

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SOCIAL FORESTRY IN TRIBAL AREA OF RAJASTHAN

**M. C. Chaudhary<sup>1</sup> and N. K. Panjabi<sup>2</sup>**

### **ABSTRACT**

*The forestry has a definite impact on environment. To extend these benefits to rural areas and also to share the socio-economic benefits with them, social forestry programme has been started. The present research was intended to study the socio-economic benefits derived by the beneficiaries on account of their involvement in social forestry programme. The majority of respondents received medium social as well as economic benefit through social forestry. The respondents also felt that as a result of social forestry, their interest towards community development has been aroused. The fodder requirement of the respondents was also fulfilled due to the programme.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the state of Rajasthan, social forestry programme begun in the sixth five year plan period. The overall expenditures on development of social forestry during the plan amounted to Rs. 250 million. A large sum of this money was received from World Bank. Social forestry programme aimed at assuring the peoples' participation in developing forests by their cooperation and active support.

The foremost benefit of the social forestry is the favorable impact on environment and on the quality of life of people. It is also imperative for improving the socio-economic conditions of downtrodden sections of society. No other measure would be so effective and important, for the poor farmers to develop them economically and socially. Social forestry can achieve a spectacular success by involvement of the villagers in the programme. An effort was made to study the socio-economic benefits derived by

the beneficiaries on account of their involvement in social forestry programme.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study was undertaken in three districts of Southern Rajasthan, selected purposely, namely Banswara, Dungarpur and Udaipur. Two panchayat samities from each district were selected on the basis of maximum area covered under plantation by the forest department. Thus, the investigation was carried out in six tribal panchayat samities. Two villages from each identified panchayat samiti were chosen, also on the basis of maximum area covered under social forestry plantation by the forest department. Accordingly, in all, 12 villages were chosen for the present investigation.

To select the respondents, a comprehensive list of all those beneficiaries (tribal and non-tribal) who were actively involved in forestry activities was prepared with help of local forest

<sup>1</sup> Ph. D. Scholar, Department of Extension Education, MPUAT, Udaipur

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Extension Education, MPUAT, Udaipur

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents on the basis of socio-economic benefits derived through social forestry**

Types of benefits (in relative term)	Tribal		Non-tribal		Pooled Score	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>a) Social benefits</b>						
Low	28	23.33	11	9.17	39	16.25
Medium	83	69.17	97	80.83	180	75.00
High	9	7.50	12	10.00	21	8.75
Total	20	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00
<b>(b) Economic benefits</b>						
Low	35	29.17	27	22.50	62	25.83
Medium	69	57.50	71	59.17	140	58.33
High	16	13.33	22	18.33	38	15.83
Total	20	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

F = frequency      % = per cent

officials and sarpanchas of the respective gram panchayat. As many as 20 respondents (i.e. 10 tribal and 10 non-tribal farmers from each chosen village) were selected randomly from each identified villages. Thus, the study sample consists of total 240 respondents. The data were collected by employing personal interview technique with help of specially designed questionnaire.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC BENEFITS

To get an overview of socio-economic benefits derived by the respondents, they were categorized into three socio-economic group viz., low, medium and high. These groups were formed on the basis of calculated mean score and S.D. of the overall score obtained by the respondents; separately for both social as well as economic benefits. The results are depicted in Table 1.

Respondents in general, received social benefits from social forestry as evident from the data in Table 1. It was noted that three-fourth of respondents (75%)

fell in the medium social benefit group. Whereas remaining one-fourth of the respondents (25%) were distributed in high and low social benefit groups.

A perusal of data in Table 1 reveals that more than half of the respondents (58.33%) fell in the group of medium economic benefit. The remaining one-sixth of them could be placed in high economic benefit group. The number of respondents reported in the group of low economic benefit was found to be 25.83 per cent.

### SOCIAL BENEFITS

It can be observed from the data in Table 2 that the social benefit 'aroused interest towards community development' was ranked first as expressed by both the category of respondents. The respondents have reported that their social prestige among the community members is increased on account of participation in social forestry. Likewise, their opinion/suggestions were given due weightage by the community members after their involvement in the programme.

**Table 2: Social benefits derived by the respondents through social forestry**

Improved Practices (120)	Tribal (120)		Non-tribal (240)		Total	
	MS	Rank	MS	Rank	MS	Rank
1. Earned social prestige	2.21	II	2.03	III	2.12	II
2. Opinion were given due weightage by the community members	1.90	III	2.29	II	2.09	III
3. Registered as member of various agencies / institutions	1.61	IV	1.43	VI	1.52	V
4. Aroused interest towards community development work	2.39	I	2.53	I	2.46	I
5. Increased interaction with various agencies and organizations	1.41	V	1.77	IV	1.59	IV
6. Realized the need and importance of education	1.23	VI	1.55	V	1.39	VI

Rank correlation co-efficient ( $r_s$ ) = 0.78 NS  
MS = Mean Score

NS = Non-significant

The rank correlation coefficient value ( $r_s$ ) of the ranks accorded to the response of tribal and non-tribal respondents was found to be 0.78. This value was statistically non-significant. It infers that there is no variation in the social benefits derived by tribal and non-tribal respondents in the study area.

### **ECONOMIC BENEFITS**

It is interesting to note (Table 3) that social forestry has been able to cater to the domestic demands of rural communities in the villages of study area. The important economic benefits perceived by the tribal and non tribal respondents were 'fulfillment of demand of fodder for livestock' and 'increase in income'.

**Table 3: Economic benefits derived by the respondents through social forestry**

Benefits derived	Tribal (120)		Non-tribal (120)		Total (240)	
	MS	Rank	MS	Rank	MS	Rank
1. Employment generated through social forestry have increased the family income	2.49	I	2.27	II	2.38	II
2. Demand of fodder for livestock was fulfilled from the social forestry	2.28	II	2.49	I	2.39	I
3. The by-products obtained from social forestry i.e. honey, gum, plants of medicinal value, etc. have catered the need of family	1.67	IV	1.55	V	1.61	V
4. Timber wood for domestic purposes was obtained from social forestry	1.33	VI	1.43	VI	1.38	VI
5. Money, time and energy being spent for procurement of fodder during long dry spell from distant places was saved	1.85	III	1.97	III	1.91	III
6. Sufficient fire-wood for domestic use was obtained form social forestry	1.50	V	1.75	IV	1.63	IV

Rank correlation co-efficient ( $r_s$ ) = 0.89 \*

MS = Mean Score

\* = Significant at 5 per cent level of probability

**Table 4: Analysis of difference in the respondents due to locale about socio-economic benefits**

Indicator		Social Benefit	Economic Benefit
Mean Score			
	Banswara	3.87	3.87
	Dungarpur	3.71	3.67
	Udaipur	3.59	3.75
'F' Value		5.30 **	2.47 NS
CD		0.498	0.534
CV		4.81	5.13
Sem		0.180	0.193

\*\*= Significant at 1 per cent level of probability

NS = Non-significant

Further analyses of the data indicate that the value of rank correlation coefficient between tribal and non-tribal respondents was found to be 0.89, which is statistically significant at 5 per cent level of probability. This leads to an inference that the tribal and non-tribal respondents differed significantly in deriving economic benefits from social forestry.

#### **DIFFERENCE IN RESPONSE DUE TO LOCALE**

It has been also tried to analyze whether the respondents of different districts perceived the benefits of social forestry in the same manner or not. The data are presented in Table 4.

The statistically significant value of calculated 'F' for social benefits signify that there exists a notable difference in the opinion of the respondents of different districts. The mean score of different districts show that the respondents of Banswara perceived the highest social benefits received from social forestry programme.

The calculated 'F' value was not significant for economic benefits derived by them through social forestry programme. This indicates that there was no variation

between the respondents of selected districts. This may be due to the equitable distribution of short term benefits of the social forestry programme.

#### **CONCLUSION**

It can be concluded that the majority of respondents received medium social as well as economic benefit through social forestry.

The tribal and non-tribal beneficiaries have shown their inclination towards community development as the main social benefit. Similarly, employment generation was perceived as first ranked economic benefit by the tribal beneficiaries; where as fulfillment of demand of fodder for livestock was reported as a first ranked economic benefit by the non-tribal respondents in the study area.

There was a significant variation between the respondents of selected districts about the social benefits derived through social forestry. A non-significant variation was observed between the respondents of selected districts about economic benefits derived by them through social forestry programme.

-----