

## PLANNED PARTICIPATION: A REVIEW OF PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN ONGOING PROJECTS

Various incentives are provided by projects to obtain the cooperation of local people in conservation and resource management efforts. In order to understand this planned participation, a review of eighteen projects has been conducted in five countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalaya Region: Bangladesh, China, India, Nepal and Pakistan. Eight of the projects are explicitly watershed management projects, while the other ten are related resource management projects. The latter have been included in the survey because major components of these projects fall within the range of what are usually considered watershed management activities.

As delineated by Cohen and Uphoff (1977), and re-examined by Butterfield in the context of Nepal (1978), participation can be understood in three dimensions: the kinds of participation (**what**); the type of people who participate (**who**); and the mechanisms and characteristics of participatory activities (**how**).

This framework has been adapted to derive three points of inquiry to survey how watershed management projects in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya Region have incorporated and encouraged people's participation in project activities. Three formats for matrices were developed (Appendix 1) and administered to project personnel on the following subjects:

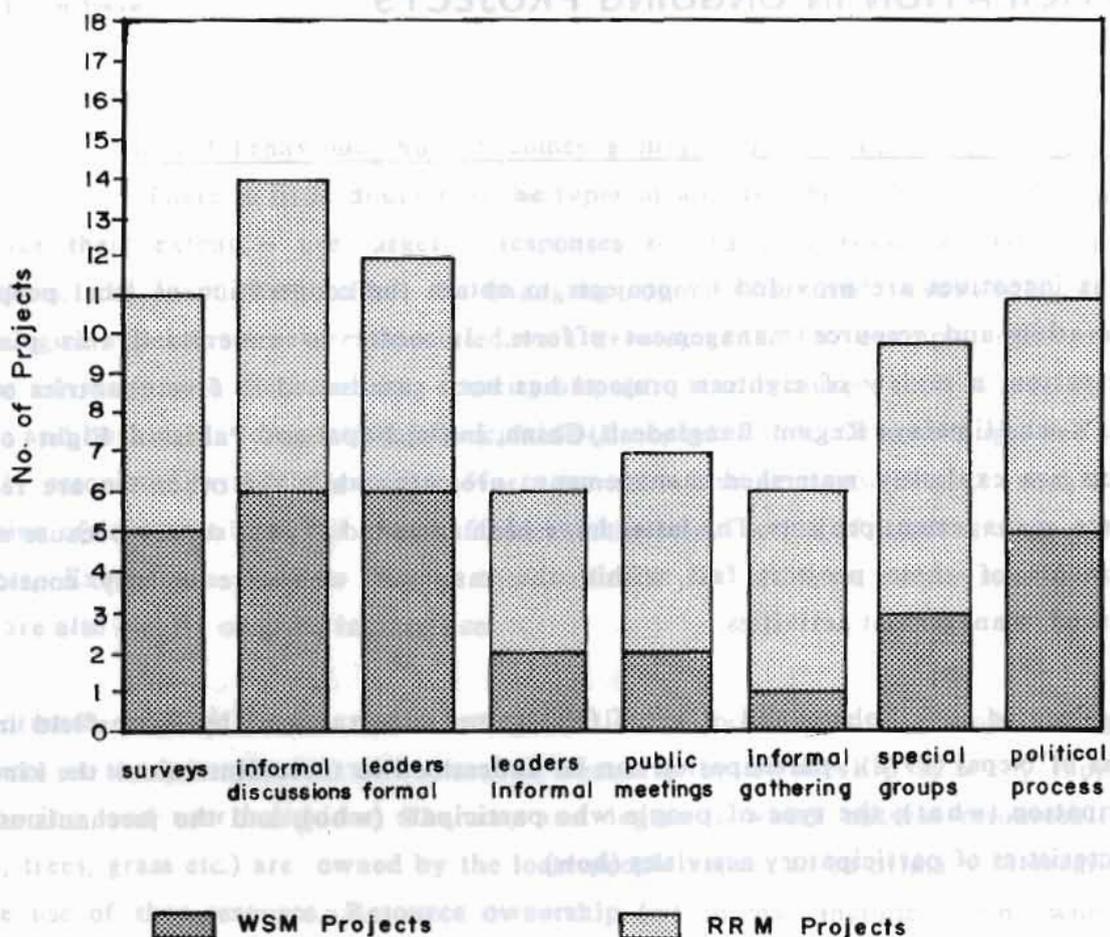
1. Forms of participation
2. Incentives used by projects (direct incentives)
3. Support activities undertaken (indirect incentives)

These data have been tabulated separately (Appendix 2) for watershed management (WSM) projects and related resource management (RRM) projects, in order to permit comparisons.

GRAPH I

## PLANNING & CONSULTATION

(VILLAGE LEVEL)



## FORMS OF PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION

The format for Matrix One applies the framework discussed above to the context of watershed management. Participation of people in project planning and decision making, including consultation and negotiation, is reviewed according to the level (national, regional, or village) at which it takes place.

Since this survey was limited to the project perspective, the question of who among the local people is actually participating has not been addressed. This important dimension has thus been noted within the format for Matrix One but only where there is direct evidence that participation is sought explicitly from underprivileged groups, such as the landless, or women, and special interest groups, such as shifting cultivators.

While this format provides a useful tool for surveying what kinds of participation are (and are not) being used for watershed management in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya Region, in addition to not identifying the various sets of actors involved, it also runs the risk of glossing over the details of the interactional process of participation. Given many of the prevailing norms of hierarchical and one-sided interpersonal interactions found in the Region, the mere incorporation of "informal discussions" or "public meetings" is no assurance that meaningful dialogue is taking place. This qualitative dimension of the participation process may, in fact, be more important for project success than the proliferation of avenues for interaction. However, quality and effectiveness can only be observed through in-depth participatory observational studies. For the purposes of this overview we are forced to rely on the hypothesis that the larger the number of mechanisms created for possible two-way communication, the more likely that some of them will succeed.

The format for Matrix One also allows for distinctions between participation in project implementation and ongoing management. Along the other axis, the resources on which these activities are undertaken are distinguished as state, group and private resources.

There does not appear to be much difference between WSM projects and RRM projects in participation during planning and consultations except in the use of informal discussions and public meetings which tend to be higher among RRM projects as shown by Graph 1. RRM projects also appear to focus more on special groups, such as the landless or women. What does not appear in this table is the fact that participation at the national level is restricted mainly to the political process largely through formal consultations with leaders.

Table 1.

## Projects Using Various Forms of Labour

<i>TYPE OF ACTIVITY</i>	<i>STATE RESOURCES</i>	<i>GROUP RESOURCES</i>	<i>INDIV. RESOURCES</i>
<b>Implementation Labour</b>			
Paid	8	6	4
Subsidised	0	8	9
Voluntary	1	6	10
<b>Maintenance Labour</b>			
Paid	9	7	3
Subsidised	1	6	5
Voluntary	0	6	15

The data on implementation and maintenance labour indicates that projects tend to use paid labour on state resources, and rely on a mix of voluntary and subsidised labour on group and private resources. In addition, WSM projects tend to use paid labour both on group and individual resources (Table 2).

Table 2. Projects Using Paid Labour

<i>TYPE OF ACTIVITY</i>	<i>WSM</i>	<i>RRM</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<b>No. of projects</b>	8	10	18
Implementation labour	8	8	16
Maintenance labour	7	6	13

There is, however, a significant difference in enforcement (Table 3). WSM projects rely more on fencing and forest guards while RRM projects rely more on local committees. There thus appears to be much less delegation of responsibility to the local community by WSM projects.

Table 3. Enforcement Methods Used by Projects

ENFORCEMENT	WSM	RRM	TOTAL
No. of projects	8	10	18
Local committees	3	8	11
Guards	6	3	9
Fencing	4	2	6

The following examples represent some of the forms of people's participation employed in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya, illustrating the distinctions which emerge from Matrix One:

- Results from the Matrices indicate that participation at the national level is largely limited to the decision making realm. Only in the case of the HMG/N-UNDP-FAO-WB Community Forestry Development Project did this consultation amount to a formal seminar with members of the *Rastriya Panchayat* (National Legislature) at the start of the project. All other consultations have been informal or limited to budget discussions.
- In the mid-eastern hills of Nepal, the Chautara Community Forestry Project (1973-78) actually initiated a process of consultation at the local and regional level for an afforestation programme designed to hand over management and control of the forests to the community. This was formerly inconceivable since all forest land was legally state property. By practically demonstrating that community involvement could work, the Chautara Project helped to prompt legislative change. The 1978 Forest Act now provides up to 100 hectares of *Panchayat Forest* and 500 hectares of *Panchayat Protected Forest*, which may be handed back to the *panchayat* by the Forest Department. The Nepal/Australia Forestry Project (NAFP) is currently carrying out an expanded version of the same social forestry approach in Sindhupalchok and Kavre-Palanchok districts, which includes the original Chautara area.
- The experiences of the Phewa Tal Watershed Management Project, the Indo-German Dhauladhar Project, the Community Forestry Development Project, the Nepal/Australia Forestry Project in Nepal, and the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme all point to the far greater effectiveness of community organisations at the *panchayat/village* level compared to the regional/district level.

## INCENTIVES USED TO SUPPORT WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The format of Matrix Two (Appendix 1) was designed to examine different incentives used by projects to support watershed management. The activities for which incentives are being provided have been classified in accordance with their significance for individual/household resources, group resources, and state/government resources. At the level of the individual or household, the activities listed pertain primarily to land use changes. At the group and state levels, activities include both land use changes, and engineering measures. Incentives have been categorised as cash incentives, incentives in kind, and incentives in the form of enhancement of resource security through policy measures or administrative action.

**Table 4. Forms of Incentives Used : Summarised Data**

ACTIVITY	WSM			RRM		
	c	k	s	c	k	s
<b>1. Individual Resources</b>						
1.1 Land use changes	6	8	2	2	10	5
1.2 Livestock management	2	8	0	1	5	1
<b>2. Group Resources</b>						
2.1 Land use changes	3	8	1	5	6	5
2.2 Engineering measures	2	7	0	3	6	0
<b>3. State Resources</b>						
3.1 Land use changes	2	5	1	3	5	2
3.2 Engineering measures	3	7	0	5	7	0

[c = cash : k = in kind : s = resource tenure security]

The summarised data from Matrix Two (Table 4) clearly shows that WSM projects rely on cash incentives to induce land use changes on individual resources more than RRM projects. Incentives in kind (in the form of free seedlings, free energy-saving stoves, subsidies for terrace improvement or horticulture, etc.) are used by both kinds of projects for a variety of watershed management activities. In other words, most projects have decided that it is necessary to provide sufficient incentives to farmers to adopt land use practices which are considered desirable by watershed managers both on private and on group or state resources.

The table also indicates that RRM projects rely on enhancement of resource security for all three classes of resources to a much greater degree than WSM projects do. The data may be misleading in that only those RRM projects which had an explicit component considered relevant for watershed management were included in the sample. If there is a bias in their selection, the fact remains that, with the exception of the XIJI Watershed Project in China, WSM projects are not using resource security as a possible incentive. The use of this incentive by RRM projects points to the possibility of WSM projects emulating them, provided adequate political will and policy support exist.

**Table 5. Incentives Used for Individual Households by WSM Projects**

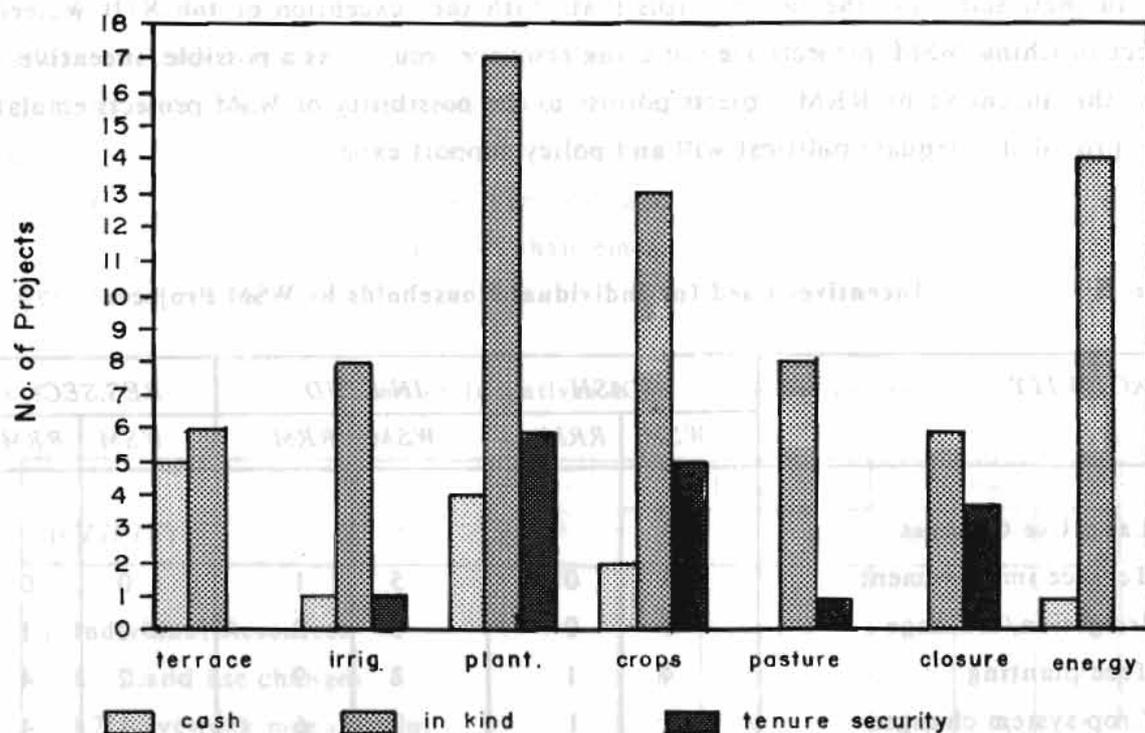
ACTIVITY	CASH		IN KIND		RES.SEC.	
	WSM	RRM	WSM	RRM	WSM	RRM
<b>Land Use Changes</b>						
Terrace improvement	5	0	5	1	0	0
Irrigation/drainage	1	0	5	3	0	1
Tree planting	4	1	8	9	2	4
Crop system changes	1	1	7	6	1	4
Pasture development	0	0	6	2	1	0
Land closure	0	0	4	2	0	4
Alternative energy	1	0	7	7	0	0
<b>Livestock Management</b>						
Improved breeds	1	1	5	3	0	1
Changing herd comp.	1	0	4	0	0	0
Stall feeding	0	0	3	1	0	0
Vet. training	0	0	7	3	0	0

Incentives are provided for a variety of watershed management activities on individual/household resources (Table 5). For all kinds of projects, incentives in kind seem to be preferred. This is particularly clear in the case of livestock management for which, with the exception of two WSM projects (Dhauladhar Project in India and Phewa Tal Watershed Project in Nepal), one RRM project (Kosi Hill Area Development Project in Nepal) which used cash incentives, and the RRM project in Lhasa which used resource security, only incentives in kind have been relied upon.

GRAPH 2

INCENTIVES ON INDIV. RESOURCES

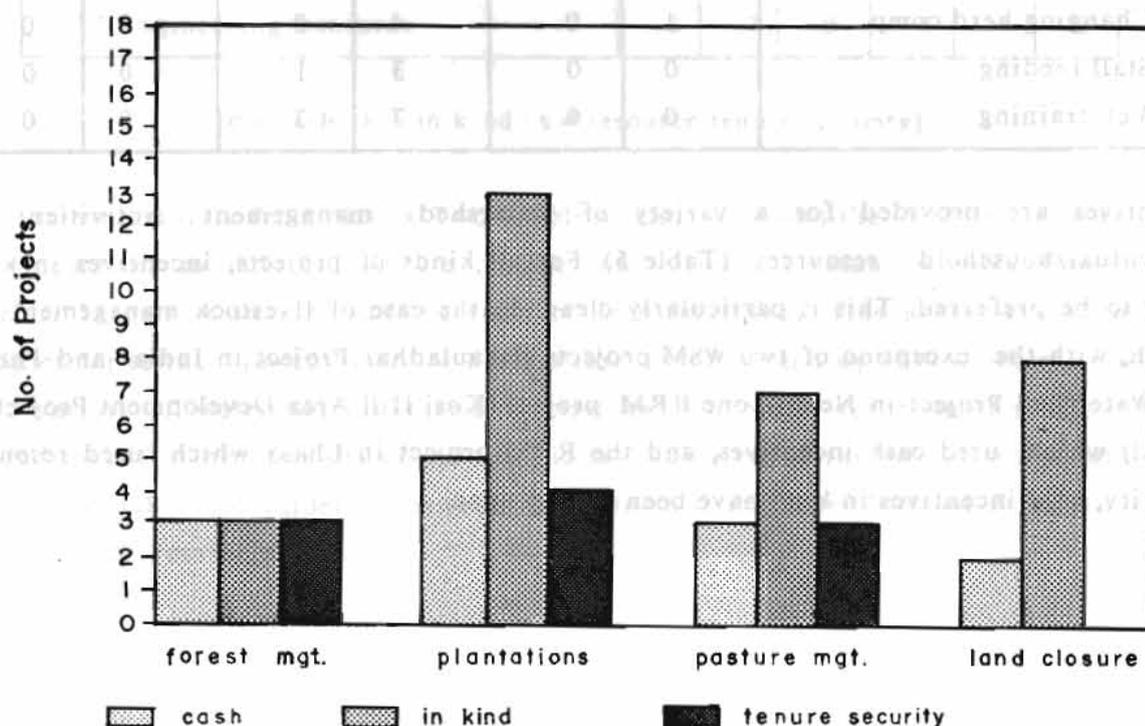
(LAND USE CHANGES)



GRAPH 3

INCENTIVES ON GROUP RESOURCES

(LAND USE CHANGES)



The emphasis in WSM projects has been, however, largely on inducing desired land use changes. Graph 2 clearly shows that on-farm planting of trees, appropriate technology for energy use, and cropping system changes have been highest on the priority list of watershed managers.

Even on group resources, tree plantation ranks highest on the list of activities for which incentives are provided by watershed managers (Graph 3). Surprisingly, natural forest management ranks lowest in terms of priorities. In fact, of all the WSM projects studied, only the Resource Conservation and Utilisation Project in Nepal is seeking to induce natural forest management on group resources. Two RRM projects in Nepal (Community Forestry Development Project and the Nepal/Australia Forestry Project) are also doing so.

Even on state resources, where the bulk of forests in countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalaya Region lie, natural forest management is unexpectedly low. It has been documented only for one WSM project (Dhauladhar Project in India) and one RRM project (Hill Tract Development Project in Bangladesh). Clearly, this is an area with considerable potential for watershed managers.

Table 6. Incentives Used for Group Resources

<i>INCENTIVE</i>	<i>WSM</i>	<i>RRM</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
No. of projects	8	10	18
Cash	4	5	9
In kind	8	7	15
Resource security	1	5	6

The provision of more acceptable forms of tenure by RRM projects as incentives becomes all the more evident at the level of group resources (Table 6). In contrast, resource security as an incentive is strikingly rare among WSM projects, both on group and state resources.

A number of projects in Nepal (for example, the Community Forestry Project) and Bangladesh (Hill Tracts Development Project) facilitate deregulation of government lands and the transfer of these lands to the local community. Both forest management and planned benefit sharing ensure active local participation. The key motive in this case is increased security of tenure which leads to more secure forms of benefit sharing and resource utilisation.

Data from a multi-sectorial development project in the Northern Areas of Pakistan provides a slightly different example. Although the project is not in a position to provide security of tenure, the project does provide appropriate inputs for the development of a productive physical infrastructure. Given the scarcity of resources in that remote rain shadow area, the infrastructure scheme identified and implemented by the Village Organisation serves to enhance the total amount of resources available to the village. In other words, it increases resource value and resource renewability, while enhancing resource user management.

Reallocation or distribution of the additional resources generated is left to the discretion of the Village Organisation, but an average of one-fifth of the additional land rendered cultivable is reserved for afforestation and for plantation of fruit trees, from which complete benefits will accrue to the villagers. In this case, the land use behaviour is changed indirectly. Whereas previously, almost all of the irrigable land was used for food production, with poplars, willows, Russian olive, and fruit trees being planted on the bunds and risers, now a part of the land developed is earmarked for woodlots which are intended to provide fuelwood, fodder, and fruit (AKRSP: 1984). Given the existing shortages of fuel and fodder in the area, farmers are beginning to accept the wisdom of increasing the amount of land actually allocated for such purposes.

These examples illustrate some of the interesting results which the matrices are beginning to reveal. By default, the same matrices also reveal what may be a fatal flaw in many projects: the divorce of the notion of participation from the role of the bureaucracy and project personnel. This does not mean to say that people representing these institutions do not participate in watershed management. The point is that frequently project personnel do not perceive their role as participatory, but take their role for granted. It is the local population which is considered recalcitrant and which is consequently induced or goaded along the 'desired track'.

This top-down approach can lead to 'holier-than-thou' attitudes which are counter-productive. Appropriate institutional support is vital for any sort of participatory development. The role of the institutional structure and the attitude of its functionaries are as vital to the outcome of the project as are those of the local community. What is required is a reorientation of the bureaucratic functionaries. The concept of "bureaucratic reorientation" emerged as an objective and a strategy in the Gal Oya Water Management Project in Sri Lanka (Uphoff 1985). The development of sympathetic attitudes and more supportive actions by relevant officials and technicians emerged as a *sine qua non* of participatory development.

A number of strategies can be suggested for supporting resource user management. The following list has been adapted from Esman and Uphoff (1984) and Uphoff (1985):

- Bottom-up local organisation and bureaucratic reorientation reinforce each other and should be undertaken concurrently. If participatory working relationships are not part of the implementors' work environment, it is unlikely that they will be effective with the farmers.
- Good action speaks louder than words; commencing implementation is more important than comprehensive surveys by organisers which may prove to be counter-productive in some circumstances, and the organisational effort should be linked to, and commensurate with, the nature of the resource management activity.
- Local resource users, particularly the non-elite, should be talked to individually before organising formal meetings.
- Farmer organisation is more likely to succeed if introduced by specially recruited and trained "catalysts" rather than by the regular government staff.
- There is need for continuing support by organisers through joint management arrangements even after initial local organisations have been established.

These strategies seem to be in consonance with the experience of watershed management reviewed in this study. However, they need to be tested in the field and refined through further research and documentation of actual project experiences.

#### **ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN TO SUPPORT PARTICIPATION**

The format for Matrix 3 (Appendix 1) was designed to help identify and analyse activities undertaken by projects to support participation. These activities include: policy measures; research, monitoring and evaluation; training and communication; and local organisational support. While the effectiveness of these activities depends on a variety of factors which frequently differ within the Hindu-Kush Himalaya Region, these measures constitute the principal tools for fostering local initiative and bringing the project and local people's perspectives closer together.

**Table 7. Policy Measures Supporting Participation**

<i>ACTIVITY</i>	<i>WSM</i>	<i>RRM</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
No. of projects	8	10	18
Resource tenure security	2	7	9
Market support	1	4	5
Off-farm employment	4	6	10
Land use regulations	3	3	6
Group organisation legislation	4	3	7

### **POLICY MEASURES**

Among the large range of relevant policy considerations, this study is confined to those detailed in Table 7. Tabulated data from Matrix Three reveals that WSM projects tend to be based more on policy measures dealing with land use regulations, off-farm employment, and group organisations than with resource tenure security or marketing support. On the other hand, the RRM projects in our sample tend to rely more on policies pertaining to resource tenure security, market support, and off-farm employment.

This difference between WSM and RRM projects, however, is also related to legislation within countries. Some countries have developed legislation and policies that directly encourage participation while others have not. For example, the allocation of public lands for resettlement in Bangladesh and India, the responsibility system in China, and *Panchayat forestry* in Nepal are institutional developments sanctioned by appropriate policy measures.

In Nepal, such policy support for participation has taken the form of *Panchayat Forestry* Legislation which legally allows for the transfer of forest land resources to local communities and attempts to increase the certainty of benefit receipt through the use of written agreements or management plans. More recent legislation has enabled these local communities to be defined by resource use boundaries rather than administrative units, further enabling the local communities to take greater responsibility for the resource.

In Bangladesh, current legislation places Unclassed State Forests (USF) and land termed *khas* under the disposition of the Deputy Commissioner who is authorised to allocate up to five acres of flat alluvial land or ten acres of hilly land to tribals and marginal farmers for land development on a rental basis or for permanent settlement. Current programmes of the Forest Department and the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board invoke this legislation to resettle shifting cultivators (*jhumias*) and to protect the land and make it productive. Traditional rights of the tribals are not disrupted. They retain the right to obtain firewood and timber for personal use from the USF but are increasingly being induced to protect forest plantations by being provided employment on daily wages and a share of the income from the plantations which they protect.

Similarly, in areas such as Gilgit and Hunza, traditional rights over upland ranges have been respected in recent programmes. Furthermore, the Gilgit project has established a policy of working only under written contracts with newly formed Village Organisations, which are required to represent all households in the community. As formerly common lands with low productivity have been upgraded, these policy measures have allowed local people to take the initiatives necessary to ensure their productive and equitable use.

These brief examples are from data collected for Matrix Three which illustrates the kind of policy measures encouraging participation: higher resource security through transfer of tenure rights to local communities, the establishment of legal user groups, and the use of written contractual agreements. Further research may identify other measures which increase the security and value of investments on private and leased lands through legislation, marketing arrangements, and implementation policies.

## RESEARCH

The extent to which research supports greater people's participation depends on its immediate applicability and dissemination. For these reasons, we find that on-farm trials and experimental plots on community lands, which start from a farming systems approach, appear to have the greatest short-term impact. Not only does this kind of research ensure its applicability to present land use systems, but it serves as a demonstration of what changes and adaptations can be easily carried out under existing conditions.

**Table 8. Research and Evaluation**

<i>ACTIVITY</i>	<i>WSM</i>	<i>RRM</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<b>No. of projects</b>	8	10	18
<b>Research</b>			
On-farm trials	7	5	12
Community resource trials	6	6	12
Sub-total field trials	8	7	15
Evaluation meetings	6	7	13

All WSM projects and most RRM projects examined are carrying out field trials (Table 8). Examples of such on-farm trials of fodder and fruit trees can be found in the Nepal/Australia Forestry Project (NAFP) in Nepal. Field trials on community forest lands can be found in a number of watershed and forestry projects in the Region, although many projects have reduced the participatory impact of such trials by conducting them with little or no local involvement. Participatory research would appear to be an area with considerable potential for further use within the Region.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation can serve as one of the most effective measures for increasing participation through bringing together the perspectives of both the local people and project personnel. By providing regular feedback on people's responses to watershed policies and programmes, monitoring and evaluation allows project personnel to adjust their understanding and programmes to the actual motivations and problems faced by upland resource users. The use of participatory monitoring and evaluation methods in which local people themselves evaluate policies and activities can further enhance this process.

Most projects in the Region use some form of household survey and informal interviewing of local inhabitants. The frequency of the surveys (Appendix 2), however, indicates that they seldom form part of a complete monitoring and evaluation system.

The Community Forestry Project has developed a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system which relies on annual surveys, special studies, and annual district meetings to identify problems and successes. NAFP in Nepal and AKRSP in Pakistan have instituted local participation in regular evaluation meetings. Some projects have extensive systems for monitoring physical processes in the watersheds; however, there is little evidence of monitoring of land users' own trends and project staff performance, which would appear to be important to increasing effective participation.

## TRAINING

Training is currently conducted for project staff in most of the projects reviewed (Graph 4). Some, such as the FAO watershed projects in Nepal and Pakistan, have devoted considerable resources to provide training to their own staff. Projects such as the Dhauladhar Project in India, and NAFP and Community Forestry in Nepal, also have extensive training programmes for locally recruited paraprofessionals. Community Forestry also provides reorientation training to officers in communication and participation methods.

Given the importance of training in fostering participation, lack of evidence of extensive community leader training programmes is a matter of concern. While some projects sponsor study tours for local *panchayat* leaders, considerably greater attention could be devoted to this method for facilitating local responsibility for resource management. In addition to training in watershed management technologies, this may require training in the skills required to run local organisations, such as accounting and management.

## COMMUNICATION

Underlying all of our analyses of participation is the conviction that adequate two-way communication is essential to effectively use participation on the mass scale necessary to address the problems in the Region.

National, bilateral and multilateral projects in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya Region are relying on a large number of media (Table 9) for communication to the people. These include: radio, films, filmstrips, slides, newsletters, flip charts, posters, calendars, stickers, buttons, brochures, T-shirts, and signboards. Face-to-face extension, which allows for the possibility of two-way communication, is also being used in most of the countries analysed.

GRAPH 4

TRAINING

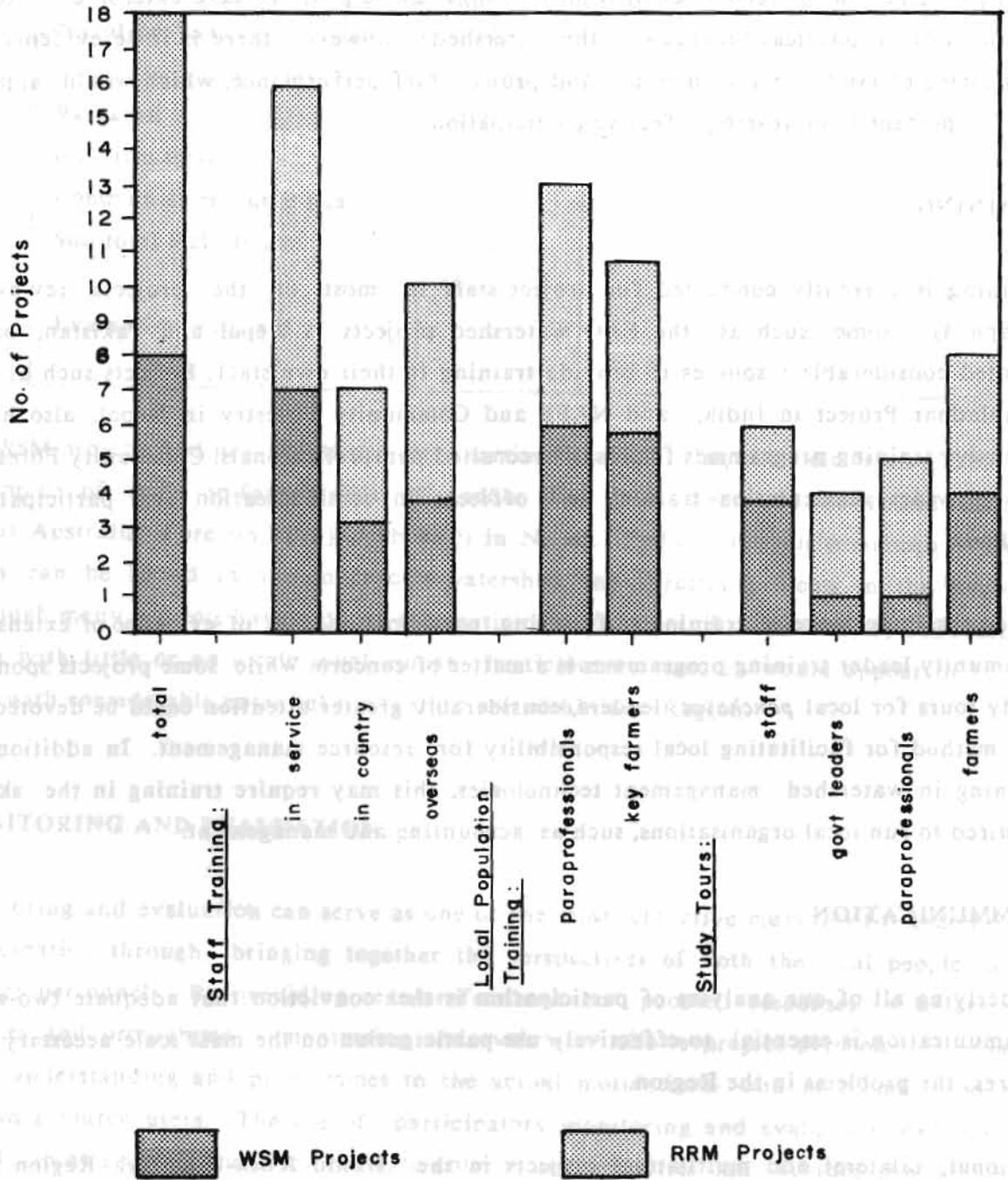


TABLE 9.

## COMMUNICATION

<i>ACTIVITY</i>	<i>WSM</i>	<i>RRM</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
<b>No. of projects</b>	8	10	18
<b>Media Use</b>			
Printed	2	7	9
Audio-visual	6	7	13
Other	2	1	3
Sub-total media use	6	7	13
<b>Individual Extension</b>			
Community leaders	1	8	9
Paraprofessionals	6	7	13
Farmers	5	4	9
Local govt. reps.	7	8	15
Sub-total indiv. ext.	8	10	18
<b>Group Extension</b>			
User groups	2	3	5
Schools	2	2	4
Women	3	1	4
Ex-servicemen	2	2	4
Sub-total group ext.	5	7	12

While identifying the types and means of communication continues to be an important task, need to focus more attention on the quality and effectiveness of the communication techniques used is obvious. How many of the media have been pre-tested with end-user audiences for intelligibility? How much and what kind of training has been imparted to extension agents? Are the extension agents the right people for the kind of participatory communication desired? What mechanisms are there for communication to flow from the people to the project? These are among the questions which will require additional attention in the future if efficient participation is to be encouraged.

## LOCAL ORGANISATION

Local organisations -- whether existing or created -- are being used by a number of watershed projects to foster participation, although the extent of their responsibility varies considerably. This subject has not been dealt with separately because it is too complex to be condensed into a generalised matrix, but it has been an area of concern throughout this study. As discussed earlier (Table 3), this appears to be an area to which WSM projects need to pay more attention. RRM projects seem to have a better record in relying on local organisations for enforcement of project activities.

The importance of non-governmental organisations and group mobilisation that extends beyond just the local resource users needs to be pointed out. Given the magnitude of the problem, all available resources for supporting mass action by groups outside of government need to be mobilised. By devolving responsibility and authority from government to these groups and providing them with increased capacity and resources, it may be possible to expand the scope of watershed activities beyond that of which governments are capable. Such an initiative has been taken in India by involving non-governmental organisations and organising youth groups through eco-development camps and eco-development task forces (Dewan and Sharma 1985).

In sum, this brief review demonstrates that a wide variety of project-sponsored measures to encourage participation are being undertaken in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya Region. The diversity of approaches undertaken likely reflect both the diversity of social, political and environmental conditions found within the Region, as well as the diversity of opinions regarding the most effective means for supporting participation. It is evident that a number of promising strategies are currently being employed. However, it is not known which of these are most effective, under what conditions, and to what extent they are an efficient measure for facilitating people's own implementation of desired watershed actions. In addition, support for participation varies greatly between watershed management projects and other related resource management projects. There is a demonstrable need for identifying the most effective strategies and promoting the opportunity and ability of projects to learn from each other.