



A Report on

# **Assessment of the Performance of VSSs in CPF Project Area**

November - 2008

K. Suresh  
D. Suryakumari



Centre for People's Forestry

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## About us

Centre for People's Forestry(CPF) is a National level Professional NGO, registered as a public trust in 2002, working for the forest dependent and dwelling communities. It is a non-profit, non-political and secular organisation working for the development of people in India, especially the deprived and marginalised sections irrespective of religion, race, caste or creed.

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Contact : **Centre for People's Forestry**  
12-13-483/39, Street No.14, Lane 6  
Nagarjunanagar Colony, Tarnaka  
Secunderabad - 500017, A.P., India  
Tel/Fax: +91 - 40 27154484  
Website: [www.cpf.in](http://www.cpf.in)

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## 1. Introduction

Centre for People's Forestry<sup>1</sup>, in partnership with the local NGOs, has worked with focused efforts towards strengthening the VSSs through various capacity building measures, during the period from April 2000 to March 2006.

During the period between 2000 and 2003, representatives (two women and one man) of 600 VSSs belonging to 32 forest ranges were imparted trainings in Conflict resolution, Gender, Microplan preparation, Forest inventory and management including protection etc along with regular follow up support and guidance by the local partner NGOs to help the communities in putting the learning's to practice.

Around the same time, the VSS networks were formed at local (range) level and by 2002, a State level Vanasamakhya (federation of the local networks) has been formed. This body was registered in July 2003. During the period from 2003 to 2006, more focus was laid on building the local networks of VSSs rather than the individual VSSs. Since April 2006, the inputs of CPF are mostly to the State Vanasamakhya and through them to the local Vanasamakhyas.

The network programme with NGOs in Andhra Pradesh being supported by OxfamNovib since 2003 (to CPF), through which the finances required for the above mentioned capacity building were met has been in the concluding mode (since September 2007). As such it is felt important to assess the performance of VSSs with which CPF had association so that the future capacity building and/or other needs in order to make the community networks (State and local Vanasamakhyas) able to sustain the programme with out much dependence on CPF and /or Forest Department.

## 2. Objectives

This study has been taken up with the following objectives:

- A. To find the usefulness of the scoring system developed for the participatory assessment of the performance of VSSs by representatives of Vanasamakhya
- b. To understand the current status of over all performance(VSS performance index)of the selected sample of VSSs
- c. To learn the performance of the sample VSSs in different aspects i.e, social, institutional, resource and livelihoods etc

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<sup>1</sup>CPF or Centre for People's Forestry is a National level Professional NGO, registered as a public trust in 2002, working for the forest dependent and dwelling communities. It functioned as an independent wing with in the parent organisation Centre for World Solidarity (CWS) since 1996 and closely associated with the Joint Forest Management programme in the State of Andhra Pradesh. CPF played an important role in the formulation of the CFM GO and the Project Implementation Plan of the World Bank supported APCFM project and has been contributing to the strengthening of the implementation of the same since 2002.



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**040-27154484**