

UNIT 16
INVOLVING AND CO-ORDINATING WITH
LINE DEPARTMENTS IN JFM

V. T. Darlong and S. K. Barik

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16.0 INTRODUCTION

Although JFM was conceived from the realisation that forests cannot be saved without active participation of the local communities, lately it has evolved into a development programme. This is a known fact that in a country like India most of the population live in rural areas and this is more true in case of the North-Eastern states. The interior places are still virtually inaccessible and the developmental programmes generally do not reach these remote areas. This is where JFM opens up immense possibilities for development. The suitable JFM sites are generally the remote places in and around the forests and they indeed are economically very backward. Most of the places are yet to be connected by road, not to mention about other necessary facilities e.g., health, education etc.

Keeping in view these aspects, JFM can be used as an integrated developmental programme. While the basic aims of JFM in protecting and regenerating forests would remain the main theme, other various government departments should be involved and participate in activities that would strengthen JFM, either directly or indirectly. Such programmes of JFM, integrated and co-ordinated with the participation of various governmental and semi-governmental departments, and dovetailed as per local needs, could become a model for overall developmental tool under the broad umbrella of JFM. Such concept has already been tried in West Bengal and elsewhere in the country with some measures of success, and the process of evolution of integration and coordination of JFM programmes with various line departments is still on.

16.1 WHAT ARE THE LINE DEPARTMENTS

All the government departments or agencies primarily dealing with programmes concerning land use or land based activities are generally known as Line Departments. For the purposes of JFM, we shall however understand line departments as those departments or agencies who can directly or indirectly promote JFM activities.

In the context of North-East India, the Line Departments may be recognised under the following categories :

A. Land use based Line Departments

- ★ Agriculture
- ★ Horticulture
- ★ Minor Irrigation
- ★ Sericulture & Weaving
- ★ Fishery
- ★ Animal Husbandry
- ★ Public Works Department
- ★ Public Health Engineering
- ★ Rural Development
- ★ Forest Development Corporations
- ★ Rehabilitation Plantation Corporations (as in Tripura)
- ★ Rubber Board/Coffee Board/Tea Board/Spices Board, etc.

B. Other Non Land use based Line Departments

- ★ Tribal Welfare
- ★ Primitive Group Programme (as in Tripura)
- ★ Local Administration Department
- ★ Panchayat
- ★ Health
- ★ Education
- ★ Transport
- ★ Autonomous District Council
- ★ SC/ST Finance Corporation
- ★ Co-operative Societies
- ★ Marketing Societies/Federations
- ★ Bank (Commercial/Industrial)
- ★ Insurance
- ★ Field Publicity Department
- ★ Khadi/Handloom and Handicrafts Board
- ★ Tourism
- ★ Small Scale Industries Department

C. Local/Traditional Socio-Politico-Developmental Institutions

- ★ Village Development Councils (as in Nagaland)
- ★ Young Mizo Association (as in Mizoram)
- ★ Institutions of Syiems, Dolois and Nokmas (as in Meghalaya)

16.2 WHY TO INVOLVE LINE DEPARTMENTS

The objective of bringing in the line departments is to bring about all round development to the JFM areas, which are otherwise usually backward. It may be mentioned here that in many parts of the hill areas of North-East India, since cadastral survey of land has not been undertaken, all the land use activities under forest, agriculture, horticulture, sericulture, pisciculture, etc. tend to integrate in a given area. And hence, the participation and involvement of aforementioned departments/agencies can ensure the development of the JFM area, both directly or indirectly, thereby promoting the causes and processes of JFM. Non land use based line departments would facilitate in promoting other activities that may reduce pressure on forest land, thereby ensuring better forest regeneration and conservation.

16.3 WHO IS TO INITIATE THE PROCESS OF CO-ORDINATION

The initiation of co-ordination with various line departments has to be done by the Forest Department, i.e., the agency responsible for the implementation of the JFM. With the establishment of FPCs, such co-ordination can also be partially handled by the members of the VFPCs. Basic philosophy of co-ordination would be to see that JFM objectives are clearly passed through across the line departments and by motivating their participation to see that their objectives too are met through the overall achievements of the JFM goals.

16.4 STAGES AND AREAS OF CO-ORDINATION

Co-ordination can be at various stages of JFM programme, such as motivation, site selection, project formulation, microplanning, preparation of action plans, project implementation, monitoring, constitution of FPC (wherein local people already having contact with particular line department could be made member of FPC), etc. Co-ordination can also be in the areas of pooling resources (finance, manpower, vehicles, etc.) to ensure effective implementation of the project(s).

16.5 POSSIBLE INPUTS FROM LINE DEPARTMENTS IN JFM AREA

The various government departments/agencies can induce their inputs in various development related fields. While land use based departments can directly provide development inputs related to lands, other departments can facilitate development inputs indirectly through financing or otherwise. For example, financial lendings may encourage micro enterprises that may indirectly reduce pressure on forest lands and/or forest exploitations.

One objective of co-ordination is to find out precisely what each department can do in the JFM area. These line departments must be approached with flexible and open mind, rather than dictating terms and conditions. This can be easily achieved if JFM aims and objectives are clearly and cleverly passed through the various components of line departments. The responsibility of 'selling' and communicating JFM concept, aims and objects rests on the Forest Department.

It may, however, be kept in mind here that it may not be possible, nor desirable to attempt to integrate/involve all the aforementioned line departments in JFM programmes or areas. The choice should rest with the Forest Department and should be locale specific so as to achieve best success.

It is best that each line department is approached and co-ordinated with to find out their possible areas of involvement in JFM programme. However, possible inputs by various line departments are briefly mentioned hereunder to serve as a precursor to the trainers, and also to facilitate an understanding in the project formulation related to JFM.

16.5.1 Land Use Based Line Departments

Agriculture and Horticulture Department

- ★ assist in planning for agriculture/horticulture improvement and food security of the JFM area;
- ★ assist in preparation of lands for agriculture/horticulture on hill slopes (e.g. terracing etc.) or alternative to shifting cultivation;

- ★ advice on agro-forestry/agro-horticulture with a demonstration model(s) suitable/replicable locally;
- ★ introduce High Yielding Varieties (HYV) of agro-horticultural crops;
- ★ introduce and regulate fertilizers, pesticides, etc., if need be;
- ★ introduce improved agricultural implements/machines;
- ★ provide subsidies, wherever/whenever applicable;
- ★ assist in marketing of surplus produce;
- ★ explore possibility of value added products such as jam, jelly, squash, pickle or dried food products;
- ★ encourage secondary agricultural activities such as
 - (a) mushroom cultivation, drying, packaging and marketing;
 - (b) bamboo shoot pickle making, or bamboo shoot drying, packaging and marketing.

Minor Irrigation Department

- ★ work in unison with agriculture and horticulture departments;
- ★ explore exploitable agricultural lands with irrigation potentials;
- ★ explore enhancement of agricultural output over seasons through minor irrigation (e.g., vegetables in winter seasons);
- ★ explore if construction of small check dams, rain water harvesting, etc. can be facilitated;
- ★ explore if underground-water can be exploited for irrigation;
- ★ assist in installations of hand-pumps, digging of wells, etc. for irrigation.

Fishery Department

- ★ explore fishery potentials in JFM areas;
- ★ assist in renovation of existing fish ponds;
- ★ assist in construction of new ponds :
 - (i) ponds may be created in strategic locations which may also serve both for minor irrigation and/or PHE water supply;
 - (ii) in many areas of North-East, particularly in Tripura, Barak Valley, Garo Hills, etc. it may be cheaper and convenient to create new fish ponds by simple construction of earthen dams in 'lungas' i.e. valleys between two hillocks, suitable for such purposes.
- ★ provision/supply or recurring inputs (such as fish seed, fertilizer, feed, etc.);
- ★ procurements of various types of fish nets as may be required;
- ★ setting up of fish seed production unit, should neighbouring villages also require to be supplied;
- ★ encourage also in culture of local varieties of fishes in areas where natural beels and other forms of wetlands exist;

- ★ provide preliminary training in pre-stock and post-stock management, including species combination for optimum utilization of ponds;
- ★ introduce improved method of drying of fish, as dry fish preparation is a delicacy in the North-East;
- ★ assist in setting up of retail outlets or other marketing requirements;
- ★ provide subsidies, extension services, etc.

Veterinary and Animal Husbandry

- ★ introduction and/or improvement of livestock rearing
 - buffalo
 - cow (local & jersey varieties)
 - goat
 - pig (local & fast growing)
 - poultry (both local & broiler)
 - duck
 - dove
 - japanese quail
- ★ assist in procurement of livestock based on potentials/capacity;
- ★ workout management/regulation of grazing patterns/grazing lands;
- ★ introduce fast growing grasses or other fodder plants;
- ★ encourage/introduce stall feeding wherever feasible;
- ★ encourage collection of hay for winter feeds;
- ★ encourage collection and use of animal dung for bio-fertilisers;
- ★ explain preliminary knowledge on diseases and treatment of livestock;
- ★ assist in retail outlets/marketing of milk, meat, eggs and other livestock produce;
- ★ subsidies and extension services.

Sericulture and Weaving

- ★ assess existing, if any, sericulture and weaving activities in the area;
- ★ identify/assess sericulture potential including land availability, host plants development/existence, silk worms, etc. of the area;
- ★ update/improve skills in sericulture and weaving;
- ★ provide required tools and implements for sericulture and weaving;
- ★ update knowledge on designs and easily marketable silk materials;
- ★ extension services including marketing of products/linking with buyers, advice on pricing of products, etc.

Public Works Department (PWD) and Public Health Engineering (PHE)

- ★ PWD can improve/maintain the conditions of roads, bridges and culverts, vital for rural communication;
- ★ construct networks of new roads, bridges and culverts in JFM areas;
- ★ PHE can provide/improve drinking water supply.

Rural Development

- ★ can supplement the works of PWD, PHE, etc.;
- ★ construct/improve roads, drinking water supply, afforestation, community based activities, etc.;
- ★ can construct market shed, community hall, social centres, primary school buildings, etc.;
- ★ can facilitate special programmes for women, rural youth, etc.;
- ★ can open up avenues for rural employment-based activities.

Forest Development Corporations

- ★ can take up forest based activities enhancing rural employment opportunities, such as rubber plantations and processing as in Tripura, Dioscorea plantations and processing as in Tripura, etc.;
- ★ can give technical advice to communities willing to undertake rubber and other forest based plantation activities;
- ★ can facilitate in procurement/marketing of forest products of the JFM communities.

Rehabilitation Plantation Corporations

- ★ can undertake rehabilitation based plantation activities for landless *jhumias* as in Tripura;
- ★ can provide extension and technical services in plantation based activities to improve rural employment opportunities, to rehabilitate landless tribals on such activities as rubber plantations, as in Tripura;
- ★ assist in marketing of products.

Rubber Board/Coffee Board/Tea Board/Species Board, etc.

- ★ can facilitate/provide subsidies for undertaking plantations of commodities under respective Board;
- ★ provide technical guidance, support in procurement and marketing;
- ★ provide extension services.

16.5.2 Non Land Use Based Line Departments

Tribal Welfare/SC/OBC Welfare Departments

- ★ extend programmes under the department in the areas of support in education, health care, old age pension, etc.;
- ★ explore any other activities for the welfare of tribals or SCs/OBCs within the mandates of respective departments.

Primitive Group Programmes (PGP)

- ★ extension of activities undertaken by PGP as in Tripura for the very backward tribal communities, e.g., the Rings;
- ★ explore availability of special programmes to support most backward tribal communities in JFM areas.

Local Administration Department / Local Self Government

- ★ explore possibility of proper land allotment to landless communities in JFM areas to ensure well defined areas for agriculture, etc.
- ★ restriction possible migration of other communities into the JFM areas;
- ★ assist in the strengthening of local self governing institutions for governance.

Panchayat

- ★ explore possible participation of local panchayat in the co-ordination, project formulation, site selection, project implementation, working out benefit sharing mechanism etc. of JFM activities;
- ★ explore possibility of allotment of funds through panchayat from local Block Development Office for rural development in JFM areas.

Autonomous District Council

- ★ Autonomous District Council can be approached for implementation of programmes under its various wings/departments in the JFM areas, if such areas fall within the Council;
- ★ assist in overall planning for development of JFM areas falling within the Council.

Health Department

- ★ Establish of primary health centres or health care facilities;
- ★ train locals, particularly the women in health care assistance, midwifery; basic nursing to attend emergencies, child care, hygiene, etc.;
- ★ periodic inspection of the JFM areas by health department teams for checks in health care requirements, outbreak of any epidemic, special nutrition needs, children and women health, vaccination or immunization, etc.;
- ★ special programme for eradication of malaria in malaria-prone areas; special programme for water-borne diseases, and for eradication of leprosy, if any and so on.

Education Department

- ★ provide primary education facilities;
- ★ strengthen existing education facilities in the JFM areas;
- ★ repair existing school building, if need be;
- ★ facilitate adult education opportunities and other non-formal education;
- ★ explore possibility of providing free text books, uniforms, exercise books, mid-day meals, tuition fees, scholarships, etc. to deserving/needy students;
- ★ appoint teachers from/within the communities, if available or nearest from the area to ensure regularity;
- ★ assist/facilitate for higher education of deserving/needy students both in technical and general education.

Transport Department

- ★ attempt to link the JFM area through proper transport facilities;
- ★ provide transport subsidies for marketing of products from JFM areas;
- ★ provide subsidies and encourage local entrepreneurs to operate transports in the area;
- ★ facilitate training opportunities for the deserving/capable local youths in motor mechanics, driving, etc.

Tourism Department

- ★ explore if the area can be brought as a tourist destination site due to unique natural landscape, or a part of the tourist trekking route, etc.
- ★ assist in training in developing basic skills as local tour guides and/or tour operators to local entrepreneurs, if any;
- ★ assist in developing and enhancing local skills in preparations of tourist-souvenirs with local materials;
- ★ assist in providing sale outlets for tourist souvenirs;
- ★ assist in construction of tourist rest house, and providing tourist amenities, etc.
- ★ explore if the area can be manipulated to convert into a tourist destination such as if a sufficiently large water body exists (e.g. artificial lake created by simple construction of dam) or picnic spot to attract people from urban areas;
- ★ explore development of skills to enhance tourism related local income.

Small Scale Industries (SSI)

- ★ explore for establishment/support for small scale industries (forest/agro-horticulture based) such as furniture making, food processing, handlooms and handicrafts, honey processing, etc.;
- ★ support/extend credit to micro enterprises in SSI units, and training for entrepreneurship development;
- ★ explore assistance in marketing and market development of products or finished goods from JFM areas;
- ★ provide extension services.

Khadi / Handloom and Handicrafts Board

- ★ facilitate entrepreneurship development or enhancement of existing local skills in handloom and handicrafts;
- ★ provide credits, subsidies, raw materials (such as good cotton and woolen yarns), etc.;
- ★ assist in designs and marketing/promoting of finished goods from JFM area;
- ★ facilitate availability or growth of local materials (such as canes and rattans, special species of bamboos, trees) for handicrafts;
- ★ facilitate interactions between different JFM communities and other specialised agencies for updating of skills in handlooms and handicrafts.

Field Publicity Department

- ★ existing policies of the government and programmes of different government departments/agencies can be made available to the communities in JFM area;
- ★ meet the entertainment/information needs of the people living in the JFM areas.

SC / ST Finance Corporation

- ★ can provide low interest credits/loans to SC/ST communities different activities such as purchase of transport, establishment of small business ventures, etc.

Banks / Insurance

- ★ provide easy access to credits/soft loans to people from the JFM areas for micro-enterprises, which may indirectly reduce pressure on forest;
- ★ explore possibilities of extending insurance in JFM areas such as crop insurance, livestock insurance, etc.

Co-operative Societies

- ★ assist the communities to organise themselves into co-operative societies;
- ★ provide basic training in operation of co-operative societies, book keeping, accounting, balance sheet preparation, profit sharing, etc.

Marketing Societies

- ★ assist to link up the communities in the network of marketing society's operation for easy marketing of the products/produce from JFM areas;
- ★ provide basic art and skill in marketing, if need be.

16.5.3 Local / Traditional Socio-Politico-Developmental Institutions

JFM goals may perhaps be easier to achieve if the traditional institutions are co-ordinated with all JFM programmes. Such institutions are in existence almost in all the traditional tribal societies of North-East India. In fact, in some places such traditional institutions cannot be by-passed in order to initiate any worthwhile programme, including JFM. Such institutions should be not only co-ordinated with but should be involved to the extend possible in motivating, designing, planning and execution of JFM projects. Some of the more pronounced such institutions are the Village Development Councils in Nagaland, the Young Mizo Association in Mizoram, and the Institutions of Syiems, Dolois and Nokmas in Meghalaya. Similar socio-traditional institutions also exist among the tribes in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Assam and Tripura.

16.5.4 Involvement of Charitable Non-Governmental Organisations

In some situations, it may also be worthwhile to explore the possibility of involving charitable non-governmental organisations, having local influence, in the programmes of JFM activities. Some such organisations may be the Dony-Polo in Arunachal Pradesh, Church-based organisations in the hill areas of Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Meghalaya, and even the Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, etc. which may be encouraged to adopt some of the JFM programmes falling within their mandates.

16.6 SUCCESS STORIES OF INTERDEPARTMENTAL CO-ORDINATION

16.6.1 Jhabua Forest Division of Madhya Pradesh

The officials of Jhabua forest division devised an innovative approach of inter-departmental co-ordination for successful mobilisation of the human resources and systematic planning for optimum utilisation of the existing and available resources in Jhabua forest division of Madhya Pradesh. The result of such effort proved to be an efficient way of forest protection and execution of rural development activities. An interdepartmental committee was set up by the Collector of Jhabua to ensure co-ordinated functioning between various government agencies for the eco-development activities in the district. The composition of the committee was as follows :

Chairman : Collector, Jhabua

Vice-Chairman : Divisional Forest Officer, Jhabua

Members : (1) Chief Medical Officer
(2) Divisional Manager, Forest Corporation
(3) Project Officer, DRDA/IIDA
(4) Deputy Director, Agriculture
(5) Deputy Director, Education
(6) Deputy Director, Animal Husbandry
(7) Executive Engineer, Public Health Engineering Department
(8) Executive Engineer, Water Resource
(9) Executive Engineer, M.P.E.B., Jhabua
(10) Deputy Director, Panchayat
(11) Executive Engineer, PWD
(12) District Women and Child Welfare Officer
(13) Executive Engineer, Rural Engineering Department
(14) General Manager, District Industrial Centre
(15) General Manager, Agro-Industrial Co-operation
(16) General Manager, District Co-operative Bank
(17) Assistant Registrar, Co-operative Societies
(18) Assistant Director, Fisheries
(19) Assistant Director, Horticulture
(20) Assistant Conservator of Forests
(To be nominated by the DFO, Jhabua) – Member-Secretary

The block level committees were chaired by revenue authorities (SDO level). The concerned Sub-Division level Forest Officer was the Vice-Chairman of the sub-division level committee. The Forest Range Officer was the Member-Secretary and all the field level functionaries of the above listed district level departments were its members.

For the first time such co-ordinated efforts have been made at the district and block level by the administration to help these grassroots level institutions to take part in collective resource management. This institutionalisation of government machinery helped in reducing compartmentalisation and isolated functioning among the government officials. The co-ordinated attempts with corresponding strengthening of leadership and motivation at the committee level laid foundation for efficient and integrated management of land based resources in Jhabua district.

The inter-departmental coordination committee carried out the following welfare activities :

- (i) Pasture Development
- (ii) Construction of stop dam, hand pump etc.
- (iii) Tree Growers Co-operatives
- (iv) Decentralised Nurseries
- (v) Fisheries Development
- (vi) Environmental Forestry
- (vii) Eco-development Centre
- (viii) Energy Saving Crematorium

16.6.2 Chakriya Vikas Pranali (after IGNOU 1998)

Chakriya Vikas Pranali (CVP) is a system of cyclic development. It was first conceived and developed on the hilltop of Sukhomajri in Haryana. The Sukhomajri system of growth has established that hills can be the source of all energy and water needs of the people living there.

Earthen tanks were built on the hilltop to harness rain water. And as tanks filled up, villagers began to sell water and the grass, which were growing on the hills. No barbed wire fencing was needed to stop the villagers from grazing. The villagers fed their cattle on cut grass. The people themselves protected their resources and assets, as a result, a sense of co-operation and togetherness was developed among the people. For example, in Tandwa Sakanpirhi, a village in Palamau, CVP experiments have been carried out in about 150 acres of land in the form of multi-layered plantation. The villagers have now taken their cattle out of the plantation area and are feeding them on cut grass. The village society charges money for grass and keeps record of the money generated.

Social fencing is, in a much more comprehensive form, called CVP and it was put to test in Palamau. CVP is a system of managing land, soil, forests and water in an integrated and cyclic manner. The system is called cyclic because income from one crop is reinvested into the next crop and so on. Thus a never ending cycle or *chakra* is created. For example, money is needed to grow papaya in the first cycle. Then, 30 per cent of the income from papaya will be reinvested to grow rice or wheat. Now villagers no longer need outside money. Income from rice or wheat is reinvested to grow bamboo in the third cycle and so on. Thus, CVP has the ability to generate enormous money, which are ploughed back again and again to enrich land and people in a cyclic order.

16.7 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND LINKAGES WITH SPECIALISED TRAINING INSTITUTES

It would be gradually realised that individual members of the VFPCs have the potential and requirement for the human resource development in several areas with demands of time and diversification of activities. Some of the areas needing specialised training would be management of micro-enterprises, management of micro-credits, minimum skill in cost and accounting, skills in value addition of products in JFM areas (high quality furniture, handlooms and handicrafts), skills in processed food technology, and so on. Therefore, JFM programmes need to be able to accommodate or absorb such future needs of the FPC members to develop the human resources by keeping linkages with specialised training institutes.

16.8 REFERENCES

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