



GUIDELINES FOR WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA (DROUGHT PRONE AREAS): AGEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The Watershed approach has conventionally aimed at treating degraded lands with the help of low cost and locally accessed technologies such as in-situ soil and moisture conservation measures, afforestation etc. and through a participatory approach that seeks to secure close involvement of the user-communities. The focus of these programmes has, with the advent of the Department of Land Resources (DoLR) shifted to the enhancement of the viability and quality of rural livelihood support systems. While the programmes of DoLR are designed to address areas characterized by a relatively difficult terrain and preponderance of community resources, those of Ministry of Agriculture are expected to aim at increasing production and enhancing productivity in cultivated areas largely privately owned. While the focus of these programmes may have differed, the common theme that underpinned their structure has been the basic objective of land and water resource management for sustainable development of natural resources and community empowerment.. Other major programmes now being implemented through this approach are the National Watershed Development Project in Rainfed Areas (NWDPR) and the Watershed Development in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDSA) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). In the present paper an attempt has been made to bring out the guidelines for Watershed Development in Drought prone Area of India. The study is based on primary and secondary data.

KEY WORDS : Drought Prone Areas Programs (DPAP), Integrated Wasteland Development Programs (IWDP) District.

INTRODUCTION

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OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the present paper are.

- 1) To Study Developing wastelands/degraded lands, drought-prone and desert areas on watershed basis, keeping in view the capability of land, site-conditions and local needs.
- 2) Promoting the overall economic development and improving the socio-economic condition of the resource poor and disadvantaged sections inhabiting the programme areas.

DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY:

The present study is based on the primary and secondary data. The Secondary data obtained from the records of Zilla Parishad and various records of Department of Watershed Development, Maharashtra State. Primary data has been collected through the questionnaire and interviews of the selected Watershed.

NEED FOR REVISION:

More than six years have elapsed since the first set of projects was sanctioned under the Guidelines. Meanwhile, a number of studies have been conducted, evaluations made and soundings taken in various fora culminating in the emergence of many suggestions in regard to making the guidelines contemporary, transparent and easy to follow. The need has also been felt to infuse a greater degree of flexibility into the Guidelines in view of the large variation in local conditions, needs and the social structure. Detailed consultations were, therefore, organized with the State Governments, Project Implementation Agencies, NGOs and other experts involved in the implementation of Watershed Development Projects under different Programmes. In fact, Prof. Hanumanth Rao himself has brought out some of the emerging issues and their immediate redressal in his Lovraj Kumar Memorial Lecture 2000. Encompassing all these innovations in one place and making the intentions more specific, the Guidelines for Watershed Development (2001) have now been reformulated inter-alia, to ensure: -

- (i) Programme-specific and focused project approach, (ii) Greater flexibility in implementation, (iii) Well -defined role for State, District and Village level Institutions, (iv) Removal of overlaps, (v) A provision for keeping the Watershed Development Projects on probation, (vi) An "Exit Protocol" for the PIAs, (vii) A "Twin track" approach to the implementation of projects, (viii) Seeking a combination of GO/NGO as PIA, (ix) A greater role of women, (x) An effective role for the Panchayat Raj Institutions, (xi) Bringing to centre-stage SHGs comprising rural poor, especially those, belonging to SC/ST categories. (xii) Establishing a credit facility from financial institutions (xiii) Effective use of remote sensing data furnished by NRSA.

WATERSHED AREA

A watershed is a geo-hydrological unit, which drains into common point. The watershed approach is a project based, ridge to valley approach for in situ soil and water conservation, afforestation etc. Unit of development will be a watershed area of about 500 ha. each in watershed development projects. However, the actual area of a project may vary keeping in view the geographical location, the size of village etc. The thematic maps generated from satellite data for different themes such as land use/land cover, hydro geo - morphology, soils etc. may be used for selection of a watershed area. The project will primarily aim at treatment of non-forest wastelands and identified drought prone and desert areas. However, if any watershed area consists of some forestlands, it should also be treated simultaneously under the project as provided in para 16 of these Guidelines.

IMPLEMENTATION

These programmes will be implemented, mainly, through the ZillaParishads (ZPs)/District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA). However, wherever it is expedient in the interest of Watershed Development Programmes, the projects can be implemented through any Department of the State Government or autonomous agencies of Central Government or State Governments with the approval of the Department of Land Resources, Government of India.

SANCTION OF PROJECTS

The projects will be sanctioned by Government of India as per procedure in vogue at the time of adoption of these revised guidelines. The Department of Land Resources, Government of India, may amend or relax this procedure from time to time. In case of interpretation of any of the provision of these guidelines, the Department of Land Resources will be the final authority. However, the Department of Land Resources may sanction projects for treatment of wastelands in Special Problem Areas such as high altitude regions, land slide areas, slopes having more than 30 degree gradient or for any other specified technical reason. These projects need not necessarily be implemented through participatory mode and may be implemented on intensive treatment specific departmental approach.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF WATERSHEDS

The following criteria may broadly be used in selection of the watersheds:

(a) Watershed area may be about 500 ha. However, if on actual survey, a watershed is found to have slightly less or more area, the total area may be taken up for development as a project. Even small contiguous watersheds with an approximate total area of 500 hectares may be taken up for development. (b) In case a watershed falls in two villages, it should be divided into two sub watershed areas confined to the designated villages. Care should be taken to treat both the sub watershed areas simultaneously. (c) Watershed, which has acute shortage of drinking water. (d) Watershed, which has a large population of scheduled castes/scheduled tribes dependent on it. (e) Watershed that has a preponderance of non-forest wastelands/degraded lands.(f) Watershed, which has a preponderance of common lands. However, in view of the fact that watershed development aims at poverty alleviation by improving productivity of land and generation of employment, projects not having preponderance of common lands may also be considered for sanction provided there is adequate justification. (g) Watersheds where actual wages are significantly lower than the minimum wages. (h) Watershed, which is contiguous to another watershed that has already been developed/ treated. (i) Watersheds where People's participation is assured through raw materials, cash, contribution on labour etc. for its development as well as for the operation and maintenance of the assets created.

DISTRICT WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (DWDC)

To ensure coordination at district level, a District Watershed Committee shall be constituted under the Chairman, ZillaParishad or DRDA as the case may be. It shall consist of CEO/PD, ZP/DRDA and district level officers of the line departments associated with the implementation of watershed Development projects, one representative of the State Remote Sensing Centre, one member from the relevant Research and Training institutions in the district, one NGO representative, at least two prominent women workers and one prominent social worker. The District Watershed Development Committee will advise and assist the



ZP/DRDA on matters, regarding selection of PIAs, members of Watershed Development teams, training, community organisation, publicity campaigns and such other items/activities. The Committee will also approve the detailed action plan for watershed development projects in the district. It should meet at least once in a quarter and review the progress of the watershed Development projects, assist in resolving management and administrative problems, guide in implementation, identify policy issues, if any, for reference to the State Government /Government of India.

ZPs/DRDAs or any other Institution in whose favour the watershed development projects have been sanctioned shall be fully responsible for their implementation. The CEO, ZP/PD, DRDA will be the Member Secretary of the DWDC. The ZP/DRDA at the district level shall have the right and responsibility to monitor and review the implementation of the programme. The CEO / PD of DRDA /ZP shall maintain the accounts of watershed development projects and shall sign all the statutory papers, such as, UCs, Audited Statements of Accounts, Progress Reports, Bonds etc.

ROLE OF PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS (PRI)

The ZillaParishads and other Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) shall have very important role to play in Watershed Development Programmes. Wherever the DRDA has been made responsible for implementation of the watershed programmes, the Chief Executive Officer of the ZillaParishad shall be a member of the DWDC. The PRIs shall have the right to monitor and review the implementation of the programme and provide guidance for improvements in the administrative arrangements and procedures with a view to ensure convergence of other programmes of Ministry of Rural Development such as JGSY, SGSY, IAY, CRSP, Rural Drinking Water Supply etc.

At the Village level, the Gram Panchayat shall be fully involved in the implementation of the programme, specially community organisation and training programmes. It may use its administrative authority and financial resources to support and encourage the formation of SHGs/UGs, the operation and maintenance of the assets created during project period and the common property resources such as pasture lands, fisheries tanks, plantations on village common lands, etc. The Gram Panchayats may also ensure that funds from other developmental programmes of MoRD are used to supplement and complement the Watershed Development Programmes. The Gram Panchayat shall be empowered to review and discuss the progress of watershed development programme in its meetings. The watershed action plan should have the approval of Gram Sabha and it should be a part of annual action plan of Gram Sabha. The Secretary, Watershed Committee shall provide all information in respect of action plan, funds earmarked for various activities, details of expenditure progress of works and future plan of action to the Gram Panchayat/ Gram Sabha.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity Building is an important aspect for the successful implementation of watershed development programmes. ZP/DRDA shall ensure that relevant training programmes are organised for all the functionaries involved in watershed development. PIA may ensure that a majority of the members of SHGs/UGs are given basic training involving skill upgradation and orientation on the technical and organisational aspects of the running of these Groups. Besides, training on application of Remote Sensing Technology for generating database for watershed development should be included in the training Programme.



Generally, the training should be organised by the WDT members with the help of local officials of technical departments/institutions, VAs etc. Guest faculties invited may be paid an honorarium as per norms prescribed by the State Government. The SHG/UG members could also be taken for visits to Research Stations/successful watersheds/KisanVikasKendras etc. where they could see the demonstration of successful technologies/practices/designs that are relevant to them. Use of audio Visual media to increase awareness and motivation among SHG/UG members should be encouraged.

WATERSHED TREATMENT /DEVELOPMENT PLAN

WDT shall call a meeting of the Watershed Association for preparation of watershed treatment/development plan, on the basis of the information generated from the benchmark survey of the watershed areas & detailed PRA exercise. After general discussion, the WC will prepare an integrated Watershed Development Plan under the guidance of the WDT and submit the same to PIA. The WDT should utilize various thematic maps relating to land and water resources development to prepare the watershed development plans. This watershed Development Plan shall necessarily mention the clear demarcation of the watershed with specific details of survey numbers, ownership details and a map depicting the location of proposed work/activities. The PIA will then formulate a Watershed Development Plan for the area assigned in association with WCs/WAs and submit the same to the ZP/DRDA for approval. This plan shall also be the basis for release of funds, monitoring, review, evaluation etc by the ZP/DRDA, State Government and the Central Govt. Watershed Treatment /Development Plan should be prepared for all the arable and non-arable land including degraded forest lands, government and community lands and private lands. Emphasis should be on low-cost locally available technology, simple and easy to operate and maintain works and activities. The items, inter alia that can be included in the Watershed Development Plan are:

CONVERGENCE OF VARIOUS RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

As the Watershed Development Programme aims at holistic development of people and natural resources, the convergence of all other non-land based programmes of Government of India, particularly those of the Ministry of Rural Development would enhance the ultimate output and lead to sustainable economic development of village community. The DRDA/ZP, therefore, shall take all possible measures to ensure convergence of other programmes of Ministry of Rural Development such as the Jawahar Gram SamridhiYojana (JGSY), the Swarnjayanti Gram SwarozgarYojana (SGSY), the Indira AwasYojana (IAY), the Central Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP) and the Rural Drinking Water Supply in the villages chosen for the implementation of the Watershed Development Projects. It should also be worthwhile to converge programmes (of similar nature) of the other Ministries e.g. Health & Family Welfare, Education, Social Justice and Empowerment and Agriculture in these villages.

COST NORMS

General cost norms for Watershed Development Projects will be as per Annexure-I. Cost estimates for each work item and project activity shall be worked out as per Standard Schedule of Rates (SSR) approved by the States Governments in representative areas.

i)	Watershed Treatment/Development Works/Activities	80%
ii)	Watershed Community Organization including entry point	5%



	activities	
iii)	Training	5%
iv)	Administrative Overheads	10%
	TOTAL	100%

CONCLUSIONS

More than six years have elapsed since the first set of projects was sanctioned under the Guidelines. Meanwhile, a number of studies have been conducted, evaluations made and soundings taken in various fora culminating in the emergence of many suggestions in regard to making the guidelines contemporary, transparent and easy to follow. The need has also been felt to infuse a greater degree of flexibility into the Guidelines in view of the large variation in local conditions, needs and the social structure. Detailed consultations were, therefore, organised with the State Governments, Project Implementation Agencies, NGOs and other experts involved in the implementation of Watershed Development Projects under different Programs. In fact, Prof. HanumanthaRao himself has brought out some of the emerging issues and their immediate redressal in his Lovraj Kumar Memorial Lecture 2000. Encompassing all these innovations in one place and making the intentions more specific, the Guidelines for Watershed Development (2001) have now been reformulated inter-alia, to ensure: -(i) Programs-specific and focused project approach, (ii) Greater flexibility in implementation, (iii) Well -defined role for State, District and Village level Institutions,

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