

Theme	Water Stewardship
Title	Rights over Natural Resources and Benefit Sharing in Watershed Development Programme
State (s)	Madhya Pradesh
District (s)	4 blocks of Agar, Chhindwara, Sehore and Ujjain
Evaluation Agency	Samarthan
Period of Study	April – September 2016

### Executive Summary

#### Objective(s):

Gain insights into, and understanding of, dynamics within village communities that determine access to common pool resources like water and fodder and if these watershed projects were able to ensure a more equitable access regime.

#### Key Findings:

- The program was executed professionally & transparently thus ensuring that the watershed structures are of high quality benefitting most farmers. These structures have started generating surplus in the rural economy.
- In all the villages proper community based governance structure were established right from the start of the programme. Membership to these committees were open to all. User groups, for overall governance of these structures were established and are effectively managing them. With certain variations, all members of these management committees take keen interest in the activities.
- The water user committee are strong and take responsibility of water sharing and its maintenance. Most of the committees have water user fee as well as membership fee to build a corpus of fund for the maintenance of the assets. The records are kept properly and funds are judiciously managed.
- The project implemented by the FES in Agar has been able to generate significant outcomes in form of water surplus, improvement of CPRs like trees and pastures, at the same time ensuring equitable distribution through community governance.

#### Areas of Improvement

- The team should get a strong orientation on equity, exclusion and gender issues before the planning begins. This will help the teams to look for solutions for the poor. It could be done with the help of technical agencies to strengthen the capacity of the teams to address issues of equity, governance and gender in a holistic manner.
- The governance norms can be improved to ensure greater inclusion of the landless so that there is a representation of diverse stakeholders and interest.
- Collaboration with the village Panchayats need to be strengthened. The Panchayat Sarpanch, as head of Village Watershed Committee, provides an opportunity to connect with the Panchayat system of the village. This will not only integrate ITC's village watershed plans with village

panchayat plans but also lead to the endorsement of the assets created in the village asset register of the Panchayat and develop a strategy of asset maintenance.

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*In case you would like to know more on the study please write to us at: [itcmsk@itc.in](mailto:itcmsk@itc.in)*