

## **Factors affecting people participation in Hariyali project under Nalagarh block of Himachal Pradesh**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study examined the programme related and socio-economic factors affecting people's participation in Haryali project of Nalagarh block in Himachal Pradesh through a survey of 71 project related personnel and 428 farmers. The findings showed that in total 22 factors (4 pertaining to programme and 18 socio-economic) were perceived by the respondents which affected the people's participation. Some of the key socio-economic factors influencing people's participation were lack of awareness about programmes, illiteracy, poor economic conditions, lack of faith in government programmes, subsidy culture, village politics, lack of exposure visits, low interest in money contribution, lack of demonstrations and transparency. Programme related factors were lack of Entry Point Activities (EPA), lack of flexibility in expenditure according to field conditions, variation in wage payments and lack of provision of advance payments. Policy and development emphasis on these factors would lead to greater participation in Haryali watershed development programme.

**Key words:** Factors, people's participation, programmes.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Watershed development programme is a people's programme where the government personnel act as facilitators. The watershed concept aims at establishing an enabling environment for the integrated use, regulation and treatment of water and land resources of a watershed based ecosystem to accomplish resource conservation and bio-mass production objectives (Jensen et al 1996). The

watershed approach has conventionally aimed at treating degraded lands with the help of low cost and locally assured technologies, such as in situ soil and moisture conservation measures, afforestation and through a participatory approach that seeks to secure close involvement of the user communities. Many projects designed within this approach were, at different points of time, taken up by the government of India. The Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP)

and the Desert Development Programme (DDP) were brought into the watershed mode in 1987. The Integrated Wasteland Development Programme (IWDP) launched in 1989 aimed at the development of wastelands on watershed basis. These three programmes were brought under the guidelines for watershed development with effect from April 1, 1995 and subsequently revised in August 2001 (Anon 2001).

To further simplify procedures and involve the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) more meaningfully in planning, implementation and management of economic development activities in rural areas, new project under the area development programmes was implemented in accordance with the guidelines of Hariyali wef April 1, 2003 (Anon 2003). A number of rural development programmes or projects were sanctioned, executed and implemented by the centre and state governments at different points of time to uplift the socio-economic status of the inhabitants with their active involvement in all the stages of the project implementation, though the implementing agencies could not achieve the goal of participation as learnt by the previous experiences. In order to know the various factors which pose hindrance in participation of the people in such programmes, the present study was undertaken.

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The study was conducted in Nalagarh block of district Solan of Himachal Pradesh. The area falls under subtropical zone and its altitude varies from 300 to 1500 m (amsl). In general, April to June are the hottest and December to mid February are the coldest months. Rainfall is received mainly during monsoon from July to September. The whole block falls under rainfed condition. In all 20 camps were organized in different Panchayats of Nalagarh block during the months of January and February 2004. The total 1424 persons participated in these camps (Table 1). To collect the data, 599 participants (428 farmers and 71 programme related personnel) were selected randomly. The sampling intensity was 30 per cent. Data were collected through personal interviews with the farmers, executive body of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, Panchayat secretaries, project personnel and members of watershed development team (WDT) on structured schedules/questionnaire with open-ended questions. The qualitative data so collected were analyzed, classified and arranged in broad heads to draw the conclusions.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Programme related factors***

It is apparent (Table 2) that there are four factors which slow down the

Factors affecting people participation

Table 1. Awareness camps organised under Hariyali programme in Nalagarh block

Sr No	Date	Name of watershed	No of participants
1	21-01-04	Jainagar	150
2	22-01-04	Loharghat	102
3	23-01-04	Maloun	74
4	25-01-04	Kohoo Nichla	83
5	26-01-04	Kohoo Uperla	111
6	27-01-04	Banli	31
7	28-01-04	Sanwad	95
8	29-01-04	Bhariach	44
9	30-01-04	Taked	66
10	31-01-04	Chauri	35
11	06-02-04	Walam	45
12	07-02-04	Charog	50
13	08-02-04	Nerli Bharmana	43
14	09-02-04	Randhala	58
15	10-02-04	Lunas	68
16	11-02-04	Nand	37
17	12-02-04	Kharpana	42
18	14-02-04	Dharel	73
19	15-02-04	Ukhoo	78
20	25-02-04	Jukhari	139
Total Participants			1424

project activities and affect the people's participation. In total 230 multiple responses were obtained under four types of factors. About 92 per cent of the respondents were of the view that entry point activities should not be stopped as it was necessary to win the confidence of the people and make good rapport of the executing agency among the villagers. Other factors which were responsible for low participation were lack of flexibility in

expenditure according to the field conditions and variation in wage payment for similar work among the executive agencies (79%). As learnt from the past experiences, there was delay in the payments of the executed works to the workers, hence they were reluctant to participate in the project work. About 75 per cent of the respondents perceived that there should be a provision of advance payment which was lacking in the project.

***Socio- economic factors***

A perusal of the Table 3 reveals that in total 18 socio–economic factors were perceived by the respondents which influenced the peoples participation in Hariyali project. In total, 4410 multiple responses were obtained under 18 types of factors. The lack of awareness about project and its benefits (90%) was the primary cause of poor participation. The second important factor was lack of basic education ie illiteracy (77%) among the people which attributed narrow vision about project activities hence influenced the local participation. Chaudhary (1986) also reported that traditional attitudes and

illiteracy were handicaps for the rural poor participation in small scale water sector projects. Poor socio-economic status of the people (72%) was another cause of poor participation. Agnihotri (1999) reported several factors viz awareness, value and belief, socio-economic structure, economic status, organizational capability and attitudes of the society towards women which affect people’s participation. The village people ( 66%) had lost their faith in government works and had low interest to interact with the govt/project staff due to previous bureaucratic behaviour of the officials and desire for getting subsidy or cash from government schemes. Chowdhry (1989) identified the bureaucratic structure

Table 2. Programme related factors as perceived by the implementing agency and project personnel

Sr No	Programme related factors (N=71)	No of respondents	Percentage	Rank
1	Lack of Entry point activities (EPA) in the project	65	92	I
2	Lack of flexibility in expenditure according to field conditions	56	79	II
3	Variation in payments for similar work among local agencies	56	79	II
4	Lack of provision for advance payment	53	75	III
	Total	230 *		

\* Multiple responses

as main hurdle in achieving people participation. Village politics, conflicts, alcoholism and people's business in animal rearing and agriculture activities were also responsible for low participation. Loganandhan and Mondal (2005) found that awareness, knowledge and attitude of the farmers were having a positive relationship among themselves, and contribute to the development of each other. Among socio-economic characters, education, extension, contacts and mass-media exposure had a positive and a significant influence over the status of farmers. Other important participatory factors identified were lack of exposure visits, demonstration of new technologies, money contributions and transparency in fund utilization which posed hindrance to participate in the project activities. Naidu (1992) was of the view that in people's participation, appropriate education, communication, persuasion and demonstration were important factors in promoting their involvement. Gupta (1983) reported that any programme that does not aim at people's education to secure their participation and involvement could hardly be expected to produce the desired results.

The factors as equally concern in social status had divided the society, fear of unsocial element in execution and management body, frequent migration for wages to urban areas caused poor participation. Only few participants/farmers (34%) were of the opinion that

indebtedness of govt bank loans and fear to repay also kept away people from the projects. The people also thought that soil and water erosion was a natural and ongoing process that did not require any interference. Punam and Atul (1999) reported that peoples willingness to do some thing for the benefit of the village community, was the prime force behind the proper execution of any development programme. Zoghy (1987) reported that the government organizations should do priority for increasing participation at the local level with addressing important needs of the community, allow members to express their ideas and discuss their problems in the meetings so that whole community could be benefited from project activities.

## CONCLUSION

It is concluded from the present study that the farmers (stake holders) were an important source of feedback. Identified factors, both socio-economic and programme related, affect people's participation. The key socio-economic factors, viz lack of awareness, illiteracy, poor economic status, lack of faith in government programmes, village politics and subsidy culture affect the people's participation to a large extent. More and more awareness about different aspects of the project activities must be created among the farmers through awareness camps, exposure visits, meetings, trainings, audio-visual devices and establishing symbiotic

Table 3. Socio-economic factors perceived by the farmers

Sr No	Socio-economic factors (N = 428)	No of respondents	Percentage	Rank
1	Lack of awareness i.e. knowledge of project concepts, objectives and their benefits, guidelines and responsibilities of user group etc.	386	90	I
2	Lack of elementary education i.e. illiteracy	333	77	II
3	Poor economic condition of the people	309	72	III
4	Lack of faith in Govt. programme due to their previous functioning	282	66	IV
5	Lack of interest to interact with Govt. officials due to their bureaucratic behaviour in the past	282	66	IV
6	Prevailing perception for getting subsidy from government programme	282	66	IV
7	Village development is not free from politics i.e. village politics	257	60	V
8	Business in day to day agriculture activity and animal rearing	257	60	V
9	Conflicts and alcoholism restrict to think on development	257	60	V
10	Lock of exposure visit i.e. visit of farmers to model watershed	227	53	VII
11	Lack of interest in money contribution	227	53	VII
12	Lack of demonstration of new technologies	227	53	VII
13	Lack of transparency in fund utilization as experienced from previous works	227	53	VII
14	Less equity concern and more fraction in society	203	47	VIII
15	Fear of un-social elements among village people and implementing agency i.e. PRIs	181	42	IX
16	Migration of people to urban areas for wages	181	42	IX
17	Indebtedness of Govt. bank loans keep away the farmers from project	146	34	X
18	Soil and water erosion perceived as natural and on going do not required improvement	146	34	X
	Total	4410 *		

\* Multiple responses

relationship between project functionaries and people. Policy and development emphasis on these key factors would lead to greater people's participation in Haryali or similar other projects.

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