

PROCEDURAL APPROPRIATENESS AND EXACTION OF DISTRICT WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT UNIT (DWDU) REGARDING INTEGRATED WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (IWMP)

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ABSTRACT: *The efficient use of natural resources following watershed approach is fast increasing, as per capita land and water availability is decreasing over the years. Traditionally, watershed management was seen primarily as a structure driven programme only. Now a day, the watershed management has emerged a new paradigm for planning and management of land, water, and biomass resources with a sharp focus on social and institutional aspects beside biophysical ones. The initiatives under Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) include a much wider perspective driven by 'Watershed-Plus Approach'. It is a multi-pronged approach on the basis of viable options. Building Institutions and Partnerships, Scientific Prioritization of Watersheds, Participatory Micro Planning through Scientific Approach, Capacity Building, Livelihood Promotion, Monitoring and Evaluation, Impact Assessment were taken up as part of IWMP. The present research study depicts the experience on a Participatory and Scientific Watershed Management in the state of Gujarat. It represents synergy and convergence of resources from a range of stakeholders. Traditionally, watershed management was seen as a programme primarily to develop water harvesting structures i.e. check dams only. The initiatives under IWMP include a much wider perspective driven by watershed plus approach. It is a multi-pronged approach on the basis of viable options. Building Institutions and Partnerships, Scientific Prioritization of Watersheds, Participatory Micro Planning through Scientific Approach, Capacity Building, Livelihood Promotion, Monitoring and Evaluation, Impact Assessment were taken up as part of IWMP. This program has been entrusted the responsibility of improvement in soil and moisture conservation, afforestation, animal management and livelihood intervention. Whether it has really worked? It can be measured by its procedural appropriateness and impact on various social, economical and environmental aspects.*

Key Words: *Watershed, Integrated Watershed Management Programme, District Watershed development Unit*

Introduction:

Over the years, India has addressed the challenges of degradation of land resources, water scarcity, deforestation, and poverty. The rain-fed areas which constitute almost two-third of the cultivated lands of the country suffer the most from the degradation forces and suffer the most from the vagaries of nature. Rain-fed agriculture is complex, diverse, under invested, risky, vulnerable and distress prone. It is also noted that such areas can be made productive and profitable by devising technologies for rain water harvesting combined with modern agricultural practices. Against this backdrop, watershed management has emerged as a viable alternative for integrated management of resources to optimize the potential of rain fed areas facilitating improved agricultural productivity leading to poverty alleviation, food security, environmental protection, access to safe energy and drinking water facility as well.

Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) has to be implemented as per New Common Guidelines issued by Department of Land Resources (DoLR), Govt. of India in 2008. As per Common Guidelines, IWMP projects have to be implemented in three distinct phase's viz. Preparatory phase (1-2 years), Works phase (2-3 years) and Consolidation phase (1-2 years). This is a major outcome oriented initiative, which aims at sustainable livelihood promotion through management of local natural resources by involving local people in planning, implementation and monitoring of various interventions carried out in their respective areas. A National Rain-fed Area Authority (NRAA) has been created to frame policy guidelines and implementation strategies of participatory watershed management. Different watershed management programs have been converged under the Department of Land Resources (DoLR), Ministry of Rural Development and in each state for the effective implementation of IWMP; State Level Nodal Agencies (SLNA) has been established as per the guidelines framed by the said authority. To know exactness in procedural appropriateness followed by DWDU this study was undertaken.

Research Methodology:

The interview schedule was particularly developed with 51 questions regarding must do activities prescribed by National Rain-fed Area Authority (NRAA) for Procedural appropriateness and exaction of

District Watershed Development Unit (DWDU) regarding Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) as per Common Guidelines-2008. The personnel of DWDU, Surat interviewed and summarized findings.

Findings:

The major findings regarding procedural appropriateness and exaction of DWDU regarding implementation of IWMP considering a new common guidelines-2008 are enlisted as under;

❖ **FINDINGS IN FULL CONFORMITY WITH THE NEW COMMON GUIDELINES-2008:**

- A separate District Watershed Development Unit was established in 2009 for selection and execution of Integrated Watershed management Projects exclusively for the Surat district.
- Full time 'Project manager' was appointed with required qualification and necessary agreement between State Level Nodal Agency (SLNA) and DWDU.
- As per the guidelines "District Level Committee for Co-ordination and Collaboration (DLCCC)" has been formed headed by District Collector and having different representatives from "Line Departments" of the district.
- Separate Account for DWDU is in existence.
- Full time subject matter specialists were appointed viz., Technical Expert, Civil Engineer, Agricultural Expert, Community Mobiliser, Surveyor, Accountant and Management Information System (MIS) coordinator cum system analyst on contract basis.
- Identification and selection work of Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) including Forest Departments executed as prescribed norms in guidelines. Consultation for this was provided by Gujarat State Watershed Management Authority (GSWMA).
- DWDU provided IEC activities as well as technical supports like Geo-Informatics System (GIS) maps and guidance to all PIAs for preparation, organisation and execution of detail project reports (DPR) of concerned watershed project timely.
- Instruction from SLNA was followed and standard procedure adopted in PRA, participatory net planning (PNP), DPR formation and compilation of project reports with necessary convergence details etc. as per instruction of GSWMA.
- Training needs of the PIAs and watershed functionaries and capacity building Programmes provided through the organisations decided by SLNA (GSWMA).
- GSWMA appointed KVK-Surat, NAU-Navsari and AKRSP-Netrang for training and capacity building of watershed stakeholders in the Surat district. Execution done by DWDU as per instruction of SLNA.

❖ **FINDINGS THAT ARE PARTIALLY FULFILLED AND NEEDS FURTHER ATTENTION:**

- Exclusive 'District Data Cell' is established at district office to facilitate MIS and GIS activities linked up with all watersheds within district and state and central data portals. However, despite special provision for establishment and maintenance of district data cell in the budget it was found that the no separate fund was provided for the cell by CLNA.
- GSWMA taken keen interest in proper monitoring, controlling, evaluation and study of existing IWMPs. However, lacuna seen in use of GIS application and MIS portal at district level.
- Annual action plan (AAP) and five-year perspective plan prepared for every watershed project and district as a whole too. However time-by-time instructions and amendments through SLNA have to be incorporated with original plan. This creates variation in execution of the project works.
- 'Livelihood Generation Activities' those identified, planned and incorporated in DPRs were implemented in fragmented manner. Lacuna observed in adhering to proposed action plan.
- Some of the activities have to be executed in convergence with flagship programme of central and state governments like MGNREGA, SBM, RKVY and GGRC. However, strong coordination and collaboration is still awaited.
- Maintenance of documentation and generalization for the same in public portal requires more emphasis and transparency.
- Demand process of project fund is tedious and still depended on SLNA. This causes delay in transfer of project fund and sometimes project works have to be suffered a lot. Requirement of decentralization in fund demand process is necessary. Fund releasing was also irregular in nature and non-relevant with project planning; it should be release in accordance with original planning.

The above discussion has summarized in table form with the consideration of guidelines 'What Ought to be?' and 'What is at Present' compiled and presented in Table 1 given below;

TABLE 1: STATING THE DETAILS OF 'WHAT OUGHT TO BE' AND 'WHAT IS AT PRESENT' PROCEDURAL APPROPRIATENESS IN DWDU-SURAT.

Sr. No.	What Ought to be?	What is at present?
1	If the Area of IWMP is more than 25,000 ha then, separate dedicated DWDU should be established at District place	Separate DWDU-Surat is established in 2009
2	Full time Project manager should be appointed with required qualification and experience	Appointed
3	District Planning Committee should be formed for planning, coordination and Management of WDP at District	District Level Committee for Co-ordination and Collaboration (DLCCC) formed, headed by District Collector.
4	DWDU should have full qualified staff of Agriculture, Civil Engineer, Social Mobiliser and GIS-MIS coordinator including one female staff (3-4 subject matter specialists)	Appointed
5	Project Manager should sign contract with SLNA with Annual Action Plan for consecutive 3 years, It should be renewed on the base of performance	Initially it was done, no renewal, Review based on AAP
6	Setting up of District Data Cell, linked up with all watersheds within district and State and Central data Portals. Special provision of Grant for that	Settled but not separate grant provided
7	Identification of potential PIA, including Forest dept.	Done
8	Facilitation to prepare DPR with technical guidance and GIS application	GSWMA has provided and implemented by DWDU
9	Follow standard procedure in DPR formation, PRA etc.	Done
10	Participatory Net Planning and Compilation	Done
11	Identification and Promotion of Livelihood generation activities	Completed
12	Training and Capacity Building	GSWMA has appointed KVK-Surat and AKRSP(I) Netrang for that
13	Maintain documentation and smooth flow of fund	Depends on SLNA (GSWMA), does not Maintain properly
14	Convergence with different scheme	Planned in DPR, least executed
15	Proper Monitoring and Evaluation with technology	Lacking in use of GIS and MIS, also BHOOVAN website
16	Seek People's contribution and participation	Lacking in prescribed way, as work implemented by Contract

Source: Field Data 2017-18

❖ **OPINIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTERS:**

- Project Manager should be appointed on permanent basis or deputed from concerned departments rather to take from out sourcing. Also appointment should be line up with project duration. Frequent transfers affected project work. Also additional charge of another district given to the project manager hampers the progress and quality of the work.
- Agreement between DWDU and SLNA should be evaluated and renewed timely that should have been done after every three years as per the provisions of the guidelines.
- DLCCC should strictly adhere to the convergence activities in the planning.
- Frequent changes in the activities by PIAs and SLNA should be avoided as it may spoil participatory net planning made by beneficiaries and delay in execution of works.

- District data cell should be provided with specific grant for establishment and maintenance. The activities of the cell should be monitored and updated frequently by SLNA.
- Contractual appointment tends to frequent turnover of the subject matter specialists at PIA level and district level, which increases gap between planning and real execution of the works. It also increases training and capacity building cost. Such situations can be avoided by making permanent recruitment.
- Farm forestry, afforestation works and silvi-pasture development works should be completed in stipulated time through line departments.
- Grants should be provided as per planning in Annual Action Plan (AAP) without any delay.
- Training and exposure visit schedule should be fixed in core consultation with PIAs, watershed committees and DWDU.
- Lack of staff or appointment of unqualified staff hinders the proper achievement of objectives.
- Queries of MIS and GIS software should be solved in time.
- Project staff should not be engaged with other governmental activities. Also sufficient means of transportation should be provided.
- Convergence fund should be released as per AAP.

Conclusion:

Procedural appropriateness and exaction of DWDU in implementing the Integrated Watershed Management Programme remained satisfactorily as per New Common Guidelines-2008. However, improvement is required in some of the procedures.

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