

Joint Forest Management: A Handbook

JICA-MoEF project on:

Capacity Development for Forest
Management and Training of Personnel



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Disclaimer:

While preparing this manual every effort has been made to follow the existing JFMC provisions. However while adopting / modifying this Manual state concerned should carefully examine the provisions.

A Handbook

Joint Forest Management

For Front Line Staff of Forest Department & JFMC members

B

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Who Should Use this Handbook?

This book would be used as a reference book for carrying out JFM activities in the forest villages by the front line staff of the Forest Department, Joint Forest Management Committees and Eco-Development Committees

preface

The Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India is implementing a project titled “Capacity Development for Forest Management and Training of Personnel (ID-P.199)” with soft loan from JICA (Japan International Co-operation Agency) and this project is being implemented in 13 states namely, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Uttarakhand and West Bengal with 100% Grant from the Ministry.

The objective of the project is to improve training environment for frontline staff of the State Forest Training Institutes (SFTI) and through capacity building of frontline forestry staff putting emphasis on Joint Forest Management (JFM), thereby strengthening human resource development for sustainable forest management.

This project intends for infrastructure development of SFTIs as hard component whereas Training Development Program and development of training materials are part of soft components. State Consultants engaged by SPMUs are given the mandate of reviewing the existing State JFM Resolutions and prepare a Handbook of JFM for guiding the frontline staff of SFDs and JFMC members.

As per the Forest Policy of Government of India in 1988, the participation of local community living in and around the forest areas is imperative need for the conservation and development of forests. In order to implement this policy, the Government of India issued a clear Guideline on 1st. June, 1990 to develop and manage degraded forestland under the custody of SFDs with the help of the local community and voluntary organizations. In pursuance of this guideline, states came out with their own resolutions which facilitated expansion of JFM in the state.

Most of the State Forest Departments notified their resolutions in early 90s and thousands of JFMCs were constituted all over the country to develop and manage millions of hectares of degraded forestlands. It could get further impetus in the states which were implementing donor assisted forestry projects. In a similar manner, the Government of India through its National Afforestation and Eco-development Board also gave 100% central grant for Forest Development Agency (FDA), which is a federated body of JFMCs and State Forest Development Agency (SFDA), which is consolidated body of FDAs in the state. For the management of the Wildlife Protected Areas, Eco Development Committees (EDCs) are also formed to ensure people participation in wildlife conservation.

State Resolutions on JFM in many states were subsequently revised based on the directives issued by the Government of India as well as experiences gained by SFDs in course of implementation of JFM. Efforts of decentralization of democratic institutions through strengthening of Panchyat Act, Panchyat Act Extension for Scheduled Areas (PESA), Forest Right Act, Bio-diversity Act & Rules, further facilitated transfer of power to communities at the grass root and thus created a scope of revision of Resolutions of JFM.

Policy intention at the apex level may not be reflected in actual implementation of JFM unless those who are directly responsible to translate these policies in to action at the village level do not have clarity of understanding. JFM Handbook will be certainly an effective instrument in this direction.

This model Handbook of JFM has been prepared by CPMU with help of its Project Management Consultants for guidance to the state PMCs who can be able to prepare similar document in local vernacular following the state Resolution to facilitate their frontline staff as well as JFMC members.

State Consultants and officers of state can jointly work to bring out a handbook as per their state JFM resolutions and ensure that it reaches in the hands of all frontline staff as early as possible. While there will be any revisions, again it can be changed and communicated for proper implementation of Joint Forest Management. All efforts have been made by us to make it a comprehensive document from our level but any further improvement will always be welcome.

We want to put it on record that while preparing the document we have copiously followed the JFM Implementation Guidelines prepared by the Rajasthan Forest Department in 2010 for which we express our sincere gratitude to them.

We are confident that frontline staff of SFDs would learn to use this document starting from their Induction Training at SFTIs, and remain well conversant with policy, rules, processes and procedures of JFM. We are sure that this document will guide JFMC members also to implement JFM related activities with full confidence.

CPMU Team



abbreviations

FCA	Forest Conservation Act
FDA	Forest Development Agency
FRA	Forest Rights Act
JFM	Joint Forest Management
JFMC	Joint Forest Management Committee
NAP	National Afforestation Programme
NFP	National Forest Policy
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institution
VSS	Van Samrakshan Samiti
WP	Working Plan
GIM	Green India Mission
PFM	Participatory Forest Management
EDC	Eco Development Committee
MC	Municipal Council
VDFC	Village Development Forest Committee

“
*The earth, the air, the land and the water are not an inheritance
from our fore fathers but on loan from our children. So we have to
handover to them at least as it was handed over to us.*”

Mahatma Gandhi

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What is JFM: An Introduction to Local Forest Protection and Management

1.1 What is JFM

Joint Forest Management (JFM) is an approach and program initiated in the context of the National Forest Policy of 1988 wherein state forest departments support local forest dwelling and forest fringe communities to protect and manage forests and share the costs and benefits from the forests with them. Communities organize themselves into a JFM Committee to protect and manage nearby forests, guided by locally prepared byelaws and micro plans. The key element in JFM is that communities have the power to manage the use of forests by members and also exclude non-members. The benefits to them is direct access and control on the use and sale of most NTFPs and a share in the income from timber as well as other intangible benefits from local ecosystem services – like water recharge, pollination, wildlife habitat etc. Thus involvement of communities in conservation of forests and wildlife is of paramount interest.

Recognition in the National Forest Policy of 1988 that communities are central to forest protection and management led to the JFM Circular of June 1st 1990, and the subsequent 2000 and 2002 Guidelines, which provided the framework for state level rules, resolutions, and guidelines for JFM. The Panchayati Raj Act, PESA, and the FRA of 2006 further expanded the rights and responsibilities of local communities' vis-à-vis forests.

The rationale and logic behind JFM is that the earlier approach of government control of forests by states put the onus of protection and management on forest department staff and excluded dis-interested local communities from the same. At the same time, forests were also diverted for other uses. Increasing population further led to a situation of accelerated degradation and loss of forests through the 1970s and 1980s and the first State of Forest Report published in 1987 highlighted the impact on forest cover. A key issue perhaps was that working plan prescriptions assumed protection after felling, which was almost impossible to enforce, leading to poor regeneration. The earliest experiments with JFM in West Bengal succeeded as they engaged with local communities and promised them both short term alternative income and a long term share in timber.

While the Forest Conservation Act of 1980 provides central oversight for forest land diversion, the National Forest Policy of 1988 signals a new approach of providing primacy to the ecological role of forests and recognizing

that communities are integral to forest protection and management. Importantly, it also provides first charge to the subsistence uses of local communities from forest lands.

Accordingly, JFM tries to harness the strengths and energy of local rural communities for protecting and managing forests through JFM Committees/ Eco-Development Committees, and helps to meet their needs for subsistence and livelihood as well as generates local environmental services.

JFM has the potential to meet local subsistence needs, of fuel wood, fodder, other non-timber forest produce, small timber and timber etc., to provide livelihood through sale of produce, while at the same time, preventing degradation of the forests that provide local, national and global environmental benefits.

India has a long history of local use and protection of forests. The oldest examples perhaps are of sacred groves, which are an indigenous community approach for protecting patches of forests for a variety of ecosystem services. Many communities have historically protected local forests. Revenue systems reserved uncultivated areas as common lands, which included both grazing and forests lands. Even after the start of reservation of forest lands by the colonial Government, the Indian Forest Act of 1927 recognized the logic and need for local control and management of forests in the form of a provision for Village Forests in Section 28. This however was implemented sparingly. The Van Panchayat Rules of 1931 (and later) in the erstwhile Uttar Pradesh what is now Uttarakhand State provided for communities to demand the reservation of common lands as local village forests managed by a committee of villagers.

In Rajasthan, there is a long indigenous tradition of building consensus for earmarking areas for protection via the process of kesar chhanta. The example of Bishnoi community which has made enormous sacrifices to protect forests in the past and still preserve trees and nature is well known. In Uttarakhand, the women and men in the Chipko movement also protected trees from felling by government authorized contractors. Van Panchayats have been shown to have similar forest cover as government forest lands.

A brief listing of various forms of formal community tenure and management of forests both past and present is

provided below:

- ▶ Forest Cooperatives in the Madras Presidency (1900s),
- ▶ Section 28 - Village Forest Provision of the Indian Forest Act (1927)
- ▶ Van Panchayats in the (now) Uttarakhand (1930s onwards),
- ▶ Cooperative Forest Societies in Kangra (1940s, earlier Punjab, now Himachal Pradesh).
- ▶ Woodlots on panchayat lands under Social Forestry (1980s - with Revenue sharing agreements)
- ▶ Forest Protection Committees (FPCs) under JFM since 1990
- ▶ Community Forest Rights & Resource (CFRt & CFRe) under the FRA

1.2 Basis for Joint Forest Management

1.2.1 National Forest Policy 1988

The primary and most significant basis for JFM is provided by the National Forest Policy of 1988.

The basic objectives as stated in the NFP 1988 are:

- ▶ Maintenance of environmental stability through preservation and, where necessary, restoration of the ecological balance that has been adversely disturbed by serious depletion of the forests of the country.
 - ▶ Conserving the natural heritage of the country by preserving the remaining natural forests with the vast variety of flora and fauna, which represent the remarkable biological diversity and genetic resources of the country.
 - ▶ Checking soil erosion and denudation in the catchment areas of rivers, lakes, reservoirs in the “interest of soil and water conservation, for mitigating floods and droughts and for the retardation of siltation of reservoirs.
 - ▶ Checking the extension of sand-dunes in the desert areas of Rajasthan and along the coastal tracts.
 - ▶ Increasing substantially the forest/tree cover in the country through massive afforestation and social forestry programs, especially on all denuded, degraded and unproductive lands.
 - ▶ Meeting the requirements of fuel-wood, fodder, minor forest produce and small timber of the rural and tribal populations.
 - ▶ Increasing the productivity of forests to meet essential national needs.
 - ▶ Encouraging efficient utilization of forest produce and maximizing substitution of wood.
 - ▶ Creating a massive people’s movement with the involvement of women, for achieving these objectives and to minimize pressure on existing forests.
- Objective 9 (peoples movement) directly points to

the need for a community based local forest management approach, especially to meet the other objectives of local subsistence needs (objective 6), expanding forest cover (objective.5), environment (objective 1-4) and forest production (objective 7-8).

The Strategy section emphasizes provision of fodder, fuel and pasture and minor forest produce of the policy document.

The section on Management of Forests of the above document also includes a separate section on Rights and Concessions (4.3.4), which states “4.3.4.2. The holders of customary rights and concessions in forest areas should be motivated to identify themselves with the protection and development of forests from which they derive benefits. The rights and concessions from forests should primarily be for the bonafide use of the communities living within and around forest areas, especially the tribal”

It further goes on to state that, “4.3.4.3, the life of tribal and other poor living within and near forests revolves around forests. The rights and concessions enjoyed by them should be fully protected. Their domestic requirements of fuel wood, fodder, minor forest produce and construction timber should be the first charge on forest produce.”

Section 4.6, dealing with Tribal people and Forests, states that, “Having regard to the symbiotic relationship between the tribal people and forests, a primary task of all agencies responsible for forest management, including the forest development corporations should be to associate the tribal people closely in the protection, regeneration and development of forests as well as to provide gainful employment to people living in and around the forest.

1.2.2 Central MoEF Guidelines

➔ June 1st 1990

Taking the lead from the National Forest Policy 1988, as well as the earlier experiments of people participation in forest management in West Bengal, Gujarat, Orissa, Haryana etc., the June 1st 1990 guidelines provided the basis for initiating Joint Forest Management in forest lands. The initial focus in the 1990 guidelines was on degraded forest areas.

➔ Guidelines for Strengthening the Joint Forest Management Program (February 21st 2000)

As on 1.1.2000, approximately 10.24 million ha of forests lands were being managed under JFM programme through 36,075 committees (21.02.2000 Guidelines). Ten years after the initial JFM order, the MoEF issued guidelines on, for strengthening JFM, covering four main aspects.

- ▶ It proposed “legal backup to the JFM committees”. This included
 - Registering them under society’s registration Act.
 - An uniform name - JFM Committees
 - MOU to be signed between state government and JFMCs
 - All adults eligible to become members
- ▶ To promote participation of women, certain threshold criteria were proposed for JFMCs
 - General membership – at least 50% women
 - Executive committee – at least 33% women
 - Quorum for EC, at least 1/3 of women members or 1 member whichever is higher
 - President/Vice-President/Secretary – at least one post should be held by a women member.
- ▶ Expansion of JFM beyond degraded forests, “Extension of JFM in good forest areas”.
 - Proposed on a pilot basis, to be reviewed and expanded subsequently.
 - Maximum sharing of revenue at 20%,
 - Management broadly as per working plan, with JFM mostly for NTFP management
 - Minimum of 10 years of protection to be eligible for revenue sharing.
- ▶ Guidance for Micro Plan preparation was provided for both new Work Plan and existing Work Plan areas
 - including all stakeholders as well as NGOs.
- ▶ Recognize Self-initiated groups
 - identify, recognize, and register community groups as JFM Committees.
 - recognize prior protection while sharing benefits.
- ▶ Contribution for Regeneration of Resources:
 - Reinvest 25% of the share of village community and of the FD in forest.
 - Transparent mechanisms for computation of income for sharing benefits.
- ▶ Monitoring and Evaluation:
 - Concurrent monitoring at Division and State level
 - Evaluation at interval of 3 years (division) and 5 years (State).

➤ *Third set of guidelines: December 24th, 2002*

Subsequent guidelines in Dec 2002 emphasized three aspects:

- ▶ Signing of **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**, outlining the short term and long term roles and responsibilities, implementation of work programme, pattern of sharing of usufructs and conflict resolution.
- ▶ Suggesting a **Relationship with Panchayats**, that lets JFM Committees benefit from the administrative and financial position and organizational capacity, while maintaining the “separate non-political identity of the JFM Committees as ‘guardian of forests’”. Secondly, benefits from NTFP sales should be shared with all members of the gram sabha including the JFM committees.
- ▶ Proposing **Capacity building for managing Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs)**
- ▶ Recognizing **importance of NTFP management** in good forest areas for sustainability and local benefits, propose capacity building for:
 - non-destructive harvesting (in accordance with working plans),
 - equity in sharing,
 - institutional reforms
 - strengthening the set-up of NTFP management

For new WP (Work Plan) areas

- Include a JFM overlapping working circle with broad provisions for micro plans.
- Evolve flexible guidelines for preparation of local need based micro plans
- Micro plans prepared by the Forest Officers and JFMCs after detailed PRA exercise
- Utilize locally available knowledge and strengthen of the local institutions
- Cover local consumption, market linkages, environmental function and biodiversity conservation

For existing WP (Work Plan) areas

- Dovetail micro-plans into WP and implement them by special order of the PCCF.
- focus on multiple products and NTFP
- can cover community lands and other government lands outside notified forest areas

- ▶ Conflict resolution:
 - may constitute divisional and state level representative forums or working groups

1.3 Provisions for JFM in the state

Comparison of some state guidelines is given at the end of this chapter. However, **orders/ guidelines** and other provisions will be unique for each state. Each state has to include state specific guidelines here.

Joint Forest Management Committee / Eco-development Committee

2.1 What is a Joint Forest Management Committee

A Joint Forest Management Committee (or JFMC in short) is a democratic, decentralized and transparent local institution of forest and forest fringe dwelling communities, that is part of the Gram Sabha fully or partially and set up as per the provisions of applicable JFM rules/guidelines of the state.

Typically, there is one JFMC in one revenue village. However in special situations, e.g. historical collaboration between neighboring villages, or where it doesn't make sense to divide the forest, a JFMC may cover two or more villages. On the other hand, especially in tribal areas, there may be situations where one village may have several dispersed hamlets, JFMCs may be set up at sub-revenue village or hamlet level.

- ▶ members.
- ▶ They get a say in the objectives of management of their local forests
- ▶ They are motivated to contribute their time, effort and knowledge via the mechanism of the JFMC/EDC and their representatives in the Executive Committee to protect and manage the forest.
- ▶ They derive direct benefits from sustainable use of the forest
- ▶ They get a significant share in the returns from timber both for self-use, as well as for reinvestment in the forest.
- ▶ To develop local leadership for bigger role in future

In this way the interests of local communities, forest departments and overall goal of forest management and conservation are served.

Facilitators should have an open discussion with the local communities on these aspects, record any concerns and try and address them to the extent possible.

2.2 What is an Eco-Development Committee

An Eco-Development Committee (EDC) is similar to JFMCs, but meant for villages in Protected Areas and their buffer zones.

Their setup, working, role, responsibilities, powers, funds etc. are as per the state level orders.

Their area of operation is restricted to protected Areas, and forest and non-forest areas near protected areas. EDCs are set up with twin objectives – to protect wildlife and other biodiversity, and also undertake eco-development activities in the villages.

As their setup and operations are similar to JFMCs, the guidance in this Handbook can be utilized for setting up and facilitating EDC operations as well.

2.4 JFM Contexts

There are a variety of JFM contexts that a community and forest staff can face. These may include:

- ▶ An area with a high-functioning JFMC
- ▶ An area with an inactive JFMC
- ▶ An area with a history of past or current locally initiated protection system
- ▶ Area with other forest protection management institutions – Van Panchayats (Uttarakhand), Committees formed to manage Community Forest Resources under the Forest Rights Act, Village Forests (Sec 28 of IFA), Kangra Forest Cooperatives (HP), Biodiversity Heritage Committee etc.

FD staff, local residents promoting JFM or community forestry in the village should explore the situation in the village including any existing formal and informal institutional arrangements for forest protection and management – document them briefly and discuss the same in local discussions, so that a consensus is slowly built about the way forward, including towards JFM or other local protection options.

Ideally some of this discussion should be preceded by or happen during a transect in the forest area in question – which can lead to a discussion of a lot of site specific issues.

2.3 Rationale for JFMC/EDCs

These JFMCs/EDCs are constituted so that:

- ▶ The investment climate in forestry sector is enhanced as rural communities participate in forest protection and management.
- ▶ Rural communities are equal partners in the protection and management of forests
- ▶ They control the management of forest lands and community lands by both members and non-

2.5 Administrative arrangements for formation of a JFMC

The process of formation and functioning of a JFMC would involve the following critical steps:

➤ Introduction

- ▶ Discussion/s within the village regarding:
 - history of the forest,
 - current situation – forest condition, demand and supply of forest produce,
 - how it has arisen,
 - and what a JFMC can do to help – what could be practical management options to sustain the forest and maintain and improve the flow of benefits
- ▶ Whom to meet
 - Initially it would be important to meet with opinion makers in the village
 - Hold hamlet wise small group discussions
 - Identify stakeholders by location, or activity (e.g. graziers, headloaders) who depend on the forest.
 - Transect

➤ Request for formation of JFMC

- ▶ Letter for forming a JFMC from as many people as possible – across all hamlets, both men and women, should be sent to Forest Guard or any other frontline Forest staff of the Division.

➤ Initial action on Request for Formation of JFMC

- ▶ Forest Guard/Forester to create a file for the proposed JFMC
- ▶ Mark copy of request up to DFO and mark it up for record
- ▶ Send list of steps for JFMC formation to village

➤ List of Documents and Steps

- ▶ Objectives of JFMC
- ▶ Copy of Handbook
- ▶ Copy of Rules / Guidelines under which JFMC is formed
- ▶ List of types of lands on which JFMCs can be formed
- ▶ Process of enrolling members of the JFMC
- ▶ Criteria and process for selection of Executive Committee for the JFMC (as per requirements of state rules/guidelines)
- ▶ Steps for preparing byelaws
- ▶ Draft sample byelaws for the JFMC – which can form the basis for customization of byelaws for the JFMC.
- ▶ Preparing a village level micro-plan considering the local needs and community resources available
- ▶ Steps for preparing micro plan

- Sketch map of local area showing forest and different zones for management
- Listing of management options for each zone – grazing, fuel wood collection, green fodder collection, no harvesting zones, etc.
- ▶ Draft sample micro plan for the JFMC
- ▶ Registration requirements for the JFMC (as per requirements of state rules/guidelines)
- ▶ Draft MOU between the JFMC and the FD
- ▶ List of books/registers to be maintained by the JFMC.
- ▶ Steps for opening and operating a bank account
- ▶ Accounting requirements of the JFMC.

2.6 Who can form and facilitate the formation of a JFMC/EDC?

The request for formation must be signed by the area residents.

Formation can be initiated /facilitated by:

- ▶ Residents
- ▶ Panchayat
- ▶ FD staff
- ▶ NGOs / Research or Educational institutions

2.7 How is the Executive Committee (EC) to be formed

- ▶ Once the request for formation of a JFMC is received, an informal adhoc committee may be formed to facilitate the process at the village level.
- ▶ Election / Selection of the EC would require (state specific):
 - Presence and vote of at least 40% of all voting residents of the area (hamlet/s, or village or as prescribed in JFM Resolution of the State)
 - When at least 33% of those present are women
 - DFOs/NGOs/ may be invited as observers.
- ▶ If the Body is registered, then statutory electoral requirements would require to be completed.

2.8 Byelaws for the JFMCs¹

Bye-laws are an adaptive mechanism to guide the day to day working of the JFMC. Bye-laws can be prepared and adapted to fit the situation at hand and can also be modified in the future. All JFMCs whether registered independently or not must prepare their own byelaws. Bye-laws can cover a variety of issues.

¹ Reference was taken from JFM Implementation Manual, Govt. of Rajasthan, 2010

A draft copy of model bye-laws for the state is attached at Annexure 1. **(State may include it as part of their manual)**

These draft bye-laws should be discussed by the EC and the key elements should be presented and discussed with the Gram Sabha. Based on this two-stage discussion, the byelaws may be suitably elaborated and modified.

Care must be taken to ensure that bye-laws are in broad conformity with the state JFM rules/guidelines, as well as the statutory requirements of the registration body. This can be shared in the preliminary meetings.

Once the byelaws have been revised and finalized by the JFMC, they should be sent to the FD for information and any comments and approval.

This final byelaw may be adopted by the JFMC and then sent for registration.

Annexure 2: Form 1 Request for Registration of a Joint Forest Management Committee **(State may add it as part of their JFM manual)**

This section deals with the process enrolling members and registering the JFMC.



Setting up a JFMC: Membership and Registration

3.1 JFMC – Who can become a member, and process of being a member

- ▶ All adult members residing within the revenue boundaries of the area where a JFMC is being proposed are eligible and must be made members. The area could be a village or group of villages, a hamlet, or a combination of whole villages and hamlets of other villages, depending on location and historical relations and forest use patterns.
- ▶ Membership criteria are as per the JFM resolution of the state. **State should “Provide quote from resolution”**
- ▶ Membership for a JFMC is open for all members of the gram sabha – i.e. voting adults. (in some states membership is open to one male and one female member of each household).
- ▶ The facilitator (Forest Guard or representative from Forest Department) should make an attempt to inform all adults about the process of setting up a JFMC, the rationale of membership and emphasize that all families are eligible and should be made members. Assistance may be sought from the panchayat and NGOs and other community based groups – e.g. *mahila dals*, youth groups, SHGs and any individuals or groups that had earlier tried to protect the forest.
- ▶ For this purpose, in addition to village level meetings, informal meetings should also be done at hamlet level, in small groups and one-to-one with individuals. This will both spread word about the process, and also help identify active individuals who can engage other community as well.
- ▶ Examples should be given of nearby villages that have taken on the management of the forests.

3.2 Forms and documents related to membership and registration²

To facilitate the process the following forms and documents may be utilized.

➤ *Record of members*

This can be in a file or register – as per the format attached. (Annexure 3).

² Reference was taken from JFM Implementation Manual, Govt. of Rajasthan, 2010

➤ *Identification Card for office bearers of JFMC/ EDC*

An Photo-identity card serves several purposes for the JFMC staff/committee members. First it serves to provide an identity. Secondly, members can introduce themselves as JFMC staff/members both to people they meet or need to restrict their movement in the forest, as well as while dealing with other government departments. On the whole, it can be a tool for their distinct recognition in the society. Proposed format is attached. (Annexure 4).

➤ *Information to DFO*

Once JFMC is formed, it will be registered with DFO and MOU will be signed as per JFM Resolution of the state concerned.

➤ *Registration Certificate for the JFMC from the DFO*

The DFO may issue a Registration Certificate to the JFMC after it is duly registered. Format for Registration Certificate is attached as Annexure 5. The document will mention details like area of land under protection, the type and ownership of the land, the villages who are members of the JFMC etc.

A format for the letter may be prepared and attached with the JFM manual.

Alternatively, if a JFMC wants to be registered under the Society Registration Act, it will have to obtain a No Objection Certificate (where state JFM Resolution prevents such practice) from DFO. This letter will be sent to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies or their local representative to facilitate registration of the JFMC under the Society Registration Act.

➤ *Post –registration letter from DFO to CF*

Once the JFMC is finally registered as a society, the DFO may inform the CF giving basic details. **A format for the letter and for the basic data is attached (Annexure 6).**

➤ *Receipt book*

Receipts should be given for membership fee collected as well as for any other money charged from the members by JFMC. **A format for the receipts is attached (Annexure 7).**

➤ *Bank account (prior to registration)*

An account may be opened in a nearby bank or post office, in the name of the JFMC, prior to registration. Membership fees and any other money collected initially may be deposited in the account. This should have preferably 3 signatories, of which at least 2 are either President/Vice President or Member-Secretary.

➤ *Membership of people who live outside the village or a member move out subsequently*

Members may consider putting a non-resident member option in their byelaws. This will allow members who live outside the village to also participate in the activities of the JFMC, without necessarily having to be on site. However, they will not be able to participate in the meeting when Byelaws will be adopted. Byelaws should consider the following with respect to non-resident members:

- ▶ Voting rights
- ▶ Level of contributions
- ▶ Share in forest produce – self collected
- ▶ Share in net income, as and when received from the FD.



Executive Committee

4.1 Formation of the Executive Committee³

The Executive Committee is responsible for managing the overall operations of the JFMC. The members of this Committee should be elected within 30 days of registration of the JFMC.

The Executive Committee members will be elected in a democratic process by the JFMC members and may be ratified by Gram/Ward Sabha (as per Panchyat Act provision). The Panchayat Act provides specific provisions for calling a Gram Sabha.

4.2 Elected Representatives

The JFMC member will elect the Executive Committee from the JFMC/ EDC members, or as defined in the state guidelines.

If the total SC/ST population of the village is greater than 10% percent, it will be mandatory to have one member from each category. In case the total population of the two categories is 15 percent or less, at least one member should be SC or ST.

At least one member should be elected from landless persons.

The Executive Committee shall include at least 3 women members who will be eligible to contest for any reserved or open position. Some state has specifically mentioned that at least one of the key post of Executive Committee should be a woman member.

4.3 Ex-Officio Members

In addition to the 11 elected members, the following may/will be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee:

S.N	Person/ Designation	Right to Vote
1	Sarpanch/Panch related to the JFMC village/ hamlet or Municipality Ward member residing in the respective JFMC ward	Yes
2	Forest Department Staff (Forester/ Forest Guard) as Member Secretary from the Forest Department	No
3	Representative of a Non-Government Organization operating in the JFMC area. (To be nominated by the Deputy Conservator of Forest)	No
4	Head of the Women Sub-committee wherever exist	Yes

³ Reference was taken from JFM Implementation Manual, Govt. of Rajasthan, 2010

[A Format of the request letter of the non-government organization to DCF/DFO is given in Annexure 8.

A Format for information letter to Non-Government Organization is given in Annexure 9]

State manual may include these.

Office Bearers of the Executive Committee (EC)

The Executive Committee of JFMC shall have 4 office bearers:

- ▶ President
- ▶ Vice President
- ▶ Treasurer
- ▶ Member Secretary (Forest Department Representative)

The Government Resolution provides for replacement of the Member Secretary by a JFMC member now or after a specific period in some states. In the interim period, a Joint Secretary may be elected by the EC, who can support the Member Secretary from Forest Department and after a reasonable period Joint Secretary can easily replace Joint Secretary.

- ▶ The President, Vice President and Treasurer will be elected from the Executive Committee members.
- ▶ It is mandatory to elect at least one woman for any of the 3 key posts, named above (if such provision exists in the Resolution)

4.4 How to Elect Executive Committee Members?

The JFMC will decide the election procedure on its own including date and time and the process to be followed.

- ▶ The local Forest Officer (Forester, Deputy Ranger etc.) will act as Returning Officer for the Executive Committee elections. The Returning Officer will conduct the elections in consultation with the JFMC and supervise the elections by gram sabha.
- ▶ The Returning Officer and Member Secretary (being a Frontline staff) will disseminate information about the election date and . They must ensure that the JFMC members and women are aware of the election date and participate in the gramsabha meeting.
- ▶ The Member Secretary will provide the Ex-officio members written information regarding their membership.

- ▶ An attempt should be made to elect the members unanimously by mutual consent.

4.5 If Members Are Elected by Mutual Consent

- ▶ This process can be followed only when all the villagers have the same choice and there is no resentment against any contestant.
- ▶ A limitation of this approach can be that a few persons or families may dominate the Executive Committee and persons from the reserved categories may not get actual representation. Ex-officio members and NGOs can help broad-basing the EC membership by discussion prior to and during the actual election.

4.6 If Members cannot be elected by Mutual Consent

- ▶ The elections should be undertaken in a democratic manner that provides equal opportunity for participation to all persons.
- ▶ Ex-officio members and NGOs can help to broad-base the EC membership by discussion prior to and during the election so that different hamlets/groups etc are well represented in the JFMC.
- ▶ The election process should be clear and transparent.
- ▶ The contestants should be asked to present written applications before the elections.
- ▶ The voting process should either be undertaken by raising hands or by secret ballot in a manner acceptable to all.

4.7 How to fill Vacant Position in the Executive Committee

The Gram Sabha must be informed about the requirement of filling a vacant position and its approval must be taken.

In case any position in the Executive Committee becomes vacant, a special meeting of the JFMC will be convened for conducting a new election for filling the position for the remaining time period.

In case the position of ex-officio NGO member becomes vacant, the Executive Committee can pass a resolution nominating a new NGO and inform the Deputy Conservator of Forest. A person nominated from the approved NGO will then take the charge as an ex-officio member.

4.8 Decisions to Be Taken in the First Meeting of the Executive Committee

The first meeting of the Executive Committee will be held immediately after the election or on the next day.

The President, Vice President and Treasurer should be selected in this meeting.

The following resolutions should be passed during this meeting:

- ▶ Decision to open an account of the JFMC in a bank or post office.
- ▶ Decision for joint operation of the account in case the account has already been opened by the Secretary.
- ▶ Selection of the NGO and its representative to be included in the Executive Committee as an ex-officio member. It should also be decided to present the Deputy Conservator of Forest an application nominating the selected NGO.
- ▶ Decision on the date of the JFMC/ Gram Sabha meeting for discussion / approval of By-Laws in their original form or with amendments.
- ▶ Decision to dissolve the previously working temporary Executive Committee.

4.9 When to Convene an Executive Committee Meeting

Executive Committee meetings should be held at least 4 times in a year and there should not be a difference of more than 90 days between any two Executive Committee meetings. The meetings should generally be organized according to the need for protection in the Forest / forestry operations in the field or distribution of forest produce.

- ▶ **Summer Meeting** (May-June): During this meeting the nature of activities to be undertaken during the monsoons should be discussed and necessary decisions should be made.
- ▶ **Monsoon Meeting** (September-October): During this meeting the process for distribution of grass should be discussed and the decision should be conveyed to all the members of the JFMC.
- ▶ **Winter meeting** (December –January): The activity of lopping and pruning should be discussed during this meeting and the methodology to be followed should be decided.
- ▶ **Spring Meeting** (March-April): During this meeting the members should discuss the process for releasing minor forest products and inform the JFMC members about the decision.

The Executive Committee meeting may be called at any time depending on the situation. In case of any problem or difference of opinion, the meeting should be convened immediately.

4.10 Procedure for Conducting Executive Committee Meeting

The Member Secretary shall inform all the members about the date, time and venue of the meeting. Whenever possible the Member Secretary shall also circulate the agenda for the meeting in advance, else the issues of discussion shall be decided in the beginning of the meeting itself.

The entire description of the meeting will necessarily be recorded in the Proceeding Register (Format of the proceeding register is given in Annexure 10). It will be the responsibility of the Member Secretary to record the minutes of the meeting in a Proceeding's Register. At the conclusion of every meeting the President, Member Secretary and all the members present shall sign the minutes of the meeting.

At least 50 % members including 1 woman shall be present to fulfill the minimum quorum for the meeting (**provision has to be made in the bye law**). Special attention should be given to issues raised and suggestions given by women members. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall preside over the Executive Committee meetings.

In every meeting the date for the next meeting shall be decided depending on the circumstances

Any member of the JFMC can attend and participate in the Executive Committee meeting. He/she shall, however, not have any voting rights.

The activities of the Executive Committee shall be in accordance with the bye laws approved by JFMC.

The information about decisions made by the Executive Committee will be disseminated extensively such that all the members of the JFMC will be well informed. It will be the responsibility of the Member Secretary /Joint Secretary to paste all the information on the 'Notice Board' (*Suchna Pat*) located in prominent public places within the village.

The Executive Committee may assign any task to any of its members but preference should be given those who are willing to perform the task voluntarily.

4.11 Powers and Functions of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is essentially formed for conducting the activities of the JFMC. It is, therefore, fully capable of utilizing the powers and fulfilling the responsibilities of the JFMC as outlined in the Government Order.

The major responsibilities of the Executive Committee are as follows:

- ▶ Prepare a Micro Plan of the area in consultation with JFMC and Forest Department. The Forest Micro Plan should help in meeting the rural community's demand for fodder, fuel wood, NTFPs, timber, and other forest products, as well as secure ecosystem services. The plan should balance local demand for forest produce with the provision of intangible ecosystem services.
- ▶ Take technical inputs from the forest department staff and develop consensus on the plan in the Gram Sabha. Take approval from Gram Sabha.
- ▶ The Member secretary shall forward the micro plan to the Deputy Conservator of Forest (DCF) who will review the plan and send to the Competent Authority for technical approval. Once this is received, the DCF will give it administrative approval. The Micro Plan and Forest Management Plan shall be considered operational after receiving the administrative approval.
- ▶ Conduct eco-development activities that simplify works for protection of biodiversity.
- ▶ Protect the wildlife and tree plantations in its area. Make an arrangement for stopping trespassing, grazing, theft, illegal mining, forest fire and illegal extraction of forest produce. Provide information about such activities to the local forest staff.
- ▶ Ensure the protection of wildlife outside the protected area.
- ▶ Arrest those persons who commit criminal activities under Wildlife Act 1972 by help of the local Forest officials
- ▶ Ensure that no member misuses the facilities provided by the government.
- ▶ Stop any person/s from engaging in activities related to agriculture, construction, illegal mining, industry or any other activity within the protected area that does not fall under the ambit of forest development.
- ▶ Design a scheme and dedicate a fixed portion of JFMC income for tree plantation/eco-development works on existing or new land or protection of its area and management.

- ▶ Ensure that all the members of the JFMC receive the benefits of forest produce in an impartial and equitable manner.

Powers of Executive Committee Members

The Executive Committee Members can use the following powers for efficiently fulfilling their responsibilities:

- ▶ Decide the process, rules and fee for minor forest products like grass, leaves, fruits-flowers, herbs, small branches etc.
- ▶ Revise and finalize the model byelaws.
- ▶ Appoint a temporary guard for forest protection on a salary/no salary basis.
- ▶ Provide for sanctions for controlling unsustainable use of forests. The sanctions may range from small pecuniary punishment to social boycott as per provision in byelaws.
- ▶ Decide the process for incurring expenses from JFMC income.
- ▶ Audit (Ankekhsan) the accounts of the JFMC.
- ▶ Employ part time workers for completing forestry activities.
- ▶ Preventing persons engaged in illegal activities in forest areas and hand them over to forest department officials.
- ▶ Stop any person from engaging in illegal activities such as trespassing, mining, lopping, grazing, hunting, smuggling in the area under management.
- ▶ Collect fine for illicit grazing as per the By-laws framed by the JFMC.
- ▶ Notify areas of drinking water and grazing for animals.
- ▶ Impose a fee on grazing.

Distinguished Powers and Duties of the President

- ▶ Convene a meeting of the Executive Committee or JFMC with the support of the Member Secretary.
- ▶ Sign agreements or any other letters on behalf of the JFMC.
- ▶ Contact any other Department on behalf of the JFMC.
- ▶ Assign specific task/s to Executive Committee members.
- ▶ It should be noted that the President and Member Secretary are jointly answerable and accountable to the JFMC.

4.12 Responsibilities of Member Secretary

The Member Secretary position is a very important one in the JFMC as that person is responsible for day to day operations of the JFMC and serves as a link between the FD and the JFMC members. Some states provide for a local person to be the member secretary. Other states provide for a local forest staff member to take on this role, occasionally with provision for subsequent replacement by a JFMC member. If the position is to be filled by a forest staff, then it is recommended to create a shadow-member secretary / joint secretary in the EC, who support and act as a counter-part for the Member Secretary and also facilitate meetings in their absence.

If the JFM guidelines in the state provides, a local staff member from the Forest Department located in the area will assume the responsibility of Member Secretary in the respective JFMC. As an Ex-officio member and Secretary they play a very important role in the JFMC.

- ▶ Build strong partnership between the Forest Department and JFMC by improving the relationship between the two agencies.
- ▶ Act as a resource person for disseminating information to the rural community on forest laws, new plans and schemes.
- ▶ Support President/ Vice President/Treasurer in operating bank accounts and maintaining financial records.
- ▶ Secretary and President, both are answerable for all administrative activities of the JFMC.

4.13 Other Important Responsibilities of the Member Secretary

The other important responsibilities of the Member Secretary are as follows:

- ▶ Organize prescribed meetings of the JFMC, Mahila (Women) Sub-Committee and Executive Committee.
- ▶ Maintain the proceedings of these meetings and get them approved in the next meeting.
- ▶ Look after the general letter communication of the JFMC.
- ▶ Provide support for maintaining all JFMC records such as – Proceeding Register, Membership Register, Agreement Letters, correspondence, accounts, cash book, pass book, cheque book etc.
- ▶ Supervise the JFMC accounts being prepared by the Treasurer to ensure that this work is being done regularly and on time. The Member Secretary will get the accounting statements approved by members and send a copy of approved accounts to the respective

Range office.

- ▶ Coordinate between the JFMC and other government departments.
- ▶ The Secretary will ensure that the resolutions passed in this meeting are presented before the Executive committee by the Secretary themselves or by a woman representative.
- ▶ Ensure that the JFMC accounts are audited on time. The annual income-expenditure statement is prepared and approved in the annual JFMC meeting. A copy of the accounts should be presented to the Department regularly.
- ▶ Inform all the Executive Committee members about the meeting dates and encourage them to increase their participation /involvement in the meetings.

4.14 Responsibilities of the Treasurer

- ▶ Regularly maintain the financial records of the JFMC.
- ▶ Give information about these records to the Executive Committee and JFMC members.
- ▶ Deposit the JFMC income in the bank or post office accounts.

- ▶ Withdraw money from JFMC only through cheques for expenses decided by the Executive Committee. It is mandatory to have signatures of the Secretary and any one from President/ Vice President/Treasurer on these cheques.
- ▶ Get the accounts audited annually and present them to the JFMC for approval.

4.15 How to Remove Executive Committee Members

The Government Order does not have any provision for mid-term removal of any Executive Committee, but the JFMC can itself decide the procedure for removal of a member due to some special reasons. For example, rules may be framed in the following context

- ▶ Engaging in forest crimes
- ▶ Regular absence from meetings
- ▶ Working against the interests of JFMC
- ▶ Bankruptcy or mental retardation
- ▶ Conviction by Court.

In all situations, a chance of hearing should be given to the concerned person and warnings given before action.



Gender Balance in JFMC

5.1 What are the Gender Issues in JFMCs?

In most parts of the country women have a high dependence on forests for both subsistence livings and income earning. In many places they are involved in managing forests as executive committee members, especially in hilly and tribal belts. Women perhaps have a dominant role in subsistence based extraction from the forest. They also bear the brunt of the burden stemming from continuous depletion of resources. This may be apparent in the form of the time taken and distance travelled for collection of fuel, fodder and other NTFP products. In some social settings there may be practical constraints in their participation in the decision making processes of the JFMC as a result, issues faced by them may not get discussed and resolved collectively. Some states have, therefore, made a provision, in the Government Order, to provide a mechanism in the form of a women sub-group under the main JFMC which can collectively discuss their problems and pass a resolution for its solution. In Rajasthan they have already formed a Women Sub Committee within JFMC. From their experience it is learnt that before forming the Women's Sub Committee, the Forester/ Forest Guard/ Facilitator should speak informally to some gram sabha members and get information about a few educated and progressive women. Thereafter, information about joint forest management should be disseminated amongst rural women as well. They should be advised to form a formal women sub-committee and only after getting their approval, the sub-committee should be formed as per procedure.

5.2 What is a Women Sub Committee⁴?

- ▶ A Women Sub Committee may comprise of about 5-7 women from the village in which JFMC has been formed. The total number of members depends on the interest shown by women and there is no upper limit on maximum number of members in the women sub-committee.
- ▶ The local forest staff should form this sub- committee on the same day when JFMC/EDC is being formed in the village with prior preparation.

5.3 Nature of Work to be done by the Women Sub Committee

- ▶ The women sub-committee will convene their first meeting immediately after all the members have been selected. In this meeting, the members will select a head/ chair-person from amongst themselves who will preside over all meetings of the women sub-committee.
- ▶ The Member Secretary of the JFMC will be responsible for organizing the prescribed meetings of the women sub-committee.
- ▶ The members of the sub-committee should regularly interact with women in the village and ascertain the problems and issues related to the forest. During sub- committee meetings, the members should discuss and analyze their problems and decide the actions the sub-committee can take for solving them. The decisions should be passed as a resolution.
- ▶ It will be the responsibility of the Member Secretary/ Convener to maintain the record of all the resolutions passed during the sub-committee meetings in a separate Proceeding Register. A Joint Secretary may be appointed from within the sub-committee.
- ▶ The Member Secretary/ Convener, Joint Secretary/ Co-Convener or a representative from the women sub-committee will present these resolutions in the Executive Committee meetings and the member Secretary will record the action taken by the Executive Committee or JFMC in the women sub-committee proceeding register alongside the resolution.

A Format for Proceeding Register of the Women Sub-Committee Meeting is given in Annexure 11. [State may include appropriate format].

5.4 Responsibilities of the Member Secretary/ Convener, Joint Secretary/Co-Convener in the Context of the Women Sub-Committee

The responsibilities of the Member Secretary of the Women sub -committee are as follows:

⁴ Reference was taken from JFM Implementation Manual, Govt. of Rajasthan, 2010

- ▶ Organize women sub-committee meetings. These meetings should be organized before the Executive Committee meeting so that the resolutions passed by the sub-committee can be placed for discussion on time. These resolutions may be presented by the Member Secretary/Joint Secretary or by women members.
- ▶ Record the issues discussed by the sub-committee in a separate proceeding register.
- ▶ Ensure comprehensive discussion on the issues/ resolutions raised by the women sub-committee.
- ▶ Record the decisions taken by the Executive Committee of the JFMC with respect to the sub-committee resolutions in both the JFMC and the sub-committee proceedings registers and inform the sub-committee members about these decisions in their next meeting.



Role, Responsibility, Duties and Rights of Ex-Officio Members⁵

6.1 Who are Ex-Officio Members and why are they needed?

Ex-officio members are those who hold posts that are included as members in the JFMC. Thus they automatically become members of the JFMC after being appointed for a designation/position. The purpose is to allow the JFMC to obtain progressive views from other experienced persons apart from their own general members. In order to ensure their impartiality, the ex-officio members are not given any Voting Rights or Right to share forest output. They are not elected as members of the Executive Committee and become members only after assuming the responsibility of the designation offered by the JFMC. They primarily play the role of a facilitator or catalyst. In Rajasthan, the State Government has made the necessary amendment to provide certain ex-officio members, like Sarpanch/Ward panch, the Right to Vote.

6.2 Why do we need Ex-Officio members?

The JFMC members may have limited experience in the beginning in technical or administrative matters and hence may face difficulties in conducting the affairs of the JFMC. The ex-officio members are selected because of their work experience, in order to provide guidance to the JFMC members and inform them about how to navigate government rules, regulations and procedures, besides maintaining the continuity in JFM administration so that the members can learn to take decisions in the right direction.

6.3 How Many Ex-officio members do the JFMC/ EDC have?

Typically, there are 4 ex-officio members in a JFMC

- ▶ Local Forester/Forest Guard from the Forest Department. He/She may also be the Member Secretary in some states.
- ▶ Any NGO working in the JFMC area
- ▶ Joint Secretary / Convenor of the Women Sub Committee
- ▶ The Gram Panchayat President or any other Panch from the village/ Municipal Committee ward member residing in the area.

6.4 Responsibility of the Member Secretary

- ▶ Represents the Forest Department.
- ▶ Maintain the records,
- ▶ Provide technical advice,
- ▶ Provide support for efficient working of the JFMC
- ▶ The activities to be undertaken by the Member Secretary are described in detail in Chapter 4.

6.5 What can be the role of the NGO?

The JFMC may collaborate with NGOs who are interested in undertaking forest conservation and management works using their own financial resources. The JFMC must however, ensure that the NGO conducts its activities in the village by working with the existing JFMC. Where JFMCs do not exist, they may first be formed under the provisions of the government JFM order. Alternatively, other local bodies such as panchyat, local committees under the provision of the Forest Right Act, or even a Self Help Group (SHG) may also be partners.

The Tree Growers Cooperative Society (TGCS) are examples of an organization which provide funds and support for forest development. It is formed under the National Tree Growers Cooperative Federation. Currently these are controlled by 'Foundation of Ecological Security', Anand. The Foundation for Ecological Security also works with JFMCs and TGCS. The State government has authorized these Societies to undertake forest development works.

NGOs operate independently and may undertake many activities for resource management and up-liftment. They are therefore, included as ex-officio members with a view of receiving their inputs and support for successful implementation of the JFMC program.

- ▶ In many situations, people trust the NGO representative as they already have a working relationship with them. They can therefore make the villagers aware about the benefits of joint forest management and motivate them to form a JFMC and become its member.
- ▶ The NGOs often have good knowledge about governmental rules, regulations, laws, schemes and procedures. They can therefore explain these to the

⁵ Reference was taken from JFM Implementation Manual, Govt. of Rajasthan, 2010

- ▶ people in detail.
- ▶ Representatives of the NGO can inform the Forest Department Officials about the interest of the people in undertaking forest management.
- ▶ They can take the initiative of starting the procedure for formation of JFMC/EDC.
- ▶ They can make the villagers aware of the provision for JFM, as well as financial schemes and programs of the forest department.
- ▶ They can help in building long term coordination and understanding between the JFMC and the forest department.
- ▶ They can provide the necessary help in developing the Micro Plan and Management Plan.
- ▶ The women members of the NGO can support the Forest Department officials in interacting with the women in the villages and help in the formation of the Women Sub Committee.
- ▶ Can inform the Forest Department about the difficulties being faced by the villagers.
- ▶ Can play the role of a mediator in case of any dispute related to distribution of forest produce arise between groups within the JFMC or with a third party.
- ▶ Can provide necessary guidance to the executive committee for decision making in the right direction. Can also provide any data that may be required by the JFMC.
- ▶ Can motivate the villagers by organizing rallies, meetings, seminars and debate, painting or essay writing competition for children.
- ▶ Can use ICT tools like movies, puppet-shows, street plays etc. for generating awareness about the JFMC program.
- ▶ Can act as a catalyst for the successful implementation of JFM program.

6.6 What is the Role of the Women Sub Committee?

- ▶ The Convenor/Head of the Women Sub Committee is appointed as an ex-officio member so that she can highlight the concerns, issues raised, and problems faced, by the women and also share their possible resolution as discussed in the Women Sub Committee meetings, with the executive committee.
- ▶ She can help communicate and safeguard the interests of women and can take the initiative of shaping the discussion and decisions in their favor.
- ▶ They are therefore provided the Right to Vote.

6.7 What is the role of the Gram Panchayat Sarpanch/ Panch (Ward Member) / Municipality Ward member?

- ▶ Represents the people of the village/ municipality area where the JFMC has been formed.
- ▶ These persons are elected democratically and give priority to the interests of the people.
- ▶ They have knowledge about the Panchayat's jurisdiction and laws. They can therefore help in establishing cordial relations between the Panchayat and JFMC.
- ▶ In any context they can present the point of view of the gram Panchayat in front of the JFMC and vice versa.
- ▶ They are given the Right to Vote as they are members of the JFMC as well as elected representatives of the area with the backing of entire community.
- ▶ In case the villagers elect the Gram Panchayat Sarpanch or panch as the JFMC President/Vice President/Treasurer, any other member of the gram Panchayat shall be selected as the ex-officio member.

Responsibilities of Forest Department Staff⁶

7.1 What will be responsibilities of the Forester/Forest Guard?

- ▶ They may be Member Secretary of the JFMC.
- ▶ They are key persons to co-ordinate between SFD and villagers
- ▶ Since they work in close collaboration with the villagers, the responsibility of successful functioning of the JFMC depends to a large extent on their knowledge, ability, dedication and ability for technical guidance.
- ▶ They are the friend, guide and supporters of the JFMC. It is therefore expected that they will be responsive to the needs of the JFMC and maintain a high moral character.
- ▶ Provide the senior officials and Local forest officer first hand intimation of all events and activities.
- ▶ Their responsibilities have been discussed in detail in Chapter 4 (4.12).

7.2 Role of the Range Forest Officer

- ▶ Form the JFMC as per procedures.
- ▶ May perform the role of a Returning officer during election
- ▶ Regularly inspect the accounts and other records of the JFMC.
- ▶ Provide technical guidance for JFMC activities related to nursery preparation, forest protection and management, protection of bio diversity, capacity development of members etc.
- ▶ Resolve the conflicts in the JFMC with or without the help of the NGO.
- ▶ Help in preparing the Micro Plan and Management plan.
- ▶ Make suitable arrangements for generating awareness.
- ▶ Take prompt action in the event of any damage to forest/tree plantation area.
- ▶ Keep control over Cultural operation and felling in their area through their subordinate staff.
- ▶ Provide the support of their subordinates for developing cordial environment between all JFMC members.
- ▶ Work as a strong link between the Department and the JFMC.
- ▶ Ensure unbiased and fair distribution of minor forest products including bamboo and small timber etc for local use as per rights.
- ▶ Present written first-hand information about all JFMC activities to the Deputy Conservator of Forest.

7.3 Role of the Assistant Conservator of Forest

- ▶ Review the activities of the JFMC/Agency and inspect their accounts and other records at least 2 times in a year.
- ▶ During the field visits, provide technical guidance to the JFMC for nursery preparation, forest protection and management, protection of bio diversity, capacity development of members etc.
- ▶ Develop cordial environment between forest personnel and JFMC members as well as villagers.
- ▶ Provide positive guidance to the subordinates for solving the problems and resolving conflicts that may arise in the process of joint forest management.
- ▶ Conduct an internal audit of JFMCs on receiving an order from the Conservator of Forest.
- ▶ Convene a meeting of JFMCs on the date and venue decided by the Conservator of Forest.
- ▶ Will also work as the Member Secretary of Division level Forest Development Agency.

7.4 Role of the Deputy Conservator of Forest

- ▶ Inspect and register the JFMC within 3 months of its formation and maintain a record of its members.
- ▶ Inspect the area from time to time and develop a cordial environment.
- ▶ Always provide positive guidance to the JFMC.
- ▶ Continuously work towards making the JFMC a fully independent organization.
- ▶ Make an agreement with the JFMC.
- ▶ Take action against the JFMC which does not work according to the government order even after being notified.
- ▶ Prepare a plan of activities to be conducted through the medium of EDC as per the Annual Plan for Protected Areas. Undertake forest development activities to be undertaken in protected areas as per the location of the EDC.
- ▶ Appoint an NGO as an ex-officio member after receiving a request from the JFMC.
- ▶ Help in resolving conflicts.
- ▶ Present reports to the senior officials for review on time.

⁶ Reference was taken from JFM Implementation Manual, Govt. of Rajasthan, 2010

- ▶ Present a quarterly report on joint forest management to the JFM cell located in the Headquarters of the Forest Department as per prescribed formats
- ▶ Organize annual audit of JFMC accounts
- ▶ Organize scheduled meetings of the district level steering committee with the purpose of strengthening the JFMCs and removing any impediments in their path
- ▶ Assume the responsibilities of CEO in areas where Forest Development Agencies have been formed.
- ▶ Ensure that JFM related information is fed into the online monitoring system (where available).

7.5 Role of the Conservator of Forest

- ▶ The Conservator of Forest will be the Nodal Officer for the Joint Forest Management Program in some states. He will conduct all the activities related to the implementation of this program.
- ▶ Supervise the activities being undertaken by JFMCs and subordinate staff for joint forest management and provide them technical as well as administrative guidance.
- ▶ Convene procedural hearing for taking a decision on an appeal filed against the decision of the deputy conservator of forest to dissolve a JFMC.
- ▶ Assume the responsibility of the Chairperson of all FDAs in the forest circle.
- ▶ Prepare a quarterly report on progress of joint forest management in the Forest conservancy area and the specific tasks undertaken by them in this direction along with procedural/behavioral problems faced. This report will be presented to the Chief Conservator of Forest in the Forest Department Headquarters, with a copy sent to their superior Principal Chief Conservator of Forest
- ▶ Approve the micro plan/ management plan of the JFMC

7.6 Role of other senior staff

- ▶ Conduct a quarterly evaluation of all the Forest Development Agencies in their respective jurisdictional area and prepare a report to be presented before the National Afforestation and Eco-development Board.
- ▶ Take the feedback of all stakeholders involved in activities related to joint forest management from the forest department as well as other agencies. Make a constant effort to improvise and remove any shortcomings that are highlighted in the feedback, including procedural and policy constraints

- ▶ Sanction long-term bio-physical monitoring in JFMC and other forest areas.
- ▶ Continuously motivate all the agencies.

7.7 Role of the Social Development Officer (Samudaik Vikas Adhikari)

Some states have Social development officers appointed by the forest department under different programs. They have the following responsibilities

- ▶ Support the forest officials in conducting the PRA and preparing Micro Plans.
- ▶ Organize a meeting of the women for preparing forest management /micro planning as well as PRA and evaluate their requirements.
- ▶ Support the forest officials in selecting capable NGOs.
- ▶ Help identify stakeholder groups – headloaders, graziers, other NTFP collectors, etc.
- ▶ Motivate women and other stakeholders for active participation in joint forest management.
- ▶ Discuss the scope of undertaking income generating activities with women and help them in selecting a activity.
- ▶ Disseminate information related to education, family welfare, small savings and self-help groups amongst women.
- ▶ Analyze the economic and social problems being faced by women and suggest solutions to the local forest officers and EC members.
- ▶ Provide necessary support to the local officers as per the orders of the Headquarters.
- ▶ Help in establishing cordial relations between the local NGO and forest department.
- ▶ Ensure the participation of women in the implementation of program activities and decision making process. Identify capable local women candidates who can be interviewed for the position of a facilitator where such positions are available.

7.8 Role of the Forest Management Cell Situated at the Headquarters

The Forest Management Cell located in the Headquarters of the Forest Department will operate under the Development Section. It will provide support to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and will include the following officers:

- ▶ Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Development) – Nodal officer
- ▶ Chief Conservator of Forest (Planning)

- ▶ Chief Conservator of Forest (MNREGA)
- ▶ Conservator of Forest (JFM) – Cell In charge
- ▶ Deputy Conservator of Forest (Planning)

The primary activities to be undertaken by this cell are:

- ▶ Inspect JFM activities from time to time and get a state level strategy prepared.
- ▶ Formulate JFM related policy for the state
- ▶ Implement field level activities as per the strategy.
- ▶ Create a state level data base.
 - Create a simple format for data collection
 - Facilitate collection of data
 - Compile data and share analysis on the website
- ▶ Convene regular meetings of the State Level Steering Committee (SLSC) and get decisions approved as per

policy.

- ▶ Coordinate with NGOs at the state Level.
- ▶ Coordinate with State Level Stakeholder Forum, where it exists.
- ▶ Organize activities for human resource and capacity development for providing momentum to JFM.
- ▶ Organize Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) activities for JFM and review the progress in this direction from time to time.
- ▶ Receive complaints and concerns related to JFM and follow up on their resolution.

The State Government orders dated _____ (INSERT State specific order date) have provided a strong platform



Financial Management for JFMCs/EDCs⁷

for the development of JFMC/EDC as an autonomous body. This autonomy has added the responsibility of financial management to the other activities that need to be undertaken by the JFMC. Since the stability of an organization depends on its financial status, it is very important for the JFMC, Executive Committee and Member Secretary to manage and maintain the accounts regularly. Special attention needs to be paid to maintain complete transparency in financial management right from the beginning.

8.1 Sources of Income for the JFMC

- ▶ Receipts from Membership fee
- ▶ Receipts from Fines
- ▶ Receipts from Sale of forest produce (share)
- ▶ Forest management / tree plantation and maintenance funds received from the Forest Department
- ▶ Fund for developmental activities received from the forest department.
- ▶ Funds or grant received from other agencies for development works.
- ▶ Funds provided by forest development agencies under the category of Over Head charges.
- ▶ Funds received from Panchayats
- ▶ Any other receipts (Grants received, contributions etc)
- ▶ (Add further: State specific options, if any)

8.2 What to do on receiving funds?

- ▶ A receipt should be issued by the JFMC for all payments received.
- ▶ A joint account should be opened in the local bank or post office and all payments received should be deposited in this account within 3 days.
- ▶ Signatories: Presidents/Treasurer and member secretary (or as per state orders)
- ▶ After the election of the treasurer, all the deposits will be made only by him/her. Before the election the treasurer, this task will be the responsibility of the Member Secretary.
- ▶ All the deposits and withdrawals from the account will be recorded in the cash book.

8.3 Who will maintain the Books of Accounts and other records?

- ▶ The government order has made a provision for election of a treasurer who will be responsible for maintaining the financial accounts of the JFMC and presenting the annual income expenditure statement in the general meeting.
- ▶ The treasurer should seek the support and guidance of the Member Secretary and other forest department officers.
- ▶ Even though the task of maintaining the records will be the responsibility of the Treasurer but all the account related records such as cash book, accounts register, receipt book, pass book, cheque book, sale record, sale of forest products to beneficiaries and share in disbursements; will be under the custody of the Member Secretary. Accordingly, the treasurer will have to work in close coordination with the Member Secretary. If the state has an ex-officio member secretary and/or the member secretary doesn't stay in the village, then mechanisms for access to documents will have to be worked out. Maintenance of cash book, pass book, etc. will be with treasurer only when he has acquired knowledge & skill to take up such activities.

8.4 Other important issues related to Accounts

- ▶ The financial accounts of the JFMC will be closed at the end of every year and the cash book will be closed at the end of every month.
- ▶ At the end of the month the Treasurer and Member Secretary will not have more than Rs 100 cash balance. If the balance is more than Rs 100, it will be deposited in the bank/post office account.
- ▶ Apart from payment for wages, any payment of more than Rs 500/- should be made through cheque/ Account transfer.
- ▶ For daily wage payments, the first preference should be to promote bank accounts amongst recipients so direct bank transfers, or cheque payments can be made. Cash payments should be the last resort
- ▶ In every meeting, the Executive Committee will review the accounts of the previous month. If

⁷ Reference was taken from JFM Implementation Manual, Govt. of Rajasthan, 2010

considered appropriate by the EC, 2 or members may be authorized to inspect and review the accounts.

- ▶ The member secretary will present a copy of the monthly account statement to the Range Forest Officer.
- ▶ The Executive Committee will review the books of accounts by the 10th of every month.
- ▶ The local forest officer will regularly inspect the accounts of the JFMCs. Apart from this the Assistant Conservator of Forest will inspect the books of accounts at least 2 times in a year.
- ▶ The annual income expenditure sheet of the JFMC will be presented in the general meeting.
- ▶ At the time of closing the books of accounts, the Executive Committee will request the Deputy Conservator of Forest for their audit.
- ▶ On receipt of the letter, The Deputy Conservator of Forest will then organize the audit as per the provisions stated in the state guidelines.
- ▶ The auditors accredited by the Controller and Audit General of India and representatives/officials from National Afforestation and Eco-development Board conduct the audit for JFMCs operating under Forest Development Agencies.

and the amount payable will either be a minimum amount fixed or the actual expenditure incurred. The approval for this expenditure should be taken from the executive committee beforehand.

- Stationary and postage
- Office expenses, rent, taxes etc.
- Publicity expenses and payments made for prizes or awards in events organized for popularizing JFM.
- Purchase of magazines related to JFM and rural development.
- Development of nurseries.
- Security/ protection works.
- Utilization of forest produces cultural operations etc.
- Audit of accounts.
- Salary/ honorarium paid to security guard or office assistant.
- Non forestry activities.
- Eco development activities.
- Other different, hidden or unforeseen expenses.
- ▶ 25% of Micro plan outlay funds made available by EDC members under the India Eco-development Project.
- ▶ 15% of total expected outlay for the current year paid by EDC as an advance payment.

8.5 How to incur expenses from JFMC funds?

- ▶ The signatures of the President, Member Secretary as well as Treasurer will be required for any withdrawal from the JFMC account.
- ▶ Since these three office bearers are involved in all finance related activities, they are together responsible and accountable towards the Executive Committee and JFMC.
- ▶ All the expenses will be in line with the rules laid down by the Executive Committee and as authorized by the EC and recorded in the proceedings of the EC meetings.
- ▶ The JFMC funds will not be utilized for the personal benefit of the members, under any circumstances.
- ▶ The expenses to be incurred by the JFMC can be classified into the following categories:
 - Executive committee meetings. The maximum limit for this expenditure may vary between Rs 50/- to Rs 100/- per meeting and this amount should be fixed by the members at the initial stage itself.
 - Travel allowance to be paid to a member, apart from member secretary, for participating in a meeting or for JFMC work. This allowance will be payable only if the distance travelled is more than the km limit fixed by the Executive Committee

8.6 How Many Accounts to be maintained?

- ▶ Two accounts to be maintained.
 - One for Revolving fund of JFMCs
 - Second for Conservation & Development Activities
- ▶ Accounts should be in saving banks account with auto-sweep facility so as to earn interest on idle funds.

Micro Plan⁸

9.1 What is a micro plan?

- ▶ A village level Micro-Plan is a blueprint of village development plan and forest development plan, which is need based and site specific, commensuration to available resources. As the unit of the plan is small, it is called a micro plan. In contrast, the macro plan covers larger units like district or state.
- ▶ Micro Plan activities are planned at the village level utilizing available village resources for the fulfillment of the requirements of the rural population.
- ▶ It outlines the strategy for meeting the requirements of people after prioritization of needs and defines the target for development.
- ▶ It contains a description of problems being faced by the villagers along with their feasible solutions, assessment of need and capacity of resources in addition to the list of activities to be conducted in the JFMC area.
- ▶ Micro plan is an official/formal document. It is an important document for balancing the complementary as well as competing demands on the available resources for example forests for forest produce for subsistence and sale vis-à-vis managing forest for ecosystem services.
- ▶ The micro-plan is a living document that must be responsive to emerging concerns and as such is an adaptive document. It must, therefore, contain clear provisions for amendments according to requirements.
- ▶ The micro plan should be developed with the help of the villagers using participatory approach of PRA/ RRA exercise. This approach is useful because
 - It helps to understand the location specific problems in a better manner.
 - It helps to know priorities of the local people of the village.
 - It is likely to be more acceptable to the villagers as they participate in the process of developing the plan and are co-creators of the plan. It creates a sense of ownership amongst the people.
 - It helps in developing trust of the villagers towards the JFMC and helps in building relations between the people and the organization.

9.2 Different Components of a Micro Plan

- ▶ First component of the Micro-plan depicts the entry point activities for supporting non-forestry activities

for solving key concerns in the area and it is to be made on the basis of the findings from the PRA exercise.

- ▶ Second component of the Micro-plan is basically the action plan for the forest related activities in the JFM area based on certain explicitly stated assumptions.
- ▶ Future Plan outlines the activities and actions along with their spatial and temporal extent, and how they relate to meeting the expectations of the people from the available resources in the long run. This comprehensive micro-plan shall include all techno-administrative and financial aspects.

9.3 What are the Objectives of Micro Plan?

- ▶ Ensure actual participation of the villagers for proper utilization of resources.
- ▶ Assess the dependence of partner communities on the resource.
- ▶ Assess the quantity, quality and present utilization of resources by the villagers.
- ▶ Identify the importance of existing resources both for local and national stakeholders. Identify synergies and trade-offs and ways of balancing the same.
- ▶ Identify the problems being faced by the villagers in utilizing the services of the forest and find solutions for them.
- ▶ Prioritize the schemes to be undertaken according to the social situation of the villagers and the availability of natural resources.
- ▶ Ensure that the benefits of the schemes reach all stakeholders and strata of society and the schemes are implemented unanimously with full participation of the people.
- ▶ Prepare forest development plan of the area.

9.4 Points to be kept in mind while drafting a micro plan

- ▶ Village will be the unit for preparing a micro plan.
- ▶ Focus will be on the existing resources of the village.
- ▶ Local people should be motivated for active participation and co-preparation.
- ▶ An initial public meeting should be held to discuss the objectives and process and outcome from the micro planning process.

⁸ Reference was taken from JFM Implementation Manual, Govt. of Rajasthan, 2010

- ▶ Targets should be defined for all stakeholders.
 - ▶ The micro plan document should be simple and easy to understand.
 - ▶ Local resources should be aligned with local requirements and objectives of the program.
 - ▶ The micro plan should be prepared within 20-25 working days.
 - ▶ Use of standard and average statistics of demand and utilization, without customization for the specific context of each JFMC may result in a faulty micro-plan with lower chances of success.
 - ▶ In order to strengthen the relationship between people and forest, the micro plan should include and build on traditional community management and conservation practices such as sacred grove protection, protection of spring zones, and other cultural practices as well as newly developed procedures such as kesar-chirka, Panchvati Ropan, Vriksha-yagya, Deep-yagya etc.
 - ▶ Participatory Methodology should be used to assess the forest produce requirements of the villagers.
 - ▶ It should be ensured that the micro plan is different from the Management plan, but it will be a factual reflection of all resources including forests in the area.
- ▶ The following statistics should be recorded in the plan for both entry point activities as well as resettlement schemes.
 - Physical and financial resources in the area.
 - Types of degraded land, their location and description.
 - Existing cattle and its population.
 - Background of the village's social and economic environment
 - Information regarding the forest and other areas in the village.
 - ▶ Technical plan should be prepared on the basis of information collected. This document should clearly state the following facts.

Related to the specific area

- The activities should be stated in relation to their spatial location via a map, as well as their temporal applicability via a timeline.
- The roles and responsibilities of stakeholders should be clearly stated.
- Arrangement for maintenance of records should be clearly stated
- Project related maps, scheme for publicity, social and resource mapping will be prepared and attached to the plan.
- After preparing the plan document, it will be explained to the villagers. There will be an open discussion and debate on the Plan. Thereafter, if there is any change in the plan, it should be amended with the consent of the people.
- Next, the Plan will be sent for approval to the related Divisional Forest Officer/ Deputy Conservator of Forest.
- Before the implementation of the plan, a MoU will be signed between the JFMC and Forest Department.

9.5 Preparing the Plan through PRA/ RRA

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is the instrument for preparing the micro plan. Therefore, while conducting PRA exercise following points should be kept in to consideration:

- ▶ The objectives of the scheme should be described in detail to the villagers and other common interest groups and their feedback should be taken.

Rapport Building for PRA

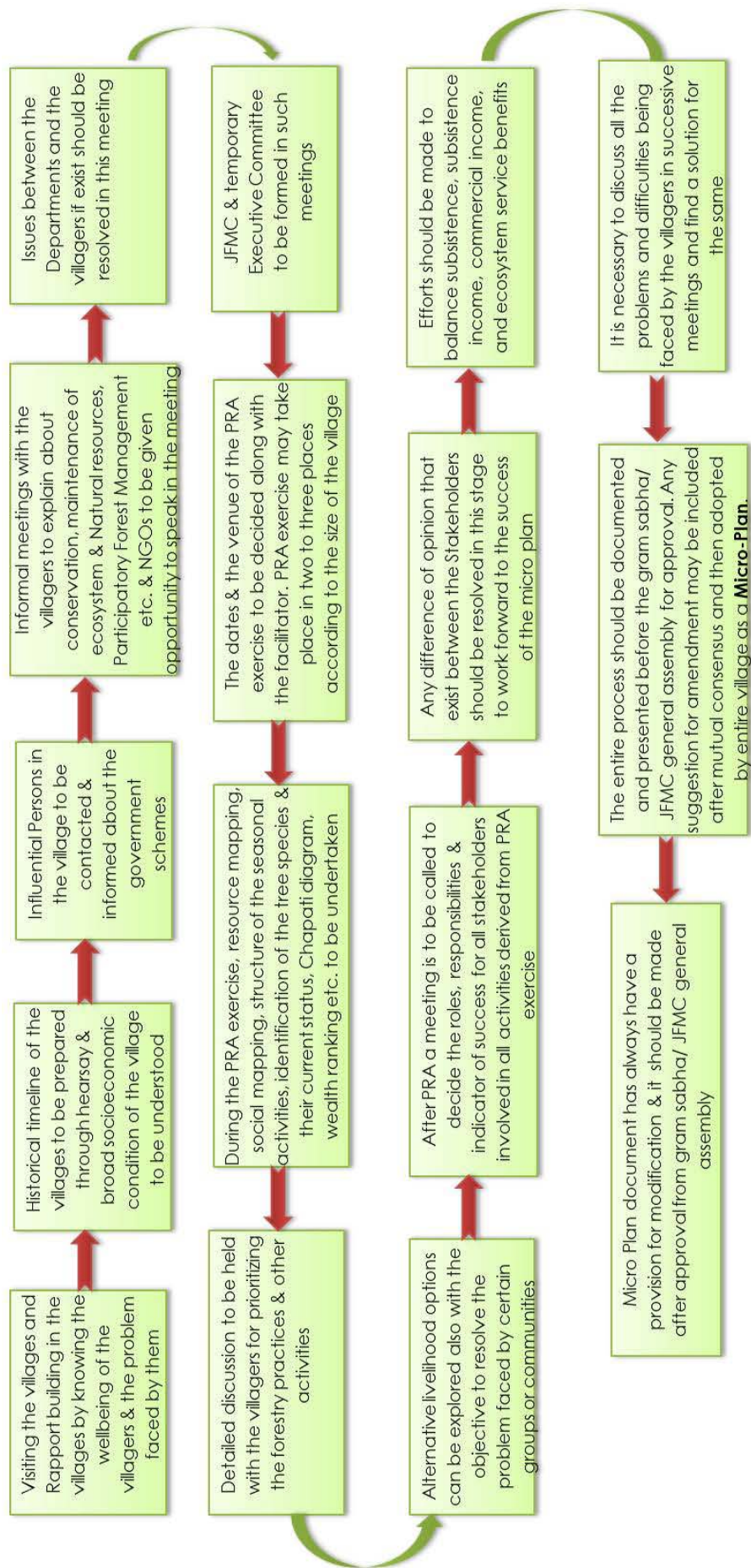
- Rapport means a relationship especially relation characterized by harmony, conformity, accord or affinity and in other words, rapport means a close and harmonious relationship in which a common understanding is reached.
- Rapport building hence means establishing such rapport or relationship with other people
- PRA is considered to be one of the popular and effective approaches to gather information in rural areas.
- PRA is a methodology of learning rural life and their environment from the rural people.
- It requires researchers/field workers to act as facilitators to help local people conduct their own analysis, plan and take action accordingly.
- For this purpose, a good and functional relationship needs to be established with the villagers.
- Proper rapport building will help the villagers to carry out PRA effectively

9.6 Procedure for Preparing a Micro Plan

- ▶ The first step is to collect information for village description and data for socio-economic survey of the village. The available data should be used to assess the village population, cattle population, dependence on forest resources and their requirements.
- ▶ Influential persons in the village should be contacted and informed about government schemes and their objectives. The relevance of rural participation for the success of these schemes should be explained to them.
- ▶ Thereafter, informal meetings should be organized with the villagers, in small groups and even one-to-one, if needed. In these interactions the relevance of forest conservation, maintenance of eco-system and natural resources, participatory forest management, optimal utilization of resources should be explained and discussed. If the village is small, such a meeting may be convened in one place and if the village is big it may be organized in 2 or 3 places (at least at one place in each hamlet). Villagers as well as representatives from NGOs should be given an opportunity to speak in these meetings. An effort should also be made to resolve issues that may exist between the Government Departments and villagers.
- ▶ The JFMC or temporary Executive Committee may also be formed during such meetings.
- ▶ The dates as well as venue for organizing PRA in different locations should be decided in these meetings and one or two facilitators should be selected for each location from within the villagers. During the PRA exercise for resource mapping, social mapping, structure of seasonal activities, identification of tree species and their current status, Chapati diagram, Wealth ranking etc. should be undertaken.
- ▶ Detailed discussions should be held with the villagers for prioritizing the forestry practices and other activities to be undertaken. The roles, responsibilities and contribution to be made by the community should also be decided and put into writing.
- ▶ A self-help group should be formed with the objective of solving the problems being faced by the villagers.
- ▶ In the end, a concluding meeting should be called to decide the role, responsibilities and indicators of success for all stakeholders involved in all activities derived from the PRA exercise. Any difference of opinion that exists between the stakeholders must be resolved during this meeting so that going forward they all can work for the success of the micro plan.
- ▶ Efforts should be made to balance subsistence, subsistence income, commercial income, and ecosystem service benefits.
- ▶ In every meeting it will be necessary to discuss all the problems and difficulties being faced by the villagers and find a solution for the same.
- ▶ The entire process mentioned above should be documented and presented before the general assembly JFMC/gram sabha for approval. Any suggestion for amendment may be included after mutual consensus. This is called a Micro Plan.
- ▶ The Micro Plan document may be modified according to the requirements of the villagers. A provision for such flexibility should be made in the micro plan and any amendment should be made after approval from gram sabha/ JFMC general assembly.



Process Flow Chart for Preparation of Micro Plan



Performance Indicators for Success of JFMC

While evaluating the JFMC program the Forest Department will investigate the level of success achieved by the JFMCs through the activities being undertaken by them. Since it is not possible to judge the success of the JFMC on the basis of one indicator or one variable, the attributes of the JFMC are compared to certain benchmark to review the percentage achievement and hence decide the

level of success. In the future, the JFMCs will be classified as Very Active, Active or Inactive on the basis of minimum percentage of benchmark achieved. The following percentage distribution will be used for the classification:

Classification	Percentage Limits
Very Active JFMC	60% or above
Active JFMC	35% - up to 60%
Inactive JFMC	35% or less

The following benchmarks may be used for this classification⁹

SN	Stage	Attribute	Details	Score
1	Formation of JFMC 0 — 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total member households as a percentage of total households in the village (0 – 5). Total women members and their percentage out of total members (0 – 5). Member households of SC/ST/Landless persons as a % of such households in the village (0 – 5). Formation of Women Sub-Committee and number of members. (0 – 5). 		
2	Activeness 0 — 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of years since the JFMC has been formed. Number of meetings organized. Number of times the meeting was not held due to lack of quorum Number of times the President/ President participated in Executive Committee meetings What were the results of resolutions passed by the women sub-committee? Have the by-laws been prepared? Has the management plan been prepared? 		
3	Result: 0 — 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which all forest products have been distributed for the benefit of the villagers? Is the Forest Produce Distribution register being maintained? Number of families benefiting Fee is charged or not? Number of forest crimes/offences detected before the formation of JFMC Number of forest crimes/detected offences per year after the formation of the JFMC. 		
4	Protection Management 0 — 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection being undertaken by the Department and by the JFMC JFMC has provided information about how many forest offences to the Forest department? What is the procedure for solving forest crimes? How much fee has been collected? 		
5	Towards Continuous Development 0 — 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much money is kept under the Village Development fund and to what use it has been put? Actions taken by the JFMC for the sustainable harvesting and conservation of Minor Forest Products and their results. Interest shown by the JFMC in the activities of other Departments of the State Government. Description of activities undertaken through the grant received under the Village Development Fund. Resolution of Conflicts. Advantage taken from other, schemes development. 		

⁹ Reference was taken from JFM Implementation Manual, Govt. of Rajasthan, 2010

Monitoring the JFM

11.1 What is Monitoring?

Monitoring refers to the concurrent assessment of any program or project which can be undertaken concurrently with implementation of program or project, to ensure that program is on track as planned. In contrast to monitoring, at the end of the project/scheme/ plan/program, its evaluation is done vis-a-vis its baseline situations at the conceptualization stage of the project/scheme/ plan/ program. Monitoring in other words is therefore, known as Concurrent Evaluation also.

11.2 How will Joint Forest Management Be Monitored?

- ▶ The JFM program will be monitored through certain indicators/benchmarks laid down by the Forest department.
- ▶ It is expected that the Member Secretaries of JFMCs, Local Forest Officers and Sub Divisional Officers (Assistant Conservator of Forest) will inform their senior officials about their activities regularly. The senior officials will record these activities and present them to the State Level Forest Management Cell in the prescribed manner.
- ▶ The feedback of all stakeholders involved in JFM activities at different levels should be collected as per

set procedure and appropriate methods should be investigated for improvement.

- ▶ The mid-term monitoring of the agencies can be undertaken through independent governmental and non-governmental monitoring organizations. The role of universities/resource organizations/prestigious NGOs can be considered in this regard.
- ▶ The Chief Conservator of Forest will conduct quarterly monitoring of Forest Development Agencies and present a report to National Afforestation and Eco-development Board through the State Nodal Officer.

11.3 Indicators for Monitoring JFM¹⁰

- ▶ The indicators for monitoring JFM have been divided into 4 categories:
 - Ecological
 - Economic
 - Social
 - Organizational/ Institutional

The following facts can be assessed on the basis of the above indicators:

The format¹¹ for the monitoring of JFMCs is as follows on the basis of the following criterion & indicators:

➤ Ecological Criteria & Indicators

Criteria	Indicators
Improvement of forests and vegetative diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forests regenerating properly • Species succession towards Climax Stage • Increased growth of grass • New and degraded forest lands brought under forest cover • Kinds of floral species now grown • Tree growth abundant and quality of forests improved • Forests is well retained
Conservation of wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in wildlife • Diversity of fauna
Maintenance of eco-system services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil erosion reduced/stopped • Increased level of groundwater • Availability of food to fauna • Availability of clean air
Improvement of agro-ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake water shed development • Increased interest in agriculture due to favorable conditions

10 Sustainability of Joint Forest Management in India, Abhijit Ghose, Social Change: March 1996: Vol.26 No.1

11 IIFM, Bhopal SFM Criteria & Indicators

➤ *Economic Criteria & Indicators*

Criteria	Indicators
Improvement in the economic conditions of the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual families are earning more income from SHG activities • Economic development through savings in community fund • Individual families are meeting their own needs • Additional sources of income are available to the villagers • Type of micro-enterprise(s) started • Increased food stock • Dependence on forest reduced • Breaking away from money lender • Decreased of local migration to urban areas
Management of FPC fund and village assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profits from forest go to FPC • Do shramdaan (voluntary labour) and contribute to village common fund • Building a common fund • Maintenance of money in a bank account • Full rights of collection and marketing of NTFPs • Village assets improved
Continuous availability of forest produce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase of availability of NTFP for sale • Increase of availability of fodder, fuel wood, bamboo and other species for agricultural implements and poles for use by families of the village • Sustainable gains from forest
Increased employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FPC provides employment • Forest Department provides employment • Increased self-employment opportunities

➤ *Institutional Criteria & Indicators*

Criteria	Indicators
Collective decision making and active participation of members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everybody is equally responsible • Villagers serve the FPC on their own initiative • Collective and careful decision making process
Gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female involvement should be more • Unity among female members • Good co-operation between male and female members • Active participation of females in FPC
Unity and conflict management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FPC is a platform to create unity and opportunity to work • Bring opponents to FPC • Sharing of opinions on forest issues • Good and clear rules • FPC settles local disputes and problems • Reduction of inter village conflicts • Number of disputes of FPC • Unity
Involvement of Forest Department, local staff and other institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of Forest Department • Good relations with local FD personnel • Monthly general meeting with FD • Interaction with FD increased • Appointment of forest guard to be done in consultation with FPC • FPC works well with other village institutions
Equitable sharing of forest produce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear demarcation of land for each village • Complete rights of ownership over NTFP and other forest materials that are needed by villagers • Awareness for development of appropriate protection mechanisms • Systems of equitable distribution
Recognition by Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FPC should have a legal status • Government should help in financial and policy matters • FD and local committee mutually decides terms and conditions of punishment

➤ Social Criteria & Indicators

Criteria	Indicators
1. Social justice to weaker sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interests of weaker sections is looked after • Access to education for children of poor families • Decrease in exploitation by powerful people in the village
Feeling of community ownership and responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus changed from selfish motives to community benefits • Sense of commitment and discipline developed • Village community is shouldering a major task of carrying FPC activities • Dependence on forest for livelihood
Unity and co-operation among FPC families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation for protection due to benefit sharing • Decrease in internal village conflicts • FPC assists individual families in trouble • Families act in co-operation
Villagers protecting the forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stopping of unauthorized felling of trees • Preventing and fighting forest fires • Control of illicit felling
Changes in behaviour to protect forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haphazard lopping is reduced • Fuel wood extraction systematically • Using other alternatives for fuelwood • Practice of rotational grazing
Village problem solving and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eradication of any social evil • Village cleanliness and improved health • Resources are available for public functions • Community development by operating community fund in a co-operative way • Overall village development undertaken through FPC • Peaceful environment in the village

11.4 Online Monitoring of JFMCs

JFM is an important program of the Forest Department and for the purpose of its effective monitoring; some state departments have introduced a web based computer application.

The forest divisions will be provided a username and password to enable them to use this application for the purpose of directly feeding JFM related information in the system. The information that will be uploaded in this application will include name of JFMC, account number, description of SHG activities and forest conservation works etc. The information will be presented in a simplified, well arranged manner and reports could be prepared based on the data. These could then be analyzed by users at different levels.

Use of this application helps in avoiding duplication of work as maximum information is required to be filled only once and any updates can be made on an annual basis. This will not only help in reducing the effort, time and stationary but also improve work efficiency and transparency.

The Forest Divisions will be given the necessary training for using this application. An effort is also made to record the 40 point format information previously furnished by the JFMCs in this application.

11.5 Format for Quarterly/Half yearly/ Annual Information to be furnished by JFMCs/EDCs¹²

Name of Forest Division.....

Name of Account.....

SN	Name of Range	Name of JFMC	Village	Registration No.	Registration Date	Membership Details				Women Sub-committee			Protected Area			Account Detail	
						SC	ST	Other	Total	Women	Yes/No	No. of members	Plantation Area	Forest Area	Total Area	Bank and Account No.	Amount
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18

Member-ship fee	Income of the JFMC				Benefits						No. of beneficiaries	Efficiency rating of JFMC A/B/C	Small plan has been prepared? Yes/No	Management Plan has been prepared? Yes/No	Related NGO	Maintenance Fund		Self Help group Male/female	Special description		
	Collection from forest offences	Sale of forest produce	Others	Total	Grass	Minor products		Others		Total											
						Qty	Value	Qty	Value							Qty	Value				
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40

¹² Reference was taken from JFM Implementation Manual, Govt. of Rajasthan, 2010

Conflict Resolution

Forests are the most valuable Natural Resource, which have been nurturing the need and greed of man since time immemorial. They are the source of timber, water, fuel and fodder and are looked upon as the most critical link in photosynthesis and as a repository of biodiversity having an immense importance for global eco-systems. While the need based utilization conforms to the norms of sustainable utilization, greed often leads to unsustainable extraction leading to degradation of the resource as well as generating more conflicts.

In the process of sustainable management of forests and natural resources, one can't deny the role of local communities who are dependent upon them for their livelihood. These communities have been managing these resources in their own traditional and indigenous ways. Today, the collaborative management of the natural resources has increased the number of stakeholders in this sector, which is not limited to the foresters and the villagers, there are many others. This has increased the possibilities of conflicts.

12.1 What are the different types of conflict?

Various issues causing conflicts among different agencies and communities; some of them are listed below:

- ▶ People's dependence on National Parks and Sanctuaries for collection of NTFPs for sustainable livelihood
- ▶ Communities as partners in conservation activities in National Parks
- ▶ Closure of grazing in parks
- ▶ Encroachments and their eviction
- ▶ Control over the forest area by JFMCs with forest department
- ▶ Leadership issues within the JFMCs
- ▶ Political interference
- ▶ Resettlement of communities residing inside the forest area
- ▶ Development activities taken up by various departments and agencies
- ▶ Destruction of spawn and seedlings of various fish species
- ▶ Illegal fishing inside the forest areas
- ▶ Ownership rights over land and natural resources by traditional practice or legal and common rights
- ▶ Growing awareness
- ▶ Participation of local communities in forest management
- ▶ Amendments in existing policy and law
- ▶ Sharing of resources
- ▶ Loss of government property/ forests
- ▶ Pollution from effluent discharge in the river inside the forest areas
- ▶ NGO involvement and participation
- ▶ Use of degraded / government land
- ▶ Loss of control over natural resources, land and culture

These conflicts can be divided into two major types :

Human-Human Conflict: Human-Human conflict is also of various types. Some of them are listed below:

- ▶ Conflict between JFMC & Other villagers
- ▶ Conflict between JFMC & Panchayat members or Sarpanch
- ▶ Inter JFMC Conflict
- ▶ Intra JFMC conflict
- ▶ JFMC & Forest Department
- ▶ Conflict with outsiders/encroachers/mining companies

Man animal conflict: Man animal conflict is also very common in the JFMC areas. There are mainly two types of conflicts seen in this case.

Attack on human habitation: cattle lifting by wild animals especially by leopard are a common phenomenon in the JFMC areas. These types of conflicts should be dealt with different manner.

Retaliatory killings: Retaliatory killings of the wild animals always happen as soon as any cattle lifting takes place in the village, there is a common phenomenon that the villagers poison the dead cattle left behind by the carnivores. The main challenges for such killings are immediately transfer of the dead cattle and to provide proper compensation to the families. Sometimes these challenges are better managed by the NGOs wherever they are very active.

12.2 How to resolve the conflicts?

Executive committee of the JFMC plays a critical role in resolving conflict between members of the committee or between two or more groups of villagers. If required, they can ask help from non-government agencies/ voluntary organizations/ forest departments. The decision arrived at by majority of the executive body member should be treated as final.

12.3 Who should resolve the conflicts?

The JFMC level conflict can be resolved by the JFMC executive body. If the conflict happened between two forest committees or between two different panchayats and JFMCs then the concerned Range Forest Officer/ Forest Extension Officer would be responsible for resolution of the conflict. If the conflict is between the JFMCs of two different ranges then the DCF should resolve the conflicts. Appeal, for all decisions mentioned about, should be made to CF. If the conflicts between JFMCs of two adjoining states then the concerned CCFs or PCCF should be involved in resolution of such conflicts.



Maintenance Fund and Corpus Fund¹³

13.1 Why do we need the Maintenance Fund?

- ▶ A majority of forest development activities in the State are undertaken with the support of externally or internally supported projects.
- ▶ After the completion of the Project, special arrangement for maintenance of assets created under the Project are not available.
- ▶ It is therefore, necessary to create a fund that can be used in the post project period for the maintenance of project assets, and also help in the implementation of the statutory working plans including micro plans.
- ▶ The JFM program seeks the support of local communities for conducting and managing forest development activities.

financial contributions.

- ▶ The total fund amount collected by the JFMC will be deposited in bank/post office in the form of a Fixed Deposit. The term period for this fixed deposit will be same as the remaining period of the Scheme.
- ▶ In the post project period, this fixed deposit may not be utilized until necessary.
- ▶ This fund can be utilized after the approval of the Executive Committee for works related to conservation of assets only.
- ▶ After the expense has been made, it will be necessary to get the approval of the JFMC and gram sabha.
- ▶ The expense accounts of the Maintenance fund should be properly recorded and the account should be operated as per the provisions of the Government order.

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13.2 What is a Maintenance Fund?

- ▶ This Maintenance fund is created for the upkeep and conservation of assets created under schemes for the purpose of JFM.
- ▶ Since the JFM program is based on the support of local people for conducting and managing forest development activities, the Maintenance fund is created out of contributions/grants by the local villagers or laborers.
- ▶ The amount to be voluntarily contributed towards this fund is decided by the gram sabha with mutual consent.
- ▶ This fund can also be created in the name of Corpus Fund, provided there is certain amount of the project set apart from the beginning for use in subsequent upkeep of the created assets of the project, when project ceases to operate. Sometimes it is entirely borne from project and sometimes borne partially from the project and partially out of the cash/voluntary labor contributed by the project beneficiaries. The objective is the same in both the cases.

13.3 How to operate this Fund?

- ▶ The JFMC will create this fund out of grant/contribution by the local residents/laborers. In case this Fund is created by voluntary contribution by laborers, it will be mandatory for the other villagers who have not made labor contribution, to provide

13.4 Corpus Fund

- ▶ This is a special fund which should be created by JFMCs for management and operationalization of income generating activities. The amount for this fund will be deposited in a nationalized bank near to the area and the account for the same will be opened in the name of the JFMC.
- ▶ This fund in Rajasthan was created under Banas River Project and Rajasthan Forestry and Bio Diversity Project funded by the Japanese Bank.

13.5 How to use this fund?

- ▶ This fund will be used as per the provisions of the MoU signed between the JFMC and the Forest Department.
- ▶ The fund will be used for the maintenance of JFM activities under the technical guidance of the forest department. These works may be included in Micro Plan.
- ▶ It will be necessary to follow the rules for incurring expenses out of this fund and it cannot be utilized for any purpose other than those specified.
- ▶ The minimum majority of the Executive Committee can decide the utilization of the Corpus fund amount. This expense would have to be approved by the general assembly of the JFMC.

¹³ Reference was taken from JFM Implementation Manual, Govt. of Rajasthan, 2010

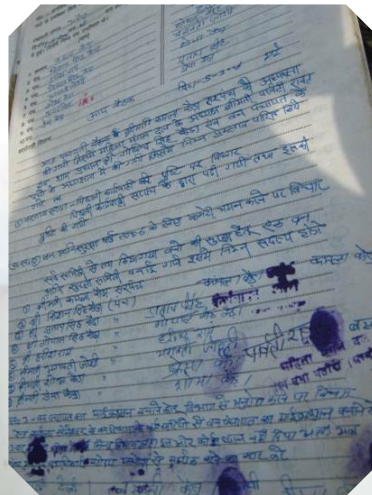
13.6 How to maintain the Records for the Corpus Fund

- ▶ The necessary expenses to be incurred from the fund can be withdrawn only with the joint signatures of the JFMC member secretary and treasurer/ President.
- ▶ The Member Secretary will maintain the accounts for the fund.

- ▶ The DCF can also form a committee for the purpose of this audit. This committee may include representatives from the forest department, local NGO and JFMC.
- ▶ During the internal audits of the forest divisions there is a provision for auditing the account of 5% of the total JFMCs. Maintenance Fund and Corpus Fund

13.7 How to audit the Corpus Fund Records?

- ▶ The first audit of the corpus fund account records will be conducted by the Internal Committee set up by the JFMC for this purpose.



Helping JFMCs to form SHGs

JFMCs, can decide for several income generation activities for alternative livelihood particularly low income group of community. They can make Self Help Groups (SHGs) and the front line staff of the forest department can assist them to form the groups.

14.1 Why Self Help Groups (SHGs)¹⁴

Villagers living in and around forest areas are mostly from poor and backward communities. Mostly these people are from SC, ST and other backward classes; mostly these people live in Kachha houses where facilities such as portable drinking water and sanitation are not adequately available. Only one member of the household is earning. One member of the family is addicted to alcohol or is suffering from chronic ailments. For such a family it is difficult to arrange two meals a day. Therefore, their livelihoods, living style and petty requirements are made through freely available forest resources. Thus, these people are responsible for degradation of forest resources.

In order to reduce dependence of these people on forest resources by ensuring them alternate livelihood, SHG groups are formed so that they can earn money to meet their daily requirements by pursuing some economic activity. SHGs also help them to inculcate habit of savings for bad days from own savings rather than incurring loan from money lender and being in a perennial debt trap.

14.2 What is Self Help Groups (SHGs)?

From our childhood days, we hear sayings like

- ▶ 'Self-help is the best help'



- ▶ 'Unity is strength'
- ▶ 'United we stand, divided we fall'

Everyone knows the story of the birds caught in a net. They could not escape one by one. But when they flew together in a group, they escaped. We know that one stick is easy to break. But it is difficult to break a bundle (group) of sticks. The SHGs show us how unity is strength. They show us how self-help could be the best help. It is useful if we can encourage and help poor people to form SHGs. They save very small amounts of money. They lend these small amounts to each other in the SHGs. They also try to solve many of their problems together.

14.3 What is the role of forest front line staff in formation of SHGs

- ▶ Forest frontline staff could explain benefits of forming a group to the villagers
- ▶ He could help in mobilizing members and organizing initial meetings
- ▶ Provide guidance and motivation to president and other members of the groups
- ▶ Help/ assist group in forming formal/ in formal rules and maintenance of books of records if required,
- ▶ Help linking the group with other government organizations working in the area for motivation and guidance
- ▶ Rotation of leadership among different members in each of the meeting to ensure active participation of all the members
- ▶ Help from social development officials could be taken for forming women self-help groups



Ref: 'Illustration from A handbook for forming SHGs by NABARD'

14 A Handbook on Forming Self Help Group, National Bank for Agriculture and Development

- ▶ Ensure adequate marketing system for produce of the group
- ▶ Continuous review of the activities undertaken by the group and guidance from the specialized as required

The detail description of the process of formation of the SHGs is written as follows. The front line staff of the forest department can follow these to form an SHG and also to run it successfully.

What Is SHGs?

SHG is a group formed by the community, which has specific number of members like 15 or 20. In such a group the poorest would come together for emergency, disaster, social reasons, economic support to each other, have ease of conversation, social interaction and economic interactions.

14.4 How to start SHGs?

The first step for forming an SHG is also simple –

- ▶ Visit the very poor families in the village
- ▶ Talk to them
- ▶ If the people do not know the person who will help to form the SHGs then first it requires talking to them about oneself.

It is important to be known to the people and to win their trust before starting any activity in the village.

- ▶ It is important to talk to the elders in the village, explain the plan to them and request for their support

14.5 How is SHGs formed?

Before forming a SHG, every family of the village is required to be visited thoroughly and the following issues (given in box no.) needs to be noted down. During the visit to the families one need to do the following

- ▶ Speak to the womenfolk
- ▶ Ask what is the most important issue for the family
- ▶ Write all details of the family especially the points written in the box..



Ref: An 'Illustration from 'A handbook for forming SHGs' by NABARD

The families having following social standard could form a group

- Similar experience of poverty
- Similar living conditions
- Same kind of livelihood
- Same community or caste
- Same place of origin

Every time one visits such families, it is important to tell them that there is no distribution or promise any subsidy money under any scheme. This is very important to avoid misunderstanding at later stages. This is called 'Preliminary Survey.' This helps to understand the needs of each individual family. One needs to visit the same families again. When one is visiting for the second time, he/she will be able to tell each family how he/she has spoken to other families, who also have very similar problems like them.

By visiting the families, one will be able to know which of those families could come together in Self-Help Groups. He will also understand what their common requirements and problems are.

What type of families could form the SHGs

- Families have only one earning member
- Families bring drinking water from faraway place
- The women folk compelled to go far in the open in the absence of toilet facilities
- There are old illiterate members in the family
- There are permanently ill members in the family
- Children in the family do not go to school
- There is a drug addict or a drunkard in the family
- Their house is made of kaccha material
- They regularly borrow from the moneylender and in perennial debt trap
- They eat less than two meals a day
- They belong to scheduled castes or scheduled tribes including all economically disadvantaged groups of people

Box no. 2: *Families with similar background will be ideal for the formation of group*

If 'yes' is the answer for three or four of these questions mentioned in Box No.2, these families can be considered as poor and they can then be formed a group.

14.6 How are group meeting organized?

Before Self-Help Groups are formed, a meeting of the community leaders and elders of the village needs to be organized to explain to them about the SHG formation. It will help to get support from them. This is very important.

- ▶ This is how the trust of village elders can be obtained.
- ▶ This will also give acceptance to one's work in the village.

This is the right time to tell everyone that the meetings are not for "giving" anything, but to "enable" the poor families to come together and help each other. It will be very useful to explain the basic principles of Self-Help Group in this meeting.



Ref: An illustration from 'A handbook for forming SHGs' by NABARD

These are normal stages. This will give confidence to the person who is there to facilitate to form a group and this will be the indication that he/she is moving in the right direction.

➔ Leadership

One member of the group needs to take the lead. How is this person identified? The best way is to ask the following questions within the group:

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
Who should decide everything for the SHG?	All members should decide
Who benefits from the SHG?	All members benefit
Who should do the work?	All should share the work
How can the work be shared?	Agree on one person to take up the work by rotation

This way, the members will understand the reason for rotation of the responsibilities. This will make it easy to choose a member to take initiative for the following main activities:

- ▶ Book keeping
- ▶ Organizing meetings



Leadership among the community member: An illustration from 'A handbook for forming SHGs' published by NABARD

14.7 How do SHGs take shape?

After meeting the elders and community leaders, one is now ready to call SHG members for a meeting. Ideally one member from each of the identified families should come for a meeting on a convenient day. This can be called "a startup meeting". During the meeting, one will have to face a lot of questions. The answers of their questions will help them slowly understand the concept further. It is required to allow sufficient time for the members to understand the different aspects of group formation.

➔ Membership

During the initial meetings, following things may happen:

- ▶ Some members leave
- ▶ Some new members come in
- ▶ The members slowly learn to decide subjects for meetings
- ▶ They learn to conduct meetings
- ▶ They understand the value of records and documents
- ▶ They want to remain together and help each other

- The process of forming groups normally takes five to six months.
- Once the group is formed, it takes one to one and a half years to settle to a stable pattern.

14.8 How do SHGs function?

Simple rules are required for SHGs to function. The following are some important rules for proper functioning of a SHG:

- ▶ Common agreement on when to meet
- ▶ Decision on time and place of meetings
- ▶ Agreed penalties for non-attendance
- ▶ Agreement on amount of saving
- ▶ Giving small loans to each other
- ▶ Taking loan from banks, repayment habits.

Training of the members is an important need for proper functioning of SHGs. The following areas for training could do well to the members:

- ▶ Basic mathematics
- ▶ Writing of books
- ▶ Scheduling of meetings
- ▶ Social aspects like women empowerment
- ▶ Basics of lending money, borrowing, repaying

Most effective method of training of SHG members is to take them for an exposure visit to a good working SHG and allowing free interaction with its members.

14.9 Characteristics and Functions of SHGs

14.9.1 Characteristics of each SHG

- ▶ The ideal size of an SHG is 10 to 20 members (In a bigger group, members cannot actively participate)
- ▶ The group need not be registered. (From one family, only one member should join the group. (More families can join SHGs this way)
- ▶ The group consists of either only men or of only women. (Mixed groups are generally not preferred)
- ▶ Women's groups are generally found to perform better. (Members of each group have the same social and financial background. Members interact more freely this way)
- ▶ The group should meet regularly (Members understand each other better if they meet weekly)
- ▶ Compulsory attendance is required in every meeting (Full attendance for larger participation)

14.9.2 Book keeping by the SHG:

- ▶ Simple and clear books for all transactions to be maintained.
- ▶ If no member is able to maintain the books, someone to be engaged by the group for the purpose.
- ▶ Animator can also help.

There are four books which need to be maintained by the SHGs:

- ▶ **Minutes Book:** The proceedings of meetings, the rules of the group, names of the members, etc. are recorded in this book.
- ▶ **Savings and Loan Register:** It shows the savings of members separately and of the group as a whole. Details of individual loans, repayments, interest collected, balance, etc. are entered here.
- ▶ **Weekly Register:** This should be maintained to note down the summary of receipts and payments on a weekly basis. It should be updated after every meeting.

- ▶ **Members' Pass books:** Individual members' passbooks encourage regular savings.

14.9.3 Functions of SHGs:

➤ *Savings and Thrift:*

- ▶ The amount may be small, but savings have to be a regular and continuous habit with all the members.
- ▶ Savings first — Credit later' should be the motto of every group member.
- ▶ Group members learn how to handle large amounts of cash through savings. This is useful when they use bank loans.

➤ *Internal lending:*

- ▶ The savings to be used as loans for members.
- ▶ The purpose, amount, rate of interest, etc., to be decided by the group itself.
 - Proper accounts to be kept by the SHG (Specimen formats given as an Annexure I)
- ▶ Opening savings bank account with bank.
- ▶ Enabling SHG members to obtain loans from banks, and repaying the same.

▶ *Discussing problems:*

Every meeting, the group will discuss and try to find solutions to the problems faced by the members of the group.

14.10 Linking of SHGs to Bank:

Soon after an SHG is formed and one or two meetings held where the savings are collected, a savings bank account can be opened in the name of the SHG. There are five steps for a SHG to link with the banks.

14.10.1 Step 1 – Opening of S/B Account for the SHG

The Reserve Bank of India has issued instructions to all commercial banks and regional rural banks, permitting them to open SB A/Cs of registered or unregistered SHGs. SB A/C in the name of SHG could be opened after obtaining from the group the following documents:

- ▶ **Resolution from the SHG:** The SHG has to pass a resolution in the group meeting, signed by all members, indicating their decision to open SB A/C with the bank. This resolution should be filed with the bank.
- ▶ **Authorization from the SHG:** The SHG should authorize at least three members, any two of whom, to jointly operate upon their account. The resolution along with the filled in application form duly introduced by the promoter may be filed with the bank branch.

- ▶ **Copy of the rules and regulations of the SHG:** This is not a must. If the group has not formulated any such rules or regulations, loans can be sanctioned without them.

A savings bank account passbook may be issued to the SHG. This should be in the name of the SHG and not in the name of any individual/s.

14.10.2 Step 2 – Conduct of internal lending by the SHG

- ▶ After saving for a minimum period of 2 to 3 months, the common savings fund should be used by the SHG for lending to its own members.
- ▶ The purpose, terms and conditions for lending to its members, rate of interest etc., may be decided by the group through discussions during its meeting. (RBI and NABARD have permitted the members to decide on these aspects.) The interest is usually kept as 2 or 3 rupees per hundred rupees per month. Interest per month is better understood in villages, than annual interest.
- ▶ Simple and clear books of account of savings and lending should be kept by the SHG. (Specimen formats of books to be kept by the SHGs are attached in annexure II)

14.10.3 Step 3 – Assessment of SHGs

It is also important to know whether the SHG has been functioning well. The check list given below will help to assess each SHG in a simple, but effective manner.

Through internal lending's, the members of the SHG will learn to properly manage, utilize and repay their SHG loans. This will be of help, when they later borrow from the bank.

Important:

- ▶ SHGs with 12 to 16 “very good” factors can get loans immediately.
- ▶ SHGs with 10 to 12 “very good” factors — need 3 to 6 months’ time to improve, before loan is given.
- ▶ SHGs with rating of less than 10 “very good” factors will not be considered for loan.

Frequently Asked Question on Sanction and Credit Facility of SHG is attached in Annexure 12. Model Bye Law of SHG is attached in Annexure 13.

S. No.	Factors to be checked	Very good	Good	Unsatisfactory
1.	Group Size	15 to 20	10 to 15	less than 10
2	Type of member	Only very poor members	2 or 3 not very poor members	Many not very poor member
3.	Number of meetings	Four meeting in a month	Two meetings in a month	Less than two meeting in a month
4	Timing of meetings	Night or after 6 pm	Morning between 7-9 am	Other timings
5.	Attendance of members	More than 90 %	70 – 90 %	Less than 70 %
6.	Participation of members	Very high level of participation	Medium level of participation	Low level of participation
7.	Savings collection within groups	Four times a month	Three times a month	Less than three times a month
8.	Amount to be saved	Fixed amount	Varying amount	-
9.	Interest on internal loan	Depending upon the purchase	24-36 %	More than 36 %
10.	Utilization of savings amount by SHG	Fully used for paying loan to the members	Partly used for paying loan to the member	Poor utilization
11.	Loan recoveries	More than 90 %	70 -90 %	Less than 70 %
12.	Maintenance of books	All books are regularly maintained and updated	Most important registers(minutes, savings, loans etc. are updated)	Irregular in maintaining and updating books
13.	Accumulated Savings	More than 5000/- INR	INR 3000-5000	Less than 3000
14.	Knowledge of the rules to SHG	Known to all	-	Not known to all
15.	Education level	More than 20% of the members can read and write	-	Less than twenty % known to read and write
16.	Knowledge of government	All are aware of the government programme	Most of the members know about the government programs	No one knows

14.11 Spreading the Message of SHGs

- ▶ To get more information regarding the formation, nurturing and linking the SHGs to a local bank one

can get in touch with the local branch of NABARD where the staff will be happy to provide any kind of information regarding the SHGs.

Success Story

MINI DAIRY PLANT AT CHENNARAOPET VILLAGE OF WARANGAL DISTRICT

The livestock economy more so the contribution of milch animals occupies an important place in the district economy of Warangal District. It is one of the most potent viable and sustainable income generating activities for the rural poor particularly for rural women. Though the dist. is having vast animal population 11.34 lakhs the milk yield is 1.25 lakhs liters only. There is a huge demand for milk and its products in Warangal district. Particularly in Warangal town which is having 7 lakhs population.

Even though there is a huge demand for milk, the dairy farmers are not getting enough remunerative prices for their produce since they are depending mostly upon APDDCF for marketing of their milk. Further the local milk vendors are also cheating Milk farmers to the maximum extent possible by all the means at their disposal. In Warangal District there are about 24000 women SHGs with 3.20 lakh women with 90 crores corpus. Already about 16500 groups are linked with banks under linkage programme and availed credit to the extent of Rs.60.00 crores. In Chennaraopet mandal 454 SHGs, 4902 Women, 12.30 lakhs Corpus existing. Already about 400 groups are linked with bank. To capitalize upon the existing human and natural resources an integrated community manage Mini Dairy Project is formulated with following objectives.

- To provide sustainable, reasonable market price to Milk being produced by SHG women.
- To provide sustainable livelihood opportunities to Rural SHG Women to improve their income and status leading to empowerment of women.
- To provide clean milk to consumers at competitive price.
- To provide package of practices to Dairy Women to improve the milk yield and there by their incomes.
- Utilization of waste lands for fodder development resulting in increased milk production.

COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT:

1. Identified 500 SHG Women with bank credit for purchase of Milch Animals, each one initially.

Total project cost	Rs.60.00 Lakhs.
Bank Loan	Rs.25.00 Lakhs
Velugu CIF	Rs.25.00 Lakhs
Beneficiary Contribution	Rs.10.00 Lakhs

All these 500 Women are identified poor women under P.I.P. After L.E.A.P. process only they are selected. Velugu fund end to MACS. In turn MACS lent to SHG Women at Bank interest and collects back. The amount funded by Velugu under CIF will remain as corpus

2. Training and capacity building of women in dairy practices to improve milk yield and keeping it clean. Extension services are provided which includes manufacturing of feed, fodder, Milk collection, Animal Health Care, Artificial Insemination etc.
3. Women co-operative society (Jhansi Rani MACS) is managing the society democratically.
4. Establishment of fodder plots and demonstration plots for fodder to Milch Animals.
5. Skill development of Women in preparation Milk Products and management of their own society.

PROCESS MODERATION :

Already 227 SHGs out of 454 SHGs of Chennaraopet Mahila formed into Jhansi Rani MACS, Limited with 2851 members. The society has to be taken up the project and invests Rs.6.00 lakhs. This MACS Society is promoted by DRDA, Warangal.

FACILITATORS :

DRDA, Warangal is facilitating the process by Linking MACS with Bank and providing required training and Capacity Building, assistance under SGSY infra etc., villages identified for milk production are as follows:

Chennaraopet, Thimmaraini Pahad, Maqdumpur old and new, Papaiahpet, Jhalli, Aminabad and Khadeerpet

PROJECT COST :

Total Project Cost Rs. 35.00 lakhs.

MOBILIZATION OF FUNDS :

A). 1). Share capital from MACS	6.00 Lakhs
2). DRDA grant under SGSY	6.00 Lakhs
3). Velugu	6.00 Lakhs
4). Bank loan	12.00 Lakhs
B). Working capital loans	5.00 Lakhs

MARKETING OF MILK: Milk is being sold at Warangal and other places. Already in Warangal Town there is a huge demand for milk. Agents will be appointed and marketing network will be developed. At present APPDDCF is selling Milk at Rs.14.00 per liter for toned milk at 2% fat. We have proposed to sale at Rs.12.00 per liter which can be increased to Rs.13.00 per liter. Further society is willing to pay Rs.1.65 per 1% fat. SHG Women will get Additional Rs.1 - 1.50 per liter. Consumer will get Rupee one less than APDDCF rate.

BENEFITS :

1. Providing reasonable market rate to milk farmers
2. Creating employment opportunities to Rural poor women
3. Developing entrepreneurship and empowering women
4. Employment opportunities are created in transport and other fields.

Success Story of SHG

JUTE PRODUCTS MANUFACTURING UNIT OF DEVI MACS in Village Gangadevipalli at Warangal District in Andhra Pradesh

Warangal District is famous for cotton as well as Jute products which got international reputation as the products are very qualitative & cheaper. Around 3000 artisans are engaged in weaving of Jute products in Warangal district. As the demand for Jute products in Western countries is increasing day by day, the steps for creating awareness, among the producers of the Jute products are necessary. It is also very essential to develop the entrepreneurship among the craft persons to promote sales of the Jute products. In order to compete in the international market it is necessary to develop attractive new designs of the Jute products to meet the fasters of consumers. Further artisans must be imparted need based training to upgrade their skills to develop various Jute products to suit to the faster & desires of the consumers.

With this intention 36 women SHG members from Gangadevipalli (v) of Geesugonda mandal were trained in manufacturing of Jute articles under skill development programme at Jute service center Warangal. The said trainees were also imparted training in EDP in TTDC Hasanparthy for a week. The trainees were exposed to different types of Jute articles made in the district & other parts of the state. The trainees were imparted training in Screen Printing at Jute Service Center Warangal.

After completion of training the trainees have started manufacturing Jute products on their own & they have formed "Devi Mutually Aided Co-op. Society Gangadevipally, with an aim to undertake manufacturing of Quality & latest jute articles. The D.R.D.A. has supported them to purchase ten Industrial Mode Machines with an amount of Rs. 45,000/-. The proposed beneficiaries have come forward to contribute each Rs.1000/- towards working capital to purchase raw material. The Jute raw material bank also agreed to supply the raw material without any interruption. Exposure trips to Srikakulam & other district of A.P. & Culcutta have been arranged to the members of Devi MACs members to create further awareness among them. Today this unit is successfully running under DEVI MACs, for which Smt. Pendli Shreevani is President & Kanneboina Swaroopa is Secretary.

Training on various alternative livelihood activities for the JFMCs

Once the JMFC is formed they should be exposed to different training programmes to enhance the skill and capacity of the members for the holistic development of the area. The different capacity building training programmes which the JFMC members should undertake would be as follows:

15.1 Enhancing Agriculture productivity through Rain Water Harvesting

The economy of the JFMCs predominantly is part of an agrarian economy. The income from Agriculture is the main livelihood of the JFMC members in almost all the states. But due to the lack of irrigation facility in almost 90% of these agriculture lands, the agriculture productivity is very low and that is the main reason of this population living below the poverty line.

The availability of perennial, semi perennial streams sometimes passing through the adjoining forest areas to the agriculture lands provides opportunity to the Forest Department to take up the rain water harvesting as a major management strategy to enhance the irrigation potential of the dry & unproductive agriculture lands of JFMCs members.

If this could be done successfully then after a few years, it would usher many mini Green revolution in many of the JFMCs areas across the States. This could become possible by constructing various kinds of site specific rain water harvesting structures like stop dam, anicuts, irrigation ponds, diversion channels and lift irrigation schemes. Where ever such rain water harvesting was unable to support complete irrigation of the village, JFMC members could be provided subsidies by converging the State /GOI schemes for providing tube wells.

The rain water harvesting structure could be water impounding pond, stop dam, tube well, diversion channel, turbines etc. Sometimes even if there is a perennial stream flowing through the forests but the agricultural lands are at high elevation and there is no power supply in the area then small hydro turbine may be introduced. Chhattisgarh Forest Department have installed quite a few hydra turbines in different divisions.

The other energy sources like solar cooker, solar heater and solar pressure cooker could also form as a part of the alternative energy sources in the rural areas.

15.2 Introduction of alternative energy sources

The fuel wood dependency both for bonafide domestic use as well as for commercial sale to semi-urban areas has played havoc with the regeneration of the forests. This resulted in conversion of productive fringe forests into highly degraded state. Therefore, it is very well understood that until the alternate fuel resources are made available to JFMC members for their bonafide requirements it is just impossible to stop fuel-wood collection from the forests. To reduce the consumption of fuel wood in JFMCs households improved biomass chullas (with roughly 48% fuel efficiency), 5 liter pressure cookers, rice husk based bio-briquette machines could be introduced by the forest department.

15.3 Hands on training on cultivation of MFPs, medicinal plants, pasture development for fodder and plantation of fruit trees/ orchards

The economy of the JFMCs is very much depended on the collection as well as sale of the medicinal and aromatic plants. The 60% of the forest area allotted to the JFMCs are in highly degraded state with blanks available for the afforestation. Thus in order to boost the economy of the JFMCs an afforestation scheme of high-tech MFP/ Medicinal Plant Plantation could be introduced in the degraded forest area of different states. Under this scheme, plantation could be raised with grafted amla, harra and baheda and many other locally available species. In case of successful plantation many JFMCs could be benefited.

One of the main reasons of degradation of the forest areas are due to the increasing pressure for grazing on the forests. In many of the targeted states the livestock are maintained by the JFMCs members mainly as status symbol and, therefore, the dependency on forests for fodder are also not been reducing. Thus it is important to take up fodder species plantation in the JFMC areas. The selection of fodder species could be done with the technical support provided by Central Grassland Research Institute, Jhansi. The tree species too could be planted viz., subabool, siris, shisham along with fodder grasses like stylo, napjar, anjan etc.

15.4 Training on Animal husbandry and poultry farming

A number of programmes are available in the state animal husbandry department for improvement of the cattle and poultry farming. The State forest Department could coordinate with the state animal husbandry department for training and capacity building of the JFMC members on animal husbandry and poultry farming. This could enhance their scope for the additional income and better livelihood opportunities. The prospective training for the JFMCs on this sector could be as follows:

- ▶ Focus on reducing scrub cattle & stall feeding to reduce grazing pressure on the forests
- ▶ Introduction of Azolla fodder to each household
- ▶ Rice husk in each household should be urea treated
- ▶ Artificial Insemination, vaccination & castration in collaboration with Vet. Dept.
- ▶ Loan from CF Revolving Fund for providing milch cattle.

15.5 Training on dairy development and skill development of SHGs in preparation of milk products and management of their own society

JFMCs could be trained on dairy development since almost all the JFMC members possess livestock. Within the JFMCs different SHGs could be formed as described in chapter 16. There is a 'Special Programme for Dairy Development' started as a part of the National Mission for Protein Supplements under Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) for FY 2012-2013. The JFMC members/ SHGs could receive support from Government under this scheme. Under the scheme, projects will be funded for expansion of animal husbandry and dairy development activities with priority given to improving productivity of milch animals through measures such as productivity improvement programme, improving nutritional balance of animal feed concentrate, fodder development activity and improving milk procurement, processing and marketing infrastructure in the identified area of implementation. State Animal Husbandry department is regularly organized training on the different issues of dairy development. They should be contacted by the facilitator for providing training of the JFMCs/ SHGs. A budgetary provision of Rs. 200 crore has already been made for the financial year 2012-2013 under the scheme. Most of the target states of the project fall under the milk producing category, therefore, they are eligible for receiving the above financial support through State Level Sanctioning committee (SLSC).

Training of the SHGs could be organized at the block level by hiring qualified resource persons in this sector.

Exposure visits of these groups should also be done to the successful SHG areas for better knowledge and experience.

15.6 Training on other activities like weaving, knitting, printing, book binding (if communities have interest/ have traditional practice)

There is no list for income generating or non-income generating activities that the SHGs can take up. But the following list provides non-forestry activities that the SHG could be linked up with:

- ▶ Spices preparation unit
- ▶ Sewing, tailoring, spinning and weaving unit
- ▶ Doll and toy making
- ▶ Rope making, bamboo basket making and other products
- ▶ Grain bank
- ▶ Handloom and small scale enterprises etc.
- ▶ Making of jam, jelly, processed juice from available fruits
- ▶ Value added products from NTFPS like Mahua flower, medicinal plants at a higher price
- ▶ Under eco development policy tourism related activities such as maintenance of eco lodge, running canteen etc.,

The group can also be linked with forestry activities such as:

- ▶ Decentralized nursery
- ▶ Grass and seeds of other species, collection and sale and marketing of fruits and leaves
- ▶ Formation and implementation of grass banks

This list is only illustrative; more activities according to local context could be added. Before undertaking any activities with the group, it must be ensured that there is adequate market for the produce.

15.7 Training on Ecotourism involving SHGs/ JFMCs

Ecotourism is a form of tourism that involves visiting natural areas—in the remote wilderness or rural environments. According to the definition, ecotourism is responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people. There are seven main characteristics of ecotourism, which are:

- ▶ Involves travel to natural destinations
- ▶ Minimizes impact
- ▶ Builds environmental awareness
- ▶ Provides direct financial benefits for conservation

- ▶ Provides financial benefits and empowerment for local people
- ▶ Respects local culture

Keeping these in mind, the JFMCs can be trained to make ecotourism plots in their areas. In this case under one JFMC three to four SHGs can be worked in ecotourism project. Since ecotourism consists of hospitality management, preparation of food locally available, maintenance of cleanliness and hygiene and travel into the forests for bird watching or wildlife safari etc. To make it a successful project the training can be organized in the following way.

- ▶ Training on the hospitality management could be organized for selected members of one SHG group. This group also needs to identify some houses which could be converted to homestays.
- ▶ Another group of SHGs should be trained on cleanliness and hygiene of those homestays as well as the surrounding areas.
- ▶ One SHG group can be trained on preparation of food from the locally available material in a typical traditional way but that also needs to be prepared hygienically.
 - One group could be trained to be as nature guide. They also have to have detailed idea of the flora and fauna of the area and also their habitation inside the forests. They also have clear sense of a nature trail in the nearby forests.

Exposure visits for the above groups needs to be organized in a successful SHG who are working on the ecotourism project. The exposure visits would make them understand the concept clear. In India a very successful ecotourism project is being implemented in Pariyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala, at Corbett National park in Uttarakhand etc. WWF-India has also started ecotourism involving communities in Tawang and Zimithang in Arunachal Pradesh.

15.8 Training on Seed orchard, Plus trees, Managing Small Forestry Enterprises

A seed orchard is an intensively-managed plantation of specifically arranged trees for the mass production of genetically improved seeds to create plants, or seeds for the establishment of new forests. Seed orchards are a common method of mass-multiplication for transferring genetically improved material from breeding populations to production populations (forests) and in this sense are often referred to as “multiplication” populations. There are different methods of seed orchard and is often composed of grafts (vegetative copies) of selected **genotypes**, but seedling seed orchards also occur mainly to combine orchard with progeny testing. Seed orchards are the

strong link between breeding programs and plantation establishment. They are designed and managed to produce seeds of superior genetic quality compared to those obtained from seed production areas, seed stands, or unimproved stands.

For optimizing tree breeding, tree breeders make efforts to get their operation efficient. Scientists develop tools aimed at improvement of the efficiency of tree breeding programmes. By putting Plus trees tree breeders try to Optimize adapting strategies and methods to certain species, group of populations, and structure of genetic variation and mode of inheritance of the important traits to obtain the highest benefit per unit of time. Optimizing is usually carried out at various levels like breeding strategy (appropriate intensity of breeding, breeding population structure and size, plan for maintenance of genetic diversity), breeding methods (viz., **mating** type, testing and selection methods, testing population size and time) and deployment methods of the genetically improved material (seed orchard, clonal forestry, genetic contribution, size).

All these above techniques are required for plantation and management of better stock in the forests. The frontline forest staff and the JFMC members need to be trained on the above techniques. The proper resource persons need to be engaged for training. Exposure visits may also be undertaken for better understanding of the frontline staff.

Training on community based forest enterprise development in small scale could also be done for the front line staff. The small scale forest enterprise includes training on incense stick making, bamboo furniture, rope making etc. Some communities in different parts of the country are already engaged in these enterprise activities but proper skill training is required for them for fetching better market price.

15.9 Training on Managing Biodiversity through Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)

Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) is planned to be formed in the biodiversity rich areas where there is popular interest or support. BMC formation should possibly be mediated through institutions or civil society organizations or Technical Support Groups (TSGs). The process of BMC formation would involve all the stakeholders in the gram sabha including tribal groups and other marginalized communities to ensure an effective consultative process to meet the requirements of the state and local conditions. . The Member Secretary should get approval from the State Biodiversity Board for forming BMCs. Technical Support Groups can extend all possible

help in identification, formation and operationalization of BMCs. The State Biodiversity Boards may require a percentage of the funds earmarked for the establishment of each BMC. This may include costs incurred by the State Biodiversity Boards in involving civil-society organizations and TSGs in identifying potential areas for BMC formation. The local body shall make efforts to integrate BMCs to other village level committees related to natural resources management.

BMC should not be an alienated committee and therefore, it should be integrated with the BMCs to other village level committees related to natural resource management. The BMC would be constituted by the local body with members of the Participatory forest/natural resources management committees members, including from members of horticulture/voids/foot botanists/tribal heads, etc., based on the local conditions. The SBB should issue suggestive list of persons to be included in the BMC. The representation may be flexible to meet the local requirements. The Biodiversity Management Committee may also draw its members from amongst the existing committees which have been formed under statutory powers/administrative orders of the respective Governments.

Roles and Functions of the BMCs

The BMCs would, in addition to the preparation of the People's Biodiversity Register (PBR), will participate in ensuring:

- ▶ Conservation and sustainable utilization of biological resources
- ▶ Eco-restoration of the local biodiversity
- ▶ Proper feedback to the SBB in the matter of IPR, Traditional Knowledge and local Biodiversity issues, wherever feasible and essential feedback to be provided to the NBA.³
- ▶ Management of Heritage Sites including Heritage Trees, Animals/ Micro-organisms etc., and Sacred Groves and Sacred Water bodies
- ▶ Regulation of access to the biological resources and/or associated Traditional Knowledge, for commercial and research purposes.
- ▶ Sharing of usufructs arising out of commercial use of bioresources
- ▶ Conservation of traditional varieties/breeds of economically important plants/animals.
- ▶ Biodiversity Education and Awareness building.
- ▶ Documentation, enable procedure to develop biocultural protocols.
- ▶ Sustainable Use and Benefit Sharing.
- ▶ Protection of Traditional Knowledge recorded in PBR

Training and capacity building of the Biodiversity Management committees is required to be undertaken on the following issues :

- ▶ On awareness building on the Biodiversity Act 2002, Rules, procedures and Institutions pertaining to the Conservation of Biodiversity at large
- ▶ on the of Biodiversity management
- ▶ on the role of BMCs with various associated departments of the Government such as Forests, Environment, Tribal Welfare, Rural Development, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Poultry, Health, Local systems of Medicine, Education etc.,

In addition to the capacity building training for the BMC members, capacity building at various levels of Government and Non-Governmental Agencies including the elected representatives at State, District and Local levels also is required to be taken place for properly delivering the duties.

Capacity Building and Skill development of BMC members as identified by SBB include:

- ▶ Preparation of People's Biodiversity Register
- ▶ Administrative procedures of BMC
- ▶ Maintenance of accounts/audit.
- ▶ Intellectual Property Issues.
- ▶ Access and Benefit Sharing issues.
- ▶ Levy of fees.
- ▶ Preparation of Action Plan, Project Report, Annual Report.
- ▶ All Acts and Rules pertaining to Biodiversity
- ▶ Management of Biodiversity Heritage Sites

The JFM committee in biodiversity rich areas could also act as a Biodiversity Management committee or two to three proactive members of the JFMC could also be the member of the BMC and deliver the duties and responsibilities mentioned for the BMC. These JFMCs already have support from the forest department as well as the other concerned departments which is also required for the BMCs. It is, therefore, very much important to encourage the JFMC to actively take part in the biodiversity management of the area and also to form a BMC wherever it is not exist.

15.10 Special Training Need for the JFMC Members & the Front line Staff for the Forest Department

Forestry has undergone a major transformation and the frontline staff of Forest Departments is now required to perform many diverse functions besides carrying out their earlier protection and silvi-cultural duties. Training for such

staff is required to be done or being done in many forest departments to discharge their duties and responsibilities. Along with the Front line staff the JFMC members also need to be trained on different aspect of forest management and financial management to carry out the JFM activities smoothly in the area.

➤ **Training for the Executive Committee Members:**

The list of the training which the executive committee member of the JFMCs should be undergone is as follows:

- ▶ For the Chairperson of the JFMCs
- ▶ For Treasurers of the JFMCs
- ▶ For the Secretary of the JFMCs
- ▶ Specific training for the Women Sub-committee

➤ **Specific training for front line Staff of the forest department**

The specific training needs to be undergone to do the activities in the forests which could include:

- ▶ On forest Law
- ▶ Ensuring the forest boundary
- ▶ Forest produce flow from the area
- ▶ Classification of the forest produces
- ▶ Management of forests
- ▶ Management of NTFPs

➤ **Training & Exposure visit for the JFMC and the front line Forest Department staff together**

Some of the training programme should be organized for the forest department and the JFMC members together. Exposure visit to the successful JFMC areas should be organized for both the members which will help them to enhance their capacity. They would also exposed to different activities like micro-planning, Entry

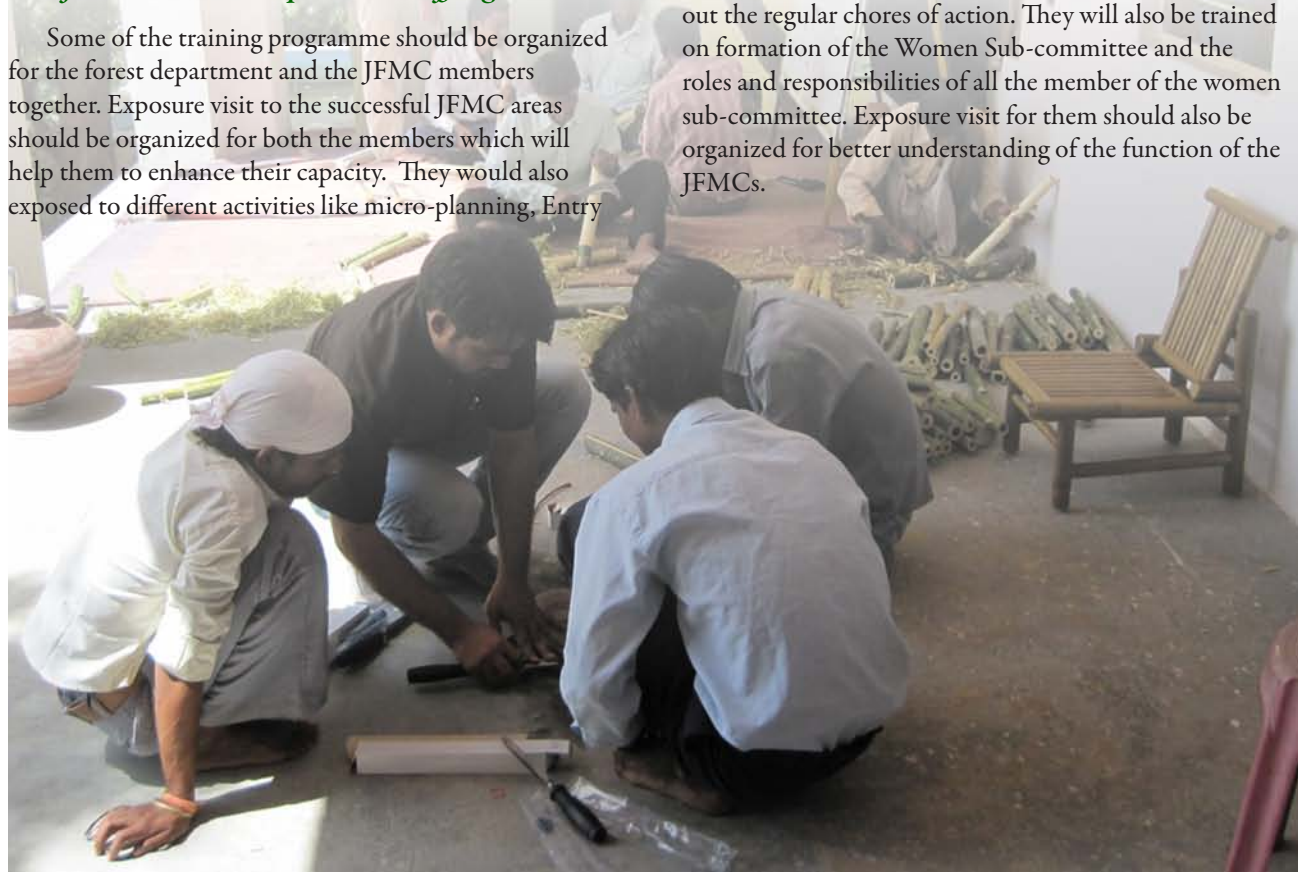
Point Activities, schemes of other departments and Forest Protection. As such, the participating trainees or members of JFMCs/EDCs were exposed to every aspect of participatory forest management and their roles and responsibilities in management of JFMC/EDC vis-a-vis conservation and management of forest.

➤ **Training for the JFMCs and Panchayat together:**

Both the group should be trained on how both can work together for the betterment of livelihood in the area. In the 2002 JFM guideline there is specific mention about keeping relationship with the panchayat. In states of West Bengal JFMC is registered as a society and work under the panchayat since beginning and in Haryana there is a mention that one panchayat member should also be a member of the executive committee of the JFMCs to be aware about the JFMC activities in the area which otherwise is not possible to be understood. During the training, JFMC/EDC Presidents from different villages also could share their experiences, constraints and opportunities in Joint Forest Management. This kind of activities plays important role during planning of village development and forest development activities.

➤ **Training for Women members of the committee:**

Specific training and capacity building of the women is also required to make them aware about the JFM activities and functions. Capacity enhancement would help them to speak about their difficulties faced by them in carrying out the regular chores of action. They will also be trained on formation of the Women Sub-committee and the roles and responsibilities of all the member of the women sub-committee. Exposure visit for them should also be organized for better understanding of the function of the JFMCs.



JFMCs and the other government schemes & Regulations: How JFMCs can work under other Government Schemes

16.1 Forest Rights Act, 2006

Responding to the 'historical injustice' to forest-dwelling and forest fringe tribal communities, especially in central India, the FRA, 2006 was passed by the Government of India. The act provides for a variety of rights in state forests. It includes a provision for Community Forest Rights (CFRt) and Community Forest Resources (CFRe), and provides the right to Manage to communities that claim the CFRts over CFRe's.

From the perspective of JFM, the community Forest Rights (CFRt) can be viewed to be a natural progression wherein Communities can take over management of their local forests that they have been protecting and the FD can move into an enabling, supporting and regulatory role.

CFRts effectively create community tenure within the state forest lands, which cannot be alienated and where there is no provision for further privatization or land use change, on the assumption that this is the area that communities themselves want to keep as a community forest resource. Moreover, major conflicts have arisen as no areas have been demarcated so far and thus people are claiming lands in different area.

Alternative livelihood models could be developed by State/ central institutions for FRA transferred areas.

16.2 National Afforestation Program (NAP)

In addition to the 2nd and 3rd JFM guidelines, the multiple forestry programs were consolidated into the National Afforestation Program (NAP). The NAP required formation of JFMCs at the field level to implement the program. This has led to a rapid increase in the number of JFMCs from around 36,000 in 2000 to over 1, 00,000 in 2010. However the functioning of these groups, to protect and manage forests after the funded plantation and maintenance cycle of about 3 odd years is complete, needs to be supported and their capacity enhanced. The NAP also requires that the secretary of the JFMC be a forest department staff, as government funds are involved in the program. Few counter provisions emphasizing on local decentralized management and the provision for a local village level secretary exist in the state JFM guidelines of some states.

16.3 Green India Mission

One of eight missions in the Prime Minister's Action Plan on Climate Change, the Green India Mission (GIM) aims to promote adaptation and mitigation measures that increase sequestration in sustainably managed forests and other eco-systems, adaptation of vulnerable species/ ecosystems, and of forest-dependent communities.

Mission objectives are:

- ▶ Increase forest/tree cover (afforestation) over 5 million ha, as well as improve quality of forest cover on another 5 million ha (a total of 10 million ha)
- ▶ Improved ecosystem services including biodiversity, hydrological services and carbon sequestration as a result of treatment of 10 m ha.
- ▶ Increased forest-based livelihood income for 3 million forest dependent households
- ▶ Enhanced annual CO₂ sequestration of 50-60 million tons by 2020

The GIM has several innovative elements which, if implemented, would be a new inclusive approach of protecting and regenerating landscapes.

- ▶ Focus on quality of forests
 - Primary focus on improving density of forest cover
- ▶ Focus on ecosystem services
 - Emphasis on biodiversity, water and improved biomass
 - Carbon sequestration as co-benefit
 - Addressing ecosystems like grasslands, wetlands, urban and peri-urban
- ▶ Focus on democratic decentralization:
 - Gram sabha as overarching institution to facilitate implementation of the Mission activities at village level
- ▶ Creating a new cadre of Community Youth as Foresters:
 - Build a skilled cadre of young "community foresters" from scheduled tribes and other forest dwelling communities
- ▶ Adoption of Landscape-based Approach
 - Interventions at scale (5000-6000 hectares) at a time
 - Simultaneous treatment of forest and non-forest areas
 - Addressing key drivers of degradation

Further, the Green India Mission document recognizes the key role for local communities and decentralized governance for Mission implementation. Taking a pluralistic role, the GIM document states, “The committees set up by the Gram Sabha, including revamped JFMCs, CFM groups, Van Panchayats, Committees set up under Forest Rights Act; Biodiversity Management Committees etc., will be strengthened as the primary institutions on the ground for nested decentralized forest governance in rural areas”.

The Mission proposed revamping JFM on the following lines

- ▶ Acknowledge JFMCs and other local institutions as technical bodies of the Gram Sabha, with the right to protect, regenerate and sustainably manage forests, under Indian Forest Act, including rights of a forest officer to the JFMC.
- ▶ Add provisions to acknowledge JFMCs as bodies of the Gram Sabha, in state Panchayat Acts.
- ▶ Silvicultural management of JFM areas as per plan approved by Gram Sabha with technical approval of the FD.
- ▶ The Forest Department’s role is envisaged as, “to provide demand-based support to the Gram Sabha and its mandated committees to strengthen decentralized forest governance leading to sustainable management of the forests.”

It is thus clear that the role of the Forest Department is expected to transform into supporting communities to sustainably manage forests especially in forest-fringe areas, via a plurality of institutions including revamped JFMCs.

16.4 National Forestry Plan and MNREGA

16.4.1 What is MNREGA?

- ▶ On 7 September 2005, the central government commenced the National Rural Employment Act which is briefly called NREGA, and subsequently renamed Mahatma Gandhi NREGA, or MNREGA
- ▶ This Act has converted the previous labour based programs into a Right’s based program. The government is now legally bound to give employment to all those households which demand employment in rural areas.
- ▶ In order to secure rural livelihood, the Act aims at providing a maximum of 100 days of annual employment to every rural household.
- ▶ The Act also aims at improving the condition of those natural resources which provide a means of livelihood,

as well as build capacity for adapting to climate change.

16.4.2 Why do we need to coordinate between the two?

- ▶ It is important in the situation where natural resources can be developed through NREGA.
- ▶ The Central Ministry of Environment and Forest and state governments do not have the financial and human resources for expanding the forest area to 1/3rd of the total geographic area. Both the resources can be made available through NREGA.
- ▶ A provision for collaborating with other schemes has also been made under NREGA. The objective of this collaboration is to improve the economic condition of people residing in or near the forest and reduce their direct dependence on forest so that forest development can take place through the watershed approach.

The central government has therefore given orders for uniting the Forestry plan and NREGA for facilitating natural resource development. Better mechanism however could be to make available MGNREGA money directly to DFO so that forestry activities could be planned for 3 to 5 years.

16.4.3 How will the National Afforestation Plan be implemented through NREGA?

The NAP activities to be undertaken through NREGA will be decided on the basis of the following conditions:

- ▶ The labour and material cost for the program will not be more than 40% of the total cost.
- ▶ The work will be done by manual labour to the maximum extent possible.

Coordination is required at 3 levels:

- ▶ **Management:** For this purpose, the District Collector will set up a District Resource Group. This group will share the information about NREGA and other Departments. It will then identify activities that can be undertaken by combining the two schemes. Based on the guidelines for the selected activities, the group will make arrangements for planning, publicity, training as well as technical support and ensure the availability of resources.
- ▶ **Planning:** At this level, an annual plan and Perspective plan will be developed for all the activities to be undertaken under the two schemes. The Perspective plan will be prepared according to the district level NREGA guidelines. The objective of this plan is to highlight the requirements and

shortcomings of all the sectors. The Annual Work Plan contains a list all activities approved by the Gram Sabha/Panchayat/Zila Parishad.

By combining the 2 plans, a small plan is prepared related to the following activities

- Solution for soil and water conservation
- Construction of soil and water conservation structures
- Multipurpose tree plantation
- Conservation and plantation of medicinal herbs
- Plantation of bamboos and shelter belt
- Agricultural works
- Discover and promote alternative agricultural activities and
- Publicizing new technologies

- ▶ **Activities:** It is necessary to coordinate the activities to be conducted in the current year and those to be undertaken in the next year. Coordination is also required in the areas of plantation in empty lands, some scheme.

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16.4.4 Which will be the Implementing Agency?

- ▶ The activities decided as per the above process can be undertaken by the Forest Department, Gram Panchayat, JFMC/EDC, FRA committees etc.
- ▶ The financial outlays for these activities can be made available through multiple sources.

16.5 REDD Plus Benefits for the JFMCs

In the last Conference of Parties in UNFCCC meet, decision was taken on reducing emission from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in the developing countries (REDD-plus). India's national strategy aims at enhancing and improving the forest and tree cover of the country and thereby enhancing the quantum of forest ecosystem services that flow to the local communities. These services include fuel wood, timber, fodder, NTFP and also carbon sequestration. It is important to note that in Indian context, carbon service from forest and plantations is one of the co-benefits and not the main or the sole benefit. Initiatives like Green India Mission (GIM) and National Afforestation Programme (NAP), together with programmes in sectors like agriculture and rural development would add or improve existing forest and tree cover in our country. However, the Joint Forest Management Programme, which is being implemented in

India over the last two decades, has helped in increasing the forest cover in the rural parts of India (Forest Survey of India Reports). The local communities, through Joint Forest Management Programme, are involved in protection and management of forest and through this programme they are getting the livelihood benefits. In some parts of India this programme is going on very successfully, which is not only enhancing the forest carbon stock but also reducing considerable emission from deforestation and forest degradation through sustainable management of forests but there exists instances where considerable shortcomings have also been witnessed. Hence possibilities needs to be explored for the JFM committees to be eligible for the REDD plus benefits.

16.6 Climate Change Adaptation

A study on "Climate Proofing of JFM" was undertaken by Inspire Network For Environment with support from GIZ to find out whether the option of adaptation to the Climate Change was mentioned in the guidelines of the State Joint Forest Management Programme and how the communities have been adapting with the climate variation happening over the years in the rural areas of India.

While doing the study through the secondary literature review it was revealed that the guidelines of the JFM programme has been drafted in 1990-91, the discussion on issues of climate change and adaptation came much later part. The study also revealed that through the implementation of the JFM programme and the JFM associated activities the forest cover over time has been increased, the socio-economic condition of the local communities especially the vulnerable section of the people got enhanced which helped them to cope up with the changing climatic condition over time.

An effort, therefore, was made to make a brief table (table no 16.1) to show how the state guidelines were framed to help the local communities for acquiring better adaptive capacities in the light of climate change.

Table 16.1: *Analysis of state guidelines to reflect on increased adaptive capacities through implementation of JFM*

S. No	Guidelines	Helped in increased adaptive capacities
1.	Composition of JFM Committee : Almost in every state it is compulsory to have the following members while constituting the JFMC/ VFC/ VFPMC/ FPC one female member from each house hold member from economically backward class people staying in the vicinity of the forests the forest guard/ local forest officer	The guideline shows that the most vulnerable communities in the society are included in the protection and management of forest; it indicates an effort made to constitute the JFMCs in such a manner that it is resulting in increased adaptive capacity of the vulnerable communities over time.
2.	Responsibility of the JFMCs: Protection & Management of forests: Committees are responsible for proper protection and management of forests. They are responsible for prevention against encroachment, fire, grazing, illegal felling, theft or any other damages in the forests. They also make the rules for collection of minor forest produce, ensures harvesting and distribution of income from sale among the members.	From the guidelines it is evident that communities are totally involved in protection, management as well as distribution of the benefits from the forests, it also shows the possibility of better protection of forests. It is also not possible for the Forest Officers to protect the forests alone without the help of the communities. Effective protection of forest makes a resilience forest ecosystem, which not only decrease the sensitivity of the ecosystem but also increase better adaptive capacity of the communities who are depending on the forests for livelihoods. Exception in Tamilnadu: Grazing is free inside the forests depending on the carrying capacity of the forests except in regeneration areas. Carrying capacity is determined by the district forest officers. Here there is a possibility of over grazing if the carrying capacity study is not been done on time. If in case overgrazing happens in the forest areas, it might increase the sensitivity of the forest ecosystem.
3.	Benefits Sharing mechanisms: Benefit sharing mechanism is different in different states. It depends on the state forest guidelines. Like in West Bengal, only 25 % of the total sale from timber, from inter-mediatory works and cashew cultivation in the forests shared with the communities, in MP, 30 % from net income from the sale of timber and 100 % from inter-mediate yield like thinning, cleaning etc., in Rajasthan, 50 % total income from sale of wood and in Tamil Nadu, 75 % from the sale of wood distributed among the communities, 25 % remitted to village forest development fund shared with the communities. In addition to these, communities are entitled to collect fuel wood and fodder grass which is available from forests free of cost in all states.	This benefit sharing mechanism clearly results in enhancing the socio- economic condition of the local communities. In West Bengal though the percentage of sharing of benefits is very low but they get the benefits in cash. The increased availability of the NTFPs and the cash income from forests enhanced their socio-economic condition. Their better socio-economic condition is evident by the visibility of increased number of concrete houses which was rare a decade before (field visit report). Through these evidences it can be concluded that the adaptive capacity against the adverse climatic condition has been increased. The availability of fuel wood and fodder free of cost assures day to day livelihood activity of the communities; this also ensures better adaptive capacity of the communities.
4.	Membership period of the committees: In Rajasthan it is 10 years; in MP and Tamilnadu it is for 5 years and in West Bengal the committee change every year	Membership period for five to ten years is a long duration for a committee to perform very efficiently, in contrast one year period for a committee is too short time to gain experience and perform according to the guidelines. Therefore, the duration for one committee to perform in very efficient way should not be more than 3 years; it not only helps the communities to increase the adaptive capacity of the communities but also make the vulnerable communities stronger to adapt in the adverse climatic condition.

From the above evidences it could be recommended that proper implementation of the JFM could potentially increase the adaptive capacities of the JFM communities. The state guidelines still needs to be field tested in light of the adaptation to the climate change in both the cases where JFM is successful and wherever, it is not successful. Successful JFMCs can be recommended for Climate Proofing of the JFM guidelines. Recommendations also need to be made on the modification of the JFM guidelines with regard to increasing adaptive capacity of the communities in the face of climate change where JFM is not so successful. Location specific adaptation strategy needs to be included in the guidelines. Capacities of the local communities and the local level government officers needs to be built to undertake different adaptation strategies at the local level State guideline needs to be field tested in light of the adaptation to the climate change in both the cases where JFM is successful and wherever it is not successful. Successful JFMCs can be recommended for

Climate Proofing of the JFM guidelines. Recommendations also need to be made on the modification of the JFM guidelines with regard to increasing adaptive capacity of the communities in the face of climate change where JFM is not so successful. Location specific adaptation strategy needs to be included in the guidelines. Capacities of the local communities and the local level government officers need to be built to undertake different adaptation strategies at the local level. Awareness generation activities on climate change and adaptation needs to be undertaken in all the states for the local communities as well as the local level government staff. JFM guidelines regarding the benefit sharing part can be modified depending upon the respond of the communities and depending upon their contribution towards forest protection. JFMCs should be registered as a legal entity to have more stakes and decision making capacity in the forest management. Local rule making, local enforcement and local monitoring are the key to the success of Joint Forest Management in the current time.

Sequence of Activities for Joint Forest Management

- Read, understand and analyze Government Orders and guidelines related to JFM.
- Engage in continuous dialogue with the villagers, resolve all conflicts and motivate them for collective action.
- Inform the villagers about the structure of JFM and explain how forestry activities can be undertaken collectively.
- Start entry point activities.
- Form the JFMC/Executive Committee/ Women Sub Committee/SHG and get them approved from the Gram Sabha.
- Inform the Ex-officio members.
- Frame the JFMC By-laws.
- Register the JFMC.
- If possible select a local voluntary organization as a facilitator.
- Provide introduction letters to the Executive Committee members.
- Maintain JFMC records such as membership register, income-expenditure account, proceeding register of the women sub-committee, Minor forest produce register, bank account and passbook etc.
- Prepare a micro plan through a PRA exercise with the villagers.
- Prepare a Management Plan for the area to be managed by the JFMC.
- Make the JFMC/Executive Committee members aware of their responsibilities towards the Micro Plan and Management Plan. Train them for undertaking forestry activities in the best way possible.
- Allocate the efficiency rating of the JFMC on the basis of activities undertaken by them and modify it as per requirement.
- Inspect the JFMC activities from time to time as per the Departmental orders.
- Record the JFMC related information in the online system.
- Prepare the Plans for the Forest Development Agencies as per orders.
- Set up the Maintenance Fund.
- Make the necessary and fair arrangements required by the JFMC members for collection/storage/value addition/ transportation/sale of forest produce.
- Audit the accounts of the JFMC from time to time.

ANNEXURES



Model Byelaws for Forest Protection/ Joint Forest Management / Eco-Development Committees

1. Name, Address and Area of work

- 1.1 This Byelaw pertains to the Committee for Forest Protection /Joint Forest Management/ Eco-Development Committee of..... (name of village). For the purposes of this byelaws, it will be called the Committee or committee.
- 1.2 The Gram Sabha of the _____ (name of panchayat/ village/hamlet -etc) has approved these byelaws and the Committee will undertake their day - to - day working as per these byelaws.
- 1.3 Address of the Committee will be ----- (FP/JFMC/EDC) for----- (name of village) in the----- (name of Panchyat) of----- (name of Tehsil) in the ----- (name of District) of ----- (name of State) with PIN Code-----.
- (Any change in address, hereafter, will be intimated in writing to the Deputy Conservator of Forest of the Forest Department and to other related departments. If the JFMC is registered as a society, then address change will be sent to the representative of the Registrar of Societies.)*
- 1.4 The area of operation of the Committee is the boundaries of the Revenue village / hamlet / chak / phala etc. All forests within the boundaries will be included. Further, other forests beyond the boundaries of the village etc, that have been earmarked and handed over for management to the Committee will be included.
Name of Forest Block-----, Compartment No.----- for Forest Area or ----- (Khasra No.) of----- (name of Village) in case of Revenue Land with following Boundary Descriptions as,

North:
East:
South:
West:

(As, in certain states like MP, good forests that may be outside village boundaries are still under FD management and also linked to specific Forest Protection Committees, such things can be mentioned here)

2. Definitions

Unless specifically mentioned otherwise:

- 2.1 Samiti and Committee refers to the Joint Forest Management Committee or (State specific name), formed as per the _____ rules / GO, dated _____.
- 2.2 Forest Act refers to the _____, (name of act and year), and rules formulated under the act.
- 2.3 Forest Conservation Act (FCA) refers to the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and associated rules and guidelines.
- 2.4 Wildlife Protection Act refers to Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and associated rules and guidelines.
- 2.5 Bye-laws, refers to the byelaws approved by the General Assembly of the Forest Protection /Eco-Development Committee, (name of village).
- 2.6 Member, refers to the members of the Forest Protection /JFM/Eco-Development Committee, (name of village).
- 2.7 General Assembly includes both ordinary as well as extra-ordinary general assembly meetings.
- 2.8 Executive Committee refers to the EC formed as per the Rules/state GOs _____, dated xxx, yyy, zzzz, and the Societies Act, 1860 (if applicable).
- 2.9 President/Sarpanch means, the President of the Forest Protection /JFM/Eco-Development Committee, (name of village).
- 2.10 Member Secretary refers to the Member Secretary appointed as per the Rules/state GOs _____, dated xxx, yyy, zzzz, and the Societies Act, 1860 (if applicable).
- 2.11 The use of the words “he” and “his”, includes the meaning “she” and “her” in these byelaws.
- 2.12 Gram Sabha refers to the Gram Sabha as held as per the Panchayat Raj Act.

3. Objectives

- 3.1 Facilitate the involvement of members of rural communities to plan, protect, regenerate, develop, manage, and share benefits from the conservation and development of the forests jointly managed by the

- communities & SFDs.
- 3.2 Share benefits from jointly managed forests equally and equitably amongst all members.
 - 3.3 Make a democratic self-governed organization to undertake forest management activities and also handle finances independently through grants, loans and other receipts.
 - 3.4 Balance multiple interests of communities, both from forest produce and environmental services.
 - 3.5 Identify the drivers of forest degradation and attempt to tackle the same, with support from the Forest Department.
 - 3.6 Make the process and implementation of JFM people friendly and motivate participation in JFM.
 - 3.7 Undertake agreements with FD, and other departments as well as organization for effective functioning and implementation of JFM and for improving forest based livelihoods
 - 3.8 Make efforts to improve the environmental, economic, and social situation for village communities through JFM.

4. Membership

The following members of the village or hamlet keep the eligibility of membership in the JFM Committee :

- 4.1 All the adult persons above 18 years of age who are permanent residents residing within the boundaries of the village but at least 33% of them shall be women.
- 4.2 Committee shall have the right to include or exclude anyone from membership
- 4.3 All members will be listed in the membership register. The format of the membership register is provided at annex 1 of these byelaws. Full particulars of each member will be entered
- 4.4 A copy of the list of members will be sent to the concerned Range Officer / DCF.
- 4.5 As mentioned in the Government Resolution, all Government and Non-Government officials will become the Ex-officio members of the Committee
- 4.6 Forester/Forest Guard appointed on the site will be Member Secretary of the committee
- 4.7 Each member of the committee will pay Rs. -----for primary membership/annual fees/ one time fee. Government, non Government and Institutional members can deposit membership fee voluntarily.
- 4.8 Any change in Membership fees need to be approved by the General Body of the Committee.

5. Termination of membership

- 5.1 If a member violates the rules of the JFMC, then, the EC, may ask for clarification, and subsequently, if required, may recommend the temporary or

permanent suspension of member after such proposal ratified by the General Body.

- 5.2 Prior to recommending suspension, the EC should give full opportunity to the member to clarify their position about the issue of concern.
- 5.3 Conditions, under which such steps may be taken, are:
 - If the member is convicted and punished by a court of law in a matter which is thought to be against the interest of the Committee
 - If proven to be of unsound mind
 - If proved to be habitual offender of forest and violates rules of the JFMC and does not desist despite warnings.
- 5.4 Members may also be free to resign voluntarily from membership.

6. General Assembly

- 6.1 General assembly comprises of all the members of the Committee.
- 6.2 It will be mandatory to hold at least two (2) meetings in a year, with a quorum of at least 40% of members. Of this 40%, at least 33% must be women.
- 6.3 In addition, the president/vice-president or secretary can convene GB meeting on receiving requests from at least 33% of members.
- 6.4 All members will be informed about the meeting, at least 7 days before the date of the meeting.
- 6.5 In the General assembly, only resident villagers will be allowed to vote. Vote cannot be cast on behalf of an absent member.
- 6.6 Decisions should be taken by consensus to the extent possible.
- 6.7 However, if circumstances demand, the GB may adopt democratic means of decision making by secret ballot or raising of hands.

7. Gram Sabha / Aam Sabha / Ward Sabha.

The above meeting will be called as per the Panchayat Act for taking following decisions:

- 7.1 Commitment of the rural community for protection and development of forest resources
- 7.2 Formation of JFMC
- 7.3 Election of Executive Committee Members
- 7.4 Approval of bye laws of the Committee
- 7.5 Approval of Village level Micro Plan
- 7.6 Decision and approval of eco-development activities

8. General Assembly vis-à-vis Gram Sabha

The General Assembly will undertake the following in its meetings:

- 8.1 Approve the annual report and other records placed by the EC
- 8.2 Discuss and adopt micro plan prepared with support from the Forest Department or other agencies
- 8.3 Discussion amongst members regarding rules, procedures, and fees for access to and distribution of forest produce.
- 8.4 Approval of the suspension or termination of membership of any member, for illegal activities.
- 8.5 Approval of short term and long term management steps to be taken by the JFMC
- 8.6 Any other matter that is brought to the notice of the GB.

9. Executive Committee

The EC will be vested with the powers of the GB as regards its day to day activities. It will work within the bye laws approved by the General Assembly. The EC will be formed as follows:

- 9.1 The size of the EC will be as per the Government Resolutions of the state concerned.
- 9.2 These elected members will include
 - 1 member each from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, if the total population of both the categories is greater than 10-10%. If the total population of both the categories is greater than 15%, then 1 member will be elected from them.
 - 1 member from landless persons.
 - At least 3 women members (These are as per GO of Rajasthan Govt. and modified as per State GO)
- 9.3 The President, Vice President and Treasurer will be selected from these elected members. At least 1 woman will be selected for any of these 3 positions. (As specified in the GR)
- 9.4 Ex-officio members. Apart from the elected members the following persons will be ex-officio members of the executive committee: (This shall be state specific and based on GR)
 - Sarpanch/ Ward member from the Gram Panchayat of the respective village.
 - Representative from the local forest department.
 - Representative from a NGO working in the area, if desired by the Executive Committee.
 - President of the women sub-committee.
 - Of the ex-officio members, only the Sarpanch/ Ward member and President of women sub-committee shall have the right to vote.
- 9.5 The Local Forest Officer will be the Election officer for the purpose of Executive Committee elections.
- 9.6 Member Secretary. This shall vary from state to state. In some states a local person will be appointed as the member-secretary. (Provide state specific

information here)

- 9.7 Joint Secretary. Where the FD representative is required to be the member secretary, the EC should appoint its own Joint Secretary who can serve as a local counter-part to the FD member secretary, so that the day to day work of the EC, at the local level can go on smoothly.

10. Rules of business for Executive Committee

- 10.1 The executive committee will have a tenure of 3 years.
- 10.2 The executive committee will organize at least 5/6 meetings in a year, however, if required more meetings can be convened.
- 10.3 The quorum of the executive committee meeting will be 6 elected members (simple majority of a total of 11 elected members) including at least 1 woman member.
- 10.4 The executive committee will actively participate in formulation of the micro plan
- 10.5 The EC shall examine the micro plan before sending them to the Deputy Conservator of Forest. If necessary, it will make amendments in these documents and present them for approval in the general meeting of the JFMC.
- 10.5 It will ensure that financial accounts are recorded and audited. It will get these records approved in the general meeting in a year and send approved copy to the related forest officer.
- 10.7 Resolve any disputes that may arise between its members by itself or with the help of the Panchayat, Forest department or NGO.
- 10.8 Perform other activities for the benefit and welfare of the members.

11. Dismissal of an Executive Committee Member

- 11.1 If a member is absent from 3 meetings consecutively, after giving due opportunity for explanation, and warning, the member may be removed.
- 11.2 If any member is caught committing a serious forest offence, the membership will be terminated immediately.
- 11.3

12. Conditions under which the Executive Committee may be dissolved.

- 12.1 If Executive Committee is found to be incapable of performing its responsibilities.
- 12.2 If some grave financial irregularity or misappropriation of funds reported.

- 12.3 There is violation of rules decided by the JFMC or activities done in contravention of government orders/guidelines.
- 12.4 Under the above mentioned circumstances, the Deputy Conservator of Forest can dissolve the Executive Committee of JFMC, if there is no improvement in their conduct even after issue of 2 notices from the local forest officer.
- 12.5 The Deputy Conservator of Forest will take the charge of such an Executive Committee through authorized representative.
- 12.6 The dissolved executive committee can make an appeal against the order for dissolution to the Conservator of Forest and his decision will be considered final and binding.
- 12.7 The decision of the Conservator of Forest should provide a provision for holding re-elections within a reasonable time-frame

13. Powers of the Executive Committee

- 13.1 Discharge all activities on the land assigned for development and protection in consultation with other as per technical requirement to fulfill the demand of forest produce and other ecosystem services.
- 13.2 Decide the procedure, rules and rates for collection/ extraction, distribution and sale of forest produce like grass, leaves, fruits, flowers, small branches etc from this land.
- 13.3 Protect the forest and tree plantation area as well as wild life according to the provisions of the existing acts/rules.
- 13.4 Make arrangement for preventing encroachment, illegal grazing, illicit lopping, theft, illegal mining and illicit extraction of forest produce from the said land.
- 13.5 Take action against any person found to harm the forests in any way, including charging fines from the offender and handing over the offender eventually to the related forest officer.
- 13.6 Make appropriate arrangement for grazing and drinking water for cattle.
- 13.7 Prepare estimates and arrange for necessary funds required to achieve the objectives of the JFMC.
- 13.8 Purchase the necessary materials and assets required for efficient working of the JFMC.
- 13.9 Arrange necessary funds required for expenditure from the forest department and other departments / organizations.
- 13.10 Receive loans, grants or gifts from any individual or organization for the fulfillment of the JFMC objectives.
- 13.11 Establish the designated fund required for accomplishment of JFMC's objectives and open as well as maintain a bank account for this fund. Maintain a separate fund for the JFMC's own income. Maintain necessary records for these accounts.
- 13.12 Make necessary agreements in the interest of the JFMC with any individual or organization.
- 13.13 Appoint any person to provide consultation for, and protection of the area and for other works. It can also give the appointed person honorarium or remuneration for this purpose.
- 13.14 Represent the JFMC in any legal case in which the JFMC is a party.
- 13.15 Make any necessary amendments in the future, in the by-laws created and decided, for the achievement of JFMC objectives. It will however be necessary to get these amendments approved in the forthcoming general meeting.

14. Powers and Responsibilities of the Office bearers

- 14.1 President/Vice President
 - The President will preside over the general assembly and executive committee meetings.
 - Will sign all documents and agreements on behalf of the JFMC.
 - Will interact with other departments, NGOs etc as a representative of the JFMC
 - Will act as a joint signatory on cheques, to withdraw money from the banks
 - In the absence of the President, the Vice-President will discharge all the above responsibilities.
- 14.2 Secretary
 - Will convene at least 2 general assembly and 4 executive committee meetings in a year.
 - Will record the minutes of these meetings and get them approved in the general assembly.
 - Will look after the general correspondence of the JFMC.
 - Will help the JFMC in designing the micro plan and coordinating with other departments.
 - Convene the meetings of the women sub-committee and present the resolutions passed by them for discussion in the Executive committee meetings.
 - Will act as a joint signatory on cheques, to withdraw money from the banks
 - Will complete any other work assigned by the forest department.

14.3 Treasurer

- Maintain the accounts of the JFMC and present them in the general assembly.
- Deposit the JFMC funds in the bank and incur expenditure as per the decisions of the executive committee.
- Will maintain the bank account according to government orders.

15. Powers and responsibilities of other stakeholders.

15.1 The Sarpanch and Wardpanch will coordinate between the JFMC and Gram Panchayat.

15.2 The local NGO will

- Coordinate between the Forest department and JFMC
- Provide support in preparing the plans
- Play the role of a mediator if a situation of any conflict arises.
- Disseminate information about government schemes to the general public.
- Inform the forest department about the problems being faced by people.

16. Women Sub-Committee

A separate women sub-committee will be formed under the JFMC. (**subject to the State Provision**). This sub-committee:-

- 16.1 Will be formed by at least 7 women from the village.
- 16.2 Will select its President from amongst its members.
- 16.3 Will discuss the problems being faced by women especially in relation to forests and will pass resolutions to be discussed in the executive committee meetings.
- 16.4 It will be the responsibility of the member secretary to convene the meetings of this sub-committee and record its proceedings.

17. Micro Plan

This is a document that will be prepared in consultation with the villagers, backward classes and women for the development of the area and management of the forest. The JFMC will work according to this document. It will contain

- 17.1 Sound silvicultural practices
- 17.2 Soil and Water Conservation methods
- 17.3 Conservation of bio-diversities
- 17.4 Use of forest produce-sharing methods
- 17.5 MOU Formats

18. Maintenance Fund

A maintenance fund will be established under the JFMC

- 18.1 This fund will be set up by the JFMC by means of contribution made by the members, villagers and labourers from their wages related to forest work, and also maintenance funds available from plantation projects (if any).
- 18.2 The amount for this voluntary contribution will be decided by the gram sabha. Once determined, it will be mandatory to collect this contribution.
- 18.3 This fund will be kept in the bank as a fixed deposit for the tenure of the scheme.
- 18.4 This fund will be used in the post scheme period for the maintenance of the assets developed under the scheme.

19. Distribution of Benefits

The income earned through the land under the JFMC by government order and area managed by the JFMC by itself will be distributed as follows:-

19.1 Non-wood Forest Produce

- The entire non-wood forest produce obtained according to the agreement with the forest department will be distributed amongst the members.
- Part of this income will be used for cultural operations if required
- JFMC will control lopping and grazing on areas that are ready for this purpose with or without payment of fees.

19.2 Distribution of benefits at the time of final extraction.

- The JFMC will derive its share according to the provisions made under the government order and as per MOU agreement after incurring expenditures on harvesting according to the government order.
- The JFMC will ensure equal/equitable distribution of income and produce obtained from the final extraction.
- Rights over bamboo harvesting and sale will be as per current rules and guidelines.

20. Agreement

- 20.1 The JFMC will sign an agreement/MoU with the Deputy Conservator of Forest from the Forest Department for conducting its activities according to the Micro Plan cum Management Plan. This agreement will signed by both the parties.
- 20.2 The MoU will outline the basis of conducting all future forestry activities.

20.3 The duration of the MOU will be specified in the MoU itself, but may vary from 5 to 20 years.

21. Amendments

If these Bye-laws made according to the government order, need to be modified time to time or there is a felt-need for new rules in bye-laws or removing certain rules, then the general assembly on request of the executive committee, can make the required changes if at least 60% members approve of it.

22. Pledge

After the Bye Laws approved unanimously or with the approval of the majority of community members, to have a sense of ownership of these Bye laws, village community may take a pledge in this effect as below and then as an agreement all members need to sign under this pledge:

“We the residents ofvillage,tehsil,.....dist.....state have constituted a JFMC named asJFMC notified by.....dt.....withsolemnly pledge that we will remain abide by this bye laws unanimously adopted by us for conservation, protection and development of the piece of forest land/community land assigned to us for management”.

(Signature of all JFMC Members)

Form 1: Formal Request for Formation of a JFMC

From:

-----,
-----,
-----.

(Identity and full address of Community/Institution)

To

The Divisional Forest Officer/ Dy.Conservator of Forests

_____.

Sub: Constitution of JFMC in Village_____ of Tehsil_____ in District_____.

Dear Sir/Madam,

We, the villagers of Village-----of Tehsil-----in District-----, understand from-----
-----about the Joint Forest Management program of the State Government. We intend to constitute/
reconstitute, a JFMC/EDC in our village for the development of forests/wildlife Protected Area under the
Government Resolution No.-----dated-----.

We request you to depute a suitable person of your Department who can guide us to constitute a committee
as per prevalent rules.

Yours faithfully,

The Prescribed Form to Keep Records of Committee Members

..... Forest Protection /Eco Development/JFM Committee

Village.....Tehsil.....Range.....

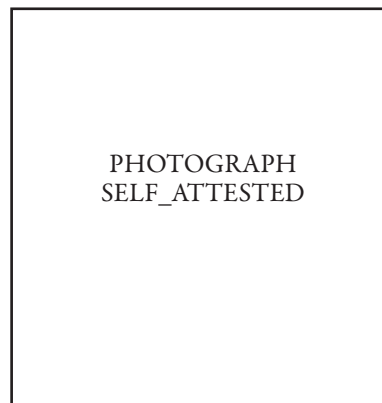
DivisionDistrict.....

S.N	Sl. No. of membership receipt (if any)	Date	Name of member / name of Father/ Spouse, Caste	Gender	Date of birth	Age	Profession	Signature	Specification
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.

Identification format for office bearers of Village Forest Management and Protection / Eco Development Committee

Identity card of office bearers of village Forest Management and Protection / Eco Development Committee

Card no..... date of issue.....
Name:
Designation:.....
Committee.....
Village.....
Range Forest Division.....
This Identify card valid till.....



Signature of DFO/DCF

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(Back Side of the Identity Card)

1. Identify card holder is elected office bearers of forest protection / eco development committee
2. Appropriate help should be made available to identity card holder for prevention of forest crimes in forest / plantation / conserved areas
3. Identity card would be cancelled in case of misuse
4. Identify card would be valid till the determined date
5. Information in case of a loss of card should be immediately made to the issuing authority
6. In case the card holder becomes ineligible during the period, the card will stand cancel automatically. In such a case it should be deposited to the office immediately.

Format for Registration Certificate of Committee

.....Forest Department

Registration Certificate

Registration Number _____

Date _____

It is stated that _____ JFM/ED/FP Committee of _____ village has been registered as per state order _____ dated _____ on _____ date of _____ (month) of _____ (year).

(Signature of DFO / DCF)

Seal

CONDITIONS TO BE WRITTEN ON THE BACK SIDE OF THE REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE

- This registration certificate is in compliance with section numberof Forest Act.....and JFM/EDC resolution of Govt. of thestate, dated.....
- This registered society is authorized to carry out forestry related activities in its area, in association with the state forest department.
- This registration certificate authorizes the committee to coordinate all administrative and financial activities in forestry related activities.
- This registration certificate has to be kept in the office of the President or the Secretary of the Committee.
- After this registration, the committee is responsible for checking of encroachment, illegal lopping, grazing, theft of forest produces and also protection from forest fires in its managed area.
- The registered society, will carry out activities like fodder cultivation, NTFP collection and afforestation, in compliance with the needs expressed by the member of the committee.
- If the committee fails to carry out its responsibilities properly, the DCF/DFO shall have the power to cancel the registration of the committee

(This Registration Certificate need to be in Printed Form, two copies of it will be kept in the DCF's Office and Range Office. It will be mandatory to provide information regarding registration to senior officials of the Forest Administration of the State as well as District Administration/Police Administration of the district with request to SP to provide Police assistance when needed by Committee to abate forest offence in the best interest of the Government)

Format for letter from DFO with information regarding registration of committee

From:
DCF,
.....

To
Conservator of Forests,
.....

S. No. _____ Date: _____

Subject: Regarding registration of JFMC/EDC of _____ village

Sir,

With reference to the above stated subject, it is to inform you that committee formed by villages of _____ village has been registered in this office with No. _____ dt. _____. This is in line with clause numbers of the State Resolution and u/s..... of State Forest Act.

The work area of the committee falls under the jurisdiction of _____ range, _____ beat and _____ police station.

DFO/DCF
Date:

Copy to, for information:

- Conservator of Forests (JFM), office of the PCCE,
- Chief conservator of Forests, _____
- Deputy Collector, _____
- Superintendent of Police
- _____ self help groups

DFO / DCF

Format of Receipt for Membership fees or any Other Income

.....forest protection / Eco Development Committee.....

Receipt number.....

date:.....

Received of Rs..... from Shri / Smt. / Km..... son/wife Shri.....
for membership fees / penalty / forest product sales.

Treasurer / member secretary

.....

* Committee must have at least one-third women members

Format for Information letter to Non-Government Organization

From:

.....
Ex-officio Member Secretary,
.....JFMC/EDS.

To
.....(Name of Ex-Officio member)
.....Address
.....

Serial No:

Date:

Sir/Madam,

We are glad to inform you that a JFMC/EDC has been formed in Village / Hamlet namedon (date) under Government Order..... and you have been selected as an ex-officio member in the Executive Committee of the same. As a part of the membership you shall/shall not have voting rights and you shall not be entitled to receive any share from the forest harvest.

We shall provide you information on the JFMC meeting dates and timings regularly so that you can provide your valuable guidance and support to the JFMC being present in the meeting. Your participation in this program will ensure the success of Joint Forest Management. We, therefore, request you to kindly accept the membership of this JFMC.

Thanking you.

Regards

Yours/
Member Secretary JFMC

Format for Proceedings Register

.....JFMC/EDC

Name of Beat..... Forest Division.....

Name of Range..... District.....

Date of Proceeding.....Time.....Venue.....

Agenda	Description of Discussion	Decision
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.

Signature
Member Secretary,

Signatures of Other Members
Present

Signature President

Stamp

Format for Proceeding Register of the Women Sub-Committee Meeting

Name of JFMC.....

Range.....

Name of Beat.....

Forest Division.....

Serial No.	Date, Day and Time of Meeting	Name of Members Present	Resolutions Passed	Action taken by EC of JFMC/EDC

Signature Member Secretary

Signature Joint Secretary

Signatures of Members Present in the Meeting

Signatures of President, Women Sub Committee

Frequently Asked Question On Sanction of Credit Facility to the SHG

1. In whose name is the loan issued?

The loan is always sanctioned and issued in the name of the group. (Not in the name of the individual members.)

2. What is the quantum of loan? How is the quantum decided?

The amount of loan to the SHG can be to the tune of 1 to 4 times of its savings.

3. What constitutes the savings of the group?

- The group's balance in the SB A/C
- Amount held as cash with the authorized persons
- Amount internally lent amongst the members
- Amount received as interest on the loans
- Any other contributions received by the group like grants, donation, etc.

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4. What are the purposes for which the loan can be given to the SHG?

Loan may be granted by the SHG for various purposes to its members. The bank does not decide the purposes for which the SHG gives loans to its members. The purpose can be emergency needs like illness in the family, marriage, etc. or buying of assets for income generation, acquisition of assets etc.. The group will discuss and decide about the purpose for which loans are to be given to its individual members by the SHG.

5. Who makes the repayment?

The SHG makes the repayment to the bank. (The group is collectively responsible for the repayment of the loan.)

6. What is the collateral security for the bank?

RBI/NABARD rules stipulate that no collateral security should be taken from SHGs by banks. Collateral security is not necessary for the loans sanctioned to SHGs because:

- The members of SHGs know that the bank loan is their own money like savings.
- They are aware that they are jointly responsible for the repayment.
- Therefore, they exert moral pressure on the borrowing members for repayment.
- Because of this, the bank gets a much better repayment from the SHGs.

7. Can the bank hold the SB A/C balance of the SHG as a security?

No. This will prevent the SHG from lending from its internal savings.

8. What is the rate of interest to be charged for the loans granted to SHG by the bank?

- The Reserve Bank of India has allowed the banks freedom to decide on the interest rates to be charged to the SHGs.

9. What is the rate of interest to be charged by the SHGs to its members?

- The rate of interest to be charged by the group to its members should be left to the group. This is usually 2 or 3 rupees per hundred rupees of loans.

10. List of documents required by banks for lending to SHGs

- Inter-se Agreement to be executed by all the members of the Self Help Group. (This is an agreement by the members with the bank, authorizing a minimum of three members to operate the group's account with the bank.)
- Application to be submitted by SHG to bank branch while applying for loan assistance. (This includes details of the purposes for which the SHG gives loan to its members.)
- Articles of Agreement for use by the bank while financing SHGs. (This contains the duly stamped agreement between the bank and the SHG wherein both the parties agree to abide by the terms and condition set thereon.)

(All the above formats are given as annexures).

The group members are collectively responsible for the repayment of loans to the bank. Under no circumstance, the SHG should allow any of its members to default to the bank.

Model Self-Help Group Bye-laws

1. The name of the group shall be -----

 2. The -----
----- (name of the group) shall be located
in village-----, Sub-division
-----, Division -----
----- Address of the group is -----

----- Pin code:

 3. The objectives of the -----
----- (name of the group) are:
 - To promote saving habit on a regular basis amongst the members;
 - To make available cash credit on easy terms primarily to expand/start IGAs and secondarily to meet urgent domestic needs;
 - To form a group which would be eligible for receiving benefits from other Government programmes, which are not available to individuals;
 - To provide a forum through which women's awareness related to Income Generating Activities (IGAs) such as group & money management, skills, IGA management, record keeping and viability analysis can be increased and other women's development activities can be pursued; and
 - To build leadership skills of the members so that they can manage the group in rotation.
 4. Membership
 - Persons between 18 and 55 years of age at the time of joining, who are:
 - Capable of physical labour required for an IGA.
 - Desirous of saving her/his money with -----
----- (name of the group).
 - Willing to take loan from the -----
----- (name of the group) for IGA.
 - And willing to start or expand an IGA with -----
----- (name of the group).
 - Not listed as defaulters in any of the banks
- (nationalized/co-operative etc.)
- Only a permanent resident of the village shall be eligible to become a member.
 - Not more than 2 members of a family shall be allowed to join a group.
 - The total number of the members shall not exceed 20, but a minimum of 10 members shall be observed.
5. Savings
 - Every member shall save Rs. ----- per month on ----- (date), on which all members will deposit their individual savings to the treasurer.
 - The ----- (name of the group) members shall decide the savings amount on a regular basis from time to time.
 - If a member does not pay her/his monthly saving money on decided date, s/he will be fined with Rs. ----- per ----- (e.g. per month/ week/day etc.)
 6. Management of the Group

There shall be a management committee consisting of three persons, viz. Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, who shall be elected by all the members and amongst the members for a period of ----- year/s. These office bearers can remain in office continuously for 3 terms or 3 years in case of 1-year tenure and 2 terms or 4 years in case of 2-year tenure. The three committee members must be from three different families. Two members of the same family should not get elected in the management committee. New committee members shall be elected unanimously.

The committee as a whole shall be responsible for strategic as well as day-to-day management of the group. It is preferable that Secretary and Treasurer can read and write. In groups where none of the members can read and write, it is expected that Link Workers will help the group in maintaining the records.

Individual responsibilities of the office bearers shall be the following:

Chairperson

- Preside over the regular meetings and any other meetings of -----
(name of the group);
- Sign or put thumb impression to approve the decisions and resolutions of the meetings;
- Call or postpone any special meeting;
- Solve any complaint with the help of other office bearers and members, if required;
- Check and co-ordinate the activities of Secretary, Treasurer and other members;
- Maintain liaison within and outside the -----
----- (name of the group) especially with bank, and other sources of help.

Secretary

- Call meetings with prior permission of the Chairperson and prepare agenda for every meeting;
- Maintain a record of the proceedings of all regular and special meetings and read them out at the next meeting;
- Write resolutions made at each meeting and read them out at the same meeting;
- The Secretary will maintain the following registers:
 - Membership register
 - Attendance register
 - Activity and resolution register
- Conduct all meetings and chair a meeting if the Chairperson is absent;
- Verify the books and accounts of the -----
----- (name of the group) regularly and report to the members in regular meetings.

Treasurer

- Preserve important papers and documents related to financial matters;
- Maintain all accounts of the -----
----- (name of the group), i.e.
 - Members' saving and loan passbook
 - Saving and loan ledger
 - Cash book
 - Bank loan book
- Deposit cash in the post office/Bank within 2 days of collection if cash is more than Rs. _____;

- Pay loan approved by the -----
-- (name of the group) to members and receive savings, repayment, Interest, etc;
- Conduct and preside over the meetings, if Chairperson and Secretary are absent);
- Present all financial reports of the group.

7. Meetings

- The group will meet ----- time/s every month. The dates of meeting/s are -----
----- . The Secretary of the group is supposed to give ----- days notice to the members about such meetings.
- All members shall have the right to attend and take part in discussions at periodic meetings of the ----- (name of the group) and Special Annual Meetings and offer suggestions from time to time for better management of the -----
----- (name of the group).
- To discuss an urgent and important issue the group will hold special meetings on a shorter notice.
- If a member does not attend -----
consecutive periodic meetings without any prior information, s/he will have to face penalty of Rs. ----- per meeting.

8. Managing the Money

- The loan limit for individual shall be decided by the Management Committee [Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer] in consultation with the members of the group as per the reason cited or nature of income generating activity. The amount will not exceed Rs. _____/- at a time for productive purpose. No loan can be extended only for consumptive purpose. If a member wants loan for consumptive purpose s/he will have club it with productive purpose.
- The interest rate shall be Rs. _____/- per month per Rs. 100/-.
- The loan repayment procedure shall be decided by all members of the ----- (name of the group). The repayment schedule must be written in the applicant's saving and loan passbook and the group's saving and loan register at the time when the loan is sanctioned.
- For a loan a written application addressed to the Chairperson of the ----- (name

of the group) will be considered during the periodic meetings of the ----- (name of the group).

- A loan shall be granted provided that:
 - ☞ The member has repaid any previous loan amount in full, along with interest.
 - ☞ The proposed loan purpose/income generating activity is viable.
 - ☞ The member is saving on a regular basis with the ----- (name of the group) for at least six months.
- A member applying for a loan worth more than her/his savings will have to produce two witnesses who have not taken any loan earlier from the group.
- The loan requests approved will be noted in the activity and resolution register.

9. All the income that accrues to the ----- (name of the group) from interest on savings, interest on loans, (including the emergency fund) plus returns from penalties and fees will be re-invested in the ----- (name of the group) fund.

10. Withdrawal of Membership

The group members should discuss in detail the procedure and terms of refund of money if a member proposes to leave the group.

11. Disqualification of a Member

A member may be disqualified by the ----- (name of the group).

The disqualification criteria are: _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

12. Maintaining Various Records

- Every member will be given a saving and loan passbook. It is the responsibility of the Treasurer to make all entries.
- Membership, Attendance, Activity and Resolution registers will be kept with the Secretary to register membership, proceedings, attendance and resolutions coming out of all meetings.

- Saving and loan register will be kept with the Treasurer at group level to maintain individual records of their savings and loans.
- Cash book and bank loan register with the Treasurer will facilitate up-to-date position of all income and expenditure, as well as bank loan received and repaid.

13. Managing the Bank Account

The ----- (name of the group) account shall be kept in the nearest Bank. Treasurer, Chairperson and Secretary (any two) shall have joint signatory power. All withdrawals shall be supported by a resolution of the ----- (name of the group).

14. Change in Bye-laws

The rules of the ----- (name of the group) or any part thereof can be amended by all the members present at a General Body Meeting convened for the purpose. To make any change it would be preferable that this change is supported unanimously or by at least 2/3rd of the total members.

15. Dissolving the Group

If at some point of time members with majority vote decide to dissolve the group, the members need to discuss the formalities and terms of group money distribution and group payables and receivables amongst themselves before the group can be dissolved. To dissolve the group it would be preferable that this proposal is supported unanimously or by at least 2/3rd of the total members.

Comparative Analysis of JFM Resolutions of Different States



1	2	3	4	5
States & resolution date	How JFM committees are formed	Constitution of Executive Committees	Women Involvement	Any monitoring Yardstick
Andhra Pradesh Resolution (41433/2010)/ PMU I/2, dated 11-10-2010	Vanasamraksha Samitee (VSS) is formed from for a village cluster situated within 5 Km from forest boundary if a minimum of 50 % of the households agree in writing in constitute a VSS; only forest officer of Forest Range officer level call for a meeting to constitute the VSS in the area	The managing committee have 15 elected members, the chairperson and vice chairperson is elected from the VSS representative , the forest Section officer convene the managing committee and oversee the election process; in schedule areas the management committee should be either from ST or SC; the tenure of the committee is for three years	Out of total 15 VSS representative 8 member should be women; the chair person/ vice chair person shall be woman/women; the forest selection Officer oversee the election process; during general body meeting minimum 50 % member should be present	Not Mentioned
Arunachal Pradesh (resolution dated 3rd October, 1997)	The management of the selected forests is entrusted on the VFMCs. The VFMCs constituted by one adult from each family in the village located adjacent to the JFM areas, 30 % are women , each VFMC is registered under Societies registration Act. The exofficio members are respectively Vice President of Zilla Parishad of the district, Vice President of Anchal Samities failing in the area, Range officer cocerned, one representative from local NGO. No exofficio members are entitled for any benefit.	Out of 8 members, 3 exofficio members are Vice president of Zilla Parishad & No range Officer shall continue as Meemember Secretary for more three years.	30% the committee members are women	Not Mentioned
Assam (Assam Joint Forestry Management rules 1998 nification dated 10th Nov 1998)	Forest Protection and Regeneration Committee to be constituted for the purpose of the regeneration, maintenance and protection of forest areas under continued degradation because of biotic interference. The area under the protection of such committees may usually be limited to 3 ha/beneficiary family for natural regeneration and one ha for incentive planning. Each Range Officer shall organise meeting with the villagers in presence of Gaon Panchayat and explains about the JFM in the meeting, if 50 % of the villagers agrees on the proposal the DFO constitute the Forest Protection & Regeneration Committees	The elected representative of the beneficiary is not more than 9 members, the concerned beat officer or any forest officer not below the rank of Forester deputed for the purpose become the member secretary of the committee.	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned

States & resolution date	Benefit Sharing Mechanisms	Conflict Resolution	Funds Flow	Record Keeping
Andhra Pradesh Resolution (41433/2010/PMU I/2, dated 11-10-2010)	Domestic requirement of the forest products is set aside and distributed among all the VSS members as per the norms evolved by the Managing Committee. The surplus quantity shall be disposed as decided by the managing committee, any expenditure incurred by the govt. on the harvesting and disposal is reimbursed to the govt, expenditure necessary to sustain the productivity of the forests as per the micro-plan is deposited in the VSS joint account, this amount shall not be less than 50 % of the net income, balance income is utilized as per decision taken by general body of VSS, 100 % net profit from the sale of bedi leaves, for offence cases apprehended and handed over by the VSS to the forest department, the VSS is entitled to a 50 % share of the compounding fees subject to condition that the forest produce seized is not from the VSS area and that no VSS member is involved in the forest offence	Not Mentioned	All disbursements shall be by the VSS Chair person (after the work is recorded, check measured and passes by nominated Forest Officials, Each VSS shall maintain a cash book and such case book is the primary cash book for accounting VSS related expenditure.	General body meeting should be held once in every six month; the mandate is 50 % member should present at the meeting and out of them 50 % should be women.
Arunachal Pradesh (resolution dated 3rd October, 1997)	All NTFPs, dead and fallen wood, small timber, fodder etc. for their bonafide domestic consumption free of cost, without causing any damage to the forests areas, the revenue accruing from timber operation at the time of silvicultural thinning & main fellings 50 % as govt. revenue, 25 % distributed among the members, 25 % deposited in the development fund., some other benefits like wage employment to as many as VFMC members if the forest reach a productive stage by the time.	Not Mentioned	No mention of fund flow in the resolution	Member secretary is responsible for proper maintenance of the records & accounts
Assam (Assam Joint Forestry Management rules 1998 nification dated 10th Nov 1998)	They are allowed to collect a) Minor Forest produce free of cost without causing any damage to the forest/ plantations, b) 25 % output from the silvicultural thinnings for the bonafied use of the beneficiaries, c) in case of surplus the forest department will sale the logs and deposit the amount in the Committees bank for the cause of common interest of the beneficiary.	Not Mentioned	A separate bank account	The committee maintains a minutes book for maintaining the records and the proceedings of the meeting of the executive committee

tates & resolution date	10 Any Special Innovative approach taken	11 SHG Linkage if any	12 Any new Resolution regarding FRA, GIM, CC Biodiversity Act etc.	13 Extension of JFM work if any
Andhra Pradesh Resolution (41433/2010/PMU I/2, dated 11-10-2010)	The forest areas under VSS is earmarked in consultation of VSS, Sarpanch of the village	Common Enterprise Groups (CEGs) are constituted in resource rich VSSs and they federate, Such CEGs and their federations undertake value addition and marketing of the forest produce	one Biodiversity management committee is formed to implement the act but they are not the appropriate group for forest management, the forest management is entrusted upon JFMCs/VSSs	CEGs implement Community Based Ecotourism in biodiversity rich areas, such federations are registered as societies/Producer companies
Arunachal Pradesh (resolution dated 3rd October, 1997)	Accounts audited once in every year, Executive Committee meets once in three months	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned
Assam (Assam Joint Forestry Management rules 1998 notification dated 10th Nov 1998)	The beat officer or the forester as member secretary shall convene the meeting of the executive committee once in every three months and once in every six months for the Forest Protection and regeneration Committee	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned	All staff of KFD and members of VSS is given adequate training on PFM, A PFM cell is also established for various forestry situations. It is headed by State level PFM Coordinator.

1	2	3	4	5
States & resolution date	How JFM committees are formed	Constitution of Executive Committees	Women Involvement	Any monitoring Yardstick
Himachal Pradesh (No. Fts. II (B) 15- 10/87 Dated 23.08.2001)	Application of Divisional Forest Officer for developing PFM is signed by at least 50 percent of the voters of a Gram Panchayat Ward for any Government forest and Government land including common land may be brought under participatory forest management. The area called selected area shall be managed jointly by the Society and the Department on the terms and conditions of an agreement to be entered between the Society and the Department.	President, Vice President, Four Members, Joint Secretary (woman), President - Mahila Mandal, Representative - Local women group to be elected by the General House; Treasurer to be nominated by the elected members from ward panchayat, Three Members to be co-opted from the village level committees constituted by other departments of the Government, societies registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860, (Act No. 21 of 1860), user groups, self help group and grazer group; Member- Secretary to be elected by the General House, provided that at least 7 members of the Executive Committee shall be from amongst the women. Joint Secretary shall assist the Member-Secretary.	Women is integral part of the executive committee,	Not Mentioned
Kerala (GO (MS)No. 9/2009/F& WLD dated 3/02/2009	The geographical areas (functional forest along with adjacent non forests) shall be a cluster of neighbouring mini watersheds in full or part, not more than 2 km from the edge of the forests shall be identified as the VSS (Van Samrakshan Samithi) forests. The process of PFM involves three phases viz., preparatory phase, planning phase and implementation & monitoring phase. <u>Preparatory phase</u> includes a) site identification, b) MOA & Bye-law drafting, c) VSS Registration, d) Opening of Core fund and Operational Fund Accounts; <u>Planning Phase</u> includes a) PRA, b) Microplan approval by VSS General Body, c) Microplan approval by Conservator of forests; <u>Implementation & Monitoring phase</u> includes a) MOU signing, b) release of credibility fund, c) annual action plan preparation, d) annual action plan Approval, e) Field Implementation followed by review & monitoring	Range officer convene the village community meeting on the appointed date for formation of the VSS after due publicity. Two member from each family would be the member, out of two one will be woman member; Membership of EC : 9 members, 3 from women, six from primary/ direct livelihood dependent on forests, secondary / indirect livelihood dependent, proportionate representation of SC/ST category. Ex-officio member are Gram Panchayat member, a nominee from Tribal Development.	out of 9 members 3 are women member (33%)	The DFO has power to dissolve the VSSEC after conducting due enquiry. Evaluation of the performance of PFM will be done by the Forest Department through an independent agency as and when it is required.
Madhya Pradesh (resolution no. F16/4/91/10-2) dated 22nd Oct, 2001	Forest Protection Committees in dense forest areas, village forest committees for degraded forest areas and ecodevelopment for the villages inside and within 5 km from the boundaries and national parks and sanctuaries to ensure the protection and conservation of wild life. Local forest staff organise meeting in the villages and appraise people about JFM, whoever voluntarily agreed to protect the forests then become member of the forest committee which is formed by convening meeting of gram sabha under section 6 of Panchayat Raj and Gram Swaraj Adhinyam, 1993.	Executive committee consisting of min 11 and max 21 members. The chairperson, vice chair person are the ex-officio members, executive committee has members including SC, ST and backward classes in proportion to the population of the gram sabha of the village, min 2 member from landless families, out of which one representative from SHG if working in the village, one beneficiary from Rajiv Gandhi water mission project, the forest beat officer or the forest incharge of the concerned forest are the ex-officio secretary, a member of the committee interested in forests & environment conservation and is 8th std pass will be made the Asst Secretary, after taining for two years from the secretary he will take the responsibility of secretary. except the Exofficio member the other member term is for five years.	Minimum 33 % member is women in which one member of the SHG if working in the village is compulsory	not mentioned

States & resolution date	6	7	8	9
	Benefit Sharing Mechanisms	Conflict Resolution	Funds Flow	Record Keeping
Himachal Pradesh (No. Fts. II (B) 15- 10/87 Dated 23.08.2001)	to collect the yield such as fallen twigs, branches, loppings, grass, fruits, flowers, seeds, leaf fodder and non timber forest products free of cost; to the sale proceeds of all intermediate harvest, subject to protection of forest and plantations for at least 3 years from the date of agreement; promote vocational activities related to forest produce and land; and other activities such as self help groups which may provide direct benefits, including micro-lending to women. None of the activities so promoted shall affect the legal status of the forest land; after 20 years from the date of agreement and, based on the principles of sustained forest management, 75 percent of the net sale proceeds from the selected area shall be put into the account of Society and the remaining 25 percent of the net sale proceeds shall go to the concerned Gram Panchayat; and to utilize at least 40 percent of the net sale proceeds on forest regeneration activities including soil and water conservation.	In case of any dispute in relation to usufruct sharing in the Society, the Deputy Ranger concerned of the Department, shall take steps to reconcile the dispute. In case the dispute is not resolved, the Deputy Ranger shall refer the dispute, along with his report to the Range Officer concerned of the Department. The Range Officer, after hearing the parties, shall resolve the dispute within 30 days from the date of receipt of report of the Deputy Ranger	Funds shall be generated by the Society through contributions by members and the sale of usufructs under these regulations. All funds, including those received from the Government, Gram Panchayats and non-government sources, shall be utilized through the micro-planning process.	Not Mentioned
Kerala (GO (MS) No. 9/2009/F& WLD dated 3/02/2009)	On satisfactory achievements of the aims of the VSS the following benefits are shared with the KFD: a) specified quantities & items of NTFP from PFM areas as per the microplan, b) specified quantities of fodder, fuelwood, green manure for bonafied use as per the micro plan, c) specified quantities of bamboo and reeds for bonafied use, d) VSS is entitled to 10 % of the net revenue of the harvested forest produce, 100 % of the net revenue from NTFPs which is credited to the VSS core fund, 75 % of this is used for village development and 25 % as reserve fund for Sustainable Forest Management	No	VSS operational fund is the fund received as an advance from the funding agency to carry out forest development and protection activities would be funded through this fund as per the micro plan	Minutes book is maintained
Madhya Pradesh (resolution no. F16/4/91/10-2) dated 22nd Oct, 2001	All families are entitled to a) royalty free nistar every year, subject to availability after deduction of harvesting cost, b) 100 % share of the produce obtained from thinning of timber coupes and clearing of clumps in degraded bamboo forests executed on the basis of provision of micro plan, c) 10 % value of forest produce obtained from final timber, 20 % from final felling of bamboo, after deduction of corresponding harvesting cost. In case of eco development committee where felling is ban they get the equivalent value of the adjacent protected areas in addition to nistar requirements. From the amount received from felling 50 % distributed among the members, 30 % for village resource development and 20 % on forest development. Rights of the minor forest produce as per the order of Govt. of MP.	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned	record of the meeting kept properly

States & resolution date	10 Any Special Innovative approach taken	11 SHG Linkage if any	12 Any new Resolution regarding FRA, GIM, CC Biodiversity Act etc.	13 Extension of JFM work if any
Himachal Pradesh (No. Fts. II (B) 15- 10/87 Dated 23.08.2001)	For holistic forest management and development of the selected area, by the Society, the micro plan is prepared with the help of the Department. A micro-plan shall be operative for a period of five years from the date of its approval by the Divisional Forest Officer and may be revised after three years. The micro-plan shall be passed in the general house with at least 60 percent majority of the members present. (2) The Divisional Forest Officer may approve whole or part of the micro-plan.	There is link, SHGs gets fund from forest department through net sale of forest products	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
Kerala (GO (MS) No. 9/2009/F&WLD dated 3/02/2009	VSS EC meets once in every month, if any member of the VSS is accused in a forest offence or acts against the approved micro plan, he shall be debarred from VSS by the VSSEC	No	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned
Madhya Pradesh (resolution no. F16/4/91/10-2) dated 22nd Oct, 2001	Not mentioned	Not direct link, but SHG members are all the member of the executive committee.	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned

1	2	3	4	5
States & resolution date	How JFM committees are formed	Constitution of Executive Committees	Women Involvement	Any monitoring Yardstick
Meghalaya Resolution dated Oct 2, 2003	JFMC formed from the good forest areas for protection and conservation of forests.	Chairperson : Conservator of forests concerned; Member Secretary: DFO (division concerned); Members : DFO other two to three wings, district level officers of other Govt. departments concerned, one representative of autonomous district council body representing JFMCs and villages not < 3 , not > 10, a representative of the clan whose land is used for FDA project. The EC also have a post of Vice president	Between 3-10 JFMC members adequate representation of women should be there	Not mentioned
Sikkim (22-8/2000 JFM)	Village Forest protection committee became JFM committee JFM committee could be formed for good forest areas (except the protected area network) with crown density 40 % and above		33 % of total member should be women	FDA is the administrative, supervisory and the monitoring body for the actual implementation of the various centrally sponsored scheme fully involving JFM committees; concurrent monitoring and evaluation of the programme should be planned at intervals of 3 years and 5 years at the Division and State level respectively
West Bengal Resolution dated 3/10/2008	The Divisional forest officer in consultation with "Ban-o- Bhumi Samskar Sthayee Samitee of concerned Panchayat select the beneficiary for JFM	Karmadhakshya,Pradhan, 3 members including one woman and one tribal, Forest Beat Officer as member Secretary, One head Forest Guard as member. The members of the EC select the President for each meeting. The EC committee is constituted for one year only.	One woman member in executive committee. The wife of the members by default become the member of the JFMCs	Not mentioned
Rajasthan F7(39) Forest/90 dater 17th October 2000	All the adult persons living under the jurisdiction of the revenue area of the village or cluster of villages or chalks and hamlets for which the JFMCs will be formed, the range forest officer will prepare a list of the members in consultation with the ground panchayat or NGOs in which at least 33 % members will be women. The range forest officer will call a meeting for formation of JFMC. Atleast 40 % members should be present in the meeting and by taking their concern the JFMC will form. DFO will do the registration after going through the document within three months after getting the letter from RFO. DFO will monitor time to time and he has the authority of rejection of the membership and inclusion of new members.	VFFPMC will be constituted 11 members of which one will be the chair person, one vice chair person, one treasurer, out of these three key posts, one has to be from the women category. Besides them, the sarpanch/ ward panch will be ex-officio member with voting right. Forester/ forest guard of the area will be ex officio secretary of the committee but will not have any voting right. The chair person of the women sub-committee will be exofficio member with voting rights. There will be representation of SC & ST if they constitute more than 10 % population of the village/area. Minimum 3 women will be elected in the executive committee. In the election of the executive committee member, the range officer will work as a returning officer. One member of the local NGO will be in the executive committee but without voting rights. Efforts will be made to a suitable member as a member secretary during re-organization of the committee.	While constituting a JFMC/VFFPMC a sub-committee of only women members will be constituted by the RFO. In this sub-committee there will be 7 women member, later they will elect one of them as a chair person. Forest guard/ Forester ensures the meeting, he will be the member secretary of the sub committee also. The views and decision of the member of the women sub committee will have to be put before the main executive committee.	Not mentioned in the guidelines

	6	7	8	9
States & resolution date	Benefit Sharing Mechanisms	Conflict Resolution	Funds Flow	Record Keeping
Meghalaya Resolution dated Oct 2, 2003	Benefit Sharing Mechanisms is similar to the other states. But less clear from the guidelines.	Not Mentioned	FDA is authorized to receive directly the grant -in -aid/ central assistance from the MOEF/ Govt. of Meghalaya / other sources & utilize such funds for execution of approved projects	To keep proper account the Member Secretary is responsible for opening the bank account. The books of account and other statutory books shall be kept at the register office and shall open time to time or inspection
Sikkim (22-8/2000 JFM)	After satisfactory protection of forests for 10 years , committees are eligible for sharing of 20 % of the revenue from the final harvest	FDA has the duty to monitor the implementation of JFM and also resolve the conflict if raised.	Through FDA all funds are percolating to JFM committee, FDA maintains a separate bank account	Not mentioned in the guidelines
West Bengal Resolution dated 3/10/2008	25 % of the net sale proceeds	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned	EC maintain a Minute Book for record keeping for all the meetings held during the year as well as the Annual General Meeting
Rajasthan F7(39) Forest/90 dater 17th October 2000	All Non Timber Forest Produce except Tendu pata and gums can be extracted free of cost., they can take out grass, seeds etc. from the forests, but if VFPMC wants they can charge a token money with the general consensus then it will be taken as a income of the committee. Lopping and grazing will be allowed in older plantation areas taking some token money which will go to the committee, if such provision is approved in the management plan. 50 % of the income from sale of logs will go to the committee and 50 % to the government after the final harvesting. Except bamboo all the timber of the girth of 20 cm, all the branches etc. will be equally divided to the members. More than 20 cm girth of timber and the bamboo will be sold through auction and the money will be divided between the committee and the govt with equal percentage. If the plantation done privately in the forest land, then 90 % will go to the committee and 10 % to the govt. Out of the 90 %, 70 % will be with committee and 30 % will go to the plantation. If it is a natural forest then after maturity 80 % will go to the department and 20 % to the committees.	if there is conflict between the members or two sects of the villages then it will be resolved by NGO of Forest department, the majority decision taken by the executive committee will be final. If the committee and the panchayat has some conflict then RFO will resolve, if they are not satisfied then DFO will resolve.	Money transfer from FD. There are three accounts : one general account, project funds which they get and they have a separate maintenance funds	Duties of all the person have been given in the resolution, all meetings of the EC will be chaired by the member secretary, member secretary documents all meeting minutes. All the general correspondences will be done under the signature of the member secretary.

	10	11	12	13
States & resolution date	Any Special Innovative approach taken	SHG Linkage if any	Any new Resolution regarding FRA, GIM, CC Biodiversity Act etc.	Extension of JFM work if any
Meghalaya Resolution dated Oct 2, 2003	The general body meets once in a year and the executive body once in three months. FDA are authorized to open bank account in Nationalised bank,	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned
Sikkim (22-8/2000 JFM)	The general body meets once in a year ; It is mandatory to register FDA under Societies Registration Act	Not Mentioned	Till that time these resolutions didn't come	Not Mentioned
West Bengal Resolution dated 3/10/2008	EC meets at least once in every two months to discuss about issues of ongoing forestry activities, preparation and implementation of microplan and other emergent works.	Not Mentioned	JFM Resolution taken in 1996 and revised in 2008. they also have taken resolution seperately for Noth Bengal, Western part of West Bengal and Darjeeling hills region	Not Mentioned
Rajasthan F7(39) Forest/90 dater 17th October 2000	Money transfer from FD. There are three accounts : one general acc, project funds which they get from projects, maintenance funds: is an innovative approach. Women sub committee is unique in Rajasthan	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned	Not Mentioned

Case Study on Choukoni Vanpanchayat, Ranikhet, Uttarakhand



1.0 Introduction

Choukoni, a revenue village on National Highway No. 6 and located in Tarikhet block of Almora district, falls under Soil Conservation division of Gagas forest division. The area of the village is 186 ha, which has an average elevation of 1500 m from MSL. River Gagas is flowing from the North West corner of the village. The nearby villages are Kallona, Maina, Makru and Gudolla. The average maximum temperature is 36°C in the summer months and average minimum temperature is 7°C in winter. The monsoon season lasts for three months mainly from July to September. Almost 70% of the total rainfall is received during the monsoon while the village gets snowfall in the winter months, mainly in December, January and February. The weather remains pleasant in the rest of the months.

1.1 History of the village:

The village Choukoni came into being when one family from Jana village came and settled there and four brothers of the same family followed and settled in the four corners of the village - the name Choukoni was given from four corners of the village. Some more families who settled there and currently there are 100 families in the village.

1.2 Establishment of Van Panchayat:

Van Panchayat of Choukoni was constituted under the Joint Forest Management scheme in 1999. Presently there are nine VP members headed by Shri Chandan Singh as Sarpanch. The Van Panchayat is working in close association with the local forest division and has made several tangible differences at the ground level and aspires to do more work to make it sustainable and economically viable in the coming days.



Choukoni village Primary

1.3 Reason for selection of case study:

The VP of Choukoni was selected after consultation with the forest department and mainly because of the following reasons.



Map of Ranikhet

- ▶ VP is doing good work since it was formed along with forest department
- ▶ It is formed under JFM scheme and is comparatively new VP in Kumayon region which is working for the last fourteen years.
- ▶ Van Suraksha Samitee is very active and has been protecting the forests around the village since long time even before the VP was formed
- ▶ The forest area under the VP is well demarcated



Demarcation of VP forest inside Protected forests

2.0 General feature:

2.1 Physical feature:

The village is located in the Almora district of Ranikhet sub division. It is connected by metalled road from Ranikhet and is only 9 km away from the Block Head Quarters.

The village is surrounded by VP forests on several sides. The total area of the forest under control of the VP

is 119 ha. The predominating species of the VP forest is Silver Oak (*Grevillea robusta*). There is also a patch of Chir pine forest (*Pinus roxburgii*) in the VP area covering about 50 ha of land. The other tree species which are available in the VP forests are Shisam (*Dalbergia shisoo*), Koiral, Aeonla (*Emblica officinalis*), Acacia molesima, Shirish (*Albizia lebbek*), Deodar, Suraj and Bay leaf. The horticultural species available in the forests are lemon, apricot, peaches, pomegranate, pear, and mango and the fodder tree species available here are *bhimal*, *koiral* and *kharik*. A patch of reserve forest is lying on the eastern side of the VP area.



Village Map of Choukoni

The village has a revenue area of 67.52 ha, out of which 5.52 ha is irrigated land and the rest is non-irrigated.

Choukoni has relatively well developed infrastructure drawing electricity from the grid line and also has installed solar plates in some places provided by the Block level. The majority of the houses in the village are *pacca*. The village has a primary school, a nursery school cum *angan bari*, a junior high school, a post office, a veterinary, a public school, drinking water facility. The other source of drinking water is from natural springs (*srots*) though the natural springs dry up during summer.



Village meeting with Van Panchayat Sarpanch, village youth, Forest guard and the Range Officer

2.2 Social-Economic feature:

The total population of Choukoni is 587 as per the census of 2011 consisting of 100 households while in 2005 the total number of households were 91, out of which 12 were SC& ST, 5 were Christian and rest 74 were thakur falling under the general category (Micro Plan 2011-2012).

Distribution of families on the basis of Economic condition (Micro Plan 2011-2012):

Families	Economic condition	Income per annum in INR	Land holding pattern
5	Rich	>200,000	½ to 1 ha
18	Middle class	50,000-200,000	¼ ha
68	Lower class/BPL class	<50,000	1-2 I

Main livelihood Activity: The main livelihood of the villagers is agriculture and agriculture labour though the dependency on agriculture is getting reduced day by day due to the increase in number of families in the village and decrease in availability of agricultural land. Migration is a common phenomenon where the village youth is travelling and relocating in the nearby towns and cities in search of livelihoods. Almost one or two members from each family had migrated to Haldwani, Dehdarun, Delhi or other cities in search of livelihood opportunities. The other professions of the villagers are cattle rearing, driving tourist car/ bus, and small businesses.



Village Profile

The percentage of family profession is as follows:

Family Profession	Percentage
Service	60 %
Business	4 %
Cattle Rearing	10 %
Agriculture	26 %

The women are very active in the village taking care of both the household activities and the agricultural activities while the men folk earn as agricultural labourer, driver and construction labourer. As per the micro plan the service provided by the men and women are as follows:

Service provider	Percentage
Men	48 %
Women	52 %

Cattle Population: The domestic cattle population of the village is 583 out of which there are 142 cows, 116 calves, 80 buffaloes and 245 goats. The estimated fodder required for the total domestic cattle population is 400 Metric ton, out of which approximately 150 metric ton are sourced from forests and the *gram-sabha* land in the form of leaf litter and grass while the rest is sourced from the agriculture wastes.

Fuel wood requirement: The total requirement of fuel wood in a year for the whole village is about 425 metric tons. During summer and monsoon months, the scarcity of the fuel wood is witnessed. The average daily requirement of the fuel wood is about 10 to 25 Kg per household depending upon the number of members. In addition to the fuel wood they use kerosene and LPG as fuel. The tree species which are mainly used as fuel wood are *chir*, *banj Oak*, *kafal*, *bitan*, *kharaiik* and *bhimal* out of which *chir* is the preferred species due to its inflammable properties.

Agricultural Crops: The main agricultural crops are paddy, wheat, maize, pulses, potato and beans. Other crops that are commonly grown are peas, radish, barley, chillies, cabbage, tomato, cucumber, gaur etc.

Dependency on Forests: The main dependency on forests is for fuel wood and fodder. A family of five members on an average consumes 8 kg per day fuel wood in summer and about 20-25 kg per day during winter months since fuel wood is also required for heating purposes during winter. Though the increased availability of LPG gases in the village had considerably reduced the demand of fuel wood and the average requirement has come down to 10 kg/day/family throughout the year. The pine fruits and cones collected from forest areas are used as fuel by the villagers. The leaves of the *chir* pine trees are collected in huge quantities by the villagers and are supplied to the factories for briquetting, which is an income generating exercise for the villagers. Although normally any VP receives royalty from collection of resins from the *chir* pine forests, Choukoni VP is yet to receive this since the pine forest in this area is relatively young and is yet to be ready for extracting resins on a commercial scale.

3.0 History of Forest management in the area

The Choukoni VP was formed in 1999 under JFM scheme from the Forest Department. It consists of 119 ha of land carved out from the protected forest area. Although it is formed under the JFM scheme, it still follows the Van Panchayat *niyamabali* for managing the forests under its custody.

The association of villagers with forests dates long back even before the formal formation of Van Panchayat. The villagers were the main guardian of the forest by protecting it from fire. The main problem of the area is frequent fire in the *chir* pine forests since pine is a highly inflammable species. Due to the high oil content in the leaf the fire catches very fast which sometime grow into a big fire. Therefore, it is very important to put out the fire immediately. Generally it is the villagers who reach the spot of forest fire even before the forest officials and start controlling it. At times some fire incidences are not even reported to the forest department and are controlled locally. Looking at their interest and relentless efforts of protecting the *chir* pine forests, forest department proposed for formation of Van Panchayat in 1999. They took the offer and became associated with the forest department formally for managing and protecting the forests by creating the VP.



Van Panchayat Forest of Choukoni

3.1 Structure of the Management Committee:

The total member of the management committee is 9, out of them 3 are women and 4 are from SC and ST categories.

3.2 Rules of the Van Panchayat forest management:

The management committee has the status of a forest officer and can exercise the following powers for the area controlled by them:

- ▶ To control forest offences, the village panchayat can impose a fine up to a sum of Rs. 500/- for each offence committed depending on the nature of offence.
- ▶ The management committee may realise the full market value of the property involved in the offence as assessed by the forest officer (not below the rank of the DFO) at the prescribed scheduled rate in addition

to the fine from the offender

- ▶ They also regulate the grazing and admission of the cattle inside the village forest/ panchayat forest areas
- ▶ They make the local sale of the forest produce without detriment to the forest and issue permits and charge fees for grazing and cutting grass or collection of fallen fuel wood after getting permission from the Divisional Forest Officers if necessary, provided further that the permission of the DFO is not necessary for allowing grazing, or cutting of grass or collection of fallen fuel wood as per the Uttaranchal Panchayati Forest Rules, 2005



Forest fire in Chir pine forests near the village

- ▶ They can extract and sale resin in accordance to the provision of the Uttar Pradesh Resin and other Forest Produce (Regulation of Trade) Act 1976 as applicable to Uttaranchal

3.3 Duties of the forest management committee:

The duties of the forest management committee of the Van-panchayat forest are as follows:

- ▶ To prepare a five year micro plan and annual implementation plan for the VP forest area and submit it to the Forest Range officer and Sub divisional Forest Officer for approval and sanction
- ▶ To protect trees from damage and to use only those trees which have been marked silvi-culturally for felling by the divisional forest officer
- ▶ To ensure that no land of VP forest is encroached
- ▶ To fix boundary pillar, to make boundary walls and to protect it
- ▶ To protect the forest from illicit felling of trees, lopping, fire and other damages and conserve them
- ▶ To ensure that the catchment areas of water sources are adequately wooded with appropriate tree and vegetation to maximise the rain water conservation

- ▶ To promote natural regeneration through management of forest fire and controlled grazing at least one fifth area annually by rotation.
- ▶ Sometimes a particular VP management committee take some decision for the sake of the improvement of the forest areas in their VP forests and the other villagers abide by the laws they made. For this they take the minutes of the meeting, frame rules and regulations and inform the villagers, who are supposed to follow the same. Generally they frame rules like closing VP area for grazing during the monsoon and open it in the winter.

3.4 Revenue generated from the VP forest areas:

For each VP forest there is a fund created and an account in the bank is maintained. The income comes from the following sources:

- ▶ The sale proceeds of forest produce
- ▶ Government grants
- ▶ Any other source of revenue

The signatory of the bank account is the Sarpanch. In case of the government funds are utilized, the forest department become the joint signatory of the account along with the sarpanch.

3.5 Meetings of the Management committee:

In general the members of the management committee are supposed to meet once in every month, which is not followed due to lack of issues. However, it becomes mandatory when any issue regarding forest management emerge or any funding comes from any department for implementing any project. Minute book is maintained for each meetings and these minutes book, member register and the pass book is checked by the Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) from time to time. Voting for the VP Sarpanch and the election of management committee member is also conducted by the SDM.

3.6. Work performed under the Van Panchayat till date

The following works have been done by the Van Panchayat of Choukoni so far:

- ▶ In 1999, plantation of mixed species have been done in 75 ha of land by Forest Department where the villagers have contributed by providing labour for digging, planting, fencing, management and protection of the plantation
- ▶ During 2011-12 the following work has been done from CAMPA funding :
 - 2 animal shelters for the shepherds' have been constructed inside the forests

- 3 water tanks have been constructed for the animals inside the forests
- 1 drinking water tank has been constructed for drinking water facility in the village
- Chairs have been bought for the community purposes

3.6 Problem faced by the communities:

The VP is running efficiently and the Sarpanch is continuing since 2006. Though they are yet to receive royalty from the Chir pine forests since the forest is relatively young, they generate income by selling grass, which help them to cover the salary of the guard. However, availability of fund remains a big problem and constricts regular activities. The other main problem is the non-availability of water. Only 8 % of the agricultural land is having irrigation facility while the rest is non-irrigated land. It compels the villagers to grow only one crop in these lands annually.

4.0 Vision of the Sarpanch for holistic development of the VP area

Chandan Singh was elected as Sarpanch of Choukoni village since 2006 and he is still continuing. By profession he is a farmer. Under his leadership the villagers have been protecting the forests for long time. Though he has done limited work under FD and CAMPA funding but he has lot of ideas and vision for the holistic development of the village as well as the VP forest area. The concerned Range officer is also very active and has developed a detailed micro plan for the village. The ideas which could be implemented in the village as per the Sarpanch is as follows:

- ▶ Irrigation facility could be available in the village by pumping water from river Gagas, which is 1.5 Km away. This could solve lot of problem of livelihoods in the area
- ▶ Migration in search of livelihoods needs to be checked by implementing some good schemes in the village.



5.0 Analysis of the Study:

From the interaction with the Sarpanch, the range Forest officer, the local youth and the members of the VP committee, it has been revealed that the following initiatives needs to be taken by the VP Sarpanch for holistic development of the Van Panchayat.

- ▶ The potential work suggested by the Sarpanch like establishing irrigation facility from river Gagas should be implemented through different government schemes like JFM/ CAMPA, MGNREGA or Rural Development Schemes.
- ▶ Before implementing any scheme, it is important to chalk out a detailed village development plan looking at the need of the communities and the potentiality of the VP forest area. It is important to take a bottom up participatory approach rather than top down approach. In some villages (not in Choukuni) it has been observed that some developmental work has already been done but did not work out well due to the lack of awareness among the communities, lack of skills and trainings of the communities, lack of unity amongst the communities and above all selfish motive of the leader.
- ▶ It has also been observed that Van Panchayat remain dysfunctional unless there are any implementation of any schemes and the meetings also become routine in nature. Hence the purpose become limited and loses its relevance. Therefore, a bottom up approach is required for preparing schemes with the help of forest department who in turn should explore for funding and implementing agencies.
- ▶ The village youth can be motivated to take up floriculture, planting medicinal plants, bee keeping in the Van Panchayat land by forming cooperative and giving the Van Panchayat royalty. Efforts should be made by the forest department through local NGOs for creating market linkage for these produce in Haldwani and Delhi. This could check the migration of the local youth in search of odd jobs to nearby towns and cities.
- ▶ Plantation of Bay leaf and fruit orchard like mango and aonla (*Embllica officinalis*) could be done in the VP areas which have good market value and efforts to be made for creating market linkages. Fish farming in the tanks already formed or exist can be a potential use of VP areas and also revenue generator.

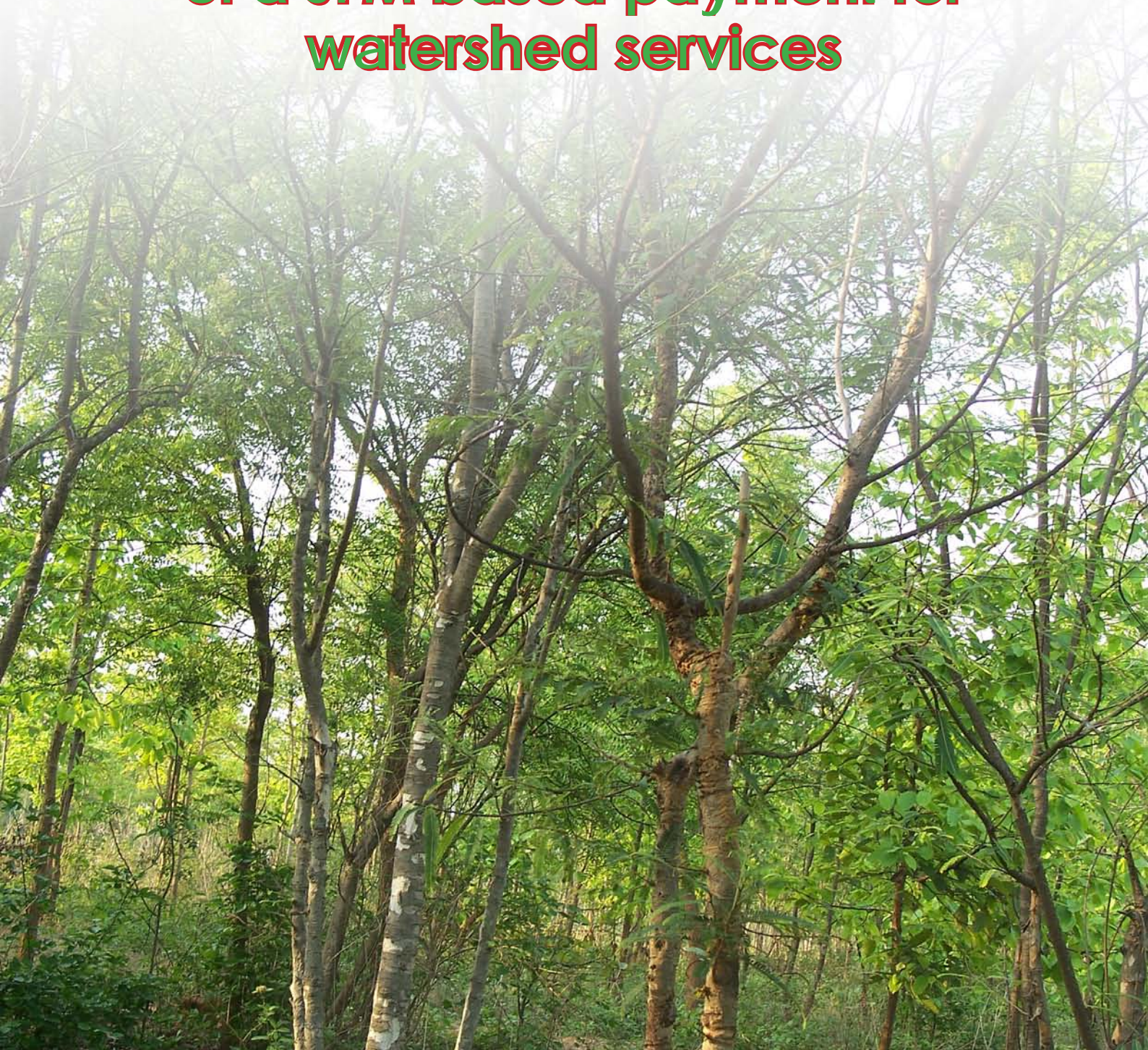
Availability of water is the main problem in the village, Irrigation facility could be set up from river Gagas which is 1.5 km away from the village agriculture land.

- Mr. Chandan Singh, Sarpanch, Choukoni VP

- ▶ It has been observed that the land of Van Panchayat is primarily used for fodder and firewood collection and Chirpine plantation. The Chirpine plantation, being very young, will start providing revenues by royalty on resins after another thirty years. However, efforts should be made to utilize the land for plantation of other less duration species on commercial basis, which can be a revenue generator immediately.
- ▶ Skill development training programmes for both the ladies and the youth needs to be organised in the village. It is also important to ensure proper guidance for them to start their own enterprise in the village itself.

Above all, a holistic planning and political will is required for the overall development. This village could be projected as a model village if some of the above initiatives could be implemented in the area.

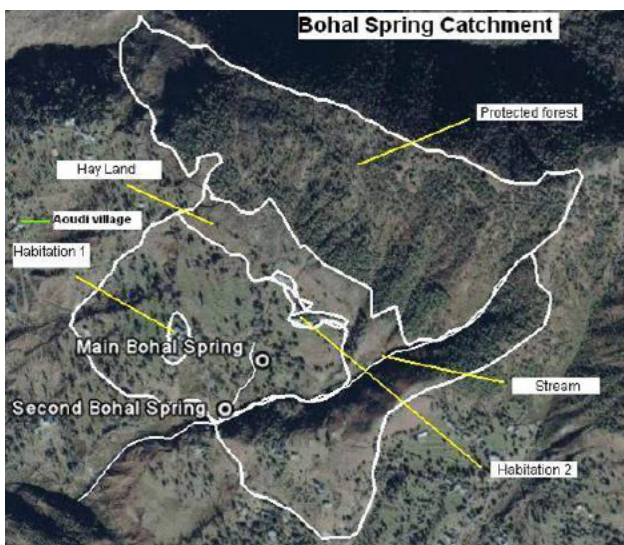
**Case Study on Bohal village
and Palampur Municipal
Council spring recharge zone
management agreement: Linking
JFM and hydrology - an example
of a JFM based payment for
watershed services**



1.0 Introduction

In October 2010, the Palampur Municipal Council, in district Kangra, HP, signed a 20 year Payment for Ecosystem Services agreement with the Bohal Village Forest Development Society (VFDS). In return for a small annual payment, the Bohal VFDS agreed to control local subsistence use (lopping and grazing) and protect a forest area of about 20 ha, which had been identified as a recharge zone for a spring in Bohal village, that supplies drinking water to the Palampur Municipal Council area.

This case study explores the role of the Forest Department and other agencies in setting up and supporting autonomous Joint Forest Management institutions and devising management plans that attempt to balance local subsistence biomass needs with off-site watershed ecosystem services. The case-study highlights how the Participatory Forest Management (PFM) Rules of Himachal Pradesh were used to create space for a PES agreement at the divisional level in Palampur Forest Division. It discusses the steps taken to facilitate the Payment for Ecosystem Services agreement, and its subsequent implementation, and the relevance of such steps in a broader context of downstream and upstream stakeholders are coming together in the face of declining water supplies including from forest areas.



2.0 National and state context – managing forests for water

Springs and local streams play an important role in the provision of drinking water in hill regions. The discharge in springs and streams is reducing and becoming seasonal due to a combination of climatic and local factors. The hydrology of springs is complex and understudied in Himalayan regions. There is a general perception that forests in the upstream play an important role in providing sustained flows of water. However in practice, ‘managing

forests for water’ requires balancing local subsistence demands with the hydrological services as well as other ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration. Local adaptive experiments that attempt this balancing act are few. Examples include the following:

- ▶ Shimla catchment Municipal forest (HP). Perhaps the best known early example of managing forests for water - about 1000 ha of forest area was first leased and then acquired in the 1890s-1900s, and essentially locked up as it was the source of about 20 odd springs and streams that were tapped for Shimla’s original water supply.
- ▶ The Uhl river Shanan hydro project in Kangra district (HP) was accompanied by the purchase of grazing rights of sheep and goat in its catchment, with the objective of reducing grazing and therefore erosion levels in the catchment of the hydro-project.
- ▶ The Reserve Forest, above Dharamshala town, district Kangra (HP) was the source of springs for water supply and local for fuelwood collection and grazing etc were acquired in an unusual move, apparently for spring protection.
- ▶ Almora town considered supplying subsidized fuelwood to its residents, to reduce the pressure on upstream forests identified as spring catchments in the 1930s-40s.
- ▶ The Kangra Forests Cooperative Societies were set up in the 1940s in Kangra district to incentivize local communities to benefit from and manage forests locally and also reduce soil erosion for the region as a whole.
- ▶ The Hill Resource Management Societies (HRMS) started from the Sukhomajari experiment (in Haryana) also attempted to moderate grazing pressures to reduce erosion and compensate locals by giving them a stake in the tree and bhabbar grass sales and also broad-basing water rights from tanks.
- ▶ Sacred groves in forest communities are often linked to springs, thus suggesting they are a local adaptive technique for micro-zoning.
- ▶ The state of Sikkim has started a large scale spring monitoring and spring catchment protection and management program in rural areas. About 500 springs are monitored in the program and interventions in the spring catchments have led to increases in lean season discharges of 100% to 300%. Details are available at www.sikkimsprings.org
- ▶ The recently launched Green India Mission (GIM) also has a cross-cutting mission focusing on maintaining and enhancing the hydrological role of forests especially in drinking water catchments.
- ▶ The Delhi and southern Aravalli hills have been identified to be a recharge zone for the region by the Central Groundwater Board.

3.0 The forest-water linkage.

As highlighted in the examples above there is a long if sporadic and scattered history of managing forests for water supply and for reducing erosion and sedimentation. While forests have long been felt to play an important role in the hydrological role in moderating runoff and increasing infiltration and certainly controlling erosion, there have been few experiments measuring the same. At the same time, there is increasing recognition that trees also use water and enhance evapo-transpiration (ET), and this aspect needs to be factored into the overall water balance equation and in evaluating the impact of forests on water. While the science on this front is still constrained by few long term studies, there is an emerging view that the impact of trees and forests depends on the overall volume of rainfall available and the balance between runoff, infiltration, and evapo-transpiration for specific species and forest types. Thus in semi-arid water constrained situations, those tree species that are large consumers of water through ET may actually reduce the overall runoff in forested catchments. In such situations, xeric species may be better suited from a hydrological perspective if increased run-off is desirable.

On the other hand, in less water-scarce situations, forests, especially multi-story forests may play an important role in moderating the monsoon flows and lead to both increased infiltration and increased base-flows, especially in the critically important summer lean seasons. Thus improved ground and tree cover can lead to improved infiltration levels and thus improved discharge from springs as well. This is likely true at catchment levels. Of course geology is an important determinant of spring discharges. Thus a combination of improved vegetative cover and soil conservation interventions in the hydrogeologically identified recharge zones can potentially lead to better spring discharges.

At broader scales, the overall ET may play a role in rainfall as well – e.g. the convectional rainfall experienced in tropical forest climates, or the role of ET from mega forests zones such as the amazon basin forests in influencing rainfall patterns and levels in the region.

4.0 The Local Context

4.1 Bohal Village and Mahila Mangal Dal.

Located in Bandhala panchayat, just above Palampur town, Bohal village and adjacent hamlets are spread across the lower Dhauladhar hills. Residential areas are in the range of 1400-1600 m, and the forests extend to the ridge above about 2000 m high comprising of oak, chir, and some deodar patches. Subsequent ridges go up to 3000 odd metres. The forest had got quite degraded due to grazing and lopping and the village felt a sense of loss from the same and also that they needed to conserve something for

future generations. Accordingly around 10 years ago the village got together and stopped grazing and lopping in a forest patch above the village and also protected it from neighbouring villages. The Mahila Mangal Dal took a lead in this process and was supported by a Rakha (village level forest watcher) who was paid by the village. However as the forest regenerated well, there was pressure to open up the area again. Some instances of lopping for fuelwood and fodder and occasional grazing had already started occurring and the MMD were not able to contain the situation. Part of the problem was that they had reached the limits of moral persuasion and needed some real authority to protect the forest area and prevent both village residents and outsiders from using the same, by stopping outsiders and levying sanctions, including fines.

Bohal village also has a spring, that supplies water to the Palampur Municipal Council Area, and the spring was bought by the Palampur MC in the 1950s. Over time the discharge of that spring has declined and demand for water has also increased.

4.2 Palampur MC

Situated in the foothills of the Dhauladhar range, with high levels of rainfall, Palampur city in Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh is well endowed with nearby sources of water.

The town area is quite small and drinking water distribution in this area is managed by the Municipal Council. The Bohal spring is an important source of near-mineral water quality supply to the MC and the MC views it as their primary source that is owned by them as well. However the discharge of the spring has declined over time and demand has also increased. Therefore the city relies on supplies from the Irrigation and Public Health department, but are concerned about the quality and regularity of these supplies, especially in the monsoon months.

4.3 Irrigation and Public Health Department

With increase in demand, the Irrigation and Public Health (IPH) department makes supplementary supply to the municipal council area, and also covers adjoining panchayat areas. This gravity supply is taken from the Neugal Khad, a local river, from which water is channeled via a channel and pipe to the city.

However, the city suffers periodic shortages in water supply, which are largely related to disturbances in the monsoons. In addition, water quality is often poor, with high levels of turbidity and some bacterial contamination as well.

4.4 Forest Department

The Bohal forest area falls in Palampur Forest division and Palampur Range, and Bandhala beat (tbc). In FD records the forest area is recorded as an un-classed forest (UF Birni) primarily of oak with little commercial significance. From the FD's perspective, they recognized that such small patches of forests adjacent to village habitations face extensive subsistence pressures and need local protection. Accordingly, any activity by the Mahila Dal and subsequently by the JFMC to protect the forest was welcome and they also supported the idea of managing the forest for water supply.

5.0 Process

In 2007, a basic scoping for protection of water supply for Palampur city was undertaken by InsPIRE Network for Environment (formerly Winrock International India during their project on incentivising watershed protection services (Agarwal et al, 2008), supported by IIED and funded by DFID. Later, the GIZ supported WASH project supported independent consultants to assess the feasibility of a Payments for Ecosystem Services for water security in Palampur and also for implementing a process of engaging stakeholders, designing the PES mechanism, and signing the agreement in 2009-10. Most recently, Winrock India has collaborated University of Cambridge and ATREE, under the Ecosystem Services and Poverty Alleviation (ESPA) program to assess stakeholder perceptions and support the implementation of the agreement.

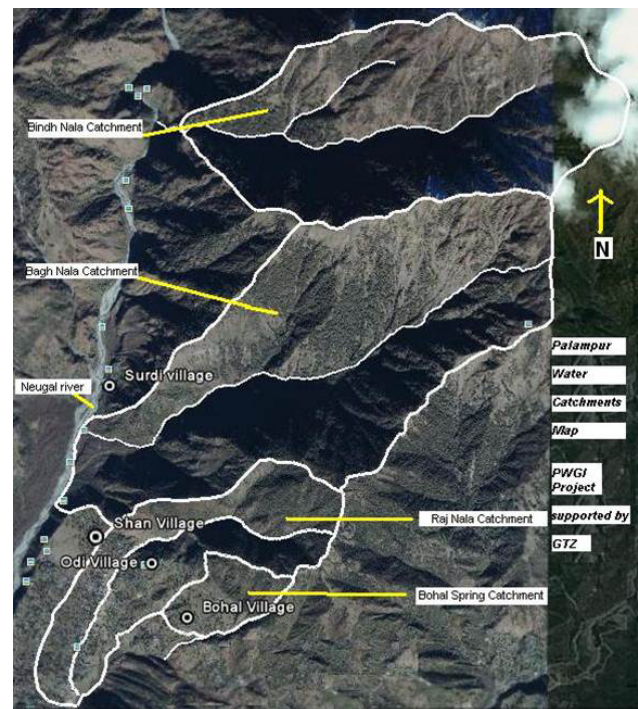
The feasibility, design and implementation of the agreement involved regular interaction with the above mentioned stakeholders in Palampur – the MMD and FD, the IPH, and the Palampur MC the key elements of the process included the following:

5.1 Feasibility

Repeated interactions were held with stakeholders in Palampur – the MMD and FD, the IPH, and the Palampur MC to assess their interests, concerns and potential role. To increase coordination, periodic meetings were held in which the downstream stakeholders the FD, the IPH and the MC were invited to discuss the problems faced in the water supply, the relevance of source protection, and the potential role of a PES agreement. The main lines of the water supply system were also identified and mapped. This process identified the importance of increasing the supply of the Bohal spring and also for locating an alternate to the Neugal supply especially in the monsoon months when high silt loads and landslide disturbance to the channels, affected both the quality and quantity of the Neugal based water supply. This assessment identified four parallel catchments one above the other, that were tapped currently

or had potential as domestic water supply sources – the Bohal catchment, the Raj nala, the Baghnala and the Bindhnala. All of these catchments were mostly forest lands. These are depicted in the map below.

However it was decided that in the first phase, the focus would be on developing a protection and management mechanism for the Bohal catchment forest to meet local subsistence needs and also maintain and improve the water discharge of the Bohal spring and subsequent catchments could be tackled later.



5.2 Stakeholder meeting process leads to hydrological assessment of recharge zone

The stakeholder meeting process led to an in-principle agreement that the MC would be willing to support the Bohal village MMD to protect the forest above the Bohal spring. However the PMC Chairman and other members wanted some credible scientific assurance that forest protection would likely result in arresting and perhaps reversing the decline in discharge. In response to questions about whether protection would improve water supply, a NGO specializing in groundwater, ACWADAM, was identified and their help taken for a hydrological survey in the summer of 2010. This survey helped delineate the likely infiltration zone for the Bohal spring system. This reassured the MC that an investment by them could lead to improved spring flow and water supply in the town. For the upstream community, in Bohal and neighbouring hamlets, it was useful to know that not all of the forest needed to be 'locked' up, and that they could balance managing for water with their local needs. Thus, the

identification of the likely infiltration zone which required more effective protection and management for infiltration was a key step in addressing downstream and upstream concerns and moving them towards an agreement.

5.3 Exposure visit

Once there was broad in-principle interest in the agreement, a trip was planned to visit the Shimla Water Supply Catchment Forest and wildlife sanctuary and the Kuhan micro-catchment in Kangra district. The Shimla catchment was chosen as it was established by the Shimla Municipal Corporation to protect their water supply over a hundred years ago, at a time when Shimla was a small town, not unlike Palampur in size. The Kuhan site was chosen as an earlier PES-type agreement had been facilitated under the IIED-Winrock partnership with the Changar Project (GTZ and FD) during 2004-2006.

The idea was to take both members of the Palampur MC as well as interested individuals from the Mahila dal in the Bohal village for a joint visit that would facilitate interaction between the members of the two local bodies as well as help interrogate the two sites from both upstream and downstream perspectives. Due to heavy rain the day before and landslides on roads, some members backed out of the visit and the start was delayed. Still the visit to Shimla was a moderate success in that stakeholders were able to visit the Shimla catchment forest and also interact with forest department senior staff, who encouraged an autonomous agreement between the MC and the village level institution in which the FD played a facilitative role, rather than a driving role.

5.4 Institutional requirements and options

After the visit, there was broad agreement from the MC and the Mahila dals that an agreement should be prepared. However a key question was what kind of institution could effectively meet local needs as well as secure the environmental services and provide long-term legal and practical protection. Given the dual focus on local use and control as well as ecosystem service protection, traditional Protected Area options like Sanctuaries were ruled out at the beginning. The broad institutional requirements were identified as follows.

Institutional requirements for PES

Upstream: For the upstream institution, the key institutional requirements identified were along the following lines.

- ▶ Right to protect and exclude. For a PES arrangement to be put in place, the body representing the upstream communities will have to demonstrate that they have the ability to protect the forest. Ideally, to be able to do this, the community and their representative

institution should have the right to protect the forest area and to exclude outsiders.

- ▶ Right to manage. The community /institution should have the right to manage the area and implement specific provisions that are friendly towards watershed services
- ▶ Right to contract. Finally, the upstream institution should have the right to contract with a downstream stakeholder to promise the provision on an environmental service and receive some support in cash or kind for the same.
- ▶ Management system to receive PES payments, shared with stakeholders or utilized as per their own decisions, to incentivize appropriate biophysical behaviour, and monitor impacts.

Downstream: For the downstream institution, institutional requirements may be somewhat simpler, along the following lines.

- ▶ Authority to contract with an upstream community institution that may be out of the MC area.
- ▶ Ability to allocate or earmark funds on a regular basis – e.g. by adding a surcharge on periodic water charges.
- ▶ Management system to be able to contract, monitor deliverables, and make payments on a sustained basis.

Accordingly to meet the institutional requirements in the upstream the following institutional options were considered:

- ▶ Village Forest Development Committee (VFDC) (Under the HP PFM Rules promulgated under the Indian Forest Act)
- ▶ Community Forestry Resource (CFR) under the Forest Rights Act
- ▶ Conservation Reserve (under the Wildlife Protection Act)
- ▶ Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS) under the Biodiversity Protection Act, 2002.
- ▶ Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) under the Environmental Protection Act.
- ▶ Baseline - Remain as PF, under informal MD management

The review suggested that given the dual focus on local control, rights and resource use, and watershed services, and the short timeframe left of the project (about two months), it would be practical to promote a JFM Committee under the HP PFM rules. The stability (JFMCs registered as Societies) and basic autonomy (member secretary to be appointed locally, rather than an ex-officio forest guard) provided by the HP PFM Rules helped in making this choice.

5.5 Facilitating formation of the Bohal-Audi-Mandai JFM Committee.

➤ *Hamlet level interactions*

Concurrently, the field team held meetings in each hamlet to share findings of geo-hydrological report and to elicit their perspectives on management of the forest. Importantly, the FD forest guard and block officer came for these meetings and helped in their facilitation. The interactions threw up the following broad conclusions:

- ▶ The forest had been grazed and lopped for a long time and had become denuded by the 1990s. Protection by the Mahila dal had helped in regeneration of the forest. However it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain protection without legal powers to do the same.
- ▶ There was considerable interest in long term management of the forest both for local use now, and to maintain it for future generations, and also to manage it for environmental services downstream. The following suggestions were made:
 - Restrict grazing for 20 years
 - Controlled lopping for fuel-wood and green leaf fodder
 - grass cutting for fodder on a rotational basis
 - maintain ground cover
 - engage with Municipal Council to seek support for protection of the proposed infiltration zone.

➤ *Preparation of a Management Plan*

Based on these interactions, a management plan (for a period of 20 years) was drafted by the facilitation team and finalized after comments from the forest department. The FD staff played an important role in the interactions and suggested several actions which were included in the plan.

Concurrently an ad hoc VFDS was initiated in the village with membership from the three hamlets.

➤ *Preparation of byelaws and registering the JFMC*

At the same time, existing draft template byelaws for JFM Committees in the state were reviewed and revised substantially to prepare a customized version for the Bohal JFM Committee. These byelaws were prepared to be compatible with the HP PFM Rules, and as suggested in the Rules. The flexibility in the HP PFM rules to frame byelaws helped make space for the PES agreements in the byelaws.

Registering the JFMC also took a lot of effort. After a long and complex process with much back-and-forth between the SDM, the FD, and the VFDS, the VFDS was finally registered on October 1, 2010. Details are in the box above.

This entire process was facilitated directly by the field team and completed within a month due to the effort of the field team and the support provided by the various

Role of FD in facilitating the PES process

The FD played a critical facilitative role in enabling the PES agreement.

- Most importantly, they supported the idea of managing forests for water and that of a linkage between a JFMC. The DFO involved other staff in the discussion.
- Guards and block officers participated and helped facilitate village meetings
- During registration the SDM had some concerns, these were addressed by a letter from the DFO stating that the JFMC may be registered, a kind of NOC
- The issue of a 20 year management plan raised some problems which were tackled creatively by the FD. While the PFM rules and subsequent guidelines mentioned a 5 year micro plan, that was more oriented towards funded plantation projects, rather than managing regenerating forests for multiple purposes. Thus a 20 year management plan was not really envisaged in the PFM rules – (1) they had a micro plan rather than a management plan, (2) of 5 years, rather than 20, and (3) there were concerns that lopping, even rotational may run afoul of some previous letter restricting lopping of oak trees. For all these reasons, it was decided that the management plan would be shared with the FD, but not handed over formally. Instead it was handed over to the SDM, along with the registration papers for the JFMC society, and its byelaws.
- The FD invested some funds in bohal village to dig a few percolation tanks. This has likely helped improve the recharge and subsequent discharge of the spring this year.
- Subsequently, FD staff have responded to calls for support and help by the JFMC as required.

stakeholders – the ad hoc VFDS, and the offices of the DFO, FD, and the SDM.

5.6 Negotiation process and drafting of an agreement

Based on the infiltration zone identified by the geo-hydrological survey, and interactions with the village communities about their priorities a list of management steps were developed and incorporated into a management plan. Based on this and earlier discussions with the MC and the Mahiladals, a draft agreement was prepared a priori as a basis for discussion amongst the stakeholders. One-on-one meetings were held with the field team, the FD, and the President and the Executive Officer of the MC where the draft was shared and comments sought.

The discussion centred around the following elements:

- ▶ the specific management steps that would be undertaken by the VFDS,
- ▶ the indicators and process monitoring system and how the payment would be triggered,
- ▶ how risk and uncertainty would be borne and managed
- ▶ Amount of payment – how would it be fixed, and whether it would increase and if so, at what rate.
- ▶ what were the measures available to either party in case of perceived non-compliance, and how they would be invoked. Part of concern was that the agreement needed to be robust enough that even if individuals in the MC and the JFMC changed (as was likely with elections etc), there was enough clarity and safeguards in the agreement to prevent inadvertent problems.
- ▶ review mechanisms

It was decided that both parties would undertake a joint transect walk in the forest to the recharge zone and do a visual inspection following which they would fill out a simple inspection report and sign it together and take steps to improve management as required.

A joint meeting between the elected members of the Palampur MC and the 10 members of the VFDS was held in Palampur in mid-September to allow members of both the MC and the VFDS to interact with each other for the first time. The broad outline of the agreement was shared there and a free and frank discussion was held amongst the members of both bodies, and the go-ahead was given to prepare the final agreement.

The agreement was drafted and reviewed extensively and it was decided to redraft it in simple language. The agreement was signed in October 2010.

5.7 Post agreement situation

The first payment was made at the time of signing in 2010. In January 2011 the first round of rotational lopping was undertaken in half the forest. Subsequently a meeting was organized in Shimla to share the process and outcome with state level policy makers. The FD supported the process by funding the digging of a few percolation tanks.

Subsequently under an Environmental Services Poverty Alleviation (ESPA) project with University of Cambridge, process monitoring, and stakeholder assessments were undertaken.

The JFMC has been tackling some teething problems in enforcing protection. Subsequent to the agreement a meeting was held in Shimla to share the findings in early 2011, and in that duration the village level forest guard – Rakha organized a community level lopping of some chir trees. The FD forest guard and BO helped resolve the situation. During the monsoon period there was some slackness in enforcing protection. In an example of adaptive decision making, it was decided in a community level meeting that as the fine amounts varied across people and some of them ran into thousands of rupees, everyone would pay a blanket amount of 25% of the fine amount.

Elections were held in 2011 for the MC and the new committee has honoured the agreement. As per the agreement, a transect walk was organized in the forest by the JFMC, and attended by the Palampur MC members. Subsequently, they also released the payment for the 2nd year of Rs 10,000. The MC also agreed to support repair of a tap and pipeline for local use, and of a platform for washing clothes etc in the village. Rotational lopping was also undertaken in 2012.

Interestingly, in 2011-12, the spring has had increased discharge in the post-monsoon period. This may be due to a combination of factors – the percolation tanks, good rainfall and snowfall in the winter, and continued protection of the forest. This has led to lot of support from the MC to continue the agreement and perhaps increase the level of payment in future.





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