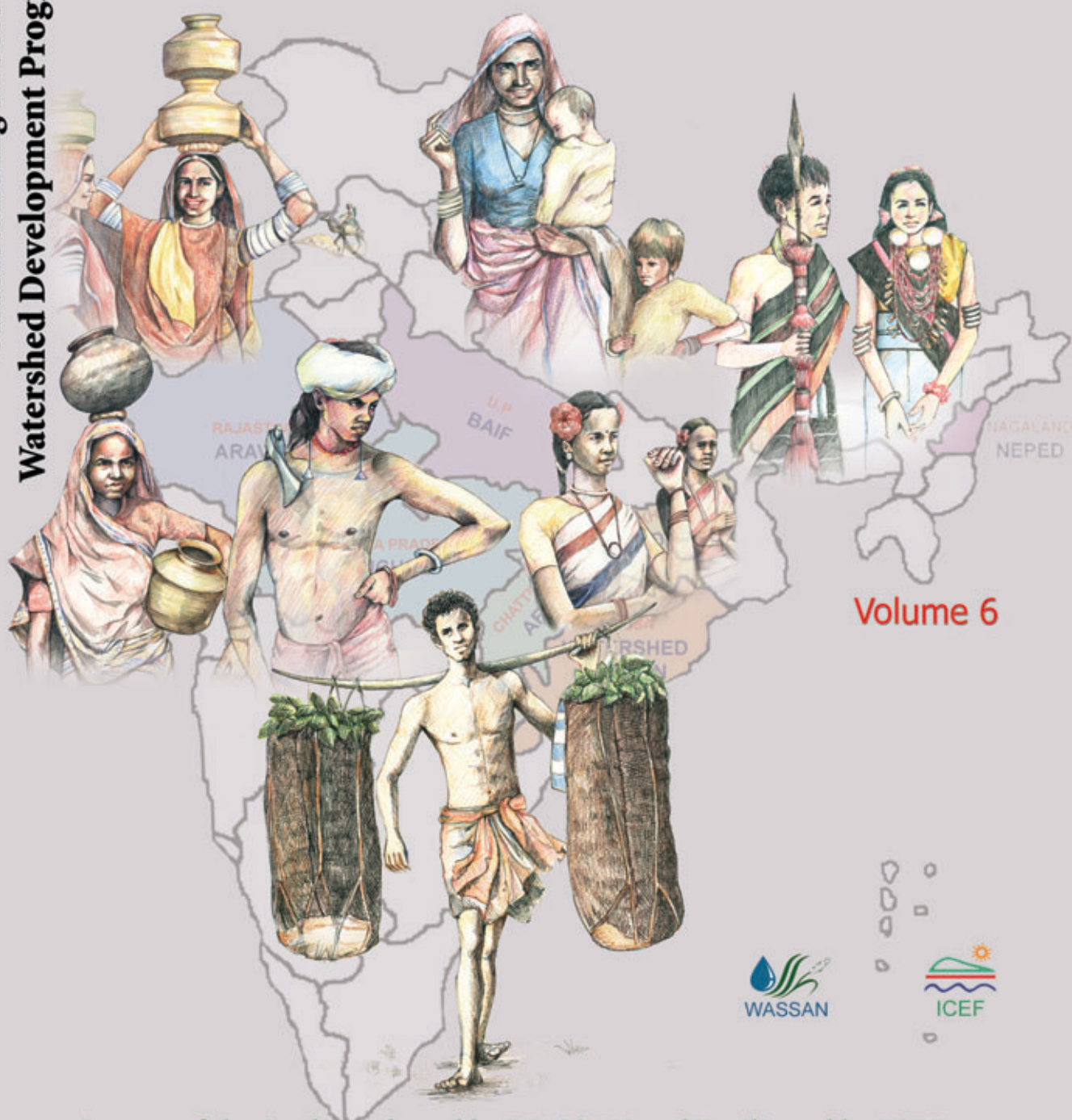


**Understanding Processes of
Watershed Development Program in India**

Recommendations at a Glance



Volume 6



Report of the Study anchored by WASSAN and Facilitated by ICEF

Understanding Processes of Watershed Development Program in India

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and Facilitated by ICEF



WASSAN



ICEF

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- Volume 1 : Birds Eye View of Processes: Status across States, Facilitators and Donors
- Volume 2 : Process Index
- Volume 3 : Indepth View of Critical Themes: Institutions, Finances and Equity
- Volume 4 : Policies and Possibilities: Compilation of Good Practices
- Volume 5 : Making them Better: Gap Analysis, Enabling &Disabling Factors And Recommendations

Volume 6 : Recommendations at a Glance

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Acknowledgements

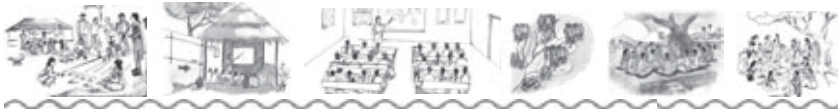
Understanding Processes in Watershed Development Projects in India is an interesting experience for me. It gave an opportunity to visit and see different villages in different parts of the country; interact with the villagers and understand their life; develop friendship with facilitating agencies (government and non government) and understand their efforts and finally to put them together in the form a report....

I do not claim to have made a perfect job this gigantic task. "Understanding" of processes means developing clear insights into the culture, history of voluntary action, roles of state, civil society organizations, communities in development processes and making sense of watershed projects in the local context. Study teams made their best efforts to grapple with the above issues and captured the processes at the field level in different states.

The study is largely conceived as a local initiative, to set an agenda for action at the field level in each state. Thus the role of study partners in the study is very important not only in conducting the field study but also in taking the agenda forward. I sincerely thank all of the study partners for their active engagement, support and interest in the agenda of strengthening processes in watershed development projects. I particularly thank the coordinators of the study teams Yogesh Agarwal, Abhishek, Sanjoli (ARAVALI, Rajasthan); Rashmi, Hargovind Singh (AAK, Utter Pradesh); S Srivastava, Devangan, Ravi Kumar (AFPRO, Chattisghad); Yoganand, Alak (PRADAN, Jharkhand); K G Vyas (NCHSE, Madhya Pradesh) Bhasker Reddy, LN Padhi, Ravnder Guada, Prabhaker Nanda, Mr Das, Kalpana, Bijoy, Prabhakaer Nanda (Orissa Watersehd Development Team, Orissa); Dr Supong, Lotha (Directorate of Agriculture, Government of Nagaland). Without their support, the study could not have taken place.

B N Yugandhar, Member Planning Commission was the inspiration to the process study. He always thought that the strong participatory processes could address several key concerns of the current watershed projects. He believed that developing a set of tools that could systematically diagnosis the watershed processes is an important requirement of the project. I hope this study meets some of his expectations. I thank him for his support and guidance from time to time, during the course of the process study.

Several members of WASSAN team took responsibilities for conducting and completing the study - conceptualization, field work, comprehending field data for analysis, preparing reports and giving feed back and project management. I thank the entire team of WASSAN. Among the team, I particularly thank Neelesh K Singh, N K Sanghi, Ravindra, K Suresh, Ramesh, Sirkanth, B Rama Chander, Surendrantah, Pavan, Bakka Reddy, Sridevi, Srinivas, Narasimha, S Raju, Malati, T Ravi, for their support and cooperation in different stages of the study. I specially thank N Chandra Sekhar and Radha Shree for providing necessary support in data compilation, which was the toughest part of the report preparation.



Narasimha Reddy, Sivaiah, Udaya, Narasimha Rao (Poverty Learning Foundation), Usha Seetamahakshimi and Ipsita Basu provided professional help for preparing the report (data compilation, preparation of first drafts of the reports). I thank all of them for their timely and quality support.

I also thank V Sampath, Director General (NIRD) for providing institutional support for conducting data analysis. I sincerely thank Dr Bidari and Ms Jayashree (NIRD) for providing necessary support for data analysis.

Writing reports is one side of the story, while giving constructive and creative feedback is another story. I immensely benefited by the feedback I received from MV Sastry (Center for World Solidarity), Uday Shankar (Trustee WASSAN), Rama Mohan (CWS), Dr N K Sanghi, Ravindra, K Suresh (WASSAN), Dr Amita Shah (Gujarat Institute of Development Studies), Dr J Venkateswarlu, Ram Kumar (Inter Cooperation) and members of nodal agencies. I thank all of them. In this context, I would like to particularly thank M V Sastry and Dr Amita Shah for the insights they provided, after a careful reading of the report. Their feedback challenged me to explore deeper insights of the processes of watershed development projects.

The study teams would have spent time with about 2500 persons in all the selected watersheds to understand the watershed related processes. These are members from watershed committees, user groups, SHGs, facilitating teams, government staff, donors and several others. I thank all of them for their support and interest in sharing their experience with our study teams.

The study and the report are the outputs of the motivation and support that we received from India Canada Environment Facility, New Delhi. I sincerely thank M Satyanarayana, Dr Mihir Maitra and Dr Jaya Chanterjee of ICEF team. Their contribution is invaluable in setting the agenda for policy advocacy in watershed development context.

During the field work and report preparation, I was away from home for long periods of time and busy with myself, even when I was at home. They missed me so much, while I was engaged with this study and its report, but also supported me in the entire process. I thank them for all their support.

I hope this report would contribute to the ever growing literature on watershed projects in India. I also hope this report would make the policy makers, academicians, donors and field level facilitators to little more sensitive to the importance of processes in watershed development projects. Ultimately, I thank the readers and users of the reports.

Thanks...

M V Rama Chandrudu
WASSAN



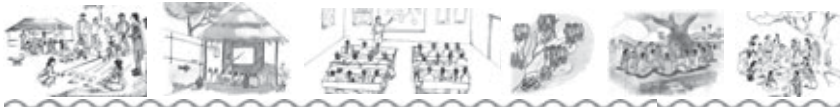
FOREWORD

India – Canada Environment Facility (ICEF) was established in 1992 consequent to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of India and Canada. ICEF was set up with the mandate of enhancing the capacity of Indian organizations to undertake environmentally sustainable development and management of land, water and energy resources, providing support for programs that specifically address the inter – relationships between poverty and environmental degradation, community participation and for public awareness of environmental issues.

In keeping with the importance of watershed management as an integrated approach for arresting environmental degradation, improving livelihoods and sustaining ecological balance, and its potential for boosting the national economy, ICEF has supported several watershed development projects all over the country, from Nagaland in the east to Gujarat in the west, and from Uttaranchal in the north to Kerala in the South. These projects provided replicable models for sites with vastly diverse topography environmental challenges and cultural regimes. In several cases follow up initiatives were funded by ICEF to strengthen community processes in the post watershed development phase of projects completed earlier. The projects were implemented in partnerships with government departments, institutions and NGOs.

ICEF projects gained considerable success in transforming their areas and influencing similar practices in the region and elsewhere, largely due to the participatory processes followed, which bonded all the key stakeholders and elicited from them self motivated participation. The project for Strengthening Participatory Processes in Watershed Development Program in India, supported by ICEF and implemented by Watershed Support Services and Activities Network, (WASSAN), Hyderabad seeks to synthesize processes followed across projects and create synergies and best practice guidelines to help policy makes and practitioners alike. It focused on the way watershed projects are planned, implemented and managed by communities, and captured the roles of the various actors. The study also provides an opportunity for several key players in the sector to conduct a “reality check” to constantly update themselves with the field level realities.

The process study conducted with the support of ICEF is an innovative study in several ways – the focus of the study is on “processes” of the watershed projects, unlike many studies which focus on “impacts”; it is also conducted by a variety of actors – NGOs, government officials, academicians, resource organizations and others; it covered several states and involved several organizations; the observations were shared and analyzed collectively by the study teams.



The study also captured the roles performed by several actors in this process. Comparisons were made possible with the help of “Process Index” which is an interesting and useful contribution of the study. The concept of “Process Index” has high potential and wider applications. Policy makers can take a serious note of such instrument which can establish the health of processes of any large scale development project.

I commend the efforts of WASSAN and its partners in documenting and disseminating the wealth of experience and lessons the project has garnered. I am sure that it will lead to better practices and enhanced results for the benefit of the millions who depend on effective watershed management for improving their quality of life. These reports call for urgent action to improve policy support for helping communities to manage their own resources.

M. Satyanarayana, IFS
Director
ICEF



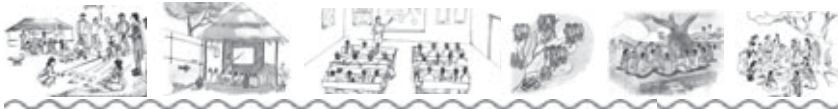
About the Study and Reports

“Understanding Processes in Watershed Development Projects in India” is an attempt to bring focus on the processes of the watershed development projects. It is an attempt to provide feed back to the policy makers, donors and field level facilitators on the processes at the field level. It is an attempt to assess, diagnose and compare process at field level in different projects. The main purpose of the study is to strengthen the participatory processes in watershed development projects and its policies.

The study was conducted in seven states of India – Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chattisghad, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Nagaland. In each state, a local nodal agency anchored the study. A detailed methodology consisting of several tools was designed together by WASSAN and its partners. Through these methodologies and tools, experiences and responses of several actors in the field were gathered and carefully documented. A total of 55 watersheds were profiled in the seven states. 30 projects were from Government of India supported and Line Department facilitated projects; 15 projects were from Government of India supported and NGO facilitated projects; 3 projects were funded by bilateral projects; 7 projects were funded by International NGO Donors and facilitated by local NGOs.

Each state team prepared a report profiling the watershed processes of the state. Processes from all watersheds from all states were consolidated by all nodal agencies together. Based on this process data, the process analysis of the watershed development projects was conducted. The process data generated from the field work has rich contents, depth and numerous dimensions. To justify the objectives of the study and present various dimensions of watershed processes, the report is presented in six volumes. This note gives a brief profile of each of these volumes.

Volume 1 : Birds Eye View of Processes: Status across States, Facilitators and Donors: This volume presents the basic features of the process study – objectives, methodology, sample, conceptual framework and basic analysis of the processes. The project management cycle of the watershed projects was taken as the basis for conducting the process analysis (Phases, Key Events and Clusters of Key Events). The “process data” is presented for every key event, as per the project management cycle. A “Two-Dimensional” analysis was conducted to reflect the variations of processes in various states (Dimension 1- Regional influences) and various projects (Dimension 2 - Donor and Facilitator combinations). At the end of process data analysis, processes are classified into “most common processes” and “rare processes”. Specific conclusions and further analysis of process is not done in this volume.



Volume 2 : Process Index: In this volume, the process data is further analyzed to make it “comparable”. An attempt was made to “quantify” processes of each key event, based on the nature of process practiced in that watershed. The “non-participatory” processes get low scores, while “participatory” process get high scores. Based on this scoring, “Process Index” was developed for every key event of the watershed project. This “Process Index” was used to assess the health of processes at each cluster of key events, compare one type of project with another (a project in UP funded by Government of India and facilitated by line department could be compared with another project in Rajasthan, funded by International NGO and facilitated by local NGO). The application of Process Index is discussed in this volume in terms of diagnosing, measuring, monitoring and identifying the solutions to the weak processes. This analysis combines three dimensions of the process data – Process followed in a Key Event; Region in which the project is located and Facilitating Agency (Donor and Facilitator combination). So this analysis is called “Three Dimensional” analysis of watershed processes.

Volume 3 : Indepth View of Critical Themes: Institutions, Finances and Equity: There are several themes of special interest in watershed projects. Of these important and interesting themes were analyzed in this volume: Institutions, Financial Aspects and Equity Issues. Process dimensions of the above three themes and other related data was systematically analyzed from the sample watersheds. Several tools were used to analyze the data on the above issues and draw lessons (Adequacy analysis, frequency distribution, Analysis of PRA data, etc). The main conclusions of the analysis are presented at the end of each section. Limited experiences indicate the feasibility of integrating strong institutional processes; equity based approaches and financial prudence in watershed development projects. However, they could only establish the possibilities. It is important to develop such enabling conditions when the project is implemented on a large scale. The integration of above concerns in watershed projects is also largely a result of concern, commitment and orientation of the project facilitating agencies. Without this basic ingredient, it is difficult to expect watershed development projects to be sensitive to concerns like participation, equity, gender and transparency. The choice of sensitive and capable facilitating agencies and policy framework of watershed projects are equally important in ensuring the integration of important concerns in the watershed projects.

Volume 4 : Policies and Possibilities: Compilation of Good Practices: Each village is a bundle of stories. Each person could add a new dimension to the watershed experiences. While conducting the field work, study teams gathered some interesting stories, anecdotes and experiences. They establish the possibility of an idea, an approach, and a new way of looking at the same old project. This volume consists of all such interesting experiences from several watersheds. These stories try to fill the gaps in the process analysis of previous chapters. This volume adds life to the entire set by bringing human dimension to the watershed projects and its processes. Initial idea was to integrate these experiences in to the previous volumes itself. But this gives very little space for narrating the basic idea and does not justify the inclusion in other volumes. This volume is a bunch of flowers, exhibiting the color of watershed processes and their successes. There are also few thorns, which indicate the future challenges.



Each story is an independent experience and allows the reader to start anywhere. However, it is important to note that the main purpose of these stories is to briefly narrate the possibility and establish the evidence of the experience. The stories do not give an exhaustive picture or a “complete” picture of the experience. This feature of this volume could be interpreted as both strength as well as weakness of the volume.

Volume 5 : Making them Better: Gap Analysis, Enabling &Disabling Factors And Recommendations: This volume conducts a detailed and systematic analysis of processes. Gap analysis is conducted for each key event of the project management cycle. The designed and desirable processes are narrated followed by processes followed on the ground (most common and rare). These are analyzed to give a picture of critical concerns and implications. The enabling and disabling factors behind the processes were also mentioned. These insights are drawn from several sources – process (soft) data, hard data, discussions with the facilitators on the selected themes, case studies, policy changes in the state/ districts, etc. Based on such a thorough analysis of processes, recommendations are proposed for making the watershed process better. As a principle, all recommendations were proposed based on “evidence” on the ground. The evidence could be from a small number of watersheds or even a single watershed. The main idea was to pick up the “real experience” and “up scale” the lessons and principles through policy reform. While making the process improvements, the need for revisiting the watershed approach itself was recognized. An attempt is made to make a distinction between “watershed project” and “watershed approach”. An indicative list of complementary project is mentioned, as part of recommendations. A set of necessary instruments is proposed to ensure that processes get adequate support in the watershed projects and approach. These instruments are – project management tools, plurality of institutions and critical support systems.

For easy reference and are classified into different categories to indicate the nature of action required and given in **Volume 6 : Recommendations at a Glance**



Introduction

Main objectives of the process study “Understanding the Processes in Watershed Development Projects in India” was to

- ❑ Strengthen the participatory processes in the watershed development program in India by providing feed back on the “way the projects are implemented on the ground” to all concerned – policy makers, practitioners, project administration teams, donors and academicians.
- ❑ Develop strategies for making the watershed development programs more community controlled and managed, equity and gender focussed, technically appropriate with institutional mechanisms in place for environmentally sound farming systems and sustainable livelihoods.

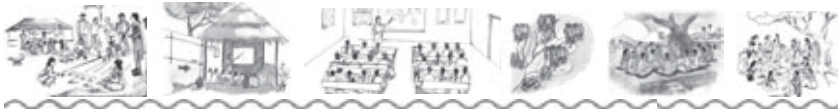
The study was conducted in 55 watershed projects of seven states of India (UP, Jharkhand, Chattisghad, MP, Orissa, Rajasthan and Nagaland). WASSAN anchored the study and seven nodal agencies from each state conducted the process study in their respective states. The study is an attempt to provide an opportunity for several actors engaged in watershed development initiatives to engage in the process of “reflection of the reality”. It provides an honest and unbiased feed back of the processes in different types of watershed projects in different states.

The data, analysis and recommendations are put together in six volumes. This is the 6th Volume of the report. In the previous volumes, the process data was recorded and compared (Volume 1); Methodologies of assessing the processes were evolved through Process Index (Volume 2); an in depth analysis of special themes such as equity, financial management, institutional space was conducted (Volume 3) and some of the innovative and good practices were captured (Volume 4); a detailed analysis of processes was conducted and recommendations were articulated (Volume 5).

In this booklet, (Volume 6), a brief summary of all the recommendations of the study are presented. These recommendations are organized according to the nature of action on the recommendations. Each recommendation is self explanatory. For understanding the background of any particular recommendation, the reader is recommended to visit the previous volumes. This compilation of recommendations is organized into three parts.

Part 1 - Entrenching Participatory Processes of Each Cluster of Key Events

The set of recommendations in this part follow the project management cycle of the watershed development projects. Recommendations are made for improving the processes for every cluster



of key events. These recommendations are organized into the following categories, depending on the nature of action to be taken:

- ❑ Requiring “Policy Change”
- ❑ Implementable by “Process Modification” within the existing policy
- ❑ Falling in the ambit of “Capacity Building Support”
- ❑ Requiring clear “Financial Allocations”
- ❑ Falling in the pervue of “Project Management/ Monitoring Functions”

It is difficult to categorise any particular intervention into one particular category. Further the above interventions would have implications on each other. The above categorization is meant for simplifying the understanding of action points. For e.g. the recommendation under “Process Modifications” could be taken up within the available supports and policy framework, without much additional support.

Part 2 - Redefining Watershed Approaches

In this part the existing policy framework of the watershed projects is challenged. Based on the analysis of the process data (from Part 1), several new dimensions of watershed approach are identified and a systematic “pooling” of these newer elements is conducted to re-define the watershed approach. This approach calls for a “package of complementary projects” that complement/accompany the “main” watershed development project. Instead of over loading the watershed project with several components, a systematic approach is proposed to complement watershed projects. This entire approach is defined as “watershed approach”, which is different from a typical watershed project.

Part 3 - Necessary Instruments

The participatory processes of the watershed development project are influenced by several factors. While policy and project framework are essential ingredients for defining the nature of process, it is also important to understand that several policies are only on paper, for want of appropriate and effective operational strategies and instruments. Few such important “Necessary Instruments” (at this point of time) are mentioned in this part, which will make the watershed policies a reality and strengthen the process based approaches at state, district, project and village level.



Project Management Cycle of Watershed Development Projects Main Phases and Key Events

Initial Phase

1. Selection of project villages
2. Awareness Generation
3. Resolution from the village
4. Planning for Entry Point Activity
5. Execution of Entry Point Activity
6. Base Line Surveys

Institution Development Phase

7. Identification and strengthening of Existing Groups
8. Formation of New Groups (User Groups)
9. Formation of New Groups (SHGs)
10. Formation of Watershed Committee and Association

Participatory Planning Phase

11. Watershed Delineation
12. Problem Analysis for Planning
13. Site Selection
14. Local Functionaries and Knowledge Base
15. Preparation of Group/ Individual Plans
16. Discussions on Non-Negotiables
17. Designs and Estimates
18. Consolidation of Action Plans and Changes in Action Plans
19. Approval of Action Plans

Implementation Phase

20. Mobilization of Contribution
21. Knowledge of Communities on WDF
22. Execution of Works
23. Measurements
24. Payments

Post Project Issues

25. Extension of Project Period
26. Use of WDF
27. Withdrawal of PIA



Part -1

Recommendations for Improving the Processes - Phase wise of Project Management Cycle

Preparatory Phase

1. Knowledge of Villagers on Selection Process of their Village

Recommendations

<p>Policy Change</p>	<p>Make the selection of watershed projects demand driven.</p> <p><i>Pre-selection Phase:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Provide for pre-selection phase of watershed development projects. During this phase, project authorities should organize communication campaigns to generate awareness about the non-negotiables, selection criteria and salient features of the watershed development project. ❑ The campaign should explain the preliminary activities that the communities should do for qualifying themselves for the watershed project. Based on the responses from communities, the watershed project could be sanctioned to them. <p>Create clear roles of local leadership, including Grama Panchayati in the selection process.</p> <p>Assess history of collective action and strength of social capital before sanctioning the watershed development projects.</p> <p>Ensure the facilitation support to villages. Orient the village leadership on the nature of participatory philosophies.</p> <p>Provide for rejection of unsuitable villages.</p>
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2. Awareness generation and Reaching Out to Women

<p>Process Modification</p>	<p>Information is power. Provide for “Rights Based Communication Campaign” and repeated exercises for empowering the communities.</p> <p>Focus should be on “resource literacy”. Systematic and meaningful communication campaigns should be organized in a professional manner. The expected behaviour changes should be integral part of the communication campaigns and message. Two way communication campaigns should be encouraged.</p> <p>Special efforts should be made to reach out to women and resource poor families. Messages of communication campaigns for this target group should be relevant to them.</p>
<p>Capacity Building Support</p>	<p>The facilitating agencies should be oriented on the meaning, scope, potential and purpose of communication campaigns.</p>
<p>Project Management/ Monitoring Functions</p>	<p>DRDA/ Project Authority should ensure that facilitating agencies make serious and systematic efforts for generating awareness on the key aspects of the watershed development projects.</p> <p>Follow up with communication campaigns is a must. Adherence to messages/ philosophy of the projects is an important requirement.</p> <p>Avoid stereo typed communication campaigns in the name of district level campaigns.</p>

3. Grama Sabha Resolution

<p>Process Modification</p>	<p>Representatives of DRDA/ Project Authority should also participate in these events.</p>
<p>Capacity Building Support</p>	<p>Facilitating agencies should be oriented on the importance of village level deliberations and resolutions before the project is formally started.</p> <p>The capacities of facilitating agencies should be developed so that they could facilitate a transparent and participatory process of getting the village resolution.</p> <p>Develop role clarity of different institutions such as Grama Panchayati, existing institutions of communities, facilitating agencies in the context of watershed development project. Firm up decisions on non-negotiables of the projects (contribution, priority to development of CPRs, rights over CPRs to poor families, etc.) at this stage.</p>



Project Management/ Monitoring Functions	DRDA/ Project Authority should be able to distinguish between the participatory process based resolution and mere resolution on paper. DRDA/ Project Authority should give importance and priority to the genuine resolutions of the communities.
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4 & 5. Planning and Execution of Entry Point Activity (EPA)

Policy Change Financial Allocations	Budget provision for entry point activity should be retained in the watershed development projects. This budget should be part of “works component”. The nature of entry point activities could be confined to natural resource management.
Capacity Building Support	<p>DRDA/ Project Authority should orient the facilitating agencies on the importance of the entry point activity and process of executing the same. The purpose of the entry point activity is many fold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Develop rapport between the communities and facilitating agencies. <input type="checkbox"/> Inculcate participatory development processes among the communities and facilitating agencies <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate non-negotiables of the watershed development project, before the entire project is launched.
Project Management/ Monitoring Functions	DRDA/ Project Authority should have a monitoring mechanism for ensuring that the entry point activity is genuinely and properly executed.

6. Baseline and Benchmark Survey

Process Modification	The focus should be on joint analysis of information by communities and facilitating agencies. Such joint exercises should set the agenda for action in terms of institution development; planning; choice of interventions and target groups. They should also facilitate reflections among the communities and facilitating agencies.
Financial Allocations	<p>DRDA/ Project Authority should evolve appropriate mechanisms to ensure that the base line surveys are professionally conducted. Such reports/ systems should be systematically used through out the project period for monitoring and evaluating the impacts of the projects.</p> <p>Provide professional support for such activities through out the project period.</p>



	Provide budget support or seeking such professional help for conducting base line surveys. The support organizations providing such professional help should build the capacities of the facilitating agencies, rather than taking this task as a “turn key” assignment.
Project Management/ Monitoring Functions	DRDA/ Project Authority or state level authorities should evolve methodology, process and content for conducting baseline/ bench mark surveys. The local level exercises need to be supplemented with the data/ information from outside (satellite maps and other sources).

Establishing Village Level Institution

7. Identification of existing institutions in the village

Policy Change	DRDA/ Project Authority should have clear process of assessing the capacities of the existing social capital. Preference should be given to those villages, which have strong institutional base.
Capacity Building Support	The facilitating agency should develop an action plan for building the capacities of the local existing institutions and creating effective roles for them.

8. Formation of New Groups

Capacity Building Support	<p>The role of user groups is beyond completing activities. The main agenda of user groups is to manage watershed resources and enhance their productivity for ensuring better livelihoods. The institution development process should aim at building core capacities of the user groups to achieve the above aspects in a meaningful and sustainable manner.</p> <p>Adequate capacity building support should be provided to form and strengthen user groups.</p>
Financial Allocations	Fund for watershed activities should be released only after the user groups are formed and are functional.
Project Management/ Monitoring Functions	DRDA/ Project Authorities need to evolve appropriate systems for monitoring and capacity building of facilitating agencies to ensure that user groups are formed and functional with a long term perspective.



9. Formation of SHGs

<p>Policy Change</p>	<p>Create appropriate functional roles for SHGs in watershed context. Since several projects/ programs are already concentrating the creation of SHGs, develop convergence between such projects and watershed development projects, rather than expecting WDT/ PIAs to create SHGs. This convergence would go a long way in giving focused attention to SHGs and helps in maximizing the existing capacities of the facilitating agencies.</p> <p>DRDA/ Project Authorities should ensure that focus on resource poor families is retained in the project by creating SHGs of poor. At the same time, DRDA/ Project Authorities should also ensure that convergence of projects takes place with watershed development projects with a clear division of responsibilities between facilitating agencies and other projects (that aim at creating strong SHGs).</p>
<p>Capacity Building Support</p>	<p>The existing experiences on the role of SHGs in watershed context need to be converted into capacity building modules, for the benefit of facilitating agencies.</p>

10.1. Formation of Watershed Committee

<p>Process Modification</p>	<p>Primary institutions should be formed first and followed by the apex institutions. DRDA/ Project Authorities should ensure that the committee formation is stalled till the primary institutions are formed and functional.</p> <p>Develop systems for transparency in the funding arrangements and build the capacities of the local institutions on financial systems of the project.</p>
<p>Capacity Building Support</p>	<p>Capacity building of the facilitators and DRDA/ Project Authorities on the project phasing is a must.</p> <p>The funding of the project should be in tune with the proposed activities (such as formation of SHGs and UG) at the watershed level.</p>
<p>Project Management/ Monitoring Functions</p>	<p>DRDA/ Project Authorities should have appropriate monitoring systems to ensure that phase specific activities are taken up as per the desired sequence.</p> <p>There is also a time lag between the project commencement data (at Delhi and State Head Quarter) and the actual date of project commencement at the village level. This leads to considerable</p>



	pressure at the village level to “spend” money. As a result of this, the project activities are “front-ended” instead of establishing primary watershed institutions, such as user groups and SHGs.
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10.2. Formation of Watershed Association

A. Strengthening of PRIs:

Policy Change	The democratic institutions at the village level should be strengthened as a prerequisite of any participatory project, including watershed development project. However, no one takes the responsibility of ensuring such vibrant representative institutions (Grama Panchayati and Grama Sabha). The efforts by concerned departments (PRI Department) and legislature need to be in the true spirit of decentralization and empowerment of Panchayati Raj Institutions. Until such efforts are made systematically, the role of Grama Sabha or/and watershed association would continue to be vague.
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B. Formalization of Membership- Based Institutions:

Policy Change	As part of the institution development (formation of primary groups – user groups and SHGs), “membership drive” should be organized. The watershed association could be formed based on the formal membership. This association of dependent communities could be actively engaged in decision making and governance of natural resources. The concerned Grama Panchayati has to be part of this process.
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C. Don't Just Delineate Watershed Areas, Delineate Executive and Governance Functions:

Policy Change	<p>It is important to delineate executive functions with governance functions, in the context of watershed development projects. The executive functions might include activities such as planning, executing works, managing funds and records of the projects. The governance functions might include functions such as regulation of resource use, conferring entitlements, conflict resolutions, setting standards and priorities of allocation.</p> <p>It would be ideal if all governance related functions are taken up by the Grama Panchayati/ Grama Sabha/ Watershed Association, while the executive functions are allocated to watershed committee, user groups, SHGs and other institutions. This division of functions and responsibilities should be part of policy framework of watershed development projects as well as the operational norms of the project. In the absence of such clear</p>
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	policy framework, it is unfair to expect that the facilitating agencies and Grama Sabha would establish such governance norms at the local level. The watershed association also requires similar policy support, to establish itself as an institution of governance.
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Participatory Planning

11.1. Delineation of Watershed Area

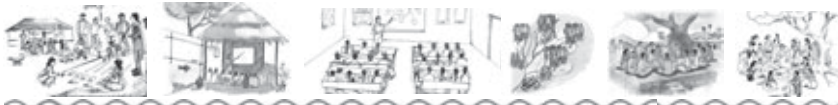
Policy Change	Recognize village or hamlet as a unit for watershed development project. The budget provision should be for developing the entire village. The treatment options should be based on watershed approaches of the technical considerations of selected sub watersheds within the given village.
Process Modification	Technology application should be appropriate to the local situation. The capacities of WDT should be augmented to ensure that technical interventions are appropriate to the local needs.

11.2. Identification of poor

Policy Change	Several of the equity related issues go beyond the current set of watershed development interventions (Eg: conferring rights over CPRs, issuing land rights, additional budgets). Forge convergence with other concerned departments for facilitating such inputs. DRDA/ Project Authorities should take a proactive role in such occasions.
Capacity Building Support	The explicit focus on poor families in watersheds is a must. The facilitating agencies should be oriented and sensitized on the opportunities that exist for poor in watershed development projects. They should also be equipped to facilitate such processes at field level.
Financial Allocations	The action plan should have a clear budget allocation towards the activities that benefit poor families, in the village. DRDA/ Project Authorities should ensure that such processes are followed and equity based action plans are prepared.

12. Conducting Problem Analysis - General and Specific to Women and Resource Poor

Capacity Building Support	Process of conducting problem analysis should be defined and the facilitating teams oriented. The skills of the facilitating teams should be enhanced on different methodologies and philosophy
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	of problem analysis. The capacity building process on these aspects should have strong focus on equity and gender issues.
Financial Allocations	Project policy should have an explicit budget provision for addressing the needs of poor and women. The DRDA/ Project Authorities should be able to monitor the adherence of such processes.

13. Decisions on Interventions/ Site Selection and Role of Volunteers in Watershed Planning

Capacity Building Support	<p>Local volunteers should be selected and trained for planning exercise. DRDA/ Project Authorities should make sure that local level functionaries are identified and trained on technical aspects of the project.</p> <p>Capacity building funds for such purpose should be released in time. Ensure that appropriate capacity building modules are available on all project components for different target groups.</p>
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14. Identification of Indigenous Technical Knowledge

Policy Change	Collaborate with regional/ state/ national level technology based resource organizations to engage with ITK in the watershed context.
Process Modification	Develop local level inventories of technical knowledge and practices on agriculture, water management, livestock management, etc.
Capacity Building Support	<p>Sensitize the DRDA/ Project Authorities and facilitating teams on the potential of ITK in natural resource management.</p> <p>Build the capacities of facilitating teams on the methods of exploring, identifying and understanding ITK.</p>

15. Preparation of Group/ Individual level Action Plans

Process Modification	<p>Ensure that the interventions and contents of the action plans are determined by the local communities. The facilitating teams should motivate the communities to make appropriate and informed choices. For ensuring this process, both the facilitating teams and community members should be properly oriented on the potential of watershed development projects.</p> <p>DRDA/ Project Authority has to create enabling environment for facilitating open-ended planning processes that are in tune with</p>
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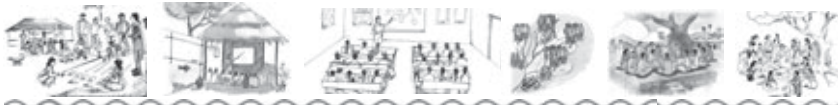
	<p>the felt needs of the community. The planning process need to be a continuous one and flexible. The planning methodologies also should be in tune with this philosophy.</p>
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16. Discussion on Non Negotiables

Process Modification	<p>The contribution from user groups as a non-negotiable is to be strongly supported by the DRDA/ Project Authorities. Unless the communities agree for this minimum and genuine contribution (during the initial stages itself); the project should not be sanctioned to such village.</p> <p>The form and quantum of contribution should be according to the convenience and affordability of the communities. There is no need for having standard norm across all villages all communities. Norms of contribution should not exploit the wage seekers and give an additional advantage to the resource rich families.</p>
Capacity Building Support	<p>DRDA/ Project Authorities should build the capacities of the facilitating agencies to ensure that participatory decision making takes place on the issues related to contribution. The facilitating agencies and DRDA/ Project Authorities should believe that the genuine contribution from users is an empowering process. In the background of heavily subsidized projects, convincing communities on this issue is a tough task. DRDA/ Project Authorities should ensure that no short cuts are invented by facilitating agencies to “complete the project activities”.</p> <p>Communication campaigns should have a clear focus and message on the need for genuine contribution of the communities.</p>

17. Preparation of designs and estimates

Process Modification	<p>There should be transparency of design and estimation processes. PIA/ WDT should adopt a more consultative process for preparing the estimates/ designs.</p>
Capacity Building Support	<p>Village level functionaries should be identified and oriented before the planning process is initiated. The orientation of the village level functionaries should cover technical aspects of the watershed development projects. These capacity building inputs would go a long way in creating local level knowledge systems in long run and appropriate support and transparency systems in short term.</p>
Financial Allocations	<p>DRDA/ Project Authorities should make sure that site specific designs are prepared which are in tune with the technical norms</p>



(instead of using standard stereo typed designs). DRDA/ Project authorities should also facilitate the process of technical support provision to the facilitating agencies.

18. Consolidation of Action Plans

Process Modification	<p>The local communities and facilitating agencies should collectively look at the action plans and verify the consistency of the action plan with the objectives of the project. If the action plan is lopsided and not-equitable, it should be revised with appropriate methodology.</p> <p>Such review meetings during the consolidation phase could avert major disasters of the project in terms of the content of the action plan, balanced-nature of the action plan, budgets and targeting. This process of review could also be a major learning experience for the community and facilitating agency in terms of ensuring the integration of core concerns of the projects.</p>
Financial Allocations	<p>DRDA/ Project Authorities should support such review and reflective exercises while approving the action plans.</p>

Approval of Action Plans

19.1. Criteria and Process of Prioritization of Activities in Action Plans

Process Modification	<p>The approval of action plans should be a meaningful exercise involving the community.</p>
Capacity Building Support	<p>The process of evolving criteria for prioritization can not just happen in one final meeting, in which the action plans were supposed to be approved. The facilitating agency should motivate the village leadership and institutions to think on issues related to prioritization, positive bias towards resource poor families, degraded resources and vulnerable communities. The instruments for reaching out to vulnerable groups should be designed during the planning process. When several such plans are consolidated and shared in the Grama Sabha/ watershed association meeting, the community is mentally ready to consider the issues related to equity, gender and transparency. They also could decide on non-negotiable conditions for project.</p>
Project Management/ Monitoring Functions	<p>The DRDA/ Project Authorities should ensure that such systems are in place from the very beginning of the project. Early indicators of such preparation by facilitating agency should be developed.</p>



	Based on the health of such indicators, the processes should be assessed.
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19.2. Approval/ Consent by Grama Sabha/ Watershed Association

Policy Change	<p>Define the roles of PRIs and Watershed based institutions.</p> <p>Differentiates the roles of governance and execution and allocate responsibilities to respective institutions.</p>
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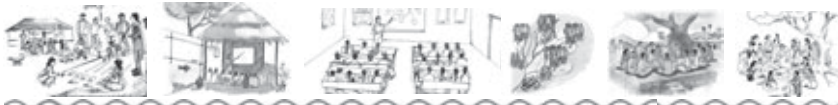
19.3. Submission and Modification of Action Plans (If necessary)

Process Modification	Flexibility is the core value in watershed development action plans. The revision of action plans is an inevitable step. Evolve several participatory processes to revise the action plans based on the experiences, needs, timeliness, availability of funds, and coverage of a particular category of population, etc.
Financial Allocations	DRDA/ Project Authorities should release the entire requisitioned fund to the watershed committee. In case there are any difficulties in the fund flows, the action planning process will be unrealistic.
Project Management/ Monitoring Functions	<p>Ensure that these changes are formally carried out with the involvement of concerned users and approval of Grama Sabha/ watershed association. Process of revising the action plans without the knowledge of the communities, but at the insistence of the project authorities should be resisted.</p> <p>DRDA/ Project Authorities should ensure that at no point of time, project works are stopped “due to lack of funds”. If this principle is followed, the revision of action plans would be administratively and financially supported.</p>

Implementation

20 & 21: Contribution, Formation of WDF and the Knowledge of Communities about WDF

Policy Change	<p>The DRDA/ Project Authorities should give adequate time and support to the facilitating agencies to engage in elaborate discussions and negotiations with the community. In several occasions, the community would be very reluctant to contribute, as they are used to get “free-lunches” in all other projects. In such situations, the facilitating agencies need to be tough with the communities and stand firmly on the principle - “genuine contributions from users is a non-negotiable”. In such occasions,</p>
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	<p>the DRDA/ Project Authorities should support the facilitating agency (morally and administratively).</p> <p>The DRDA/ Project Authorities should withdraw from those villages, where community is not willing to contribute genuinely, at any point of the project period. Such a provision strengthens the hands of the facilitating teams. Communities will also get to understand the importance of their share in development process.</p>
Process Modification	The need for developing WDF from genuine contributions should be established in all types of projects/ PIAs.
Project Management/ Monitoring Functions	The contribution related financial transactions should be streamlined to develop higher level of transparency.

22. Execution of Works

Process Modification	Processes that ensure local level participation, involvement and controls during the execution stage should be defined. Formations of sub committees, identification of local volunteers are few such processes.
Capacity Building Support	<p>Capacity building support is important during the entire project period, for enabling such processes. Capacity building inputs should not be limited to a particular phase of the watershed development project. The capacity building processes at this stage need to be very different and focus more on “on-the-job-training” type of interventions.</p> <p>Appropriate capacity building inputs should be organized at the local level by DRDA/ Project Authorities/ facilitating agencies on the roles and responsibilities of the local institutions in execution of the projects.</p>
Financial Allocations	Taking the support of technical support organizations for ensuring better quality works and local level participation is an important intervention at this stage.
Project Management/	DRDA/ Project Authorities should detect the absence of institutions at an early stage itself. When local institutions exist and are capable, the execution of plans would be participatory.

23. Measurements of Works

Capacity Building Support	The technical and managerial skills of the local functionaries need to be systematically developed to ensure their participation. In
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	the absence of such capacity building inputs, the local institutions tend to depend on the facilitating teams.
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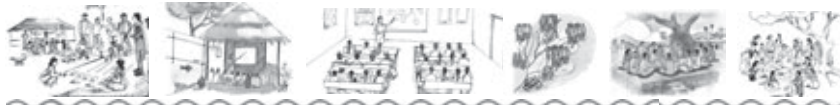
24. Making Payments and Maintenance of Records/ Finances

Process Modification	Transparency is a core value of the project. The measurements and payments should be in tune with the objectives and core values of the project.
Capacity Building Support	<p>Appropriate capacity building measures should be in place before the actual execution of the work begins. The local institutions should identify responsible persons maintaining the records and making payments.</p> <p>Good practices of fund management in which the local capacities were augmented and supported should be documented and converted into useful capacity building agenda.</p> <p>Facilitating agencies should be oriented to ensure that such institutional systems are in place before the project works are actually initiated. Facilitating agencies also should resist the temptation of taking up the direct responsibility of maintaining records and making payments. It might take longer time initially, but eventually the local institutions would learn to take up responsibilities of managing their own affairs.</p>
Project Management/ Monitoring Functions	DRDA/ Project Authorities should monitor this process and ensure that facilitating agencies are on track.

Post Project Issues

25. Completion of works and Extension of Project Period

Policy Change	Appropriate project phasing and related funding arrangements help to complete the project tasks within the project period. Policy support in terms of project management should be given for this funding arrangement.
Capacity Building Support	Sensitize and provide capacity building inputs to senior government officers on the role of civil society organizations and community based organizations in participatory development.
Financial Allocations	Administrative problems related to fund flows should be addressed. State/national level project monitoring should help to sort out the gaps in the fund flows.



26.1. Use and Management and Use of WDF

Policy Change	<p>DRDA/ Project Authorities should evolve appropriate mechanism and support systems for management of WDF. Lessons learned from the experiences should guide this process. It is important to realize the current amount of WDF is accumulated by the contributions of rural poor, mainly laborers in majority of cases. So the use of WDF should be in tune with the needs of poor and enhance their role in natural resource management.</p>
Capacity Building Support	<p>Build the capacities of watershed committees/ watershed associations to take decisions related to the use and management of WDF. They should believe that this fund is their own fund and they are responsible for using, managing and benefiting from the same.</p> <p>Facilitating agencies and DRDA/ Project Authorities should ensure that the institutional capacities are part of the core mandate. Financial aspects of the project should be part of capacity building processes.</p>

26.2. Management and Maintenance of Assets (On CPRs and Private Lands)

Policy Change	<p>The process of decision making on maintenance and management of assets and roles of PIA/ WC/Grama Panchayati should be clearly defined. In the absence of this, the village level institutions are not prepared to take care of the management of the assets created.</p> <p>The preparations for the post implementation stage should begin from the early stages of the project itself. The facilitating agency should prepare the members of the institutions to take up responsibilities of the project from the beginning.</p> <p>Plan for continuity of facilitating agencies rather than withdraw of these agencies.</p>
Capacity Building Support	<p>The management of assets on CPRs requires considerable attention and preparation of the institutions from the beginning of the project itself. The role of user groups and watershed committee/ Grama Panchayati should be well articulated and established during the planning and implementation stage itself. When such processes are not followed, the management of assets on CPRs will receive less attention. Even the systems for use of WDF could not be properly and formally established, by the local institutions.</p>



27. Withdrawal of Facilitating Agency

Policy Change	<p>Conceive “Consolidation Phase” of the watershed development project.</p> <p>Define clear objectives, roles and functions of different agencies including facilitating agencies and Grama Panchayati.</p> <p>Facilitate convergence and institutional strengthening for sustainability, growth and resource management by communities</p> <p>Attend to pending tasks even after completing the “works” part of watershed development project.</p>
Financial Allocations	Mobilize appropriate funding support to this phase needs.



Part -2

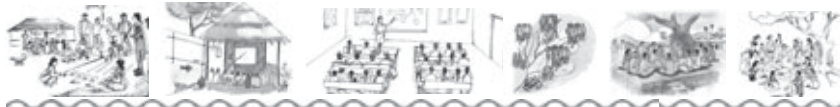
Redefining Watershed Approaches

Reality Check to Possibilities and Possibilities to Policies...

Based on the evidences of possibilities and good practices, the scope of the watershed framework and approaches are re-defined. While the focus on natural resource management agenda of watershed projects is retained, the potential for including related components and concerns are part of the process of re-defining the watershed approach. The missing dimensions of watershed approach are presented here, in the form of “key words”.

Adding Missing Dimensions

Equity, Gender, Participation, Sustainability and Growth, Belief in Institutional Approaches and Partnerships	Values
Conservation, Development and Management of Natural Resources, Productivity Enhancement of Natural and Human Resources, Livelihoods Promotion	Components
Regulated Use of natural resources and entitlements over land, water and forests	Rights over Resources
Funding; Independent Project Facilitating Agencies at state/ district/ project level; Learning opportunities; Monitoring and Action research; Hand Holding Support; Networking; Linkages; Fair Markets and Consumers of products from rain-fed farming systems, Innovations; Convergence.	Support Systems
Improved Capacities; Food Security; Diversification of Livelihoods; Employment Opportunities; Increased Incomes; Reduced Discrimination on Gender/Caste basis; Better Natural Resource Base.	Results



Complementary Projects for Additional and Related Themes

Forging Convergence with Similar Projects

There are several new and similar projects/ programs in the rural areas now. (Stree Sakti which establishes SHGs of women; Employment Guarantee Act which envisages taking up watershed based interventions while creating employment). It is important to develop systems for convergence between these and watershed projects as they operate on similar lines. The convergence is in the lines of planning, institutional arrangements, fund flows, human resource deployment and capacity building support.

Inclusion of Forest Lands

Absence of an agreement between forest department and rural development department on operational aspects of this policy support (in Guidelines) is a critical bottleneck in this regard. Both these departments should recognize the autonomy of user groups/ watershed committee in terms of fund utilization and rights over forest produce, while framing such operational aspects.

Inclusion of Tanks

The tanks in dry land regions need special attention. The watershed programme largely helps the farmers in the catchment areas of these tanks. The riparian rights of farmers at micro/ macro watershed level are of critical concern particularly in drought years. Similarly, institutions for groundwater management need to be created to utilize augmented groundwater in a sustainable manner. Since the investments for developing/ maintaining these tanks are huge, separate but complementary project on tanks in watershed areas should be conceived.

Rainfed Farming Systems

The watershed development Programme is facilitating a shift in agricultural practices that are commercial and water intensive. Market forces and a sense of pride attached to irrigated crops also facilitate this shift. Early indications warn that this shift may not be sustainable. Natural resource conservation related interventions should be followed up with interventions related to strengthening of rain-fed agriculture. Examples of such interventions are:

- Developing locally generated controlled and managed systems for seeds, fertilizers, pest management, processing etc.
- Marketing Support -pricing and procurement for public distribution systems of rain-fed crops.
- Diversification into horticulture/ animal husbandry that is suitable to rain-fed farms
- Field relevant action research on technologies, institutional and financial arrangements.



- ❑ The interventions for strengthening rain-fed agriculture range from field level facilitation to creating policy support.

New projects should be developed for inclusion of distribution of land (issuing land pattas) and developing assigned lands of dalits for productive use, irrigation and livelihoods support to dalit farmers (assignees) for sustainable farming systems.

Developing Assigned Lands

Rights Perspectives in Watershed Projects

Sometimes the forest lands are treated without the formal permission from the forest department. Similarly, there are villages with common lands, on which several poor families are dependent. The investments on the development and protection of forest lands/ CPRs did not yield useful results in a sustained manner, in the absence of institutional arrangements. Clarity on the ownership, management and usufruct rights over forest lands/ CPRs in the context of watershed projects should be developed. This calls for a clear policy from forest / revenue/ other concerned departments that enable the watershed communities to gain access and rights.

Rights Over Forest Lands/ Common Property Resources

The equity considerations can not be addressed without dealing with structural issues of inequities of the society. Conferring land rights to landless families is a major challenge for the facilitating agencies and state governments. Though this is a long drawn and conflict ridden approach, this is the only way to address structural aspects of equity.

Assignment of Land Rights

With the augmented groundwater resources, private investments also increased considerably. The competitive exploitation of augmented groundwater by individual farmers is not only leading to faster depletion of groundwater but also pushing the farmers into debt trap (as a result of heavy investments on bore wells and crop failures). It is important to develop appropriate institutional arrangements for regulated use of ground water. These institutions should have social sanction and legal backup for enforcing regulatory norms for ground water use. The rights of water need to be defined within the broad framework of regulatory norms, set by the local communities.

Rights over Water Resources- Social Regulation of Ground Water Use



Part - 3

Necessary Instruments

The participatory processes of the watershed development project are influenced by several factors. Policy and project framework are essential ingredients for defining the nature of process. However, several policies are only on paper, for want of appropriate and effective operational strategies and instruments. Some of such important “Necessary Instruments” are mentioned here:

Making Watershed Projects Manageable – Project Management Components

This is a strategy to make the watershed development project demand-driven. The DRDA/ Project Authorities have to make serious efforts to share the salient features of the watershed development project and explain the selection process of the same. The history of collective action, capacity of existing social capital and willingness of the villagers to abide by the non-negotiables of the project need to be assessed through this pre-selection process in an objective manner. Based on the demonstrated performance of the villagers on the above (and other) criteria, the villages could be selected.

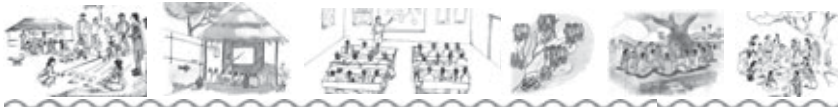
Pre- Selection Phase for Selection of Villages

This tests the commitment of villagers on the watershed approaches. A small portion of the watershed area would be developed as an entry point activity. The process of execution in this area should demonstrate the core concerns of the watershed approach. Based on the level of participation, transparency and other concerns, the village would be graduated to next phase.

Initial Phase and Probationary Phase

The villages which cross the above two levels come to this stage. In this phase, a detailed perspective action plan would be prepared and executed. The planning components and process during this phase also have to follow the similar process.

Main Implementation Phase



Consolidation Phase

In this phase, the watershed based institutions need to develop action plans for managing watershed resources for sustained flow of benefits and growth. Linkages/networking with other resource organizations; regulated and equitable use of natural resources would be the main focus.

Planning, execution, financial management, monitoring & review and capacity building support should continue through out the project, in all phases.

Making Watershed Institutions Functional – Plurality of Institutions

At the village level

The watershed development would be sustainable when the institutional base of the project is functional, dynamic and responsive to the emerging needs of the communities in resource management. No single institution (either Grama Panchayati or watershed committee) can and should function in isolation. Governance and executive functions should be separated for effective and transparent systems. Several user groups need to be established who have direct benefit from a particular activity/ asset. The facilitating agencies and DRDA/ Project Authorities should have necessary skills to create/ strengthen various types of institutions in the context of watershed development projects.

At the Project Facilitation Level

The facilitation of projects requires considerable commitment and capabilities. This is the single most critical factor that has a strong bearing on the success of the watershed development projects. It is important to develop appropriate selection criteria for selecting the “right” institution for this purpose. The facilitating agencies could be selected from among line departments, academic institutions, voluntary organizations, NGOs, Apex bodies of CBOS, PRIs or any other forms. It is important to realize that each category of institution has a particular advantage. It is unfair and unfortunate to dismiss any one category of facilitating agencies, from performing such role. The watershed policy should enable the entry of all qualified agencies from all categories of agencies. The selection process needs to be fair, transparent and objective.

At the Project Management Level

The watershed programs require considerable autonomy, professional skills and responsive management systems at the district/ state level. The financial management, capacity building support, monitoring and learning processes need to be fine-tuned to the participatory nature of the project. Independent and autonomous Project Management Offices should be established at district and state level, for managing watershed development projects. Government of India should meet the cost of running these offices (in the lines of DRDAs).



Making the Watershed Processes Better - Critical Support Systems

The watershed development projects have several components that need to be facilitated and supported. Several civil society organizations could play critical roles in this process. Though it is difficult to mention exact nature and role of civil society organizations, an indicative list of their roles is mentioned here.

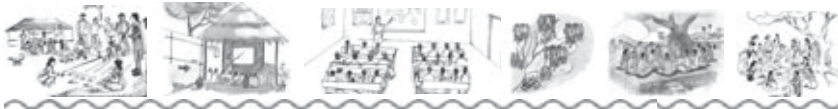
Civil Society Organizations

- As facilitating agencies
- As resource organizations
- As independent monitoring groups
- As action research groups
- As lobbying groups for creating policy support to watershed projects (affordable energy, fair markets for products of rain-fed farming systems, better quality inputs to the farming, facilitating linkages, any other)
- As organizers of wage seekers and farmers to gain greater control over watershed projects and agriculture systems
- Any other

It is observed that critical support provided by independent/ international donors made considerable difference in the watershed development projects. The projects supported by the donors have demonstrated new approaches and taught new lessons to the watershed practitioners and policy makers. Though some of these ideas/ interventions are not unknown, an inventory of themes is mentioned here towards which the donors could constructively contribute.

Independent Donors

- Provide supplementary budgets to the facilitating agencies to function in an established facilitating agency.
- Support the processes of “demand driven” process of village selection
- Facilitate the process of “advanced action planning” by communities
- Facilitate the processes related to “consolidation phase” of watershed projects
- Facilitate/ support the process of independent monitoring, action research and documentation of good practices



- Support the process capacity building support systems
- Support the process of creating fair markets for products of rural/ rain fed farming
- Support the process of creating watershed activists/watershed professionals on different themes
- Support the evolution of lobbying plat forms at district/ state/ national levels for better policies for watershed project
- Sensitization programs of senior government officers and leadership of facilitating agencies
- Any other

Capacity Building Support

Clear operational strategies should be developed for capacity building of different at actors involved in the watershed development projects. The delivery of capacity building inputs seems to be fairly unprofessional and misplaced. Autonomous capacity building support system should be developed for watershed development project that is fairly focused and professional. This capacity building support should be provided during different phases of the project to build necessary skills and orientation of the key actors.

Platform for Policy Advocacy and Policy Formulation

The policy framework of watershed development project should be re-visited, re-defined and re-articulated from time to time. Informed debates, regular monitoring, new developments/ policies on related themes have to be part of this process. Several actors need to contribute to this process and take active roles and responsibilities. This is a collective and collaborative agenda of central/state governments, peoples representatives, academic institutions, civil society organizations, NGOs, Donors, community members. It is important to create this “Platform for Policy Advocacy and Policy Formulation” at different levels. It is desirable that such platform is anchored within civil society organizations and seeks active partnerships with several concerned groups. Conducting action research on watershed policies, engaging in independent monitoring, taking up pilots, formulating state specific/ theme specific process guidelines could be part of the mandate of this platform.



Conclusions - Setting the Agenda

“Understanding Processes in Watershed Development Projects in India” is an attempt to draw the attention of policy makers, field level practitioners, analysts, facilitators, civil society organizations on the importance of “process centrality” in watershed development approaches. The process data generated from the field work, conducted in 55 watersheds in seven states of India was carefully recorded, quantified and analyzed. For this purpose, appropriate tools such as Process Index are also developed. Based on a systematic analysis of processes, need for entrenching participatory processes was stressed upon. For every cluster of key events, suggestions are made to improve the quality of processes. Through this process, the need for making the watershed development approach more robust and comprehensive was stressed. An attempt was made to suggest the new dimensions of watershed approach and necessary conditions to make the watershed approach more meaningful and effective at the ground level.

Articulating new needs and concerns is an on-going process. These expressions have to take the shape of new policies, projects and processes at the field level. It is important that several actors take responsibility of contributing to this process of policy formulation and making these policies work at the ground level. It is also important to understand the need for consistent and informed debate on watershed approaches among several key actors involved with this agenda. It is hoped that “Understanding Processes in Watershed Development Projects in India” supports this process and helps to set an agenda for these discussion and debate. It is important that these debates and discussions take place at several layers, levels and regions in a cohesive and coordinated manner, for producing a clear operational strategy for improving the policies, projects and processes of watershed development projects in India. It is important that civil society organizations are engaged in a decisive manner with this process. This “self-defined” role of civil society organizations in policy articulation, advocacy and lobbying for change of watershed approaches needs to be nurtured and strengthened through series of consultations, collaborative engagements, networking and partnerships with governments and communities. The study is a call for action, not a conclusion.



Annexure

Organisations involved in the study

WASSAN, Andhra Pradesh

Watershed Support Services and Activities Network (WASSAN), Hyderabad is an autonomous support organization, which conducted process studies on watershed development projects in Andhra Pradesh with the support of Government of Andhra Pradesh (2000 to 2003). These studies made a significant contribution to the formulation of "Process Guidelines of Watershed Development Projects in Andhra Pradesh (2002 and 2004)". WASSAN recognised the need for taking up similar initiative at the national level and contribute to the formulation of new generation watershed development policies in the country. ICEF supported this study. "Understanding Processes in Watershed Development Projects in India" is an outcome of these initiatives and thinking.

ICEF, New Delhi:

India Canada Environment Facility (ICEF), New Delhi provided funding support to this study. ICEF, New Delhi supported several innovative projects that demonstrated new ways of managing environmental resources by communities, in different parts of the country. Several of these projects provided important leads for new policies and programs related to conservation and management of environmental resources.

State Nodal Agencies:

This study was conducted in seven states of India, namely Madhya Pradesh, Chattisghad, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Utter Pradesh, Orissa and Nagaland. As a network based organization, WASSAN collaborated with state based resource organizations which were Nodal Agencies for conducting the process study in their respective state.

ARAVALI, Rajasthan:

ARAVALI is a resource organization working for creating better policy framework for development and enhancing the role of voluntary sector in this process. ARAVALI has strong partnerships with several NGOs and Government of Rajasthan.

Arthik Anusanthan Kendra, UP:

AAK is a grass root level voluntary organization engaged in community managed developmental processes in natural resources management, education, entitlements, and sustainable agriculture. AAK also implemented watershed development projects and combined land rights related issues within watershed projects.

AFPRO, Chattisghad:

Action for Food Production (AFPRO) is a national level technical support organization involved with several natural resource management projects across the country as a support organization. They pioneered watershed development projects on technical aspects in different parts of the country.

NCHSE, Madhya Pradesh:

National Center for Human Settlements and Environment, Bhopal is a state level voluntary organization engaged in several developmental initiatives at the state level. They have executed large number of watershed development projects in the state. They are also engaged in action research projects in the state.

PRADAN, Jharkhand:

Professional Assistance for Development Action, Jharkhand is a national level professional organization that has expertise in several rural development themes including natural resource management. They have innovated and established several models and approaches of community based developmental approaches. They work in several parts of the country and have strong collaborative partnerships with state governments and local NGOs.

OWDM, Orissa:

Orissa Watershed Development Mission, Orissa is a specially constituted mission by Government of Orissa, for managing watershed development projects in the state. OWDM manages several types of watershed projects in the state including DFID I supported Western Orissa Rural Livelihoods Project (WORLP) in selected districts of the state.

Directorate of Agriculture, Government of Nagaland:

Directorate of Agriculture is responsible for implementing several agriculture and allied development projects in the state of Nagaland. They are also responsible for implementing the watershed development projects in the state under Ministry of Agriculture.

Understanding Processes of Watershed Development Program in India

Report of the Study anchored by WASSAN and Facilitated by ICEF

Volume 1 : Birds Eye View of Processes: Status across States, Facilitators and Donors

Volume 2 : Process Index

Volume 3 : Indepth View of Critical Themes: Institutions, Finances and Equity

Volume 4 : Policies and Possibilities: Compilation of Good Practices

Volume 5 : Making them Better: Gap Analysis, Enabling &Disabling Factors And Recommendations

Volume 6 : Recommendations at a Glance

Volume 6 : Recommendations at a Glance

The fifth volume conducted a detailed and systematic analysis of processes. Gap analysis was conducted for each key event of the project management cycle. The designed and desirable processes were narrated followed by processes followed on the ground (most common and rare). These were analyzed to give a picture of critical concerns and implications. The enabling and disabling factors behind the processes were also mentioned. These insights were drawn from several sources – process (soft) data, hard data, discussions with the facilitators on the selected themes, case studies, policy changes in the state/ districts, etc. Based on such a thorough analysis of processes, recommendations were proposed for making the watershed process better. As a principle, all recommendations were proposed based on “evidence” on the ground. The evidence could be from a small number of watersheds or even a single watershed. The main idea was to pick up the “real experience” and “up scale” the lessons and principles through policy reform.

The set of recommendations are given in this volume for easy reference and are classified into different categories to indicate the nature of action required.



ARAVALI

