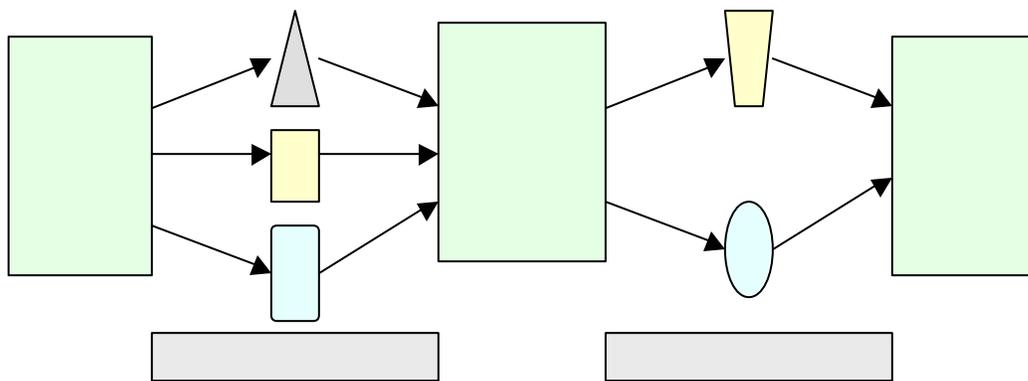


Capitalization of Experiences: 'Water, Land and People' in India

Proceedings of the Third Learning Group Meeting (22-24 November 2006)

Venue: Alankrita, Hyderabad



Background

The first meeting of the CE Learning Group took place on the 9th and 10th of December 2005 at Hyderabad where relevant experiences in water management were analyzed and focus areas were identified for further exploration. The focus areas identified under the broad subject of “Institutional dimensions of water resource management” include: (1) Rules, regulations and management systems (water resources); (2) Addressing information imbalances in the context of community organization; (3) Convergence, linkages and collaborations among institutions; and (4) Watershed development and growth.

Four subgroups were formed based on the interest of the members in a focus area. The subgroup members undertook field visits and activities such as case studies, story telling, video of community views, expert interviews etc. as part of intermediate activities between learning events. The members shared their experiences and learnings from their intermediate activities at the second Learning Group meeting at WOTR, Darewadi, Maharashtra on the 5th and 6th of May 2006. The members also planned for consolidated outputs that are easy to disseminate and the time frame for sub-group activities.

Objectives of CE-WLP Third learning event

1. Provide a platform to share subproducts of the subgroup members based on the activities undertaken during the CE process
2. Gather learnings from the different experiences
3. To provide access to lessons from regions across the country
4. To look into the feasibility/challenges in replicating/applying these learnings under different conditions

Overview of the CE third workshop

The workshop started with a welcome address and introduction to SDC perspective of the CE-WLP process. The CE-WLP members then shared their experiences and presented their subproducts in the next two days. The delegates from Pakistan and Bangladesh also shared their experiences. There were also discussions to integrate and bring varied subproducts under a common umbrella as a single comprehensive product.

Day 1:

Welcome and introduction to CE-Third Learning Event

The workshop started with a welcome address and introduction to the process by Ms. Rupa Mukerji. Mr. Martin Sommer then shared SDC perspective of the CE-WLP process.



Objectives and expectations of SDC (Martin Sommer):

- Linkages with Millennium Development Goals
- Bring out experiences to share with others
- Not a classical report
- Products that are useful
- Facts, figures and evidence of outcomes: Economic, environmental social impacts
- Should help in better shaping of programs in the future
- Should be in a position to answer: What do you do to address poverty issues?
- Equity issues: Have the interventions reduced the level of economic disparity
- Sustainability issues: Institutional sustainability
- Scale: micro watershed issues at the trans-boundary level
- Grass root impact versus policy impact
- Use of materials in policy discussion
- Bring knowledge into public domain and limit to within organizations

This was followed by an introduction to the design of the workshop and a brief review of the CE-WLP process so far by Mr. Ramkumar.

Points of discussion:

Restructuring of the themes based on the outputs

Upscaling aspects:

What to be up scaled and its worth?

Upscaling in a local context?

Sharing of subproducts and presentations by CE-WLP members

Presentation by Anwar: Anwar's focus was on groundwater governance. He focused on the management of groundwater in different scenarios such as urban, peri-urban and rural areas. For example, how sustainable are the groundwater markets that prevail in the peri-urban regions and what is their impact on groundwater table? How do we evolve a legal framework for managing groundwater resources?

He then shared a short video clipping that illustrated the case of social regulations and water sharing agreements prevailing in a village called Madirepalli in Ananthapur district in Andhra Pradesh.



Presentation by Mary: Mary examined the different community level institutions created during the process of community based natural resource management activities.

Major observations:

- Continuation of institutions by adapting and adopting new techniques /productivity enhancing techniques
- Role of Vana Samrakhana Samithis (Forest Committees) in evolving a way to overcome problems/obstacles such as water scarcity
 - They evolved a strategy to adopt new techniques to use the limited water resources.
- Revival of traditional tank management institutions (Neerugantis)
- Water management should radiate outwards from the water body and integrate soil and water conservation activities.

She then shared a short video clipping showing how involving the community in various natural resource management activities throws up leaders and who with appropriate capacity building can sustain the changes and link up with larger village level governing institutions (Panchayat systems). This video shows how investment in human and institutional development leads to enhanced knowledge and self confidence that makes good leaders out of ordinary community members.



Presentation by Nafisa Barot: Ms. Nafisa explained the challenges in bringing together communities spread across four different villages in a river basin onto a common platform to interact and discuss their problems collectively. This was done in the form of a “padayathra” (walkathon by communities across the basin) to map the problems in different areas of the basin. This finally lead to a kind of arrangement or agreement based on the demands of the downstream farmers, whereby the farmers in upstream areas restricted their water use and made some changes in their cropping pattern (reduced area under water intensive cash crops).



Discussion points:

- Priorities for groundwater management:
 - Defining the water rights
 - Regulatory mechanisms to govern these water rights
 - How do we transfer governance to community?
- Steps taken to sustain village level institutions towards resource management:
 - Leadership and capacity building helps in developing authority, which is their own
- Transferring governance to community without clarity on their rights may not be the right idea. Devolution of power has to go with this kind of clarity.
- Irrigation water and drinking water can be thought in continuity and they may not be considered as different issues, but this depends on supply of water.
- Are there any savings due to sharing of groundwater?

Discussion on subproducts:

- Support cases with empirical support
- Synthesize the subproducts in such way that it is easy to swallow and digest
- Discussion framework to put themes into different slots
- External facilitator to cull out lessons since the experience holders are too close to their experiences / knowledge
- Put together multiple products without duplicating the messages

Sharing of Videos

Kalyan Shetti shared two video clippings based on experiences from Indo-Swiss Participative Watershed Development Project in Karnataka (ISPWDK), namely, Towards empowerment: Story of Devaki and From participant to representation: Story of Khattal saab.

Towards empowerment: Story of Devaki

In this film, Devaki, a landless laborer belonging to a socially oppressed group (Dalit), shares her experiences of belonging to a Self-Help Group (SHG) and her transformation from a laborer to a community resource person responsible for technical aspects of watershed structures.

From a Participant to an elected representative: The story of Khatal Saab

In this film, Khatal Saab shares his experiences from his journey from being a council member of the Village Development Society (VDS) to ultimately becoming the elected representative of the local governance institution (Gram Panchayat).

Presentation by Mattia Celio: Mattia elaborated on the different types of rights over water: Access, Withdrawals, Management, Exclusion and Transfer. Based on these rights the institutional arrangements for water allocation could be user based allocation, agency allocation and market allocation. He went on to explain some of the steps to improve water allocation.

**Day 2:**

Road Map: To put into perspective the various subproducts under different focus areas for the benefit of participants who were not part of the learning group, a brief overview of the different focus areas, the process of arriving at specific subproducts were explained.

Presentation by Kalyan Shetti: Kalyan shetti described the process of integrating gender into watershed development activities based on experiences from Indo-Swiss Participative Watershed Development Project in Karnataka

(ISPWDK). Participation shifted from land based approach to household approach. This was more inclusive

Presentation by Kaushik Rawal: The presentation was about collaborations among institutions (GO-NGO) and also type of community participation in terms of gender in two villages, namely, Neswad and Avanya. An important learning was that participation could be understood in many ways. Type or extent of mechanisms for women may differ among the villages depending on socio-cultural factors but as long as transparency and accountability are maintained in the decision-making processes through gram sabhas and other community /public forum, it is possible to achieve positive results.



Sharing of video: A video clipping was shared that encapsulated the progress of clusters of women Self Help Groups in organizing themselves into a grass root level organization called “Mahiti”.

Presentation by Heeralal Sharma: Heeralal illustrated the participatory processes followed in the watershed development activities undertaken in Bhinder block of Udaipur district in Rajasthan. Participatory processes were followed in planning, execution, monitoring and review cum assessment. He explained the process that involved multi stakeholder platform meetings that involved community members, NGO facilitators, government department personnel, local politicians (Member of Legislative Assembly) and technical resource persons from research institutions.

Plenary:

The presentations were followed by a session where the presenters provided clarifications for the questions and queries from the audience. It also provided an opportunity to get feedback and suggestions from the workshop participants.



Presentation by Jangal/Marcella: A joint presentation was made based on the review of post watershed sustainability in the case of Mhaswandi watershed, part of Indo-German watershed program. They looked into the growth and development in the post watershed development focusing on local institutions and CBOs, maintenance of watershed assets and market linkages. Some of the learnings shared were that livelihood opportunities could be developed for landless farmers within the village even after watershed development and that implementing agencies/NGOs can still have a role in the post-project period in a Keep-in-Touch mode to bring in new ideas and to provide linkages to the village level institutions.

Presentation by Jangal: The focus of the presentation was on the need for effective market linkages to market farmer's produce to make use of the productivity developed through watershed development interventions. New market linkage strategies such as the Safal Marketing systems (Safal fruit and vegetable auction market and functions were explored to examine the possibilities of linking the village level institutions created as part of watershed development activities (Village Development Societies) with such market facility.

Sharing of video: A Video clipping was shared titled Participatory hydrological monitoring: Tools for community water management. The video illustrated the use of simple techniques by the community members to manage their water resources.

Presentation by Shankar: The emphasis was on watershed development beyond land-based activities (Focus on the case of tamarind processing). The case illustrated was that of natural resources based livelihood strategy that evolved into a small-scale enterprise that supports the landless households. The interventions were small such as easy access to credit and converting raw tamarind into cakes that are easy to store and market.

Plenary:

The presentations were followed by a session where the presenters provided clarifications for the questions and queries from the audience. It also provided an opportunity to get feedback and suggestions from the workshop participants.



Points of discussion:

- NRM management in India is fragmented with responsibilities split between many CBOs. While each has a specialized niche/capacity, it is very important to look at successful examples of collaborations and convergence.
- What do we mean by growth? More risk prone, high input farming or more sustainable, equity focused growth?
- Make incremental learnings from *PIDOW* visible, assess more carefully baseline messages with regards to benefits, cost sharing and indigenous technologies.
- Livestock and watersheds: Agriculture is risk prone; Livestock provide secure income; and small ruminants provide secure incomes in summer.
- Equity issue: How is the wealth created by the interventions distributed among the farmers/community?

Sharing of experiences from Pakistan: The participants from Pakistan shared their experiences from bilateral projects.

Group work

The participants were divided into subgroups to discuss key learnings, take stock of respective sub-products and way forward to aggregate varied subgroup products.



Group 1:

Learnings:

(Based on own programs as well as from other programs else where)

- Community managed water resources included three themes: Surface irrigation, groundwater management and integrated water resources management.
- Surface water-Tank management experiences:
 - Tank storage capacity is restored by desiltation (removal of accumulated silt). It is more effective and meaningful if the desiltation activity is linked to application of silt for enhancing agricultural productivity.
 - Rich traditional tank management institutions exist (*Neeruganti, Domasu, Gonchi*) that emphasize on food security, these can be revived and adapted to suit contemporary institutional systems.
 - Leadership development is an important component that has bearings on sustainability
 - Tank management is a bankable scheme
- Groundwater management:
 - Community capacity in understanding groundwater resources is critical
 - Groundwater to be used as minimum security for crop/food production
 - Sharing water resources is a win-win solution and minimizes futile investments in borewells
- Integrated water resources and multistakeholder dialogue is most essential element in this.

Way forward-outputs:

- Subproducts to be classified thematically and topics viewed through the lenses of gender, equity and sustainability
- Facts and figures to be added to the outputs
- Physical output may be a document to structure the idea and put it under a common umbrella: Theoretical background to link the different case studies with conclusions and implications at the end.
- Powerpoint presentations, posters and videos can be used for dissemination among various stakeholders as appropriate.

Group 2:

Stock taking of products:

- Leadership
- Empowerment
- Gender integration in the water resource management
- Collaborations
- Institutional growth and development
- Process for planning, implementation, monitoring, linkages and collaborations
- Post project continuity and reflecting growth in development

Key learnings:

- Empowerment
- Leadership
- Accountability and transparency
- Mutual respect
- Equity
- It leads to sustainability-growth and development continue

Way forward:

- Scale up activities by federating SHGs and developing community managed resource centers
- Synthesis to be done to integrate individual cases

Group 3:

Lessons:

- NGOs role as facilitator: What is and what is not?
- Process of systematic capacity building to give direction and key component is the willingness of the people to take development in own hands
- Facilitating to provide stimulus in the post project period and be as a resource for people to reach and respond
- Local skill up gradation through value addition
- Linkages to be done during project period (market linkages) for continuation in post-watershed

Discussion points regarding the subproducts:

- The presentations have real life experiences. These could be synthesized. This synthesis could be linked for supporting – policy dialogues, inform policy makers.
- At the moment everything seems to be at individual level. There is a need to synthesize these individual experiences and then come out with products.
- Sharing the key messages that came out of the groups can be shared with few other groups and get their consensus before going for policy recommendations.
- Reinforcement of the messages in different products
- Stories – knowledge products need to focus more on the “how” part of the change achieved
- In sharing of project experience, important to focus on the thematic domain (under CE study) under which presentation is being made. Not all information about project/program is required.
- The interlinkages are coming out in the process but not in analysis. How did the stakeholders interact?
- Rich collaborative experiences (especially village level) are there. Important to analyze dynamics between them, knowledge flows, what worked, what failed, where were the key conflicts etc.

Day 3:

Sharing of Experiences from exchange visit to Bolivia by Ms. Marcella: Marcella gave an overview of the issues pertaining to Bolivia. The focus was on water conflicts and solutions arrived at. She described the process in which people mobilized themselves and initiated a movement (concerns over loss of culture) and put pressure on the local administration against privatization of water.

Introduction to Keep in Touch (KiT) program: Rupa Mukerji

It is similar to the capitalization of experiences involving different SDC/IC NGO partners and broad themes were identified to document the NGO experiences from different states (Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Karnataka and Kerala) and sharing, linking and taking lessons out of them. For example, water harvesting structures, sustainable agriculture (PTD), tank management experiences.

KiT Presentation by Shankar, CCD: Mr. Shankar shared his experiences from the tribal belt of Orissa on water management. The main objective was to improve the livelihood standards of the communities through soil & water conservation and utilizing the existing water resources and through simple low cost

technologies. Irrigation canals were constructed for multi purpose use through gravitation flow of water.

Presentation by Alain Cuvelier, Delegate Bangladesh: Issues for focus for CE

Major points:

- Results should be communicated and shared, transferable but not simply reported.
 - Experience capitalization is an institutional memory:
 - Should not be lost and done in time
 - Capitalizing after long period results in loss of internal memory
 - Experience holder needs to reflect and not by external evaluator
- Experience capitalization is a monitoring process
- CE is always biased towards success stories and less on mistakes
- Distribution is not sharing and sharing should be according to clients

He also provided inputs towards the CE-WLP process in India especially regarding lessons or processes that help in scaling up and replication, Policy dialogue and harmonization of donors and development partners.

Group work: To visualize final product in terms of policy making and design new programs

Group1



Inputs towards policy making

- Policy briefs (country specific and region specific)
- Policy notes focusing less on specifics and more on emerging concepts, concerns, impacts, learnings and strategies
- Comprehensive report documents for policy makers
- Leaflets
- Booklets
- Pamphlets
- Short films

To design new programs

Physical outputs:

Synthesis document
Interactive CD
VCD and posters help in designing new programs

Content/issues

Focus on system change
Process as important as the outcome
Outcomes - > Key messages
Material for enhancing capacities
Strategies for upscaling successful experiences

Group 2:



Inputs towards policy making

- CD containing all the learnings and set with one synthesis document (that gives context, lessons learnt, a few stories, recommendations)
- One comprehensive document with details
- One CD with videos: stories+messages
- CE process on posters
- Posters with messages and attractive photos
- Video clipping to share project, people, area experiences as support

Design new program

Physical outputs and contents

- A folder with CD
- Leaflets of experiences
- Booklets of learnings + video clips
- Booklets on guiding principles
- Booklets on policy issues

Feasibility of putting up the products on a website

Synthesis group was mooted to comprehensively bring all the themes and lessons under a common umbrella.

Conclusion

The learning event concluded closing remarks by Rupa Mukerji and with Ramkumar thanking all the CE-WLP participants for their active participation in the entire CE-WLP process.