

FEEDBACK OF SHG BENEFICIARIES ON INTEGRATED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME OF AMRELI DISTRICT OF GUJARAT

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted in Amreli district of Gujarat state. The Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) aims at improving agricultural productivity, promote judicious use of water, and enhance agriculture based other livelihood options. Watershed management has emerged as an important intervention for supporting natural resource based livelihood mean in different agro-climatic regions in India and Gujarat. There is a high level of community participation in watershed management. A sample of 90 SHG members working under Integrated Watershed management Programme (IWMP) were purposively selected representing 10 villages of Amreli, Lilia, Lathi, Dhari and Kukavav taluka of Amreli district. To know the feedback of SHG members about IWMP only the SHGs which associated with IWMP from more than four years were selected. To know their degree of importance, respondents were asked to give their responses in three point continuum i.e. strongly agree, agree and disagree. The frequency and percentage were calculated. Result revealed that cent per cent of the respondents were strongly agree that "The SHGs promoted under IWMP leads to all round development of the beneficiaries", "SHG provides an opportunity to develop self-confidence to talk in meeting, public" etc. "meetings, discussions, educational tours etc. conducted in SHG helps the respondents to gain more knowledge" because in the meetings all the members were involved in exchanging information, discussing about innovations, current issues etc.

Keywords: IWMP; self help group members; opinion, community participation

INTRODUCTION

The State Government of Gujarat introduced the IWMP in the year 2009. The principal objective of a Watershed Development Programme is to enhance sustainable livelihood options for the rural poor through integrated land and water management practices. The primary livelihood option of rural folks is agriculture, animal husbandry and allied activities. Thus, the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) aims at improving agricultural productivity, promote judicious use of water, and enhance agriculture based other livelihood options. The Gujarat State Watershed Management Agency is the state level implementation agency of the programme (Anonymous, 2011).

Watershed management has emerged as an important intervention for supporting natural resource based livelihood mean in different agro-climatic regions in India and Gujarat. There is a high level of community participation in watershed management.

The Watershed Committee constitute SHGs in the watershed area with the help of WDT from amongst poor, small and marginal farmer households, landless/asset

less poor agricultural labourers, women, shepherds and SC/ST persons. These groups are homogenous groups having common identity and interest who are dependent on the watershed area for their livelihood. Each Self Help Group is provided with a revolving fund of an amount to be decided by the Nodal Ministry. Roul (1996) stated that an SHG is a group where members come together with certain objectives to manage their own funds and affairs by themselves to achieve better control over their resources and to meet their credit needs. Bariya (2021).

OBJECTIVE

To know the feedback of SHG members about Integrated Watershed Management Programme

METHODOLOGY

The SHG women were purposively selected which were taken their livelihood activities under Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) in different five talukas of Amreli district. From each talukas two villages were selected where SHGs taken their livelihood activities more than four years. Further 9 members from each SHG

were selected randomly. The responses were collected by way of a personal interview. The data were processed; tabulated, classified, analyzed and statistical analysis was carried out in the light of objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The information in Table 1 gives a clear picture regarding opinion of the respondents towards functioning and development of SHGs. Cent per cent of the respondents were strongly agree towards the statement “The SHGs promoted under IWMP leads to all round development of the beneficiaries”, “SHG provides an opportunity to develop self-confidence to talk in meeting, public” etc. “meetings, discussions, educational tours etc. conducted in SHG helps the respondents to gain more knowledge” because in the

meetings all the members were involved in exchanging information, discussing about innovations, current issues etc. vast majority (96.67 per cent) of the respondents were strongly agreed to the statement – “SHG provides a dias for women members to discuss their problems and take collective actions”, because any member in SHG who is having family problems or financial problem can discuss in the meeting so that collective actions can be taken to solve the problem and only 4.44 per cent of the respondents disagreed to this statement, which might be because of somewhat lack of cooperation among the group members. “Loan is misutilised by the beneficiaries in the SHG” is strongly agreed only by 6.67 per cent of the respondents may be because of no politics in the group, unity, no leaders dominance, etc.

(n=90)

Table:1 Feedback of the SHG members about IWMP

Sr. No.	Feedback of respondents	SA		A		D	
		F	P	F	P	F	P
A	SHG						
1	The SHGs promoted under IWMP leads to all round development of the beneficiaries	90	100.00	--	--	--	--
2	Loan is misutilized by the beneficiaries in the self-help groups	06	06.67	02	2.22	82	91.11
3	SHG provides an opportunity to develop self-confidence to talk in meeting, public etc.	90	100.00	--	--	--	--
4	Meetings, discussions, educational tours etc. conducted in SHG helps the respondents to gain more knowledge	90	100.00	--	--	--	--
5	SHG provides a dias for women members to discuss their problems and take collective actions	86	96.67	--	--	04	04.44
B	Enterprises						
1	Marketing of the product is irregular and delayed	03	03.33	04	04.44	83	92.22
2	The entrepreneurial activities of IWMP are based on beneficiaries needs	90	100.00	--	--	--	--
3	Undertaking of the enterprises provided by IWMP helps to increase the annual income of the beneficiaries	72	80.00	18	20.00		
4	Non-availability of raw materials hinders the progress of the employment	84	93.33	06	06.67	--	--
C	Project						
1	Projects like IWMP are a boon to women in rural areas	90	100.00	--	--	--	--
2	IWMP provides technical and social assistance to the beneficiaries in order to improve their economic goals	61	67.78	29	32.22	--	--
3	The project has made people to work hard and to achieve their goals	85	94.44	15	16.66	--	--
4	IWMP has made farm women to actively participate outside the home and village activities	79	87.78	11	12.22	--	--
5	IWMP villages have become model villages for rural development personnel	69	76.67	21	23.33	--	--

SA – Strongly Agree A – Agree D – Disagree F - Frequency P - Percent

In case of enterprise vast majority (92.22 per cent) of the respondents disagreed to the statement *i.e.* marketing of the product is irregular and delayed because they may not have faced problem in marketing of their products as their end products were sold in their village and nearby villages and neatly packed and attractive, there were no damages and also due to their hard work, interest, good bargaining capacity, boldness etc. Cent per cent of the respondents were strongly agree towards the statement “The entrepreneurial activities of IWMP are based on beneficiaries needs”. The reason might be that the entrepreneurial activities decided by the beneficiaries at the time of formation of SHG, whereas, the statement like “Undertaking of the enterprises provided by IWMP helps to increase the annual income of the beneficiaries”. 80.00 per cent of the beneficiaries were strongly agree and 20.00 per cent beneficiaries respond their response in agree category because in some SHGs the entrepreneurial activities were seasonal. Non-availability of raw-materials hinders the progress of the employment was strongly agreed by 93.33 per cent of the respondents because when the raw materials were not available they cannot take up the entrepreneurial activities which directly affects their economic status.

Last component in Table 1 deals with the feedback of respondents towards the project which indicate that cent per cent of the respondents were strongly agree towards the statements such as “projects like IWMP are a boon to women in rural areas” followed by 94.44 per cent, 87.78 per cent, 76.67 per cent and 67.78 per cent that the “project has made people to work hard”, “IWMP has made farm women to actively participate outside the home and village activities”, “IWMP villages have become model villages for rural development personnel” and “IWMP provides technical and social assistance to the beneficiaries in order to improve their economic goals”, respectively. The reason because they have been benefited a lot by this project. This finding was in line with Bharthi (2005) and Bharthi and Badigar (2008).

CONCLUSION

There was a huge impact of SHGs on empowerment of rural women. The psychological, social, economical, cultural, health and political empowerment of SHG women were low before implementation of the IWMP project while it increased considerably at a greater pace with the introduction and functioning of the benefits offered in form of IWMP leading to empowerment of women respondents.

Earlier, they used to sit and work at home and utilize their whole time and energy for household chores, for caring and cooking for their family but after implementation of IWMP project, women realized their potential. They started utilizing their human resources *i.e.*, time, energy and skills along with the suggestions, guidance, opportunity and advice offered by IWMP extension personnel to establish enterprises and to prove themselves a support for their families.

POLICY IMPLICATION

The study revealed certain positive impact of IWMP project on its beneficiaries undertaken various IGAs. Hence, such livelihood development projects should be implemented in other areas and it should focus on whole community concerning various dimensions of development like human capital, natural capital, social capital, physical capital and food security.

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