

MINUTES OF PARTNERS MEETING-CUM-WORKSHOP

GEF UNDP SGP CEE – Wells for India collaborative programme in Dry land areas of Rajasthan and Gujarat, India

UDAIPUR, 11-12 MARCH 2015

DAY 1: (35 participants)

The meeting was opened by Mr. O.P. Sharma, Wells for India. A brief introduction was given by all participants.

Mr. Sharma talked about the partnerships and how do we learn from each other. The partnerships are in the areas of water, climate change, land degradation, etc. Mr. Sharma spoke that there should be more interaction and questions raised by the participants and the participants should avoid to be silent spectators rather they should share their experiences which will be helpful in our own learning. This is a joint meeting between GEF/SGP and Wells for India partners.

Mr. Sodhi spoke that we need to understand the expectations of the partners and the needs of the communities. We should realise and feel the expectations of the communities. We have 4 major stakeholders, i.e. Government of India, State and District Governments, GEF, UNDP and Wells for India. Similarly, Wells for India have their own key stakeholders at UK, India and their nodal points in the Government.

He added the purpose of the workshop is to meet with the expectations of our stakeholders. The GEF/SGP program is operational in 134 countries and India is the recipient of the highest grants, i.e. US \$15 million so far. We are answerable to any queries that come from any of our stakeholders and it is the SGP's moral responsibility to satisfy their requirement as the topmost priority.

India receives US \$140/150 million as the GEF grants every cycle of 4 years but there are no proposals received for FSP and MSP from the NGO partners. The partners do not even apply for the various Awards; Talks and Workshops that are announced by national and international organizations – the excellent work being done by our partners is, therefore, not recognized beyond their territories, and thus limitedly influence policy and decision making; and also unfortunately do not effectively empower the communities.

He shared the ideas on the Results Based Monitoring system, and shared that it is being followed by other countries and we are, therefore, influencing at the policy level. MoEF&CC has invited GEF/SGP to put up about **26 stalls at Green Haat** at their new premises from **5th to 12th April 2015** and **we require the support of our project partners to display their products for linking up with the market.** This will give great exposure to the work being done by our partners. **Our NGO partners should become a member of Global GEF NGO Network** who will continue to receive regular information of the good work done and also the various awards announced globally.

UNDESA is also looking forward for the applications for CC adaptation and Mitigation and we will share the same with all.

MoEF&CC is starting a Green Climate Fund which has US \$100 million budget which is meant for technologies at the grassroots levels and for innovations, please have a look at the MoEF&CC websites. He urged that we all should anyway keep looking at the websites of all partners and source other lead things ongoing.

It was also felt that the partners should also from time to time send us updates on their achievements and GOOD Resolution Photos so that they can be uploaded - all photos to have good captions clearly mentioned.

Mr. Sodhi generated a debate on what work is being done by the partners on capacity building:

- 1) Leadership development and confidence building to share their knowledge and to speak without any fear and hesitation;
- 2) Identifying technologies and skills development for linking their products with markets;
- 3) Creating a spark to perform and develop platforms for challenging;
- 4) Capacity building on awareness, and usefulness of activities, briefing on nutritional values of local varieties and food items, like millets and medicinal plants, mahua (for its nutritional values, in place of simple intoxicant properties), etc;
- 5) Technological awareness on soil contents, soil erosion to improve the land quality for increased production;
- 6) Special program designs;
- 7) Systematic approaches in farm recharge, rainwater harvesting;
- 8) Use of local technology to suit to local needs – like local construction material for biogas and cook-stoves;
- 9) Use of folk and cultural media for awareness raising;
- 10) Small technologies of tiles for the households of tribals and unreached communities;
- 11) Provide specific occupational skills;
- 12) Sensitizing the communities on limited resources and identify the real problems, crises and the sustainable practices;
- 13) Developing local level institutions for people who are controlling the resources, and making aware their legal rights;

Presentations from each partner of ongoing projects and new possible projects were given, one by one as under:

- 1) **Paryavaraniya:** Working in Jasadan Block with 500 farmers in 10 villages. Provided seeds of organic crops to 250 farmers. Three types of traditional seeds of millets have been distributed. Soil testing was done for 270 farms in two Blocks. A similar program was launched in Botad village which is a new area to the project. Meetings arranged with the farmers for marketing of millets produced locally in Jasdan Block. A food stall was put up at Ahmedabad depicting different varieties of food items made out of Bajra. A profit of Rs.30,000 was made. Participated in another festival at Ahmedabad on Satvik food which also contains garlic, vegetables, etc. A model farm was developed at Dhanashakti farm for information dissemination to the villagers. The staff was sent for training on different food items, like biscuits, etc. from Bajra. Linked up with Jamnagar Millet Research Centre to understand various usages and improvement in quality. The nutrient value of millets was derived and certifications obtained.

Mr. Sodhi highlighted the short-comings in the Quarterly Report submitted by each NGO. The good work done is not fully reflected in the reports which should be brought up properly. They should send a Case Study to us for sharing with GEF/SGP. They should have exchange visit to CONARE for learning on good quality of fodder. They should also visit Vruksh Prem to learn the best practices adopted by them on seed bank. WFI suggested that they should link up with NABARD and efforts should be made to scale up the activities and look at sustainability after the project funding ends.

- 2) **Vruksha Prem Seva Trust:** The project is on Fofal River Command Area for putting up check dams for harvesting systems. Completed one check dam at Village Belda, District Rajkot, Gujarat. A total of 21,000 check dams have been made so far. Awareness raising, experience sharing from old check dams is done and the selection of check dam is done in consultation with the community. A resolution is done and a letter of consent is kept on record from the beneficiaries. The project is done with 50% contribution from the beneficiaries, in kind (labour). The site selection and cost saving are the prime issues kept in mind before starting the check dam. ABP News reporter

interviewed about the project. The construction work is completed in two months. From the project, 13 farmers will directly benefit, 62 hectares of land will benefit because of underwater resource. 15 wells will be recharged and 6 bore wells will get benefit of up-gradation of water level. 52 livestock will benefit. The NGO is ready to take up a similar activity on 10,000 farms.

WFI desired that they should start working on assessment of use of additional water more judiciously. Since the NGO has now obtained the FCRA clearance, WFI assured that their project will be reviewed for the remaining amount of Rs.10.0 lacs from WFI. The return on investment on water should be more accurately reported and how such investments should become sustainable should be kept in mind. Mr. Sodhi asked them to share with us the resolution letter with the farmers, and the system. It was also felt that we really need good photos and knowledge products.

- 3) **Hunnarshala Foundation:** The project is on community-led approach towards zero waste city – responsible waste management. The project is to move Bhuj towards zero waste city and the NGO is initially working in two Blocks. They are working on banning less than 40 micron plastic. They have formed 4 SHGs of 48 women members. They have organized door to door collection system from 1200 properties. The waste is segregated at household basis and 50% properties are segregating the waste at household level. The project is covering 121 families in Bhuj and 262 families in Maldhari.

No details are provided in the QPRs and the QPRs are not regularly reaching the SGP office. Mr. Sodhi suggested that they should visit Bhopal project who are doing an excellent work on the plastic waste. Later one to one meeting was held and also talk was done in detail with Mahavir Acharya, director of the NGO on the problems emerging in the project. Meeting was separately held and many issues sorted out. Ideas and alternatives shared.

- 4) **GRAVIS:** The project is in the north-west Rajasthan and the area is drought prone and receives less than 25 centimetres of rain in a year. The project is on rainwater harvesting in taankas and development of pastureland. Formed 5 Village Development Committees comprising of 64 members. Constructed 50 Taankas and 50 families will benefit. 15 taankas constructed through convergence with Government program and MNREGA. There are total 792 families, 350 Taankas have so far been made and the objective is to cover all the 792 families. A pastureland of 8 hectare developed and 1600 plants planted.
- 5) **Samarthak Samiti (RFP):** Eight Cooperative Societies were formed to collect Tendu leaves. Thereafter, the scope was expanded to include more forest produce. The objective is to support 3-pronged livelihood activities and move from collection of forest produce to product development and marketing. The focus is more on improving harvesting practices to obtain good price for the produce. Four nurseries have been developed with 12,000 plants and 64% is the survival rate.

Mr. Sodhi suggested if they can think of growing some plants of fig (anjeer). In addition to gooseberry, jamun and honey, now they are producing henna as an additional item. 1,000 litres of Jamun sirka produced and sold. One Solar drier has been bought and henna and bathua are being dried in this. Once it is found useful, 3 more will be bought subsequently. A donor has assured to supply a van worth Rs.10.0 lacs for show-casing jamun ark in Udaipur city. They were suggested to meet Yerala Society in July to link up the products for marketing. They were asked to share the pictures of nurseries and other activities in the field.

- 6) **GVSS:** With the depleting harvest, soil testing was done in all the project villages. It was found that there was shortage of zinc in the soil and in consultation with experts, the soil quality improvement measures were taken. The exposure visits were arranged for the farmers to agriculture research institutes. 44 farmers did the farming in Rabi. 4700 saplings were distributed.

64 cook-stoves given and 34 more are ready for distribution. 10 hectares of barren land brought under cultivation. One more nalaband of 4 hectares made. Seed bank set by 4 farmers. Sodhi guided that the NGO should learn from Vruksh Prem on check-dams; also get all the cook stoves done properly and all stoves to have smokeless pipes and shared that in case we cannot get ferro-cement then we should get the simple low gauge iron sheets; also wanted more links to be established with agriculture crops/varieties.

- 7) **GVNML:** Working in 8 villages of Dudu Block. 9 hectares of pastureland has been developed through chaukas after obtaining NOC from Panchayat. The migration of cow-boys has been reduced from six months to two months only. Livelihood of 100 farmers improved through renovation of a pond and enhancing the embankment. The rules and planning is done in advance for releasing the water to each farm. 10 taankas have been made for rainwater harvesting from SGP – in all 67 taankas have been made by accessing funds from other sources. Eco-park made in 4 hectares of community land. They should share the kit of chaukas with us. They were suggested to use the “Kair” plant for value addition for the local community, i.e. pickle making which is generally bought raw by outside traders.
- 8) **Mahiti:** A new proposal has been submitted to GEF/SGP. They work in 3 districts, 7 blocks and 200 villages. These villages are in the gulf area and the water stagnates. They build check-dams for storage of drinkable water. As the ground water and rainwater mixes and becomes salty, they build ponds with plastic sheets placed inside to avoid mixing of salt water with the drinkable water. They have made more than 400 mahila mandals who do regular savings and avail of loans instead of taking loans from money lenders at high rates. There is limited land which is fertile and waste land is in plenty. They grow bhaliya wheat which is a local variety and tastes very good, but is becoming extinct because of people shifting to other hybrid varieties. The project will promote native bhaliya wheat and chana (grams) which are under extinction. They will demonstrate 15 plots with bio-fertilizers and create awareness. They want to work in 15 villages and 120 farmers and indirect beneficiaries will be 27,000. Locally prepared bio-fertilizers will be prepared. A seed bank will be developed. Funds requested from GEF are Rs.29.0 lacs against a total budget of Rs.41.39 lacs. The NGO should develop more strong plans and keep provision in the budget to ensure that the people do not go back to using chemical fertilizers. They should develop a replication strategy in the beginning itself to justify the support to the project. WFI desired that more focus should be on assessing the impact assessments. There should be a clear thinking to replicate this project in other areas at the beginning of the project design. The proposal appears to be good.
- 9) **Samagra Vikas Sansthan, Jhunjhunu:** The project is on optimum use of water for maximizing productivity. The regular water discharge from aravali hills is becoming short and the ground water usage has gone up impacting the area crop production substantially. A demonstration was done on one village and the impact was significant. They want to use improved varieties of crops taking less time till harvesting, linked with pond making for water discharge. They want to take up Bajra, Guar, Barley, Grams and wheat. They want to link up with the scientific institutions to adopt the recommended varieties. The NGO should specify per farmer income enhancement on an annual basis. The proposal appears to be good.
- 10) **Kotda Adivasi Sansthan, Kotda:** Kotda is a separate entity established by Aastha for independent sustainability. The project area of Kotda is 61% agriculture and 34% forest. 89% of the population is of tribals. The livelihood dependence is on agriculture, NTFP and labour. They worked with SGP in 2 villages to reduce migration. 34 villages benefitted from check-dams. Non-farm activities like goat rearing was done. The number of 250 goats was increased to 450. Now want to promote eco-friendly and sustainable agriculture in 35 villages in 15 Panchayats. 659 bighas (one bigha is equal to 4.1/2 hectares) of land will be developed for more productive outputs. They will link up value addition of pulses (including storage arrangement for better pricing, processing of pulses for

better income) and marketing. The per-hectare cost of development in terms of total budget requested is very high. They should view their proposal from this context and structure in their proposal. The proposal appears to be good.

Mr. Sodhi informed the participants that Kotda have done their self-evaluation – similar practices should be followed by others. If required, the partners can make use of Interns for documenting and doing evaluations.

- 11) **Ibtada:** The NGO has participated with SGP and the main focus was on biogas – 75 biogas units were constructed, clubbed with animal husbandry activities. 65-70% of the biogas units are still working. The slurry was used as manure for kitchen garden. They have not prepared a formal proposal so far. They are working through 5 Federations and 1,000 SHGs and working on goat and rearing of other animals. They have set up a Producer Company for collection and marketing of milk. They want to focus on combining 2,000 to 2,500 families and raise the milk collection to 5,000 litres per day in 15-20 villages. Looking at the pricing of milk outside, it is the demand of the women milk collectors to open up a direct market based link. The proposal appears to be good.
- 12) **Jan Chetna Sansthan:** 9,500 women are the members of SHGs. They have formed the SHGs into a Federation and link them for micro-finance. They have put up 25,000 plantation of bamboo. They have worked on social inclusion and livelihood enhancement. They have linked up NRLM and MNREGA. They want to work for socio-economic conditions of tribals through optimum utilization of land and water resources in Sirohi district. The livestock, fodder and fuel has been a gap which needs to be supported through SGP.

Mr. Sodhi suggested that grafting of fruit bearing plants should be done in villages for future income of the communities.

- 13) **Chhatrasal:** The method how to set up a biogas plant, starting from digging the pit and civil work was explained. The dimensions of each size of unit were explained and how the land levelling and plastering is to be done before starting on to the next stage. The forming of dome type iron frame with 8mm rod, 4.8 mm MS wire, and iron nets was explained. The support is given by 4" brick around the dome. Two layers of cement and sand are placed (inside and outside) and then one layer each of only cement is placed – both inside and outside. The Government is giving Rs.8,000 for 1 cum unit as a subsidy which is being cashed by the NGO to promote more number of biogas units. The total cost of the biogas unit is Rs.23,400. A presentation was also made on setting up improved cook-stoves.
- 14) **Results Based Monitoring System by Mr. PS Sodhi:** Mr. Sodhi gave a presentation on the Results Based Monitoring System being maintained by GEF/SGP in order to track the progress in the field. He explained the importance of reporting on the 18 parameters on which the RBM system is updated by us and our Country's performance is judged on these success indicators. He explained that these are the overall outcomes expected from the OP5 program and we fully depend upon our project partners on how they report on these indicators in their Quarterly Reports. He also informed that there might be more indicators derived out of the projects on the ground and if the partners find any additional indicators, they should include in their reports.

DAY 2: (35 participants)

- 15) **Seva Mandir, Udaipur:** The proposal is to conserve and mainstream the indigenous bio-diversity relating to plant and animal bio-resources. They will set up community seed banks. Want to set up eco-orchards and local bird (poultry) breeds. 200 farmers will be targeted to develop 50 hectares of marginal land, shall grow indigenous varieties of trees and agricultural crops and will set up 4

seed banks. 100 households will adopt backyard poultry. They expect 20% increase in farm income and 30% increase in income from poultry. Support requested from SGP is Rs.28.66 lacs with co-financing of roughly Rs.10.00 lacs from communities and the NGO. They should link up statistics as to how the scenario in their area is deteriorating and how much percentage of farmers have adopted hybrid varieties and how the NGO wishes to reverse this trend.

- 16) **Vaagdhara:** They are working in tribal belts of Banswara and Dungarpur areas with Bhil community. They want to conserve and promote the local plant species which are very rich in vitamins and minerals. They want to promote the traditional varieties of food crops, like vegetables, grains and fruit which are getting extinct in the area. In particular they want to promote Patharia paddy which gets ready in 60 days and can provide better income to the farmers. They will work in 20 new villages of Banswara District and will also involve 200 existing villages where the NGO is working to create awareness in these villages also. They will also promote mix-cropping of Maize-Jolar and Maize-pigeon pea with 5,000 families. 200 farmers will be linked to market to enhance their income by Rs.2,000 to Rs.5,000 per annum. 20 SHGs will be supported to establish an enterprise. 10 hectare area will be taken up for plantation and 8 women will develop mini nurseries of 500 plants each. The nutritional value of the produced crops will be ascertained from KVK and will be promoted. They have proposed a budget of Rs.39.02 lacs from GEF & WFI, with no co-financing defined. They were suggested to limit the varieties of grains and plants so that there is a concentrated activity and ultimate impacts could be better assessed. The proposal appears to be good.
- 17) **Gandhi Manav Kalyan Society, Udaipur:** They work in the tribal belts of Jhadol, Kotda and Gogunda Blocks. The main focus will be on Kathodi community who are the migrants and have settled down in these blocks and need proper rehabilitation. The proposed project is to promote organic farming and income enhancement of 250 tribal families. They want to promote cash crops (ginger and turmeric) and pulses for food security. They have proposed a budget of Rs.19.65 lacs. It was felt that except for targeting at the livelihood of tribal women, the proposal does not capture any innovation.

Mr. O.P. Sharma:

Mr. Sharma informed that the whole exercise of two days was a good learning experience from each other. It is important to enhance the capacity of the various groups that have been made under the projects. The issues like climate adaptation and mitigation should simultaneously be taken up in addition to the normal activities being taken up. The meaning of adaptation and mitigation and how to calculate the CO₂ emission calculations should be understood by each partner. We should focus at business models for ensuring sustainability rather than depending upon subsidy based support. WFI also believes in return on investments and there should be clear discussion done at the village levels. The objective of collective partnership with WFI and GEF should result into recommendations for the SDGs.

Different experiments are being made on water preservation, and how to enhance the capacity of traditional methods of water storage and conservation needs to be stressed upon. Our communities have a tremendous knowledge to share and we should keep recording and practicing the new learning to share the knowledge with the outside world.

Mr. Anil Arora:

The partnership with WFI is important to us as the GEF funds for limited thematic areas and the water sector is not fully covered and even the livelihood angle is not strongly bridged by GEF and this gap is well taken care of by WFI. Because of this partnership, WFI and GEF are able to provide a

comprehensive solution to the needs of the communities. GEF also has the financial limitation of funding up to US \$50,000 per proposal and by collaborating with WFI, the scope of activities on the ground can be enhanced.

For the convenience of new project partners, Mr. Arora explained in detail as to how the application form for new proposals is to be filled up and how the gaps should be bridged, and how the linkages are to be established to make the proposal complete in all respects. He explained that the title of the project should be short and to the point. The background scenario should clearly cover the type of communities being dealt with, i.e. marginalized, tribals, unreached, scheduled casts/type, etc with clear message as to what is intended to be achieved with GEF/UNDP SGP and WFI funds. He explained that the SGP supports projects for incremental activities and the partners should clearly specify as to what work has been done in the past and what is intended to be carried forward with additional SGP/WFI support. The main focus of the project should be on establishing institutional structure at the start of the project and the involvement of communities at all stages of planning, implementing and monitoring, with gender mainstreaming as the important component.

Picking up from the details provided by Mr. Sodhi on how the co-financing is to be calculated, Mr. Arora explained to the partners that while preparing the budget, they should mention all the activities in one column and then should keep defining the funding, irrespective of the fact whether funds are requested from SGP/WFI or not to give the project a comprehensive approach.

The GEF thematic areas were explained and how the GEFability should be defined, picking up from the success indicators defined on the last page of the application form. He explained that the GEF/SGP supports the innovative and replicable projects which are sustainable and hence the sustainability angle should be viewed and details provided in the column appropriately. This is an important component which is not only viewed by the GEF/SGP NSC members but is also an important factor for WFI to consider for approving the new proposals.

- 18) **Presentation by Wells for India:** The WFI gave a presentation on monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The presentation focused more on meticulous planning and establishing problem tree v/s. Solution, developing the LFA and doing baseline survey. The focus should be more on appointment of project team and their competence.

Mr. Ramesh Savalia stressed that while developing the problem tree, a clear understanding should be developed at the planning stage itself that the GEF-supported projects are more with the specific thematic areas and the planning should aim at these at the planning stage itself. The focus should be more on innovation and replicability rather than focusing simply on livelihood issues. Mr. Savalia informed that the issues must be reported in the reports so that timely remedial action should be taken. The reports for the jointly funded projects should be shared with WFI, CEE Regional Office and Delhi Office. Mr. Savalia informed that the 2nd instalment of funds can only be released once the Mid Term Evaluation is done and the audited Utilization Certificate is sent to GEF.

WFI explained that at the implementation stage, the aim should be to develop an institutional structure like SHG for the sustainability. For implementing the activities, a month-wise break-up of the plan at partner level and unit cost break up and cost estimate should be drawn up to get a sense of completion on a monthly basis. The quality of activities should be kept in mind by providing technical inputs. Developing the Case Studies and process documents are also equally important.

The monitoring system was explained through a photographic representation as to how to observe, make mid-term corrections and look at end-results. The monitoring should also be done at the

village level, partner level (including preparation of records and registers), the data collection should be shared for structuring in the annual reports. WFI reviews the projects through year-wise plans, by visiting the projects and by monitoring through quarterly reports and annual assessment visits, reviewing the annual reports and guiding the partners. The reporting requirements of WFI were also explained, including the Mid Term Review and Final Evaluation.

The LFA table was shown and explained as to how to monitor the success indicators and impacts of the project. WFI desired that the partners should provide the good, clear pictures, with clear captions and by clearly providing the photographs of “before” and “after” scenario.

Mr. Sharma spoke about the importance of engaging the right technical persons for the project as this is a very essential part for the success of the project. Mr. Anil Arora informed that the focus should also be more on enhancing the capacities of the staff and there should be a proper provision made in the budget at the project planning stage.

Mr. Dinesh Sharma of WFI explained about financial reporting requirements and how to manage the budget.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by Mr. OP Sharma. Mr. Anil Arora also thanked the WFI and their staff for making all the arrangements so meticulously by making sure that proper confirmations are received from each and every partner and the logistics were arranged accordingly.

Photographs:





