

**Name of the activity, component or project**

Watershed Development in India

**Name of the country, and the date of the intervention**

India – Karnataka (1985 – on-going)

**A brief description of the challenge you faced,**

Many semi-arid parts of India had not benefited from the green revolution and faced increasing poverty and degradation of natural resources and migration in the early 1980ties. These areas coincide with rainfed smallholder farming systems which produce over half of Indias food crops.

**How you approached it**

The State Government of Karnataka together with national NGO's inspired and supported by Switzerland pioneered participatory watershed development programs based on the strengthening of village organizations and their capacity to manage its natural resources capital and technical expertise to improve water management.

**The development impact, and Name and email address of a contact person for further information**

Together with other agencies and state officials SDC was instrumental for the watershed approach being adopted by the Indian government as a key element for development of semi-arid lands. Today, large parts of the Indian rural areas are covered by this strategy and massive scaling up has meanwhile taken place. The impact is well documented, among others by a landmark report prepared by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Environment and Development (CISED, 2004). Poor people have largely benefited from watershed management but the report also

It is important to acknowledge the contributions of many agencies and especially Indian authorities and communities to the success of the watershed approach. It is an example of local institutions being able to pick-up an approach initially followed by NGO's and international cooperation and bring it to an important scale. The presence of strong national institutions is a prerequisite for this.

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