wise details about these incidences. They even highlighted the lack of transparency with regard to payment of honorarium to NGOs, although the guidelines stressed payment cheque.
- ⁴ For instance, the chief secretary responded positively to FEVORD's request in 1982 and started sending government orders, circulars and policy papers to FEVORD. This ultimately led to the establishment of a consultative committee with GOs and CSOs under the chairmanship of the Development Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner at the state and district levels respectively.
- ⁵ For instance, in the meeting held between GOs and NGOs on 29th November, 1990, the suggestions of NGOs regarding the inclusion of revenue and C and D class lands for plantation, constitution of consultative committees at the district, taluk and village levels were accepted. The committee, at the request of NGO members, decided to prepare a policy document on the basis of existing government orders and circulars; prepare an action plan by pooling resources from various departments and NGOs to regenerate degraded forests to meet fuel wood, fodder and timber needs and invite eminent experts to seek their opinion in forest regeneration.
- ⁶ For instance, FEVORD launched a protest movement between 1984 to 1993 against the Karnataka government to return 30,000 hectares of village forest and common land to village communities. Karnataka Pulp Wood Limited (KPWL) (Karnataka's share is 51 per cent, while it is 49 per cent for Birla Company, Harihar Polyfibres) acquired these village lands to raise eucalyptus

plantation for the exclusive use of the Harihar Polyfibre factory in Dharwad district. This is one of the longest non-violence struggles against KPWL by the people, FEVORD and many other organisations in Karnataka. They organised many protests, rallies and satyagrahas including 'Kittico Henchiko' (pluck and plant) Satyagraha in 1988, during which many people were arrested. As part of these struggles, FEVORD filed a writ petition in the Supreme Court under a public interest litigation to which the court responded favourably. The struggle went on for years and finally succeeded in restoring the land to the villagers (Potter, 1988).

- ⁷ The letter says, "it is not just that the implementation of the JFM is faulty, but that the very conceptual and policy framework underpinning people's participation in forest management and the accompanying legal, administrative and fiscal arrangements need to be thoroughly reexamined." The letter further says: "The past eight years of experience with JFPM in Karnataka as implemented by the KFD was disappointing, notwithstanding small benefits." According to it, "JFM has neither improved the forest cover nor income of the local forest communities." The main reasons for this, according to research studies, were: (1) lack of clear and adequate rights over land and produce; (2) lack of sufficient autonomy in day-to-day management; (3) ambiguity in the existing rights and privileges leading to intra-village inequalities in forest access; (4) lack of security of tenure and sustainability of institutions due to the project and fund-oriented nature of implementation; (5) focus on only degraded FD lands leading to only partial coverage of the public lands used by the villagers. "Participatory forest management is a system of governance of natural resources, not a short-term project or programme. It is a basic right of all communities that derive direct or indirect benefits from forests and public land. This right must be given by law and must be available everywhere in the state; it must not depend on GOs or project funds." The other demands, according to the letter, include: extending JFM to protected as well as all public land irrespective of physical conditions and legal status; absolute autonomy to VFCs by making foresters members without voting rights; rights to harvest, permitting consumption and sale of all surplus products that are permitted for sustainable use; restricting borrowings from foreign agencies.
- ⁸ The movement that was launched in the 1990s to prevent the selling of wood lots at a lower price for industrial use was very innovative. Many village communities were persuaded by FD officials and contractors to sell matured wood lots raised under SF programmes at a lower price for industrial use. In order to prevent this, a movement known as 'Forest Produce Marketing Initiative' (FPMI) was launched in 117 villages in the Nayagad and Kurdah districts. Meetings and workshops were organised in these villages; leaflets and booklets and posters were used to educate people. The poster stating 'Beware of Wood Eating Tiger' (the forest contractor) was very popular and effective in these villages.

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