

Uttarakhand Decentralized Watershed Development II Project (GRAMYA II)



Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation (PME) Action Plan



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ABBREVIATION

AI : Artificial Insemination

ARC : Action Required Checklist

CBOs : Community Based Organization

FIG : Farmer Interest Group

FNGO : Field NGO

GP : Gram Panchayat

GPWDP : Gram Panchayat Watershed Development Plan

IGA : Income Generating Activity

MDT : Multi Disciplinary Team

NBC : Natural Breeding Centre

PME : Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation

RVC : Revenue Village Committee

SHG : Self Help Group

UDWDP : Uttarakhand Decentralized Watershed Development Project

UG : User Group

VC : Village Community

VG : Vulnerable Group

WO : Women

WWMC : Water and Watershed Management Committee

PARTICIPATORY MONITORING & EVALUATION (PME) ACTION PLAN FOR UTTARAKHAND DECENTRALIZED WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT II PROJECT (GRAMYA II)

INTRODUCTION:

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) have long been important to assess actual change against stated objectives to judge whether development assistance has been successful or not. This has usually involved external experts evaluating against indicators. Different organizations increasingly realized that there is need to happen with a wide range of stakeholders, thus making M&E more participatory. Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) involves the assessment of change through processes that involve many people or groups, each of whom is affecting or affected by the impacts being assessed. Negotiation leads to agreement on how progress should be measured and the findings acted upon. It is a challenging process for all concerned as different stakeholders must examine their assumptions about what constitutes progress and together deal with the contradictions and conflicts that can emerge. PM&E can stimulate a shift from assessing impacts based perceptions of benefits to include the perceptions of the target population. PME can, therefore, provide more comprehensive information on efficiency, relevance, sustainability, impact and effectiveness of work in progress. By learning from mistakes *en route*, it can lead to timely corrective action. By highlighting the successes of people's efforts, it can increase motivation.

PME is about strengthening primary stakeholders' involvement as active participants in interventions by them taking the lead in tracking and analysing progress towards jointly agreed results and deciding on corrective action. This approach contributes to demand-led planning and decision-making and improved accountability, when effective communication and feedback loops are in place with programs and agencies.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND AREA

The project development objective (PDO) is: *to increase the efficiency of natural resource use and productivity of rain-fed agriculture by participating communities in selected micro-watersheds of the State of Uttarakhand.*

A total of about 2.638 lakh ha. in the middle Himalayas ranging from 700 m to 2,500 m above sea level will be treated by this project. About 509 Gram Panchayats, spread across 18

developmental blocks in 8 Districts will benefit from the project. About 55,600 households comprising population of 3.18 lakh will be benefit by various project interventions.

PROJECT COMPONENT

The Uttarakhand Decentralized Watershed Development II Project has the following components:

- Social Mobilization and Participatory Watershed Planning
- Watershed Treatment and Rain-fed Area Development
- Enhancing livelihood opportunity
- Knowledge Management and Project Coordination

DEFINING PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION (PME)

PME is defined as a process where primary stakeholders (those who are affected by the intervention being examined are active participants), take the lead in tracking and making sense of progress towards achievement of self-selected or jointly agreed results at the local level, and drawing actionable conclusions.

OBJECTIVES OF PME:

To assess information, facilitate monitoring and evaluation by beneficiaries of different development activities and increase beneficiaries' commitment and understanding in designing, planning and implementing community-based development projects or programmes.

Participatory monitoring involves local beneficiaries in measuring, recording, collecting, processing and communicating information to assist local development project extension workers and local group members in decision-making.

Participatory evaluation assists in adjusting and redefining objectives, reorganizing institutional arrangements or re-allocating resources as necessary. Monitoring and evaluation system (MES) allows continuous surveillance in order to assess the development project's impact on intended beneficiaries.

Potential Benefits on Local Governance of Implementing and Institutionalising PME:

Purpose of PME	Expected Benefits
EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generating location specific insights and information 2. Improve soundness of policy making 3. Facilitate adaptive and flexible management 4. Increase efficiency of resource use 5. Promote stakeholder motivation 6. Promote staff motivation (local government, service providers and other agencies) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding about local realities and therefore, more realistic and appropriate plans and policies • Shared analysis of suggestions for improvements • Improved strategic planning at different levels • Programs are more demand-led, which enhances effectiveness and sustainability of interventions • Timely adjustments to plans, schedules and/or budgets, following local feedback on bottlenecks as well as unanticipated negative impacts that need correcting; • Identification of possibilities for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of activities; • Reduced possibility for corruption or diversion of funds to non-intended activities • More motivated stakeholders at the local level, • More staff motivation, initiatives and creativity • Shifting perception from monitoring as 'policing' to monitoring as mutually beneficial
EXERCISE OF POWER	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve responsiveness 2. Promote openness and transparency 3. Strengthen mechanisms for checks and balances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced legitimacy of programs and organizations • Reduced risk of clientelism and patronage around resource use • Improved transparency and accountability enhances willingness of citizens to contribute resources (including paying of taxes) • Local empowerment
EQUITY OF OUTCOMES	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledge and clarify diversity of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased equity in who is heard and participate • More equitable distribution of benefits from service

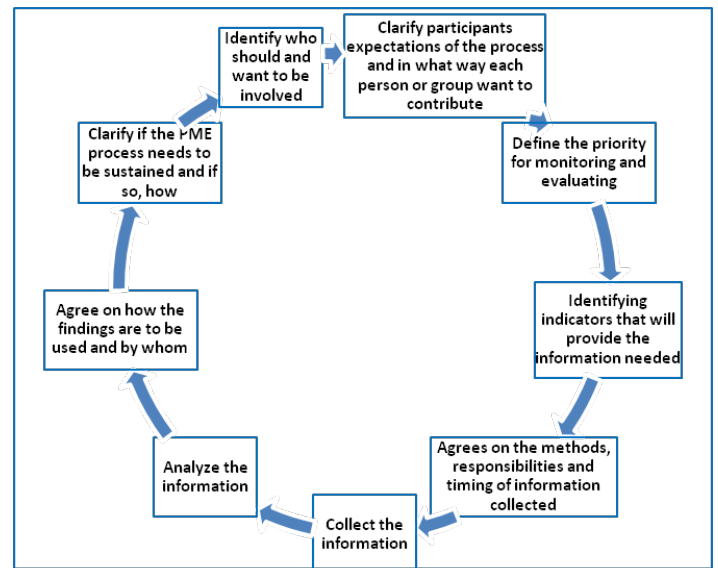
Purpose of PME	Expected Benefits
<p>expectations;</p> <p>2. Identify and address barriers to participation and decision-making</p> <p>3. Build voice of marginalized groups</p>	<p>delivery, in particular to marginalized, vulnerable and the poor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address biases • Improve position of marginalized groups
ENHANCING STAKEHOLDER INTERACTION	
<p>1. Building horizontal relationships Strengthening dialogue and collaboration</p> <p>2. Shared analysis and agreement on options for change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving quality of social and organizational interactions (i.e. building social capital), and communication and (inter)group skills • Improved mutual understanding of problems, opportunities and options for change • More willingness to question previously accepted norms and constraints • Better understanding among stakeholders of institutional environment and resource availability, leading to more realistic propositions • Prevent and reduce conflict between stakeholders

Case studies on experiences with PME may generate various benefits like:

- Improved understanding of the resource, the institutional environment, and of visions and management options of the various stakeholders involved;
- Increased capacity and willingness to question previously accepted technical and institutional norms;
- More informed decision-making;
- Shifting perception of monitoring as a form of policing towards monitoring as mutually beneficial for management;
- Improved quality of partnership interactions and communication;
- Increased equity regarding voice and flow of benefits;
- Improved conflict management;

Steps for which methodologies need to be fleshed out during the development of the PM&E approach are:

- Building commitment and engagement at the community level;
- Deciding on who participates and how this will evolve;
- PME process
 - Jointly establishing goals and expectations;
 - Tracking progress and information collection,
 - Joint analysis, sharing results and identifying action points
- Communication and feed-back systems to community; to program, other stakeholders and fora.



PME MANAGEMENT TEAM:

- ❖ A ‘PME Management Team’ will be set up to lead the PME process approach in consultation with key stakeholders. This team includes staff from the implementing agency, consultants, FNGO staff and members from different CBOs/institutions. The members of this team should understand the principles of PME and how it is built into the overall project design.
- ❖ The ‘PME Management Team’ facilitating the PME process will be provided with clear guidance and methodologies, support from subject matter specialist, follow-up training and exchange events. A workshop/training program for community facilitators therefore will be preceding the start of the PME at the community level. Understanding PME principles and ways of working, building commitment to the process and ensuring equity will be the important elements of such workshop/trainings.

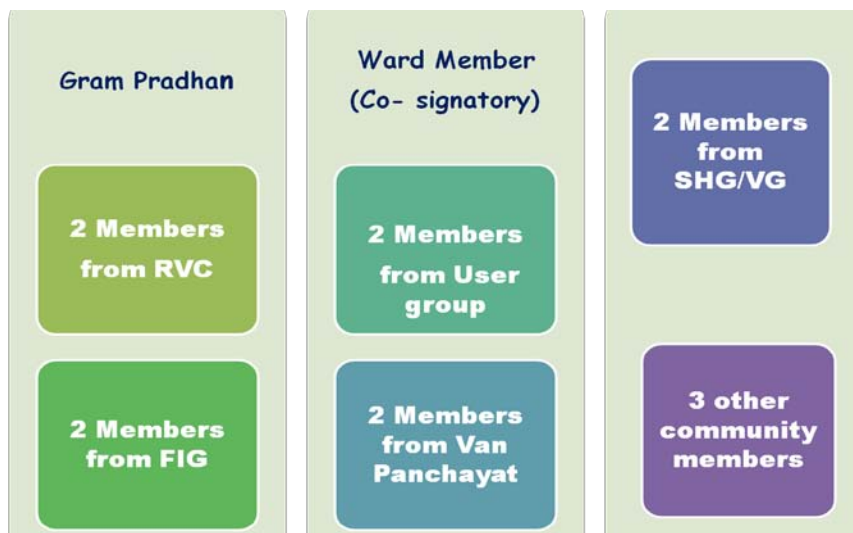
Organization and Conduction of PME

- WWMC with the help of MDT would facilitate conduction and coordination of PME at GP level on half yearly basis.

- 'PME Management Team' comprising of following members representing different CBOs/ institutions will be constituted at GP level.

1. GP/ WWMC- GP pradhan + Women ward member (Responsible for jointly operating watershed account)
2. RVC members - 2 members (one male and one female) from the RVC for the concerned village.
3. SHG/ Vulnerable Group- 2 members (one male and one female).
4. FIG- 2 members
5. UG- 2 members
6. Van Panchayat -2 members (Sarpanch + one SC/ST member)
7. Other community member - 2 women + 1 SC/ ST member.

Village Motivator, Facilitator, Account Assistant and unit members will facilitate the exercise.



FREQUENCY OF PME

- Keeping in view the learning's of Gramya I, PME would be conducted on half yearly basis in all project GPs.
- The Action Required Checklist (ARCs) with corrective measures to be compiled and a report has to be generated.

PROCESS OF PARTICIPATORY MONITORING & EVALUATION:

PME will be conducted phase wise during project period. In the first and second year of PME, process monitoring of planning phase will be done. As the PME team comprises representation of all community groups thus the members of PME team will ensure that during planning phase also process monitoring will be done and community should be aware of project objectives and intervention, community's needs should be prioritised, inclusion of community's perspective in annual plan etc. Thus Following step will be taken as a whole in project planning phase by PME team also-

- The first step to initiate participatory planning would be to make the communities aware of the various kinds of support and investments that the project will make under each component. Sensitisation about the project goal and objectives will be an important step prior to need assessment.
- The second step will be to assess the community needs and to support communities to priorities their needs and to realistically develop a perspective plan for a project period, keeping in view the different activities they can possibly take up under each project component. The project partner FNGOs will take a lead in building a vision for planning and facilitate the process, with the full involvement of Gram Panchayats (GP), and the staff from the Division offices and WMD.
- Once the community perspective plans will drawn-up, they will be made into annual plans, project continues to adopt their existing annual work plan including the use of GIS.

The village community will be involved from planning to implementation, handling of funds, procurement to maintenance of assets. The continuous process of consultation with the stakeholders for the execution of interventions will be required to find out whether the planned interventions are being executed as per the intended objectives or not. If not, corrective actions need to be taken in order to realize the expected outputs. In the above context, PME would play an important role by way of active involvement of key stakeholders in the M&E process.

PME METHODOLOGY

PME is a continuous process, and not a one-time event. During the PLA workshop, the PLA team and the community work together to come up with a list of indicators, this can be monitored on a regular basis by the community members. There is no set formula for which PLA techniques to use for PME. Below are some participatory techniques of PLA techniques for PME which will be adopted during PME process as per the suitability:

- Mapping
- Diagramming
- Ranking/Scoring
- Seasonal Calendar
- Semi structured interviews
- Pie chart

Participatory tools

Data collection on selected participatory indicators through simple PRA methods that were flexible and adapted to the local context was done. The tools applied were mainly

- ❖ Semi structured/structured interviews
- ❖ Questionnaire
- ❖ Short studies/sample surveys
- ❖ Ballot box exercise
- ❖ Focus Group Discussion
- ❖ Review of Records
- ❖ Physical verification

COMPILATION OF ACTION REQUIRED CHECKLIST (ARC)

- At the end of the PME, an Action Required Checklist with clearly spelt out responsibilities of the WWMCs, UGs etc. and project staff will be completed.
- ARC should be shared with the community in the subsequent cycle of PME.
- Actions which were addressed will be checked off the list accordingly.

PME Plan for UDWDP is a live document subject to modifications as and when required.

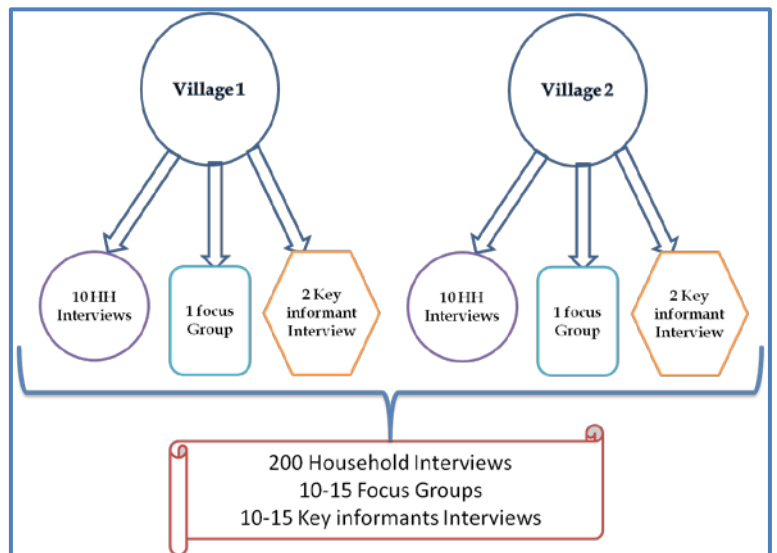
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PME

A questionnaire will be developed to conduct outcome survey. It will be a simple household survey that will be undertaken by project staff and will cover a small sample of 150/200 households selected randomly. The survey will be conducted exclusively in villages targeted by the project and will include project beneficiaries. Overall, the exercise will be conducted with the support of project staff and “Field NGOs” (FNGOs)/Partner NGOs (PNGOs).

Objectives of survey based on questionnaire:

The main objectives of the survey are to-

- (i) Measure changes happening at the household level in terms of livelihoods and food security during the project life;
- (ii) Assess targeting efficiency;
- (iii) Provide evidence of project success or failure; and
- (iv) Provide timely performance information necessary to undertake corrective actions.
- (v) Survey will be conducted on the basis of developed questionnaire starting from the 2nd year of implementation.



The survey should be implemented in conjunction with qualitative assessments that will complement the household-level information, providing information on “why” and “how” some outcomes were or were not achieved. This means that in each village, in addition to the household interviews, the team should conduct a certain number of focus group (FG) discussions and key informant (KI) interviews. The figure below provides an overview of the survey design. The figure shows that the field data collection teams will go to 20 villages, and in each village they will conduct 10 household interviews as well as focus groups and/or key informant interviews. The number of qualitative interviews to conduct will be decided by the project (number in the figure given as examples).

PROCESS OF SURVEY:

To prepare and conduct a survey based on questionnaire, the following activity/step will be adopted-

S. No.	Activity/step	Estimated Duration	Comments	Responsibility
1	Development of the questionnaire and interview guides for qualitative assessments	1-3 days	Can take longer if questions are added or modified from the standard template.	WMD with inputs from project staff and FNGO/PNGO team.
2	Selection of the sample	1-3 days	Depending on availability of reliable lists.	WMD. Lists to be provided by field project staff (villages) and local authorities (households).
3	Selection of enumerators and supervisors	5 days	If possible, enumerators should be field officers and supervisor project staff.	DPD/PD, project staff and FNGO/PNGO team
4	Training of enumerators and field testing of questionnaire and qualitative assessment guides	1-2 days	The training should include a session on sampling.	M&E specialist/external consultant
5	Logistical planning, preparation for data collection	1-2 days		M&E officer, project staff and FNGO team
6	Data collection	1-3 weeks	Depends on availability of logistic support/no farming season etc.	Field staff under supervision of DPDs / FNGO/PNGO
7	Data entry	1-2 weeks	If Excel file is used, data entry can only be conducted by one person at a time.	Division level under supervision of DPDs/PD and finally at WMD level.
8	Data analysis	2 -3 week		Initially at divisional level and finally at WMD level.
9	Report writing	1-2 week		At WMD level with inputs from project staff and FNGO team
10	Communication and sharing	ad hoc events		WMD, project staff and FNGO team

DATA COLLECTION

- Data collection on selected participatory indicators through simple PRA methods that are flexible and adapted to the local context would be done. This could include-
 - ✓ Semi structured/structured interviews
 - ✓ Questionnaire
 - ✓ Short studies/sample surveys
 - ✓ Ballot box exercise
 - ✓ Focus Group Discussion
 - ✓ Review of Records
 - ✓ Physical verification
- Participants in PME exercises will be facilitated in a manner which allows for substantive discussion around the issues identified during PME data collection.
- Participants will track the progress on achievement of selected indicators and compare the targets and actual achievements for the given period.
- Relevant gaps will be discussed and diagnosed.

KEY FEATURES OF PARTICIPATORY MONITORING & EVALUATION:

PME would primarily focus on following;

- Community driven decision making, implementation and management.
- Process monitoring and implementation.
- Performance of institutions involved in project implementation.
- Responsiveness of the project to genuine need of stakeholders.
- Empowerment of target beneficiaries and strengthening of CBOs through better programmes, accountability and transparency.
- Sustainability of institutions and created assets.

Sample indicators for PME:

- PME indicators will be finalized through a consultative process with project staff, members of FNGO & PNGO and stakeholders. For this purposes a series of consultative village level workshops will be conducted in all selected project villages

to identify and develop PME indicators. The unit level MDTs including FNGOs will be instrumental in organizing, coordinating and conducting such workshops. Selected villages will be visited prior to consultative process to involve stakeholders in the process.

- Gender and poverty sensitive indicators will be developed to monitor and evaluate the status of women, weaker section and vulnerable groups' of the project. Gender based response will be taken from community and Grievance redressal section of PME will address the gender related complaints. For sampling one division from each region i.e. Garhwal and Kumaon will be selected. Before finalizing the indicator field test will be conducted to check its feasibility.
- Seven broad objectives will be taken up for PME exercise and indicators will be developed under these major objectives -
 - Awareness about project objectives and intervention
 - Inclusiveness and Equity
 - Transparency and Accountability
 - Financial Management
 - Knowledge Management and dissemination
 - Grievance Redress Mechanism
 - Withdrawal strategy

The first round of PME will be conducted in the first year of implementation phase of the project.

STEP FOLLOWED IN PME EXERCISE

First phase of PME:

In this phase of PME, the indicators will be more specific about the mobilization to awareness about project objective and intervention, budget cap, beneficiary selection and consideration of gender and equity issue, beneficiary selection, planning process of the project activities; Women Aam Sabha meeting was conducted prior to GPWDP preparation, inclusion of women specific plan in AWP, Awareness as regards ESMF, Involvement of villagers in finalization of RVC proposals, Frequency of meetings of RVC/ WWMC etc. in the indicators. As PME is live exercise thus in the 1st phase of PME exercise process monitoring of planning phase will be done.

Second phase of PME:

In this phase of PME, the indicators will be more specific about the execution of project works. Indicators related to the Implementation process will be developed like execution of the works are through user's group, quality of works, timely payment of the works, O&M strategies are being followed, EDP training to vulnerable groups, execution of grievance redress mechanism etc.

Third phase of PME:

In this phase of PME, the indicators will be more specific about the consolidation strategy and withdrawal plans of project. Indicators will develop more on capacity building training / workshops related to the withdrawal plans, operation and maintenance of created community / individual asset, convergence and linkages plans etc.

Thus it will be improved time to time but sample indicators are as follows:

Sample Indicators of PME in Planning Phase:

A. Awareness

- (i) Awareness about project's objective and intervention
- (ii) Awareness about budget cap of the GP
- (iii) Awareness about beneficiary selection for various watershed activity
- (iv) Awareness about knowledge practices sharing

B. Inclusiveness and Equity

(i) Institution Development

- a. Meetings/ Aam sabhas were arranged to develop various institute according to project objectives
- b. Women Aam sabha organized to include their version
- c. Various socially vulnerable groups/members (disadvantaged people e.g. SC/ST/OBCs, especially abled people etc.) were took participation in institute development
- d. Gender equity were ensured

(ii) Active participation of all stakeholder in preparation of comprehensive watershed development plan

(iii) Beneficiary selection during GPWDP preparation is justified;

- (iv) Employment generated through GPWDP work (both temporary and permanent nature).
- (v) Active participation of stakeholders in GPWDP participation
- (vi) Atleast 80% HH took participation in GPWDP preparation
- (vii) Prior GPWDP preparation women Aam Sabha were conducted and its proposal included after ESMF screening

C. Transparency and Accountability

(i) Beneficiaries Selection

- a. Beneficiaries selection was appropriate
 - b. In beneficiaries selection priority were given to poor/SC/ST or vulnerable
 - c. In beneficiaries selection equity and transparency were ensured
 - d. Selection of beneficiaries was done in open meeting where all stakeholders of the project were present.
- (ii) In the open meeting of Gram Sabha plan was discussed and shared with all stakeholders
 - (iii) Through the PME it is clear that the community is aware about the process of information display.
 - (iv) Transparency is being maintained by the WWMC/RVC/ MDT in different activities in the community through meetings or workshops.

D. Financial Management

- (i) Budget cap for the GP being shared with all stakeholders/villagers
- (ii) Distribution of fund for various activities like for rainfed area development suing watershed management practices/ livelihood promotion opportunity/consolidation of Gramya I activities/institutional strengthening being discussed broadly
- (iii) Information for various registers for different purposes like R1, R2, cash registers being shared

E. Knowledge Management and Dissemination

- (i) No. of trainings and exposure visits on various issues.
- (ii) Status of co-ordinance and convergence of project activities with existing developmental schemes of Rural Development; IWMP; MGNREGA etc.

F. Grievance Redress

- (iii) Process of Conflict Resolution and grievance redressal mechanism developed and shared
- (iv) Gender sensitive process
- (v) Regular follow-up and accountability ensured at all level

F. Withdrawal Strategy

- (i) Management and maintenance of common property resources (plantations, irrigation guls/tanks, soil conservation structures) broadly discussed with villagers
- (ii) Individual assets will be maintained by the beneficiary
- (iii) Withdrawal plans broadly discussed with villagers
- (iv) User group will be operational and maintained immediately after the assets creation
- (v) Institutional sustainability

Sample Indicators of PME in implementation Phase:

In the second phase of PME, Project will be in its second year of implementation process thus on the basis of broad objectives indicators will be changed like-

- Support of MDT team was there during various assets creation, PME conduction etc.
- Beneficiary selection was justified.
- Quality of assets created was good/bad/ok.
- Women Aam Sabha was organized regularly.
- Grievance redressal mechanism is working properly.
- Knowledge sharing practices is being adopted or shared.
- User groups being formed.
- Grant allotment to VG was timely and justified.
- Distribution of various benefits like ag. Kit/horti kit/etc. transparent and equity is ensured.
- Timely payment of work done.
- Employment generated through project activity.
- Inclusion of Women specific plans.
- Beneficiary selection for demonstration activity was transparent.

- FIGs formed and active.
- SHGs / Vulnerable Groups formed and active.
- Capacity building of CBOs through trainings/ workshops.
- Training of Vulnerable Groups / women SHG in IGAs.
- No and types of IGA adopted, capacity building of Vulnerable Groups.
- Awareness regarding Vulnerable Groups Fund amongst Vulnerable Groups.
- Training/ inputs to FIGs.
- Perception regarding demonstration activities.
- Perception regarding NBC services / AI Services.
- Adoption of new species and technology.
- Improvement in condition of road.
- Perception as regards improvement in availability of water, fodder due to project interventions.
- Perception as regards improvement in availability of fuel wood due to project interventions.
- Perception as regards enhancement in availability of cereals and off-season vegetables.
- Perception as regards income enhancement due to project interventions.
- Enhancement in agribusiness opportunities and market linkages established.
- Transparency of procurement process, contractors selected etc.
- Performance of WWMC.
- Awareness of expenditure and disbursement by GP.
- Performance of MDT.
- Performance of Village motivators / Facilitator.
- Performance of Account Assistant.
- Performance of User Groups and service providers.
- Awareness on terms of payment to the beneficiary.
- Satisfaction with beneficiary selection.
- Tendency of conflict resolution by GP.
- Satisfaction with project.
- Sustainability of institutions and assets.

ACTION REQUIRED CHECKLIST
PME REPORT (Half yearly)

Gram Panchayat:
Revenue Village:
Unit:
Division:

Sl. No.	Activity/ Action Required	Responsibility for Action						Action Taken
		WWMC	RVC	VG	FIG	Individual	Project	