

Institutionalization of the Participatory Approach Under the Watershed Programme a Menu of Mechanisms and Instruments

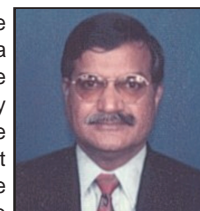
– S.P.Tucker, N.K.Sanghi, A.Ravindra and Ramachandrudu

INTRODUCTION

"We should participate in their plans rather than they participate in our plans" is now a well-accepted guiding principle, particularly in innovative projects that are concerned with sustainable development of natural resource. An increasing number of success stories, from a wide range of situations, is reinforcing the merit of the participatory approach. However, the upscaling of such an approach, particularly under government-funded projects, continues to be a challenge.

The initiatives taken by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) during 1995 and later on by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) during 1999 are indeed unique examples of upscaling the new paradigm under the watershed programme in India. Here, the thrust on a participatory

approach was given not only through adequate policy support but also through the provision of a series of mechanisms and instruments in the project guidelines. These steps have undoubtedly helped orient different stakeholders towards the new paradigm. It is, however, being realized that the types of operational mechanisms in the existing guidelines are still insufficient to institutionalize the participatory approach in the desired manner. It is also being realized that adequate administrative instruments are also not available in these guidelines, with the result that functioning of even the existing mechanisms is not at a satisfactory level (Table1).



"Institutionalization of participation may become easier if different stakeholders adopt 'win-win approach' in letter and spirit"
– S.P. Tucker

Table 1. Overall functioning of existing mechanisms under the ongoing watershed programme funded by MoRD in Andhra Pradesh during 1996-2002

Sl. No.	Type of mechanisms in the guidelines	Overall functioning (*)	Remarks
1.	Organization of community into a sustainable institutional setup	R	Post-project sustainability of community-based organisation (CBO) is very low
2.	Capacity building of different stakeholders	R	Low emphasis was given on management, social and process aspects
3.	Direct funding to the community	G	By and large, people were able to satisfactorily manage the developmental fund during the project period
4.	Demand-driven and participatory planning emphasis	Y	High cost structures have received more
5.	Flexibility in choice of technology emphasis	Y	Exogenous technologies have received more
6.	Contributory approach abourers/ equipment suppliers	Y	Contribution was deducted out of wages of I
7.	Implementation of works by people themselves	Y	Contractors were not involved, but contractorship has still been operating
8.	Involvement of NGOs as PIA district	Y	Varies from state to state and from district to
9.	Creation of corpus (WDF) for repair of community-oriented structures	Y	The WDF is lying unused at most places (even if some structures need repair)
10.	Provision of revolving fund (RF) for livelihood development	R	Circulation of revolving fund (RF) is very low
11.	Democratic decentralization in decision making	Y	Functioning of DWAC, WC, etc.. needs considerable improvement

* R = Red (poor functioning); Y = Yellow (average functioning);

G = Green (good functioning)

2. Emerging innovations in participatory management of the watershed programme

In the present article, innovative mechanisms and modalities emerging from recent field experience in various projects have been consolidated. Many of these modalities have already been tested and found successful while others are at different levels of consideration.

For the sake of convenience, these innovations have been categorized into different themes as per details given below. While listing out new mechanisms under each theme, the reference of some of the concerned organizations has also been given so that further details may be assessed separately.

2.1 Management of funds available under the project

Broadly speaking there are four types of funds under the watershed programme, namely (i) fund for developmental

component, (ii) fund for management component, (iii) revolving fund and (iv) corpus fund. Out of these, the first three types are generally provided by the funding agencies, whereas the corpus fund is evolved largely through the contribution made by participating families towards implementation of various works/ measures. Some of the useful modalities related to management of above funds are indicated below.

♦ Fund for developmental component

♦ The developmental component (which consists of 75-80 percent of the total fund) may be divided into two sub-components, namely: (i) Natural Resource Development (50 percent) and (ii) Livelihood Development (25-30 percent) as being adopted by MoA-Delhi, KAWAD-Bangalore, and APRLP – Hyderabad.

- ◆ A vigilance cell may be created at district level for facilitation of social auditing at field level (DPAP – Kurnool).
- ◆ The responsibility of addressing audit paras could be owned by Watershed Association and Watershed Committee (MoA – Delhi).
- ◆ Bi-monthly system of financial planning and internal auditing of accounts could be adopted through contractual assistance of an experienced resource person at district level and trained book keeper at watershed level (as being adopted in World Bank-funded watershed project in Karnataka).



- ◆ Wherever possible, the need for an external co-signatory on bank cheques could be eliminated, particularly at the terminal end of the fund allocation under the programme i.e. SHG or federation of SHG at village level, as being adopted by ITDA – Adilabad, VIP – ahaboobnagar, BDO – Salooni, OUTREACH – Chittoor, MYRADA – Bangalore.
- ◆ Funds could be transferred from one project to another project if utilization is poor on account of contributory approach/participatory approach (MoA - Delhi).
- ◆ **Fund for management component**
- ◆ The management component (which consists of 20-25 percent of the total project fund) may be shared at three levels, namely: district level, PIA level and committee level for each of the three components, namely: administration, community organization and training programme (MoRD – New Delhi , MoA – New Delhi)
- ◆ Actual release of these funds could be made against the approved action plan rather than by reimbursing it against the completion of a particular activity (as being proposed by APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ **Corpus fund**
- ◆ Utilization of the corpus fund (for repair of community oriented structures) could be started during the project period so that the community gets accustomed to its proper utilization (MoA – Delhi).
- ◆ Corpus fund may be used even for production enhancement activities, livelihood development, etc. (as being proposed by APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ **Revolving fund**
- ◆ Rotation of revolving fund may be done not only within a particular SHG but also between different SHGs. (MYRADA – Bangalore, MoA guidelines, and APRLP – Hyderabad)
- ◆ Revolving fund may be used for both non-land based livelihoods and for land-based livelihoods (MYRADA – Bangalore, MoA guidelines, and APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Release of RF may be routed through a federation of SHGs at village level and against approved micro-plan (APLRP – Hyderabad, DPIP – Chittoor).

2.2 Management of technological aspects under the project

Under the changing paradigm new concepts are emerging on technological as well as management aspects. There is a need to integrate them in the overall management of the project in order to harmonize new technologies with the changing social realities. It has also been observed that some of the social issues related to participation of people, equity for resource-poor families (RPF), etc. could be addressed better through proper modification in the technological design, changing the location of measures, modifying the sequence of operations etc. Some of the modalities emerging out of field experience are indicated below.

- ◆ Flexibility may be provided in the ridge to valley approach (in which development of land and water resource is to be carried out only in those fields for which farmers are willing to pay advance contribution). In case any farmer in the upper field does not come forward, the measures may be implemented in lower fields after suitably modifying the technology. The upper farmer should, however, be welcome to join later if he/she gets motivated (MYRADA – Bangalore, KAWAD – Bangalore, MANAGE – Hyderabad, OUTREACH – Chittoor, MoA – Delhi).
- ◆ Need-based soil harvesting structures could be constructed in a drainage course so that the bed area may be converted into a productive asset, rather than constructing a series of gully checks from top to bottom that will only serve to reduce bed erosion (MANAGE – Hyderabad, RWDP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Investment could be made in a wide range of water-harvesting structures (including exogenous and indigenous options), to meet diverse needs of community members within a given watershed (MANAGE – Hyderabad).
- ◆ The concept of social fencing in common land could be simplified through a ban on goat-keepers carrying axes (rather than a ban on grazing / lopping by goat) particularly in situations where the goat population in the watershed is low (APPS – Anantapur).

2.3 Organisation of the community into a new institutional setup



In a large number of watersheds, the project management principles (namely systematic planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) related to this component are not adopted, with the result that the community is not organized properly, nor are the funds available for this purpose used efficiently. Therefore, this component is presently the weakest link in the chain. It is now widely recognized that sustainability of physical structures depends heavily upon sustainability of social structures created under the project. Out of the four types of structures, namely, Self-Help Groups (SHG), User Groups (UG), Watershed Association (WA) and Watershed Committee (WC), only SHGs are found sustainable beyond the project period. Some of the innovations which are helpful in improving sustainability of above social structures are indicated below.



- ♦ Organization of SHGs of not only women members but also of men (KAWAD – Bangalore, GVT – Bhopal, DPIIP – Chittoor, PRAWARDA – Bidar, SERP – Hyderabad, WESE – Hyderabad and many others).
- ♦ Organization of UGs by drawing members out of SHGs (DPIIP – Chittoor, APRLP – Hyderabad)
- ♦ Improving the functioning of WA either through organization of habitation-based sub-associations where more than one habitation is involved or through formation of a separate advisory body if the size of the association is too large. (GVK – Chittoor, RDT – Anantapur, and DPAP – Nalgonda).
- ♦ Improving the functioning of WC through nomination of its chairperson and secretary from SHGs, and through rotation of office bearers on term basis (which may usually be two-year terms). (OUTREACH – Chittoor, KAWAD – Bangalore, KWDP – Karnataka).
- ♦ Organization of SHG federation at village level (which could be considered as a sub-committee of watershed programme) for facilitation of equity-oriented development of natural resource and for management of revolving fund for livelihoods. (APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ♦ Increasing the frequency of WA meetings (preferably on monthly basis) in order to facilitate downward accountability of WC to the overall community of the watershed (CRD – Hyderabad).
- ♦ Minimizing political conflicts by including representatives with all political affiliations in the management bodies of WA and WC rather than from only the majority party (GVK – Chittoor, RWDP – Hyderabad).
- ♦ Giving preference to those members in the management bodies (WC) that are active in SHGs, particularly in the case of women members and those who belong to SC/ST.
- ♦ Delay in organization of WC, which may be done after organizing sufficient number of SHGs and UGs (APRLP – Hyderabad, KAWAD – Bangalore).
- ♦ Balanced empowerment of WC and WA through clarity in roles and responsibilities (MoA – Delhi).
- ♦ Empowerment of labourers by organizing them into SHGs and associations at village level (GVK – Chittoor).
- ♦ Use of Information Technology by federation of SHGs at mandal level (WESE – Hyderabad, CEAD – Adilabad, MANAGE – Hyderabad).
- ♦ Use of experienced practitioners as trainers for promoting new SHGs in the existing villages or nearby villages (KAWAD – Bangalore).

2.4 Capacity building of different stakeholders

This is another weak link in the chain. The project management principles indicated in the case of community organization are not adopted properly for this component either. Some of the innovative mechanisms / modalities emerging on this aspect are indicated below.

- ♦ Adoption of handholding approach through long-term and repeated contacts between trainers and trainees (WOTR – Ahmednagar, DSC – Ahmedabad, MANAGE – Hyderabad, KAWAD – Bangalore, APRLP – Hyderabad, WASSAN – Hyderabad).
- ♦ Integration of capacity-building input with project cycle as well as with project monitoring system (bilateral projects in the country, RWDP – Andhra Pradesh, WASSAN – Hyderabad).
- ♦ Separation of capacity-building phase from main implementation phase (in which apart from the training programmes being carried out, a small block with an area of 50-100 ha is planned and implemented before the main implementation phase). Under this approach, the capacity-building phase may be treated as a probation phase (WOTR – Ahmednagar, APRLP – Hyderabad, MoA – Delhi, MoRD – Delhi).
- ♦ Focus on social and management aspects for proper facilitation of participatory approach (DSC – Ahmedabad, MANAGE – Hyderabad, APRLP – Hyderabad, WOTR – Ahmednagar, WASSAN – Hyderabad).
- ♦ Intensive training of different stakeholders in participatory processes besides technological aspects (APRLP – Hyderabad, MANAGE – Hyderabad, WASSAN – Hyderabad).
- ♦ Release of training fund at three levels (i.e. state level, district level and PIA level) as per the approved action plan so that the concerned organization may coordinate the specific part of the training programme in a convenient manner (MoRD – Delhi, MoA – Delhi, APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ♦ Identification of autonomous resource organizations at three levels, namely: state level (for orientation of project directors and members of DWAC from different districts); district level (for orientation of different PIAs and WDTs) and sub-district level (for orientation of CBOs under the watershed programme) as being done by APRLP – Hyderabad, WOTR – Mahaboobnagar, GVT – Bhopal, WASSAN – Hyderabad.
- ♦ Building the capacity of a pool of resource persons which could be available on freelance basis for different resource organizations (WASSAN – Hyderabad).



2.5 Planning of programme through demand-driven approach

A demand-driven approach is the key to facilitation of people's participation with respect to development of natural resources. The steps and procedures under this approach are very different than those used in the conventional approach. Some of the useful operational aspects adopted by innovative organizations related to demand driven approach are indicated below.

- ♦ Preparation of strategic plan through participatory auditing of natural resource before starting the preparation of an annual action plan (KAWAD – Bangalore, MoA – Delhi).
- ♦ Participatory situation analysis by community members themselves through pictorial charts (APRLP – Hyderabad).

- ◆ Integration of macro-level information (obtained through scientific survey and remote sensing) with micro-level information (obtained through PRA exercises) for preparation of strategic plan and an annual action plan (ISPWD – Karnataka, KAWAD – Bangalore).
- ◆ Allocation of funds for different sub-components through PRA exercises in each watershed before starting the preparation of an annual action plan (MoA – Delhi).
- ◆ Preparation of an annual action plan through open-ended application forms (MANAGE – Hyderabad, MoA – Delhi).
- ◆ Net planning/block planning system for harmonious integration of demand-driven approach with ridge-to-valley approach (WOTR – Ahmednagar, RDT – Anantapur).
- ◆ Preparation of the annual action plan through the appreciative enquiry method (MYRADA – Bangalore, APMASS, Hyderabad)

2.6 Implementation of programme by people

Under the participatory approach, works are implemented by the people without involving contractors, so that their sense of ownership of output as well as management of the development fund could be improved. Field experience has shown that, although formal contractors are not involved in the programme, contractorship is continuing. Some of the promising modalities to address the above problem are indicated below.

- ◆ Direct payment by WC to each service provider / labourer as per SSR, rather than through the nodal person who normally pays as per the market rate (MYRADA – Bangalore, OUTREACH – Bangalore, MANAGE – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Flexibility in modification of action plan during implementation phase provided additional cost (if any) is paid by the concerned users (MoA – Delhi).
- ◆ Implementation of works through mature SHG and keeping the savings, if any, in the common fund of the group (ITDA – Adilabad).
- ◆ Improving the quality standards in the construction of community-oriented structures through formal certification by outside experts. Expenses for this purpose (as well as for writing of measurement book for such structures) to be booked under the developmental component (MoA - Delhi).
- ◆ De-selection of PIAs in the middle of the project period in case their performance continues to be poor on account of participatory/contributory approach (MoA – Delhi).

2.7 Collection of genuine contribution for developmental work

A contributory approach is very crucial for institutionalization of peoples' participation in a large-scale development programme. At many places, the level of contribution is very low. Also it is often paid by is it labourers? / other input providers out of the wages/input cost. Some of the useful modalities and instruments for proper facilitation of contributory approach are indicated below.

- ◆ Collection of genuine contribution from actual users rather than deducting it from wages of labourers / other service providers (MYRADA – Bangalore, RDT – Anantapur, OUTREACH – Chittoor, MANAGE – Hyderabad)
- ◆ Releasing the payment to labourers/other service providers, only after receiving satisfactory completion certificate from concerned users who have paid the contribution in advance (MANAGE – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Differential rate of contribution for different items (KAWAD –

Bangalore, MoA – Delhi).

- ◆ Incremental rate of contribution from resource-rich families (RRF) (under consideration in APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Development of private land and water resource through loan / revolving fund from SHG (MYRADA – Bangalore).
- ◆ Collection of higher rate of contribution for development of natural resource [KAWAD – Karnataka (10-50%), RWDP – Hyderabad (25-50%), TBS – Alwar (upto 66%), MARI – Warangal (upto 60%), OUTREACH – Chittoor (5-50%)].
- ◆ Collection of advance contribution in cash, kind and labour depending upon the convenience of the participant (KAWAD – Bangalore, RDT – Anantapur, APRLP – Hyderabad, MANAGE – Hyderabad).

2.8 Maintenance of community-oriented structures / measures

Under the participatory approach, the responsibility for repair and maintenance of community-oriented structures should be owned by the community so that its sustainability is high. Some of the important mechanisms and instruments evolved by innovative organizations are indicated below.

- ◆ The corpus fund collected as contribution from participants may be used as a long term loan for this purpose (MoA – Delhi).
- ◆ Formal ownership of community-oriented structures may be given to concerned UGs so that their sense of ownership increases (KAWAD – Bangalore).
- ◆ UG members could also pay cess charges/user charges on six-monthly basis to be used for repair of structures in future (under consideration by KAWAD – Bangalore).
- ◆ Preference could be given towards earthen structures in place of cement structures, and towards low-cost structures in place of high-cost structures (MOA guidelines; Indo-DANIDA Watershed Project in Karnataka, APRLP – Hyderabad).

2.9 Development of land-based and non-land based livelihoods



Under the watershed programme, the livelihood component is either not included or is given low priority. In many cases, the efficiency regarding management of this component is also low due to lack of proper organization of the community and inadequate methodology. Some of the useful mechanisms for overcoming the above problem are indicated below.

- ◆ Organization of livelihood groups and commodity groups by drawing members out of SHGs so that technical input from outside experts could be facilitated conveniently (APRLP – Hyderabad, DPIIP – Chittoor).
- ◆ Facilitation of livelihood-based development of natural resources instead of area-based development, so that sustainability of investment is high (under consideration in APRLP – Hyderabad).

- ◆ Improving the technical content in the livelihood component through outsourcing of specific aspects to the experienced organizations / freelancers (KWDP – Karnataka, KAWAD – Bangalore, APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Provision of matching revolving fund to mature SHGs against approved micro-plans, particularly for development of those livelihoods which are economical only at lower rate of interest than the banks (MYRADA – Bangalore, MoA – Delhi, MANAGE – Hyderabad, APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Utilization of revolving fund for filling the gap of only those technological inputs about which families are already aware but could not adopt previously due to lack of financial resources (APRLP – Hyderabad, APPS – Anantapur).
- ◆ Focused attention on collective marketing of produce so that overall profitability of families is increased even in areas where chances for quantum jump in productivity are low (APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Allocation of usufruct in favour of resourcepoor families for the biomass in common land so that need-based micro-enterprises could be developed (APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Provision of community-oriented borewells to diversify the existing farming system as per the market demand (AP-WELL – Hyderabad).

2.10 Social regulation against overexploitation of common property resource

At present major attention is paid towards new development of natural resources rather than sustainable management of already developed resources. Open access is considered to be the biggest factor responsible for degradation of common property resource. This has happened not only in case of biomass degradation in common land but also with regard to overexploitation of ground water resource. Open access is primarily due to lack of allocation of specific rights to the deserving members of the community, particularly in case of community-oriented natural resource. Some of the modalities evolved by innovative organizations on the above aspect are given below

A. For management of ground water

- ◆ Utilization of newly developed water (under the project) resource for crops requiring less water and also through efficient methods of irrigation (Indo-German project – Maharashtra, AP-Well – Andhra Pradesh).
- ◆ Ban on digging of private borewells in the project area (Hind Swaraj – Ahmednagar, Hyure Bazar Watershed – Ahmednagar, GVT– Chittoor).
- ◆ Ban on direct pumping of standing water near those check dams/tanks that are meant for recharging of groundwater (MYRADA – Chitradurga, WOTR – Ahmednagar)
- ◆ Demarcation of buffer zone around drinking water borewells (KAWAD – Bangalore).

B. For biomass in common land

- ◆ Natural regeneration of biomass in common land (through social fencing) for at least 2-3 years before investing heavy external funds on development of common land or plantation of trees (APPS – Anantapur, VANA – Anantapur, CPPS – Cuddapah, Jan Jagriti – Anantapur, GVT – Chittoor).
- ◆ Formal allocation of tree patta to UGs belonging to resourcepoor families (KWDP – Karnataka).

- ◆ Block plantation of economically viable trees (which provide non-timber forest produce) like tamarind, mango, and cashew etc. in common land and handing over its usufruct to Panchayat / individual families (DRDA – Anantapur, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam districts).
- ◆ Plantation of high value trees and allocation of the usufruct to a society at village level having equal representatives from all families in the village (NTGF – Anand).
- ◆ Replacement of Joint Forest Management (JFM) with Community Forest Management (CFM) as being done in the World Bank-funded project in Andhra Pradesh.

2.11 Equity for resource-poor families

Equity has not yet become an important agenda in most watersheds, particularly those that are funded under the public sector. It is also realized that this aspect may not get addressed on its own since the programme deals with development of land and water resources, which are mainly owned by resource-rich families. Some innovative organizations have however been working on the equity aspect. Major learning that emerged out of these experiences is mentioned below.

- ◆ Allocation of a specific proportion of the project fund for equity-oriented development of natural resource (under consideration in APRLP – Hyderabad)
- ◆ Bargaining for equity while developing private fallow land owned by RRF. For this purpose long term lease of above land may be made in favour of Resource Poor Families (RPF) after development of land (DDS – Medak, MVF – Ranga Reddy).
- ◆ Allocation of usufruct exclusively to women SHG for tree component developed under the project in common land (Jan Jagriti – Anantapur).
- ◆ Development of watershed exclusively for resource poor families (DDS – Medak).
- ◆ Digging of community borewells for resource poor families to cultivate only low water requiring crops and to adopt efficient methods of irrigation (AP-WELL – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Priority given towards recharging of community wells/borewells owned by RPF (APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Development of assigned patta land and other land owned by RPF on priority basis (APRLP – Hyderabad, RWDP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Priority given towards construction of earthen structures rather than to cement structures for development of water resource (APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Development of natural resource only through involvement of locally available labourers (MoRD – Delhi, WASSAN – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Development of natural resource through food for work (being adopted in many states) through assistance from GOI and also projects funded by the NGO-World Vision.

2.12 Empowerment of women

Participation of women in the watershed programme is negligible in most watersheds. This is in spite of the fact that women play a key role in management of natural resources and livelihoods. It is also being realized that in rainfed areas, attention of men toward management of natural resource (as well as livelihoods) is gradually reducing due to seasonal migration and alternative opportunities in urban areas.



It has therefore been proposed by some of the innovators that a participatory approach may flourish better in situations where women play a key role in the management committee of the watershed projects. This may of course, happen if they are empowered properly. Some of the innovations emerging from various organizations on this aspect are presented below.

- ◆ Prioritising the organization of SHGs of women who are not part of any group (APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Organization of focused exposure visit of women members to relevant success stories (APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Investment of project fund on women-specific agendas such as drinking water, development of livestock, fodder, and vegetables. (APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Management of watershed programme at village level through all women committee (CRD – Hyderabad, MYRADA – Bangalore, OUTREACH – Chittoor).
- ◆ Organization of federation of women SHGs at cluster/mandal/block level (WESE – Hyderabad, OUTREACH – Chittoor, CEAD – Adilabad, DPIP – Andhra Pradesh).
- ◆ Operation of self-bank by federation of women SHGs at mandal / block level (DRDA – Ranga Reddy and many other districts).
- ◆ Strengthening of federation of women SHGs through computer-based management system (MANAGE – Hyderabad, DRDA – Ranga Reddy and many other districts).
- ◆ Involving federation of SHGs as a PIA in the watershed programme (APRLP – Hyderabad, SERP – Hyderabad, OUTREACH – Chittoor, CRD-Hyderabad).

2.13 Administrative and Management aspects under the project

The present shift in the paradigm towards participatory approach demands a major change in the attitude, roles and responsibilities of persons associated with project management. However, significant improvements are being made in this respect by some of the innovative practitioners in order to meet the new demand. The major learning that has emerged on above aspect is summarized below.

- ◆ Allotment of watersheds to PIAs in batches based upon the performance of PIAs and WCs (CRD – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Foreclosing of projects that perform poorly during the probation period (WOTR – Maharashtra, MoRD guidelines, MoA guidelines).
- ◆ Decentralization in the allocation of funds under management component up to PIA and WC levels (MoRD – Delhi, MoA – Delhi).
- ◆ Establishment of a full-time project management unit at district level for proper supervision and monitoring of the watershed project (CRD – Hyderabad).

- ◆ Concurrent evaluation of programme through external resource persons (Bilateral project, World Bank funded project).
- ◆ A computer-based decision support system may be adopted at district level to minimize the problem caused by frequent transfer of head of the project (WOTR – Maharashtra, APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Improvement in the guidelines through GOI orders and office circulars from time to time based upon the feedback under the project (KAWAD – Bangalore, CRD – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Separate project support units could be established at state and district levels for evolving and promoting new strategies, approaches and methodologies (CRD – Hyderabad, APRLP – Hyderabad, Bilateral projects, NGO-funded projects).
- ◆ Preparation of long-term perspective plan and prioritization of watershed sites on the basis of commonly agreed criteria to facilitate objectivity in selection of sites (CRD – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Self-selection of watersheds and PIAs through fulfillment of conditions/resolutions by the community in the initial stage (WOTR – Ahmednagar, Hind Swaraj – Ahmednagar).
- ◆ Separate allocation of funds for preparing a 'feasibility report' before sanctioning the main implementation phase (Indo-German project – Maharashtra).
- ◆ Further decentralization of the watershed programme by shifting from committee-centered approach to group-centered approach to avoid excessive concentration of resources and activities around Watershed Committee (OUTREACH – Chittoor, MYRADA – Bangalore).
- ◆ Preferential investment of project funds on indigenous technical knowledge, particularly for development of natural resource (OUTREACH – Chittoor, MYRADA – Bangalore, MANAGE - Hyderabad)
- ◆ Gradual change from project mode to programme mode to provide an antidote for target-oriented development (MYRADA – Bangalore, APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Provision for a matching revolving fund through mature SHG to provide an antidote for subsidy-oriented development (MYRADA – Bangalore, MoA – Delhi, MANAGE – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Decentralization in technical sanctioning of proposals for natural resource development (CRD in Andhra Pradesh, MoA – Delhi).
- ◆ Preparation of design and estimate of costly structures by freelancers The charges for this purpose may be met out of developmental component (MoA – Delhi).
- ◆ Institutional reforms may be considered by govt. departments through establishment of project support unit, project management unit, linkage with autonomous institutions, registration under society act, etc.(APRLP – Hyderabad, ISPWD – Karnataka, KWDP – Karnataka, RWDP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Withdrawal strategy may be facilitated during early stages of the project (GVT – Bhopal, KWDP – Karnataka, ISPWD in Karnataka).
- ◆ Monitoring of processes may be carried out in early stages and by the CBOs themselves (APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Total project period may be divided into three phases: community organization phase (2 years); capacity building phase (1 year) and main implementation phase (3 years).

- ◆ Hiring of subject matter specialists may be done as per need in each phase of the project.
- ◆ Monitoring of participatory processes may be started in the early stages for promoting sustainability under watershed programme (APRLP – Hyderabad, WASSAN – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Self-monitoring of processes may be facilitated through pictorial charts (APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ CBOs may be encouraged to become PIAs to avoid excessive dependence on GO/NGO (as PIA). For this purpose, GO/NGO may help in organizing the CBOs and building their capacity without becoming a PIA (Planning Commission, Government of India, SERP – Hyderabad, APRLP – Hyderabad).
- ◆ Adoption of project management principles (i.e. planning, implementation, monitoring, etc.) for not only development components (namely natural resource development, livelihood development) but also for management components (like community organization and training programme, etc.)

2.14 Size of unit area for development of a watershed

With the increased emphasis on participatory approach, the unit size of watersheds has drastically reduced (from thousands of hectares in the 1980s to only 500 ha. now). This is undoubtedly a desirable trend, since genuine participation of people in all stages of the project (planning, implementation, monitoring etc.) is more likely to take place only when the size of project (in physical and financial terms) is manageable. There is however an inherent conflict in the adoption of smaller size on account of differential requirement of unit area for development of other components (land, water, livelihood, social institutions etc.).

While unit size could still be reduced (with an advantage) for components like land development, livelihood development, and social institution development), the unit area needs to be much larger than the present area for meaningful development of water resource as well as for development of common / forest land. The conflict between physical boundaries of a watershed and social boundaries of a village remains unaddressed if 500 ha. is considered as the size of watershed in all places. Important innovations emerging on these aspects are briefly indicated below.

- ◆ Size of unit area may be kept flexible depending upon the type of component to be developed, i.e. the existing unit of 500 ha may be sufficient for development of private land resource. The whole village may have to be considered as a unit for development of livelihoods/commodities through SHG/ LG. A cluster of villages may however be considered as a unit for development of common land. Likewise, a cluster of a few micro-watersheds may be considered as a unit for development of water resource. These types of adjustments may have to be made particularly for preparing the strategic plan and annual action plan.

2.15 Convergence of different programmes

The watershed programme deals with a wide range of activities which cut across different departments/organizations. The budget allocation under the project is able to meet only part of the requirement of the area/community. The need for convergence of different organizations/schemes is well recognized but sustainable

modalities are not yet in place. Useful pointers on this aspect are indicated below.

- ◆ Convergence of different schemes may be made around CBOs rather than around a nodal department (APRLP – Hyderabad, KAWAD – Bangalore).
- ◆ An inter-departmental advisory committee may be constituted to facilitate policy reforms (SERP – Hyderabad, APRLP – Hyderabad, KAWAD – Bangalore).
- ◆ Exposure visits of senior officers, policy makers, etc may be made in the ongoing watershed programme so that new learning could be upscaled in the ongoing programmes of different departments (KAWAD – Bangalore, APRLP – Hyderabad, CRD – Hyderabad).

3. Overall Recommendations

Institutionalization of participatory approach is a crucial requirement for natural resource management, particularly under the government-funded programme. The new paradigm, though it has been widely accepted, is still in the initial stages with respect to its design and development. A wide range of professionals and funding agencies are currently exploring ways and means of upscaling the above approach. New learning is emerging that needs to be synthesized and institutionalized on a regular basis. The following specific steps may be taken for achieving the above objective.

- ◆ Refinement of existing guidelines of watershed projects at the national level/state level. This may also include development of need-based process guidelines in different states keeping in view the specific opportunities and background experience.
- ◆ Addition of new mechanisms and instruments during the project period through periodic circulars and government orders in respective states.
- ◆ Organization of specific training courses at different levels on process guidelines for facilitation of the above mechanisms/instruments.
- ◆ Monitoring of 'processes' besides physical and financial progress in the early stages of the project so that necessary corrections can be made in time.
- ◆ Organization of innovators workshops and exposure visits to success stories where new mechanisms and instruments have been evolved and practiced.
- ◆ Periodic survey of new learning through workshops and case studies.

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