ABSTRACT
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The study aimed to understand the nature and operations of agro-social afforestation and wastelands development programmes of the Dindigul Anna District, Tamil Nadu and to assess their effectiveness as perceived by the beneficiaries. The afforestation programmes analysed in this study were Agroforestry in drylands by State Agriculture Department (APAD), Homestead Plantations by State Rural Development Department (HPRDD) and Wastelands development Programme by Gandhigram Rural Institute (WPGRI). In total, 343 respondents were contacted for detailed investigations.

The respondents of all the three programmes differed significantly from each other in respect of all their characteristics except their dependence on tree fodder. WPGRI, APAD and HPRDD were ranked on the order given based on their preference, however they differed significantly from each other with regard to their perceived effectiveness.

The constraints reported by the respondents were lack of water resources, inadequate knowledge on tree husbandry and soil and water conservation measures, delayed
supply of seedlings, cattle browsing, difficulty in establishing the tree during initial period, damage due to the effect of tree crops, belated, non-remunerative and absence of continued incentives, non-cooperation of the fellow farmers, non supply of fruit and gap filling seedlings.

The important suggestions putforth by the respondents to improve the effectiveness of the afforestation programmes were; conducting trainings on tree husbandry and soil and water conservation practices, timely supply of quality and choice tree seedlings, strengthening of extension agency contact at all levels, supply of fruit seedlings as an additional incentive, promoting awareness on marketing of tree and tree produces, proper and timely payment of incentives, incentive for fencing and financial assistance for borewell/installing a hand pump.