

Peoples Participation in Entry Point Activities (EPA) component in Watershed Program Development in Medak District of Telangana state.

Dr. V. Pavankalyan^{1*}, Y. RG Reddy¹, and Saikumar²

^{1*}Assistant Professor, Guru Nanak University, University Institute of Agriculture & Horticulture, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, Hyderabad, India

¹Assistant Professor, Green field Institute of Agriculture Research and Training, Hyderabad, India.

²Assistant Professor, Green field Institute of Agriculture Research and Training, Hyderabad, India.

Abstract

Entry point activities as per watershed Programme is “The project initiation activities that make the village community feel the entry of a watershed project in the village. The Watershed Development programme is focused on the importance and role of community in implementation of Entry Point Activities at the watershed project area. It helps the confidence building among the village community”. The research paper is covered for Batch-IV watershed projects of Medak district.

Keywords Watershed Development, entry point activities

Introduction

IWMP program has been initiated in Medak during 2009-2010. The facilities acquired by the community members under Entry Point Activities will be comprised of cattle troughs, school furniture, solar street lights and pipe extensions. During the early days of the preparatory phase, the project areas communities have a wider population and have used all the activities carried out through collective efforts. The total livestock population of this village is around 800 such as goats, sheep, buffaloes, and cows (Chandrappagari, *et al.*, 2012).

The main objectives of study:

Comprehending of importance of the importance of community participation in Entry Point Activities to initiate village watershed activities and also consider the preferences of the community and goals for village growth

Materials and Methods

The study is emphasized on the various works taken up under the Entry Point Activities in watershed villages and the relevant data collected from the District Water Management Agency (DWMA), Medak district and secondary data collected through the relevant case studies in the project area. The data tabulated and analyzed project wise, Gram panchayat wise, activity wise and EPA wise. The study selected for Medak district Batch-IV projects have been covered.

Initiation of Watershed Project in Medak District

The Govt. of Telangana being pioneer in the country in conserving natural resources by adopting Watershed approach has created a separate Commissionerate for Rural Development for carrying out

Programme across the entire state in the coming years. All the criteria proposed by the DoLR, GoI have been used for prioritizing the Watershed. Based on this, more critical one's as to be treated on priority (Mishra, *et al.*, 2018).

Further, taking into priority ranking given by TSTWC denotes that SC, ST population, percentage of literacy, percentage of agricultural labour, status of groundwater, scarcity of drinking water, quality of drinking water, availability of DWCRA, contiguity with existing watersheds, livestock population, community mobilization etc.

About 2,300 watersheds were prioritized into very high, high, medium, low and very low categories across the state. In this view Medak district implemented 110 watershed projects since 2009- 10.

Implementation of Watershed Project at Grass Root Level in Medak

The major activities of the Watershed Development projects were carried out in three phases comprised as: Preparatory phase, Works phase and Consolidation phase. The project duration could be in the range of four to seven years.

In preparatory phase, Entry Point Activities of community-oriented works such as cattle troughs, school furniture, water purification plants, solar street plants, tent house material are taken up as per the need in micro watershed villages during the first year to bring watershed concepts into community using 4% project funds.

The major objective of this phase is to build appropriate mechanisms for adoption of participatory approach and empowerment of local institutions (WC, SHG, and UG). WDT will assume a facilitating role during this phase. In this phase, the main activities consist:

Involvement of primary stakeholders is at the Centre of planning, budgeting, implementation, and management of watershed projects. Community organizations are closely associated with and accountable to Gram Sabhas in project activities.

The community plays a key role in defining and organizing aspects of all the required works for their village, their position in the Entry Point Activities which is evident in implementation of works that were taken up. In Grama Sabha, all the entry point activities were identified through consultation with the village's public and they ensure that all categories of communities have participated such as SC, ST, and women's groups and so on. Taking up entry point activities to establish credibility of the Watershed Development Team (WDT) and create a rapport with the village community. The entry point activities, *inter-alia*, will include:

Works based on urgent needs of the local communities such as revival of common natural resources, drinking water, development of local energy potential, augmenting ground water potential etc.

Repair, restoration and upgradation of existing common property assets and structures (such as

village tanks) may be undertaken to obtain optimum and sustained benefits from previous public investments and traditional water harvesting structures.

Productivity enhancement of existing farming systems could also be an activity that helps in community mobilization and building rapport.

Role of Peoples Participation in Entry Point Activities

The Grama Sabha and Watershed committee facilitated the initiation of EPA activities throughout the process. The EPA activities have been identified based on the need and priority in the villages which is used for the larger community's interest.

It involves building rapport with community, strengthening and sustaining it throughout the program and thereafter. In reality, it involves a lot of time and resources of project staff and could determine the success or failure of program. The EPA is envisaged to build a rapport between Project Implementing Agency (PIA) and rural people before initiating watershed programs. Usually, entry point intervention/activity is identified through PRA and Grama Sabha meetings. A carefully laid out EPA could address community's aspiration and capitalize on it by ensuring larger peoples' participation in all watershed activities. Under the new guidelines of IWMP, nearly 4% of the total watershed budget is earmarked for Entry point activities (EPA) to be spent for the needs of the watershed/village beneficiaries in the first year of preparatory phase and to develop their confidence in implementing all watershed activities planned under watershed development project.

Identification of Entry Point Activities

Generally, EPAs' were identified through Grama Sabha and watershed stakeholders meet to identify the immediate needs of the community instead of individual needs. Moreover, EPAs' are so chosen and done as to develop the rapport between the project implementing agency (PIA) and the rural people before initiating watershed programs. While deciding the activities of EPA following criteria was considered for successful implementation of the Batch-IV projects.

Study Area

Batch-IV projects of Medak district which covered 15 micro watersheds in Anantapur District, 5 Projects were initiated and completed under batch-IV projects. The details of these projects along with details of micro-watersheds and habitations covered under IWMP Batch-IV in Medak are presented in Table 2 The 5 projects located in Medak district are located in 5 mandals and sub divided into 15 micro-watersheds. These micro- watersheds spread over 20 habitations in the district and are having 14,305 households.

Entry Point Activities

The batch-IV was initiated in 2012-13, and the entry point activity is one of the important milestones of the Programme that has helped increase community trust in the program's ability to sustain the Watershed Programme. At this point, the community has decided on various components based on their necessity. In these scenarios, in Medak district, 15 micro watersheds in 5 projects have carried various activities such as solar lights, cattle troughs, and extension of pipe line for drinking water, fertility camp, health camps, and RO plants, supply of services, tailoring center, and tent house (table 2).

Results and Discussion Cattle Troughs

In the district like Medak it's very difficult to get sufficient water during the grazing of animals. The watershed committee and community have been decided to have the water sources to the animals such as cows, buffalos, goat and sheep.

The village community was given importance to address the needs of the livestock. Despite its importance, livestock are widely neglected in agricultural water planning and management, in particular the water requirements for fodder crops. Drinking water for livestock is often provided in rural domestic supply. In many areas in the district, animals have to travel for long distance, especially in dry areas during summer season.

The construction of animal's water troughs provided enough water. The water troughs generally constructed in the villages on the roadside and also at animal grazing areas.

Solar Street Lights

Solar streetlights have received tremendous response and it is major achievement in the selected areas. With this ultimate aim of enhancing rural communities' living standards by linking them to renewable energy, the watershed program has taken on a novel initiative by installing solar streetlights and delivering efficient and effective solar-powered lighting up villages. The village community effectively keeps the solar streetlights repaired and maintained regularly.

Table.1 Details of Projects Covered under IWMP Batch-IV in Medak District

Sl.No.	Project	Mandal	MWS wise Area (in Ha)	No. of MWS	No. of Habitations	No. of House Holds
1	Venkatapur	Medak	4,700	4	6	2,439
2	Shankarampet- R	Shankarampet- R	4,311	2	3	2,051
3	Chegunta	Ibrahimpur	3,209	4	5	2,300
4	Narsapur	Kazipet	4,616	2	4	3,002
5	Papannapet	kondapak	2,927	3	2	2,852

Table.2 Entry Point Activities of Batch-IV Projects in Medak District

Sl. No	Category	Completed			
		No of works	Wage in lakhs	Material in Lakhs	total cost in Lakhs
1	Cattle/goat / sheep trough	216	0.14	68.46	68.6
2	Extension of pipe line for drinking water	32	0	26.8	26.8
3	Fertility camp	82	0	19.7	19.7
4	Health camps	139	0.13	62.73	62.86
5	RO plants	58	0	105.21	105.21
6	School related like furniture, shed, building repair, lab	112	0	78.72	78.72
7	Single works	215	0.08	128.17	128.25
8	Solar street light	259	0.13	124.67	124.79
9	Supply of services	38	0	29.39	29.39
10	Tailoring center	4	0	2.61	2.61
11	Tent house	104	0.08	126.56	126.64
	Grand total	709	0.55	773.01	773.56

School Furniture and Sports Material to the Children

The community has realized the importance of educating the children and their facilities, and has provided through EPA school furniture such as school benches, school computer tables, library furniture, etc., all of which shows is the shift of the rural community towards school facilities and infrastructure that assists children's educational success.

Also, the school teachers and the department of education are tremendously happy to have contributions from the watershed program to the school which would be useful for improvement of the education level. School children also improved their attitude towards the village's watershed management and holistic overall growth.

RO Water Plants

Safe drinking water is a very common problem in drought prone areas and lack of sufficient safe drinking water in the watershed project region, resulted frequent occurrence of disease among rural poor people, and spending a lot of money on hospitals, due to polluted water use, etc.

Nearly 4% of the budget allocated for innovative entry point activities (EPA) under the IWMP

guidelines, which were used effectively to meet the needs of the watershed community and to build a good relationship for the smooth implementation of the watershed, and this effort was successful. The village community has strongly decided to have a safe drinking water facility through EPA of watershed program through RO plants and water plants, etc. The RO water plants has been maintained in the watershed villages very well by the community, thus saved money spent towards purchase of water as well as time which was allocating to bring water from for off place.

The villagers wisely made use of the project EPA by getting widely acceptable material like, cattle troughs, school furniture, solar streetlights and tent houses. Among these cattle troughs find very useful in villages for drinking water for almost 100 animals daily. In the village, the solar streetlights produced remarkable success, as well as school furniture found excellent usefulness.

The EPA played a vital role in developing the relationship between project implementation agency (PIA) and rural community before setting up watershed projects and community-selected EPA initiatives as an example for the sustainable approach in the watershed program. Majority of the EPA programs have become very beneficial to the general community and managed primarily by the community in the watershed villages.

Case studies

The village communities in the project areas have given importance to address the needs of the livestock. Despite its importance, livestock are widely neglected in agricultural water planning and management in particular the water requirements for fodder crops. Livestock drinking is often provided in rural domestic supply. In many areas animals used to travel long distance for water and fodder especially in dry areas during summer season. In the districts like Medak, it's very difficult to get sufficient water during grazing of animals.

IWMP program has been initiated in kazipet MWS during 2012-2013. During the early days of the preparatory phase, the project areas communities have a wider population and have used all the activities carried out through collective efforts. The facilities acquired by the community members under EPA will be comprised of cattle troughs, school furniture, solar street lights and pipe extensions. The total livestock population of this village is around 500 such as goats, sheep, buffaloes, and cows.

The community faced a shortage of drinking water for the animals. During the Entry Point Activities, the entire community came forward and decided to have cattle troughs for the animals. These cattle troughs are very useful in villages and are used daily for drinking water for livestock. The total expenditure incurred for cattle trough is Rs. 34,105. Earlier, the entire cattle population used to travel long distances to get drinking water, and there are no drinking water facilities in the village. With this initiative, all villagers feel happy to feed their animals with water in the village itself. They expressed their gratitude to the watershed team and government officials.

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