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Case Study Information Sheet

Region: South Asia

Country: India (case study no. 1)

Title: Complementarity of Institutions: A Prerequisite for the Success of Joint Forest Management. A Comparative Case of Four Villages in India

Authors: Shashi Kant and Roshan Cooke

Other Information: (i) Original language: English

Abstract: This case study highlights how informal institutional design needs to take care of community specifics for sustainability of the program, through an analysis of the Joint forest Management (JFM) program in four villages in Madhya Pradesh, India. In these four villages the program has been implemented entirely by the Forest Department without any support or collaboration of the civil society or non-governmental organizations. The extent of interest and involvement of the Forest Department, the homogeneity of communities inhabiting the villages, the traditional ways of life of the indigenous communities and their dependence on forests, and the scarcity of forest resources are some of the factors cited as being responsible for initiating successful village level institutions. However, continuation of these institutions require complementarity of informal and formal institutions and between formal institutions (like Forest Protection Committees, Village Panchayats, Watershed Development Committees, etc.), the absence of which can create conflicts, reducing the efficiency and efficacy of the institutions. In addition, some other factors like transparency of institutions, accountability of change agents, equitable distribution and uncertainties of the program should be dealt with in the early stages of the JFM program implementation to ensure long term sustainability.

Themes (prioritized): 2, 1

Subsistence Practices (prioritized): Agriculture, Gathering

Resource Type & Ecosystem: Forest

Key Terms: Conservation, Forestry, Gender, Regional cooperation

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