

EvSum529

SILVICULTURAL RESEARCH PROJECT (SRP) & FORESTRY RESEARCH PROJECT (FRP), NEPAL

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The Project

SRP and FRP were implemented between 1979-1985 and 1986-90 respectively. The objectives of SRP were to develop a Forest Research and Information Centre (FRIC), together with a separate field station and Silvicultural Trials Unit. FRP aimed to strengthen further the capability of FRIC, and to collect and disseminate forestry research information. ODA inputs to SRP consisted of 3 TCO's, training and equipment at an estimated cost of £0.45m. ODA support to FRP included 7 TCOs, training, buildings and equipment. The total ODA allocation for FRP was £2.55m. A second phase of FRP began in November 1990, focusing on institution-building

The Evaluation

SRP and FRP were evaluated in May 1991. The joint UK- Nepal team consisted of a Nepali forestry expert, a UK forester, a socio-economist, and a member of Evaluation Department.

This report was used in the "Forestry Evaluation Synthesis Study", EvRpt541. (See EvSum541 for the summary.)

Overall Conclusion & Success Rating

The evaluation concluded that SRP/FRP had been *partially successful*. As a result of the projects there is now a central research facility which is capable of executing successful forestry research. However, institutional progress was constrained by staff shortages and by the lack of a clear institutional strategy and objectives. Most importantly, the institutional achievements would not be sustainable in the absence of the continuing ODA support.

Both projects produced a wide range of internationally recognised publications. However, the overall impact was reduced by the lack of a strategy for research planning and the dissemination of findings.

The Main Findings

- A large number of high quality technical articles and publications were produced. These were widely circulated and known within Nepal, although the findings were less generally used. This was due to poor institutional links between research and end-users, and to the inaccessible style and language of the publications.
- The projects were judged to be cost-effective. Potential economic and environmental benefits were difficult to assess, but probably positive.
- Despite wider institutional constraints in Nepal, and an inadequately defined approach to institutional strengthening, the projects contributed significantly to the creation of an operational forestry research institution. However, research planning was unsystematic and national research coordination limited.
- The evaluation considered that the research could have been more appropriate to the needs of end-users. This was attributed to the lack of a systematic analysis of research priorities, the absence of parallel socio-economic research, and the failure to involve end-users in the research process.
- Weak or undefined institutional links between research and its potential users inhibited problem identification and, more critically, the dissemination and impact of research results.
- TCO training of counterparts was unsystematic and not consistently successful. UK training was generally appropriate.

Lessons

- The effective dissemination of research findings requires a clear strategy. Information should be produced in a style, language and media appropriate to the target end-users, and good links must exist or be developed with extension services. The dissemination and impact of research will be reduced if insufficient attention is paid to these aspects.
- The reality that a new institution will require support for longer than the life of a typical five-year project needs to be recognised and planned for from inception. It is nevertheless of paramount importance that: (a) timebound institutional objectives are particularly closely defined; and (b), institutions should eventually be sustainable without continued external assistance.
- If sufficient priority and support is not given to ensuring that TCOs fulfil their counterpart training role, success in this area will be variable.
- Wide ranging technical support is likely to be required in projects which cover a wide range of disciplines. This needs to be readily available and sufficiently flexible to address specific needs.
- Forestry research needs to be based on a systematic multi-disciplinary assessment of priorities and, where possible, on the involvement of end-users in the research process. This is more likely to generate appropriate research findings with the

maximum potential impact.