



## **Common property resources: A major source of income to weaker sections**

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### **Abstract**

Common Property Resources (CPR) is accessible to while village community and no individual has exclusive property rights. They play a pivotal role in increasing income, generating employment opportunities and increases household assets. Particularly after introduction of New Economic Policy, the status and the use of Common Property Resources are gained further important from the point of view of the village economy in general and poor in particular. In fact, CPR in a rural economy acts as a harbinger of prosperity. Hence, distribution and utilization of common property resources in rural areas of our country have been receiving considerable attention by policy markers, government officials and researchers. Common property resources has become a major source of income for weaker sections belonging scheduled caste communities in the study areas of Adilabad district of Telangana state and Kurnool and Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh State. The intra area disparity is visible in Telanagana and Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh state. Therefore, in order to improve their income position, almost all the marginal and small farmers of these two areas are excessively depending upon common property resources. These resources have become becon of hopes to them. Particularly for poor, down trodden, for under privileged farmers belonging to scheduled caste communities use of common property Resources have become a ray of hopes and resources should be protected from the exploitation of rich farmers and the impact of globalization, privatization and liberalization should not destroy Common Property Resources.

**Keywords:** common property resources, weaker sections, rural economy

### **Introduction**

Common Property Resources (CPR) is accessible to while village community and no individual has exclusive property rights. They play a pivotal role in increasing income, generating employment opportunities and increases household assets. Particularly after introduction of New Economic Policy, the status and the use of Common Property Resources are gained further important from the point of view of the village economy in general and poor in particular. Infact, CPR in a rural economy acts as a harbinger of prosperity. Hence, distribution and utilization of common property resources in rural areas of our country have been receiving considerable attention by policy markers, government officials and researchers. The nature, extent and use of these common property resources differ from village to village. The village common properties are those which from times immemorial served the common purposes for the people in a village. These common properties refer to those which are kept to serve the common use or purpose like fairs and festivals, shandies, cremation, boundaries to villages and ayacut lands (Puntalu), threshing pads, shelters to the pilgrims and any other known or unknown common purpose.

In the light of this description, some of the common property resources in a village are grazing and uncultivable land, irrigation tanks, other tanks, revenue poram bokes, burial grounds, temple lands and choultries. These properties can also be classified as properties within the village and those outside the village but with in the revenue limits of the village.

Even though these resources make important contribution to the village economy, their role has not been recognized adequately.

### **Significance of the Study**

Majority of the weaker sections in rural areas are depending on CPRs for subsistence requirements. These include grazing for their animals, collection of minor forest produce (MFP), such as fruits, edible roots, tubers, leaves and medicinal plants, firewood, flowers and nuts for the preparation of beverages etc. Estimates reveal that about 60 per cent of the production is consumed by these communities either as a main food or as a supplementary source and it constitutes about 10 to 40 per cent of the total household earnings. For instance, in Andhra Pradesh it is estimated that 58 per cent of mohwa flowers and seeds and 17 per cent of tamarind fruits collected by thetribals are used for self-consumption. And in Baster District of Madhya Pradesh, tribals not only use the forests to comfort themselves, they forage for leaves to make plates and cups, collect a special type of wood for indigenous tooth-brushes and gather MFP such as tamarind, saal seeds and tendu leaves for purposes such as making local cigarettes. Viewed this way, the utility and relevance of CPRs is undiminished in the dry regions of India at their present stage of development. Hence an attempt has been made in this study to find out the socio economic background of the respondents who are using common property resources available in the selected villages of Adilabad and Khammam districts of

newly formed Telangana state and two regions of Andhra Pradesh. These two districts possessed large common property resources. Infact weaker section such as small and marginal farmers who constitute a larger percentage in the total rural population in these two districts are depending mostly on common property resources available in the villages.

#### Main Objectives of the Study are as Follows

- To find out the extent of use of CPR by the weaker sections, specially lower class sections.
- To assess the impact of CPR on the changing income position of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes respondents.
- To suggest suitable measures for the effective use of CPR for improving the living conditions of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people.

#### Hypothesis Framed for the Study

To test the above objectives, few hypotheses have been formulated and they are:

- Availability of CPR differs from village to village in the States of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.
- Proper utilization of CPR will fetch additional income to the poor scheduled caste and scheduled tribes communities.

- Most of the SC/STs are solely depending upon CPR for their livelihood.

#### Research Methodology

The study has been conducted in few selected areas of Adilabad (Telangana State), Krishna district and Kurnool district, Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh where CPR are found to be in large areas. These areas have been selected purposively to know the impact of CPR on living conditions of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities.

The study covered both primary and secondary sources. A detailed "Interview Schedule" had been prepared to get the information on the extent of use of CPR by the respondents. The schedule covered various facets of CPR and what extent it is helping the poorest among the poor. The primary data covered not only socio-economic profile of the respondents but also their land holding pattern, crops raised, farm income, subsidiary occupation and types of CPR using to etc. Eighty respondents from each area were selected using Purposely Sampling Method and thus altogether 240 respondents were interviewed in the study areas of both the states. Data for secondary sources were gathered from official records ranging from Village Official Records to All India Reports. The information from secondary sources was incorporated at various places of the report.

**Table 1:** Income Collected from the Fodder C.P.R.

District	Status	Upto200	Upto300	Upto400	Upto500	Total
Adilabad	MF	6400 (35.96)	2700 (15.16)	4200 (23.60)	4500 (25.28)	17800 (100.00)
	SF	--	2500 (43.86)	2200 38.60	1000 (17.54)	5700 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	1800 (78.26)	500 (21.74)	2300 (100.00)
Total		6400 (24.80)	5200 (20.15)	8200 (31.79)	6000 (23.25)	25800 (100.00)
Krishna	MF	4800 (30.00)	3600 (22.50)	3600 (22.50)	4000 (25.00)	16000 (100.00)
	SF	--	1500 (28.85)	2200 (42.30)	1500 (28.85)	5200 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	--	--	--
Total		4800 (22.64)	5100 (24.05)	5800 (27.35)	5500 (25.95)	21200 (100.00)
Kurnool	MF	7200 (35.12)	4200 (20.48)	5600 (27.31)	3500 (17.07)	20500 (100.00)
	SF	--	1500 (35.72)	1200 (28.58)	1500 (35.72)	4200 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	1500 (100.00)	--	1500 (100.00)
Total		7200 (27.48)	5700 (21.76)	8300 (31.67)	5000 (19.08)	26200 (100.00)

Source: Field Data.

Parenthesis indicate the percentage

#### Findings

Fodder is an important resources in rural areas and most of the weaker sections derive income by collecting and selling the fodder, particularly poor rural people belonging to scheduled caste communities mostly depend upon fodder to eke out their living. Hence, we have collected the data i.e. how much income farmers are selling in a month through setting fodder. We have divided the income zone, into four i.e. up to Rs. 200, up to 300, up to 400 and Rs. 500 in that order.

Table (1) reflects that in Adilabad district of Telangana state, marginal farmers altogether received an amount of Rs. 17800, whereas the same category of farmers of Kurnool received to the extent of Rs. 20500. It means marginal farmers of the selected areas of Kurnool district are slightly better. However in the case of Krishna district, marginal farmers could get only Rs. 16000. Income wise analysis has revealed that majority of the marginal farmers i.e. more than 50 percent received

income only to the extent of Rs. 300 per month. Whereas their percentage in Andhra and Rayalaseema regions their percentage was ranging between 44 to 46 per cent. It means most of the poorest farmers of Adilabad district of Telangana state is selling very meager amount by selling fodder collected by marginal farmers in Telangana state is inferior in nature.

The situation of small farmers category is almost similar to that marginal farmers. In other words, nearly 44 per cent small farmers in Adilabad district were selling only Rs. 3000 per month, whereas their proportion in Krishna district is nearly 29 per cent and Kurnool district is 36 per cent. In both the situations, the income received by selling fodder is very less in Adilabad district of Telangana state compare to that of Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema.

One finding of the study is that none of the big farmers either they are from Telangana or Andhra or Rayalaseema collected the fodder from their villages to get some additional income. It

means fodder is adding some additional income to the weakest section of the rural folk who are both socially and

economically down trodden.

**Table 2:** Value of the Grass Used In a Week C.P.R.

District	Status	Upto 200	Upto 300	Upto 400	Upto 500	Total
Adilabad	MF	6200 (38.50)	3600 (22.36)	2800 (17.39)	3500 (21.74)	16100 (100.00)
	SF	1000 (13.15)	1200 (15.79)	2400 (31.58)	3000 (39.47)	7600 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	--	--	--
Total		7200 (30.37)	4800 (20.25)	5200 (21.95)	6500 (27.42)	23700 (100.00)
Krishna	MF	3400 (35.79)	1800 (18.95)	2800 (29.47)	1500 (15.79)	9500 (100.00)
	SF	--	3000 (46.15)	1000 (15.38)	2500 (38.46)	6500 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	--	--	--
Total		3400 (21.25)	4800 (30.00)	3800 (23.75)	4000 (25.00)	16000 (100.00)
Kurnool	MF	7600 (38.98)	4500 (23.07)	4400 (22.57)	3000 (15.38)	19500 (100.00)
	SF	--	1200 (27.91)	1600 (37.20)	1500 (34.89)	4300 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	--	--	--
Total		7600 (31.94)	5700 (23.95)	6000 (25.21)	4500 (18.90)	23800 (100.00)

**Source:** Field Data.

Parenthesis indicate the percentage

Table (2) reflects the value of the grass used in a week by the respondents in the selected areas of Adilabad district of Telangana State and Krishna and Kurnool of Andhra Pradesh State. It is observed that in all the villages, put together total value of the grass collected from the areas was found to be Rs. 23800 like fodder, even in the collection of grass also none of the big farmers were involved. This we could see in all the study areas whether they belong to Andhra or Telangana or Rayalaseema Region. Further reflects that in Adilabad district of Telangana state more 60 percent marginal farmers could

earn upto Rs. 300, whereas in Kurnool their percentage was more than 61 per cent. As far as in Andhra region covering instituting spread in Krishna district is concerned even the weak farmers lands fertile and covering natural grass. As a result we could see more than 61 per cent small farmers could get more than Rs. 300. It means most of the small farmers living in the fertile areas of Andhra are selling good income from their natural grass whereas in the dry regions of Telangana and Rayalaseema region most of the farmers are not selling sufficient income.

**Table 3:** Income from Bamboo Cutting In C.P.R.

District	Status	Upto 200	Upto 300	Upto 400	Upto 500	Total
Adilabad	MF	3200 (15.54)	8700 (42.23)	5200 (25.24)	3500 (16.99)	20600 (100.00)
	SF	1400 (15.56)	--	5600 (62.22)	2000 (22.22)	9000 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	2000 (40.00)	3000 (60.00)	5000 (100.00)
Total		4600 (13.29)	8700 (25.14)	12800 (37.00)	8500 (24.56)	34600 (100.00)
Krishna	MF	2800 (16.37)	7500 (43.86)	4800 (28.07)	2000 (11.70)	17100 (100.00)
	SF	--	2100 (24.41)	4000 (46.52)	2500 (29.06)	8600 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	--	--	--
Total		2800 (10.90)	9600 (37.35)	8800 (34.24)	4500 (17.50)	25700 (100.00)
Kurnool	MF	2400 (11.42)	9600 (45.72)	6000 (28.58)	3000 (14.28)	21000 (100.00)
	SF	--	2100 (39.63)	3200 (60.37)	--	5300 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	2000 (57.14)	1500 (42.86)	3500 (100.00)
Total		2400 (08.05)	11700 (39.26)	11200 (37.59)	4500 (15.10)	29800 (100.00)

**Source:** Field Data.

Parenthesis indicate the percentage

Apart from fodder and gross income from bamboo cultivating is another important source of income to the respondents. Most of the weaker farmers either they belong to marginal or small in all the study areas are selling income from bamboo cutting.

Table (3) shows that in the entire Kurnool districts, an amount of Rs. 29800 reviewed by the respondents through bamboo cutting. Out of this more than 76 per cent are earning upto Rs. 400. Only 15 per cent respondents of the entire sample are earning more than Rs. 500. Area wise separately also reflects that in Adilabad district, we could see an amount of Rs. 34600 was earned by all the respondents through bamboo cutting. Out of this marginal farmers income was more i.e. Rs. 20600

followed by small farmers Rs. 9000 and surprisingly big farmers earned to the extent of Rs. 5000.

Further, it is observed that out of the total income of the marginal farmers, more than 57 percent earned upto Rs. 300 another 25 per cent upto Rs. 400 and nearly 17 per cent derived benefits of Rs. 500. Thus, income from bamboo cutting is one of the major sources of CPR to weaker sections of Adilabad district of Telangana State. Even in Kurnool region of Andhra Pradesh state, marginal farmers earned Rs. 21000 out of this more than 56 per cent earned upto 300 rupees. The situation in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh state, most of the marginal farmers who belong to scheduled caste communities earning Rs. 400 through bamboo cutting.

Thus the data collected from the field investigation has shown that bamboo cutting is one of the major sources of income to

weak farmers irrespective of the area they belong.

**Table 4: Income Earned From Fuelwood CPR**

District	Status	Upto 200	Upto 300	Upto 400	Upto 500	Total
Adilabad	MF	6000 (34.69)	3600 (20.80)	4200 (24.27)	3500 (20.23)	17300 (100.00)
	SF	--	1500 (39.47)	800 (21.05)	1500 (39.47)	3800 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	--	--	--
Total		6000 (28.43)	5100 (24.17)	5000 (23.70)	5000 (23.70)	21100 (100.00)
Krishna	MF	--	4200 (40.00)	3600 (34.28)	2700 (25.72)	10500 (100.00)
	SF	--	2100 (51.21)	2000 (48.79)	--	3100 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	--	--	--
Total			6300 (43.15)	5600 (38.35)	2700 (18.49)	14600 (100.00)
Kurnool	MF	7400 (38.95)	2800	4800 (25.26)	4000 (21.05)	19000 (100.00)
	SF	--	2300	1500 (20.55)	3500 (47.95)	7300 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	--	--	--
Total		7400 (28.13)	5100 (19.39)	6300 (23.96)	7500 (28.51)	26300 (100.00)

**Source:** Field Data.

Parenthesis indicate the percentage

Similar attempt was made in our investigation to find out the total income received by selling fuel wood in the villages. Infact in forest based areas, most of the farmers belonging to weaker sections get fuel wood from forests illegally and major share of it sell it in the villages market to get some additional income. It has become their main source of income also. Hence, data on this aspect was collected through an appropriate interview scheduled and presented in the table (4). Interestingly a large number of marginal and small farmers of Kurnool region earned more income that that of Adilabad district of Telangana by selling fuel wood. Both these two categories earned an income to the extent of Rs. 26300 which is higher than that of 5200 of Adilabad and Rs. 11700 of

Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. None of the big farmers in the entire study areas used fuel wood from the forests. Further it is observed that nearly 39 per cent marginal farmers in Kurnool district and 35 per cent in Adilabad district earned only Rs. 200 by selling fuel wood. On the other nearly 26 per cent marginal farmers in Krishna district received an amount of Rs. 500. The situation of Adilabad and Kurnool is that small farmers of these two districts i.e. nearly 48 per cent in Kurnool and 39 per cent in Adilabad district earned income upto the extent of Rs. 500.

Thus the data on the income from fuel wood is more visible in the small farmers category that that of marginal farmers. This observation is seen in all the three study areas.

**Table 5: Value of the Beedi-Leaf Collection C.P.R**

District	Status	Upto 200	Upto 300	Upto 400	Upto 500	Total
Adilabad	MF	6400 (34.60)	3400 (18.37)	5200 (28.10)	3500 (18.92)	18500 (100.00)
	SF	--	1500 (34.48)	1250 (28.74)	1600 (36.79)	4350 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	2000 (40.00)	3000 (60.00)	5000 (100.00)
Total		6400 (22.98)	4900 (17.60)	8450 (30.34)	8100 (29.08)	27850 (100.00)
Krishna	MF	3600 (25.53)	2900 (20.57)	3600 (25.53)	4000 (28.36)	14100 (100.00)
	SF	2000 (21.05)	3300 (34.74)	1700 (17.90)	2500 (26.31)	9500 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	--	--	--
Total		5600 (23.73)	6200 (26.27)	5300 (22.45)	6500 (27.54)	23600 (100.00)
Kurnool	MF	7800 (38.04)	4500 (21.96)	6000 (29.26)	2200 (10.74)	20500 (100.00)
	SF	--	1200 (23.07)	2500 (48.07)	1500 (28.85)	5200 (100.00)
	BF	--	1500 (42.86)	2000 (57.14)	--	3500 (100.00)
Total		7800 (26.71)	7200 (24.66)	10500 (35.95)	3700 (12.67)	29200 (100.00)

**Source:** Field Data.

Parenthesis indicate the percentage

Table (5) throws light on the income earned by the respondents by engaging in beedi leaf collection. It is widely prevalent in the forest based areas. Most of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes and other poor people are usually engaged themselves in the beedi leaf collection to get some income to maintain their family expenditure. The primary data reveals that an income of Rs. 29200 is found in Kurnool district followed by Rs. 27,85 in Adilabad and Rs. 23600 in Krishna district. It means an extra income Rs. 1350 is visible

in Kurnool district compared to that of Adilabad district. The table also depicts that 38 per cent marginal farmers of Kurnool district and 35 per cent of Adilabad district earned only Rs. 200 by beedi leaf collection.

On the other nearly 29 per cent small farmers in Kurnool and Krishna district of Andhra and 37 per cent in Adilabad district earned income upto Rs. 500. Thus, the analysis on income position through beedi leaf collection has shown the similar trend of other resources pooled in CPR list. It means

scheduled caste respondents hailing from small farmers are benefiting more than that of marginal farmers.

**Table 6:** income earned from C.P.R. Per year

District	Status	Fodder	Grass	Road Metals	Fuel Wood	Tamarind	Beedi Leafs	Total
Adilabad	MF	17800 (18.09)	16100 (16.36)	20600 (20.95)	17300 (17.59)	8100 (8.23)	18500 (18.80)	98360 (100.00)
	SF	5740 (18.72)	7610 (24.96)	9000 (29.56)	3800 (12.47)	1500 (4.93)	2850 (9.35)	30450 (100.00)
	BF	2300 (18.70)	--	5000 (40.65)	--	--	5000 (40.65)	12300 (100.00)
Total		25800 (18.29)	23700 (16.83)	34600 (24.54)	21100 (14.95)	9600 (06.80)	26350 (18.68)	141050 (100.00)
Krishna	MF	16000 (21.71)	9500 (12.90)	17100 (23.20)	10500 (14.24)	6500 (8.82)	14100 (19.13)	73700 (100.00)
	SF	5200 (14.01)	6500 (17.52)	8600 (23.20)	4100 (11.05)	3200 (8.63)	9500 (25.60)	37100 (100.00)
	BF	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total		21200 (18.30)	16000 (14.44)	25700 (23.19)	14600 (13.17)	9700 (08.75)	23600 (21.29)	110800 (100.00)
Kurnool	MF	20500 (18.64)	19500 (17.72)	21000 (19.09)	19000 (17.27)	9500 (8.64)	20500 (18.64)	110000 (100.00)
	SF	4200 (15.27)	4300 (15.64)	5300 (19.27)	7300 (26.55)	1200 (4.36)	5200 (18.90)	27500 (100.00)
	BF	1500 (17.65)	--	3500 (41.17)	--	--	3500 (41.17)	8500 (100.00)
Total		26200 (17.95)	23800 (16.30)	29800 (20.41)	26300 (18.01)	10700 (07.32)	29200 (20.00)	146000 (100.00)

**Source:** Field Data.

Parenthesis indicate the percentage

We have also collected the data on the income position of the respondents through setting tamarind which is an important resources in the CPR pool. Interestingly, income is more visible in Kurnool and Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh state compare to that of Adilabad district of Telangana state. Table (6) further shows that an income of Rs. 10700 is seen in Kurnool region out of which nearly 89 per cent by marginal farmers and the remaining 11 per cent by small farmers. Similarly in Adilabad district out of Rs. 9600 earned by selling tamarind, 84 per cent is under the control of marginal farmers and the remaining by small farmers. However, in the case of Krishna district, out of Rs. 9700 which was earned by selling tamarind, 67 per cent has done by marginal farmers and the remaining 33 per cent by small farmers. Thus, most of the small and marginal farmers of Kurnool and Adilabad district are selling some income by selling tamarind in the study areas.

Finally an attempt was made in this study to have comparative analysis on the income earned by various resources of common properties of the study areas of both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states and presented in the table (4.18). In Adilabad district of Telangana state, all the respondents either marginal, small or big could earn an amount of Rs. 141050 per month out of which nearly 70 per cent by marginal farmers, 21 per cent by small farmers and the remaining 8 per cent by big farmers.

Similarly in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh state, out of 146000 rupees, 75 per cent by marginal farmers, 18 per cent by small farmers and the remaining 7 per cent by big farmers. In the case of district out of 110800 rupees, marginal farmers income was 66 per cent, whereas small farmers income was 34 per cent. None of the big farmers earned any income from CPR.

Resource wise analysis has revealed that in the marginal farmers of Adilabad district of Telangana state, out of total income Rs. 98360 income from road materials occupied first position followed by beedi leaves, fodder, fuel wood in that order. Similarly in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh marginal farmers altogether earned rupees 73700 out of which 23.20 per cent from road metals and income from fodder and

beedi leaves occupied second and third position.

In the case of Kurnool district all the marginal farmers put together earned income to the extent of Rs. 110000 out which income from fodder and beedi leaves is the same proportion i.e. 180.64 per cent and there is not much difference between income earned from grass and fuel wood.

### Conclusion

Thus, common property resources has become a major source of income for weaker sections belonging scheduled caste communities in the study areas of Adilabad district of Telangana state and Kurnool and Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh State.

The intra area disparity is visible in Telangana and Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh state. Therefore, in order to improve their income position, almost all the marginal and small farmers of these two areas are excessively depending upon common property resources. These resources have become beacon of hopes to them. Particularly for poor, down trodden, for under privileged farmers belonging to scheduled caste communities use of common property Resources have become a ray of hopes and resources should be protected from the exploitation of rich farmers and the impact of globalization, privatization and liberalization should not destroy Common Property Resources.

Thus, CPR is important source of income to the weaker sections of the people who are suffering from poverty and low level of living standard. Hence, the study suggests that if CPR is properly managed with supportive policies by the Government, these will become productive asset to rural areas and particularly benefits percolates to weaker sections who constitutes a large section in rural society.

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