

EVALUATION OF PREPARATORY PHASE OF IWMP IMPLEMENTATION - CASE STUDIES FROM HIMACHAL PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

Watershed Management brings about the best possible balance between natural resources and basic minimum needs of the people in a sustained manner. The common basic objective of this programme is land and water resource management for sustainable development. In New Common Guidelines for Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), cluster approach of area treatment has been followed and livelihood enhancement has been given preference. Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) is being implemented by Rural Development Department in Himachal Pradesh, with multifaceted approach to meet the water need for livelihood activities to upscale the socio-economic status of the people of the State. Preparatory phase of IWMP aims at building appropriate mechanism for adoption of participatory approach and empowerment of local institutions. This preparatory phase continues for a period of one to two years depending upon the activities gaining momentum and serves as a pillar for whole watershed project with focussed approach of rapport building with the local community through various activities in the watershed area. One of the guiding principles in Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects, 2008 states "to obtain feedback and undertake the improvements in planning, project design and implementation, a participatory, user focussed, outcome and impact-oriented evaluation and learning system be put in place". The evaluation of preparatory phase is of paramount importance since it undertakes scrutiny on the preliminary planning process of watershed projects. The present contribution is a document of evaluation of preparatory phase of IWMP implementation in three watersheds of Himachal Pradesh with analysis, findings and suggestions besides scope for future research.

Introduction

Watershed Management basically aims at improving the land and water relationship through appropriate interventions. Watershed management tries to bring about the best possible balance in the environment between natural resources on one side and human beings and animals on the other. All previous watershed development programmes i.e. Desert Development (DDP), Drought Prone Area

Programme (DPAP) and Integrated Wasteland Development Programme (IWDP) have been consolidated into a single modified programme called Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) launched in the year 2009-10 after incorporating the provisions of New Common Guidelines issued by Ministry of Rural Development in the year 2008. IWMP is a programme developed by government in active participation with stakeholders (watershed

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residents, interest groups). It states shared goals and outlines actions to manage land, water and related resources on each watershed basis. The Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) is a set of common guidelines for implementing watershed projects throughout the country.

The evaluation of preparatory phase is a preliminary step to review the planning process, which could lead to further improvements in the watershed projects.

A dedicated State Level Nodal Agency (SLNA) has been constituted by the State Government which sanctions the watershed projects for the State on the basis of approved State perspective and strategic plan as per laid down procedures and monitor all watershed projects in the State within the parameters set out in the New Common Guidelines. The State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Himachal Pradesh (HP) is an independent agency identified and approved by State Level Nodal Agency (SLNA) keeping in view its experience and expertise in the field of MGNREGS and Watershed Projects throughout the State.

The study area included three blocks out of which two blocks namely, Bijhari and Bamsan of district Hamirpur have watershed area 5000 ha. and 2800 ha., respectively and one block Naggar of district Kullu has watershed area 5983 ha.

Different components under various activities of IWMP projects have been evaluated in three watersheds, namely Bijhari, Bamsan and Naggar.

Watershed I : This watershed area lies in Bijhari block of district Hamirpur and situated between 76°30' 13" and 76°30' 44" on East longitudes and 31°29' 52" and 31°30' 58" on North latitude. The elevation of block varies between 65 - 850 m MSL. The watershed area was further divided into five (five) micro-watersheds, including 15 Gram Panchayats having 100 villages.

Watershed II : The watershed is situated between 76°26' & 76°40' E longitude and 32°40' & 32°44' N latitude in Bamsan block of district Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh at about 850m MSL. The total treatable area under this watershed is 2800 ha. as compared to the total geographical area i.e. about 3117.6 ha. The watershed area was further divided into micro-watersheds which were 4 in number, including 10 gram panchayats having 65 villages.

Watershed III : This watershed lies between 77°07' & 77°10' E longitude and 32°01' and 32°02' N latitude in Naggar block of district Kullu in Himachal Pradesh. The total treatable area which comes under this watershed is 5983 ha.

Research Methodology

In order to evaluate the activities of preparatory phase, methodology included collection of primary and secondary data.

The primary data include

- Non-probability quota sampling technique, as per prescription of rural development department, Himachal Pradesh, was adopted for selection of watersheds under study.
- A random sample of 30 per cent of the project area was selected for evaluation as per the suggestive guidelines for evaluation of preparatory phase of IWMP projects.
- More than 20 per cent of EPAs works were selected through stratified random sampling method and physical verification of the same was carried out.
- Interviews with multi-stakeholders (including farmers, women, Gram Panchayat members and reserved category people), focus group discussions, meeting with user groups and self-help groups were followed by field visits to the watershed sites. Qualitative data drawn from the experiences gained in field visits as well

as interviews held with all the stakeholders were used.

Secondary data have been drawn from

- The evaluation report of IWMP preparatory phase of 2009-10 projects by H P State Institute of Rural Development, Shimla.
- Records and reports available with Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs).
- Besides these, the rules, guidelines and instructions issued by Government of

India and Government of Himachal Pradesh have also been studied.

On the basis of above mentioned methodology, data were collected and evaluation of preparatory phase was completed.

Results

Evaluation of Various Activities of IWMP in Selected Watersheds: The results of the study pertaining to different components under preparatory phase of Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) in three watersheds are presented in Table 1.

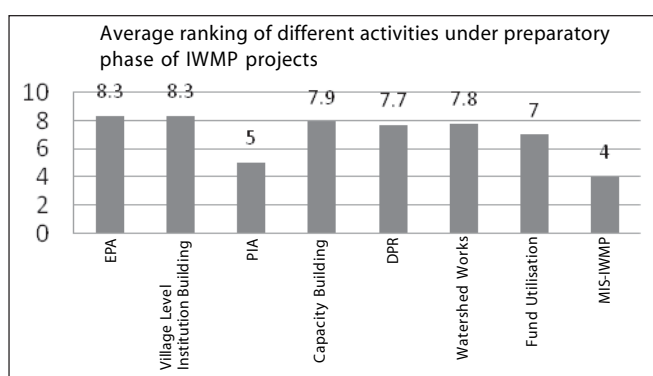
Table 1: Different Components of Preparatory Phase of IWMP

Component	Watershed Bijhari		Watershed Bamsan		Watershed Naggar	
(1)	(2)		(3)		(4)	
PIA	BDO		DD, Agri.		BDO	
EPA						
No. of activities	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
	12	12 (100%)	4	2 (50 %)	39	39 (100%)
Quality of component	Good		Average		Average	
Need based or not	Need based		Not need based		Not on priority basis	
Village Level Inst. Building						
User Groups	5		0		36	
Self-Help Groups	4		9		33	
Members in SHGs	10 -15		10-15		5-7	
Activities of SHGs	Not carried out properly		Undertaking different activities		Undertaking different activities	
Watershed Committees	Gram Panchayat		Gram Panchayat		Gram Panchayat	
Interest in WC activities	Good		Ritualistic		Ritualistic	
Women participation	Good		Average		Good	
WDTs						
Team of four members	Complete (4)		Complete (4)		Incomplete (3)	
Experienced members as a percentage to the total WDT members	75 %		50%		75%	
Capacity building						
Awareness camps	14		10		14	
Exposure visits	3		2		4	
Trainings/ workshops	7		8		6	
Total persons trained	800		1220		2196	
Total expenditure incurred on CB (₹ in lakh)	9.10		6.85		7.25	

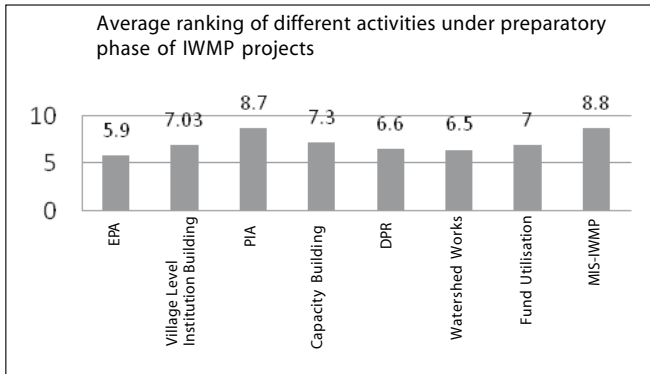
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Table 1 (Contd.)			
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Detailed Project Report			
Effectiveness of PRA exercise	Not effective	Not effective	Not effective
People's awareness on DPR works	Partial	Nil	Nil
Watershed works Completed works	50%	5%	100%
Total allocated amount (₹ in lakh)	56.25	74.02	66.99
Expenditure incurred (₹ in lakh)	39.40	2.79	66.99
Quality of work	satisfactory	Average	Poor
Total Fund utilisation (in percentage)	68.45 %	52.75%	74%
MIS-IWMP			
Data Uploading	100 %	5 %	0 %
EPA	8.3	5.9	8.3
Village Level Institution Building	7.03	7.03	8.3
PIA	8.8	8.7	5
Capacity Building	7.3	7.3	7.9
DPR	9.3	6.6	7.7
Watershed Works	8.5	6.5	7.8
Fund Utilisation	7	7	7
MIS-IWMP	8.8	8.8	4

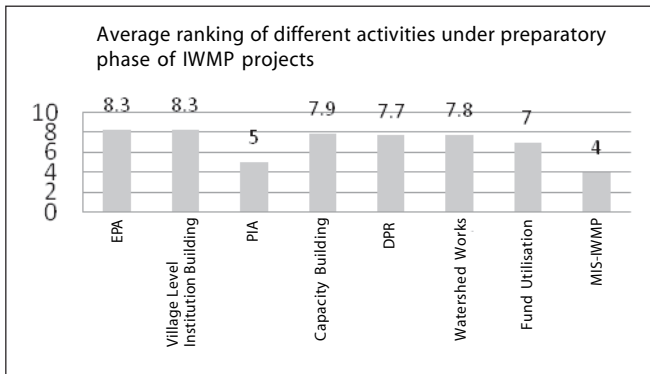
Table 2: Average ranking of different evaluation indicators under preparatory phase of IWMP projects in Watershed Bijhari, Bamsan and Naggar



Graph A: Showing average ranking of different evaluation indicators under preparatory phase of IWMP projects in Watershed I (Bijhari).



Graph B: Showing average ranking of different evaluation indicators under preparatory phase of IWMP projects in Watershed II (Bamsan).



Graph C: Showing average ranking of different evaluation indicators under preparatory phase of IWMP projects in Watershed III (Naggar).

Findings

EPA: The performance of Block Development Office as PIA in executing Entry Point Activities was better in comparison to agriculture department. Hundred per cent achievement has been found in case of BDO office as PIA against 50 per cent achievement by agriculture department. However, in terms of quality of the components, it was average by agriculture department in Bamsan but in case of BDO office, it was good in Bijhari and average in Naggar. Only in Bijhari, need-based activities were undertaken whereas in Bamsan the activities were not need-based in contrast to Naggar where the priorities were not followed. This performance establishes the fact that execution by BDO office is better in comparison to agriculture department.

Institution Building: It was found that agriculture department has not constituted any User Group in Watershed area Bamsan, however, SHGs have

been constituted in all three watersheds. In case of BDO's as PIA's, good women representation has been given by them, whereas it was found average in case of agriculture department. In all the three cases, GPs are working as WCs.

Project Implementing Agency: Bamsan watershed is being implemented by agriculture department whereas two other watersheds i.e. Bijhari and Naggar are being implemented by rural development department through its respective Block Development Offices. It has been found that the WDT was complete in all three cases, except one member short in case of Naggar watershed, but in case of watershed project executed by agriculture department, only one or two members were found experienced in relevant fields.

Capacity Building: The number of awareness camps and exposure visits organised by rural development department were more than the

agriculture department, except the marginal increase in organised trainings. The same pattern is repeated in number of persons trained and total expenditure on capacity building.

Detailed Project Report: In all the three watersheds PRA exercises were not effective.

Watershed Works: In Naggar watershed cent per cent works were completed followed by 50 per cent works in Bijhari watershed and 5 per cent in Bamsan watershed. In terms of quality of works, Bijhari watershed reported 'good' followed by Naggar and Bamsan watersheds where quality was found quite poor.

Fund Utilisation: In case of Watersheds Bijhari and Naggar, it was found to be 68.45 and 74 per cent. Watershed Bamsan utilised only 52.75 per cent of the total funds allocated to PIA. It was found that pace of expenditure was better in Bijhari and Naggar blocks.

MIS under IWMP: Data uploading under MIS was found very well in case of Watershed Bijhari, in comparison to Watersheds Bamsan and Naggar.

Field Visit Observations After completing the physical, social and financial verifications as indicated in data analysis the following observations came forth:

- Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercise was not effectively performed during preparation of Detailed Project Report in maximum watershed projects.
- Most of the activities done in preparatory phase were found average in quality; however a large amount has been spent on the execution of works.
- The self-help groups formed in all three watersheds studied, are facing problems related to sale and marketing of their products to the commercial areas.
- Due to lack of trainings and proper guidelines from time to time, WDTs were not able to execute the responsibilities entrusted to them.

- Gram Sabhas conducted in gram panchayats are not serving the exact purpose of community participation for watershed projects.
- The impact of watershed activities after completion of EPAs and few works under watershed projects could be seen in few watershed areas, as community has good benefit sharing for few activities like growing vegetables, maintaining the moisture of the area, retaining the available water for use in various agricultural activities and drinking purpose for cattle.
- The MIS component under IWMP projects in two watersheds under study, was not found satisfactory, due to lack of project staff. In block Naggar, Data Entry Operator has not been appointed yet.
- Social audit as envisaged during the preparatory phase was not reported to be conducted.

Discussion

Evaluation indicators of preparatory phase of watershed projects 2009-10 have shown that the activities under Entry Point Activities have been executed in consultation with local community in Watershed Bijhari, which was on lower side in case of Watershed Bamsan and Naggar. The reason assessed through focussed group discussion was the ineffective PRA exercises, revealed by the community in these watershed areas. The Gram Panchayat functioning as watershed committee which is acting as PIA at project level in the micro-watershed, seems to have very less interest in execution of the scheme. The most probable reason was the changes in the cost of material and labour, especially in remote or distant sites. The composition of watershed committee in all three watersheds has good proportion of women and scheduled caste members. As far as women participation is concerned, it was found on lower side during the gram sabhas,

which indicates that the gender responsiveness is lacking in the hilly terrain. However, few Self-Help Groups having women members are actively involved in various activities related to income generation in watersheds Bamsan and Naggar. Whereas, in watershed Bijhari, SHGs have been formed but they were not able to decide the activities. The most probable reason for this was lack of proper training and capacity building of the groups. While preparing the Detailed Project Report, the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercises have not been performed effectively in watersheds Bamsan and Naggar, whereas people were little aware of the DPRs and works incorporated in it in watershed Bijhari, which was found through FGDs with the local community. This directly points out that WDT has effectively disseminated the information and made the people aware through different modes. Non-availability of Data Entry Operator (DEO) in watershed Naggar has resulted in 0 per cent MIS data uploading, which is followed by 5 per cent in watershed Bamsan due to recent joining of DEO and then 100 per cent in watershed Bijhari, where the WDT was found complete and efficient.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for effective implementation of the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP):

- The Watershed Development Team should be given practical exposure on

undertaking effective PRA exercise for active Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and User Groups under this programme.

- SHGs should be motivated to produce quality goods which have demand and market value.
- The watershed work components should be need-based after executing the rigorous PRA exercises.
- Above all, the planning at project level should be done with proper scientific baseline surveys and effective Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercises involving community at large.

Future Scope of Research

The major findings of the study have made projections for improvement in the planning process at the outset of the project. Based on the current evaluation of preparatory phase, improvements can be made in the overall planning process at micro-level i.e. right from preparation of Detailed Project Report, conducting effective PRA exercises, involvement of CBOs and large number of population residing in the watershed area. It is evident that the implementation of later phases of Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) depends totally upon effective planning including the strategic action plan accompanied by appropriate technical interventions. Research on the watershed implemented with proper planning and preparatory phase activities is necessary.

Reference

1. New Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects, 2008.