



1. Project Data:		Date Posted : 05/04/2001	
PROJ ID: P010408		Appraisal	Actual
Project Name: Bihar Plateau	Project Costs (US\$M)	132.2	121.4
Country: India	Loan/Credit (US\$M)	117	92.2
Sector(s): Board: TR - Roads and highways (47%), Irrigation and drainage (32%), Water supply (13%), Agricultural extension and research (6%), Sub-national government administration (2%)	Cofinancing (US\$M)		
L/C Number: C2439			
	Board Approval (FY)		92
Partners involved :	Closing Date	06/30/1998	06/30/2000
Prepared by:	Reviewed by :	Group Manager :	Group:
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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

The primary project objective was to increase rural incomes and alleviate poverty of the tribal people in the underdeveloped southern plateau of Bihar through:

- (a) making investments in infrastructure to facilitate delivery of agricultural services for increasing production and improving access to markets;
- (b) strengthening planning, coordination and monitoring by the local administration;
- (c) expanding beneficiary involvement in project activities; and
- (d) promoting environmentally sustainable activities.

b. Components

The project consisted of five components:

- (i) agricultural development, including applied agricultural research and extension, improved crop varieties and animal species, and watershed development;
- (ii) minor irrigation and drainage;
- (iii) rural roads;
- (iv) drinking water; and
- (v) project implementation support, including institutional strengthening of the Minor Irrigation Department (for irrigation) and the Rural Engineering Organization (for roads).

Revised Components:

At the time of MTR, some of the project components were revised and funds reallocated. The main changes were:

- Increase in the size of the rural roads component - the road length was increased from 1200 km to 1290 km, and the number of bridges expanded from 65 to 230 (total bridge length increased from 4,780 m to 10,280).
- Increase in Birsa Agriculture University (BAU) involvement in the project by including sub-components for tissue culture and mushroom spawn production, floriculture, expansion of breeder seed production, and soil

micro-nutrient analysis.

- Reduction in agricultural development component, eight out of the twelve catchment areas selected for soil and water conservation were dropped.
- Reduction in irrigation component - development of new irrigation schemes was dropped.

c. Comments on Project Cost, Financing and Dates

The actual project cost was US\$121.4 million compared to the appraisal estimate of US\$132.2 million. At appraisal, the Bank committed US\$117 million and total disbursements were US\$92.2 million. The project closed on June 30, 2000, two years after the original closing. There are some unclaimed expenditures which will be financed by Government of Bihar (GOB), increasing the governments' contribution from US\$15.2 million to US\$28.7 million.

3. Achievement of Relevant Objectives:

Though the project was overambitious in design and complex, it was reasonably successful in achieving its objectives.

- Increase in area under irrigation, improved seeds and fertilizers, increased cropping intensity, agricultural research and extension services, and improved access to markets is expected to increase agricultural production and farm incomes substantially at full development.
- The physical targets for minor irrigation and drainage works have been achieved. The area under irrigation is expected to increase by 36,000 ha.
- The physical targets for rural roads and bridges were not fully achieved. About 1069 km of rural roads and 177 bridges have been rehabilitated compared to the revised target of 1290 km of rural roads and 230 bridges at MTR. Development of critical segments of rural roads have greatly improved farmers' access to markets, agricultural inputs, and social services.
- The project substantially improved access to drinking water.
- The project improved the capacity of the Regional Engineering Organization (REO), the Minor Irrigation Department (MID), and the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) in contracting and tendering procedures, infrastructure design, and construction and supervision.

4. Significant Outcomes/Impacts:

- The project provided the critical investments necessary for construction/rehabilitation of key infrastructure in the underdeveloped Chotanagpur Plateau region to facilitate agricultural production and increase farm incomes.
- The provision of safe drinking water to the rural population has considerably reduced the incidence of water-borne diseases.
- The establishment of an integrated seed production system, the Biotechnology Center and training programs at BAU will equip the farmers with modern farming techniques.

5. Significant Shortcomings (including non-compliance with safeguard policies):

1. Quality at entry was weak and the project suffered from poor implementation for a variety of reasons. Delays in effective project start up resulted in much of the construction being compressed into the later part of the implementation period.
2. The project achieved limited success in introducing a participatory approach to planning.

6. Ratings:	ICR	OED Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
Outcome:	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Institutional Dev.:	Substantial	Substantial	
Sustainability:	Likely	Likely	
Bank Performance:	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	The Evaluation Summary rates

			Bank Performance as satisfactory but considers it marginally so because of the poor quality at entry and the design deficiencies.
Borrower Perf .:	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	The Evaluation Summary rates Borrower Performance as satisfactory but considers it marginally so because of the weak commitment in the early years. The arrangements for project staffing and coordination of government agencies were not adequate and project implementation suffered because of late and inadequate release of funds.
Quality of ICR :		Satisfactory	

NOTE: ICR rating values flagged with '*' don't comply with OP/BP 13.55, but are listed for completeness.

7. Lessons of Broad Applicability:

The ICR identifies a number of important lessons, three lessons are repeated here:

1. Readiness for implementation is crucial for completion of the project on schedule and achievement of its objectives. Actions that are critical for project implementation and need to be completed before credit/loan effectiveness should be carefully monitored.
2. During project implementation adequate attention needs to be given to monitoring and evaluation and performance indicators to track project performance.
3. Beneficiary groups need to be involved right from the project design stage for them to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility.

The ES adds the following lesson - Projects that depend on grass root organizations for implementation need to realistically assess upfront whether adequate capacity is available. If such capacity is weak, then the project has to allow for adequate resources in terms of time and money to build this capacity.

8. Assessment Recommended? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Why? (i) To verify the sustainability and institutional development impact of activities begun under the project; and (ii) to provide a building block for the indigenous people's study being undertaken by OED.

9. Comments on Quality of ICR:

The quality of ICR is satisfactory.