

Clarifications On Common Guidelines For Watershed Development Projects

S. No.	Item	Clarification
1.	Para 25 of the Guidelines states that the SLNA would consist of one representative from the Central Nodal Ministry. Whereas, it may be ammended to include 'one representative each from the Central Nodal Ministries'.	We may agree to include one representative from each concerned Central Nodal Ministry.
2.	The District Watershed Development Unit (DWDU) will be established in the districts where the area under watershed development projects is about 25,000 ha as per Para 29. Clarifications are being sought whether the area under watershed projects including on-going ones or only the area under newly proposed watershed projects is to be considered.	Area under watershed projects may include ongoing as well as the newly proposed watershed projects in the district.
3.	In order to effectively integrate the watershed development plans with district Plan, the guidelines at Para 32 envisage that the DPC will approve the perspective and annual action plans relating to watershed projects in the district. It was suggested to avoid going back to DPC every year for annual action plan, when Five Year Perspective Plan has been approved by the DPC.	No change or clarification is needed.
4.	Para 34 says that PIAs would be responsible for implementation of watershed projects in different districts. While Para 44 says that Gram Sabha will constitute the Watershed Committee (WC) to implement the Watershed Project with the technical support of WDT in the village. Need to clarify who is the implementer, PIA or WC?	No change or clarification is needed.
5.	Under item 5.3 in Para 40, on composition of WDT, it was suggested to replace Water Management by Soil & Water Engineering/ Hydrology.	The guidelines provides relaxation & flexibility, to SLNA
6.	Under items 6.1 and 6.2 in Paras 42 and 43, it is mentioned that the Watershed Committee shall constitute SHGs and User Groups. Whereas, at Para 44 it is mentioned that the Watershed Committee will comprise of at least 10 members, half of the members shall be representatives of SHGs and User Groups. It is contradictory. Therefore, Para 42 and 43 should replace that Gram Sabha with the help of WDT shall constitute SHGs and UGs.	If SHGs already exist they can be taken on board. Alternatively they may be constituted by WC in consultation with WDT.
7.	Regarding constitution of Watershed Committee (WC) contained in Para 44 and 45, it was pointed out that in the context of Orissa State,	SLNA may take a view on such matters based on ground realities.

	the Gram Sabha/ Gram Panchayat is not co-terminus with the Watershed Committees. In view of this more than one WC may have to be constituted within a single project area. This may create problems for effective flow of funds to WC as contained in the common guidelines.	
8.	The issue regarding Watershed Committee to act as special or sub-committee of Gram Panchayat was raised. In that case, the need for Watershed Committee to register will not be necessary.	This point was raised by number of States and also during the National Workshop. In the past also this practise was being followed in watershed projects. Therefore, in terms of freedom and flexibility, it is advisable to register WC for better administrative convenience.
9.	Conflict normally exists between JFM and watershed committee in watershed areas where both these committees exist and operate. For resolving the conflict, it was recommended that in watershed areas where the area under forest is more JFMs may take over from WS committee. Where forest area is least it could be vice-versa.	The suggestion was accepted
10.	The statement at para 47(b) "Authenticate the accounts/expenditure statements of Watershed Committee and other institutions of watershed project", needs to be clarified because Gram Panchayat is not involved in execution of the works.	SLNA may decide the matter. However, whoever receives the funds may authenticate the accounts/ expenditure statements.
11.	Allocation of 2% for monitoring and evaluation is less. It was suggested that savings, if any from Administrative costs, may be allowed to be used for monitoring & evaluation, subject to the condition that total allocation under Project Management will not exceed 12%, as allocated in guidelines (Para 67).	The 2% allocation for monitoring and evaluation is sufficient.
12.	It was suggested that the farmer's contribution for cost intensive farming system activities on private land (Para 73) be re-examined and reduced from 40% to a lower side for small and marginal farmers of General Category	Guidelines indicate that 60% & 80% (for general and SC/ST) will come from the Project funds. It was not meant that entire contribution of farmers will go to WDF. Since it is discussed under WDF, it has created some confusions. This fact may be clarified. Nevertheless, we may at least transfer 10% or 5% (as the case may be) for such works to WDF from Project Account to build sufficient amount in WDF.
13.	A large number of projects, especially DPAP & IWDP, have received only 2-3 instalments out of six instalments and states are very much	Concerned States may approach Nodal Ministry in such cases.

	<p>concerned about such a backlog. The States have emphasised for foreclosure of such projects or early completion where major part of the works are yet to be undertaken. This would enable States to take up new projects as per common guidelines and new financial norms. What mechanism could be evolved to decide the fate of such old pending projects as foreclosure clause was not there in the previous guidelines.</p>	
14.	<p>The projects funded by DAC, Ministry of Agriculture under NWDPRAs are following new common guidelines except for release of funds directly to SLNA/DWDU. NWDPRAs will continue to follow the old procedure of fund release as per MMA guidelines. This will create different norms for release of funds in the same districts while following the same common guidelines.</p>	<p>In order to have uniformity in implementation of programmes in terms of release of funds at the Districts and at the State level, it would be appropriate to approach the Ministry of Agriculture for having a special dispensation in NWDPRAs watershed project to follow the uniform release pattern as proposed in the common guidelines. We may request the Ministry of Agriculture to take up this matter at the appropriate level to seek approval for such special dispensation exclusively for watershed management projects under NWDPRAs.</p>
15.	<p>The criteria for selection & prioritization of watershed development projects lists a condition that "Area of the project should not be covered under assured irrigation". It may be noted that 4.04 Million Hectares (MHa) (96%) out of the total cultivated area of 4.2 MHa is under irrigation in Punjab. On the other hand, the groundwater scenario is very grim in Punjab, especially in the Central districts. As per a report of the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), 103 out of total 141 blocks (having more than 70% of the geographical area) have been categorized as 'Over Exploited' in terms of ground water development. Although most of the area in these 'Over Exploited' blocks is under assured irrigation, mainly from tubewells, it has a considerable scope for watershed development projects.</p> <p>Punjab Government has requested that the condition of assured irrigation at para 48 may be relaxed, especially for the 'Over Exploited' blocks of Punjab.</p>	<p>In view of the alarming situation of increasing water scarcity and fast declining per capita water availability, especially in the 'Over Exploited' blocks of Punjab and other such areas in the country concerted efforts are required to focus on augmenting ground water recharge, allocation of water among competitive users and among users, water saving irrigation methods, resource conservation and institutional mechanism for developing collective action to reverse this process. It may be, therefore, appropriate to relax the Clause 48(g) for such 'Over Exploited' blocks.</p>
16.	<p>In some States Gram Sabha / Gram Panchayat is not existing and instead village councils are in place which may be appropriately addressed in the Guidelines.</p>	<p>It sounds logical and such situation exists in NE States. This may be agreed and clarified accordingly.</p>

17.	<p>DWDU is to be set up in districts where the projects under watershed development is about 25000 ha. In districts with less than 25000 ha there will be no technical support team in the absence of DWDU. A decision may be taken to establish DWDU either in all the districts or an arrangement for Technical Support Group to DRDA / District Level Committee by engaging 1-2 professionals as consultants and involving ATMA / KVK. Whether programmes of DAC will get due attention in the scenario of DRDA being treated as DWDU.</p>	<p>Any common Agency operating at the district level for implementation of the Watershed projects as per the common guidelines will be supported by the funds from DoLR to the extent as stipulated as in the Common Guidelines.</p>
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