

Water Policy Research

Highlight

**Scaling Up Without Losing
Quality and Impact:
Lessons from Outstanding Watershed
Programs in India**

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One of the biggest challenges facing watershed development in India is the choice of a proper institutional arrangement.

Government departments, by and large, have proved ineffective in implementation of such schemes. Alternatively, the NGOs have been struggling with limited reach and impact.

There are, however, some examples of large scale successes in watershed management. The paper looks at four such cases-Bharat Agro Industries Foundation (BAIF), Mysore Resettlement and Development Agency (MYRADA), Watershed Organization Trust (WOTR) and Rajiv Gandhi Mission for Watershed Management (RGMWM), exploring strategies adopted for sustainable scaling up of watershed programs.

SCALING UP WITHOUT LOSING QUALITY AND IMPACT: LESSONS FROM OUTSTANDING WATERSHED PROGRAMS IN INDIA¹

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT BASED ON A PAPER WITH THE SAME TITLE

The Common Minimum Program (CMP) of the UPA government indicates a new emphasis and intensification in plans for upscaling of watershed interventions. While there is almost a consensus on the efficacy of the program as an ideal solution to the innumerable problems facing rural areas, opinions on institutional arrangements for implementing the same have been polarized between those of Gos and NGOs. The state of confusion on the issue is evident from the 'quantum' oscillations made by the policy-makers while moving from the 1994 guidelines to *Haryali* (2003).

Government departments have proved to be less suitable for the implementation of such schemes, and by and large, been a failure in watershed implementation. On the other hand, the NGOs, which have performed relatively better, have been struggling with limited reach and impact. Within this entire canvas of watershed programs, however, there are a few bright spots which offer certain promise. They seem to have broken a long held myth that NGO interventions in watersheds are limited in scale. These programs are also widely acknowledged for their success with watershed implementation. The objective of the paper is to draw out lessons from these experiences for sustainable scaling up of watershed programs. Bharat Agro Industries Foundation (BAIF), Mysore Resettlement and Development Agency (MYRADA) and Watershed Organization Trust (WOTR) are some examples we investigate in this paper along with a state government initiative Rajiv Gandhi Mission for Watershed Management (RGMWM). This study is part of a long term research program and the findings are of preliminary nature.

In the full canvas of watershed programs there are a few bright spots. These programs have broken a long held myth that NGO interventions in watersheds are limited in scale.

We define 'sustainable scaling up' as an expansion in geographical coverage, wherein the benefits of the intervention are distributed equitably and retained over a long time period. A case-study research method was followed for the study and besides collection of data from both primary and secondary source, we also interacted with the program heads, program managers, field-level functionaries and watershed communities. Two watersheds were selected (successful/not-so-successful) from each organization to understand the factors affecting the performance of these programs.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The key questions addressed by the research were- [1] what differentiates these programs from the rest?; [2] are there any models or design principles which have been used for rapid replication?; and [3] what helps them avoid the likely trade-off between scale and quality? However, while doing the study, it was realized that each of them has its own unique logic for choosing a strategy, derived from an amalgamation of various factors. In the following sections we outline four very different approaches to large scale watershed development, all robust and largely successful (though we found RGMWM to be suffering with hard impact deficiencies). The observations are summarized in Table 1.

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Table 1: Summary of Observations

	WOTR	BAIF	MYRADA	RGMWM
Scale (Lakh ha)	2.64	2.57	1.25	23.25
Spread	Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh	Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal,	Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh	All districts of MP
Entered watershed development in	1993	1993	1985-86	1995-96
Origin	Created strategically for large scale implementation	Created for holistic development (Gandhian NGO)	Created for need-based development	Created strategically for large scale implementation
Philosophy/ Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Organization with rapid replicability • Project mode of operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on Livelihoods • Program mode of operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on Institution Building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major thrust on fulfilment of targets
Process/Design innovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net planning • Participatory monitoring • Involvement of all stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of <i>wadi</i> in watershed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area Group concept • Integration of credit • Resource Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State level parenting body
Principal elements of scaling up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic approach/standardization • Documentation and dissemination • Operationalizing partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Result of a 'pull' factor • Effective decentralization • Context specific approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiential learning • Decentralized operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political mandate • Existence of an administrative apparatus
Withdrawal	Exit after completion of project in IGWDP, Continued contact with own projects	Continue after completion of project	Shifting of role, Gradual withdrawal, Creation of Resource centres	Sudden withdrawal
Unique strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds security • Successful involvement of different stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputation with livestock development program • Fund security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund security • Strong base with SHG/SAG Programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyed political support at the time of origin

Watershed Organization Trust (WOTR)

WOTR was created as a support organization for the Indo-German Watershed Development program (IGWDP). The program was triggered off by a series of droughts in Ahmednagar (Maharashtra) around 1980s, when a number of voluntary organizations, decided to come together for a large scale intervention. However, it soon became apparent that very few NGOs had the required technical and organizational skills to support large scale watershed implementation. This led to the birth of WOTR in 1993, with the specific mandate to undertake capacity building

of NGOs and village groups on a large scale.

The genesis of this organization had a significant impact on its approach to watershed management. “Social organization with rapid replicability” is the motto driving its choice of strategies. For instance, while describing how WOTR is different from other NGOs, Crispino Lobo (the executive director of WOTR) and John Farrington remarked- “It does not allow the prospects of scaling up to be undermined by some notion of an ideal CBO which can only be achieved through intensive, long term focus on a narrow geographical area such as one or two villages”.

The success of the program hinges on: [1] successful operationalization of partnerships (Box 1) and [2] a standardized set of watershed practices/norms developed and perfected over a period of time. Many of the tools/norms developed by WOTR have been adopted widely. One of them is the 'self-selection criteria', wherein each watershed village and the implementing NGO have to fulfill certain conditions (like the village must show a minimum degree of collective spirit and the NGO should be able to mobilize the community) for selecting a village for intervention.

Another practice is a pilot watershed intervention on an area of around 100-150 ha. It creates a 'demonstration effect' where the benefits of the program are exhibited, generating interest in the community. The capacities of implementing NGO and the community are strengthened and also tested for a larger intervention. This apart, the organization has also developed a

participatory net planning methodology, participatory monitoring tool and a participatory operational pedagogy. This standardization of processes has helped the organization reduce the transaction costs considerably, and grow from working on seven watersheds through seven NGOs to a total area of 2.64 lakh ha across 2 states involving 98 partner NGOs in a short span of ten years.

The pilot watershed intervention of WOTR creates a 'demonstration effect' where the benefits of the program are exhibited, generating interest in the community.

Mysore Resettlement and Development Agency

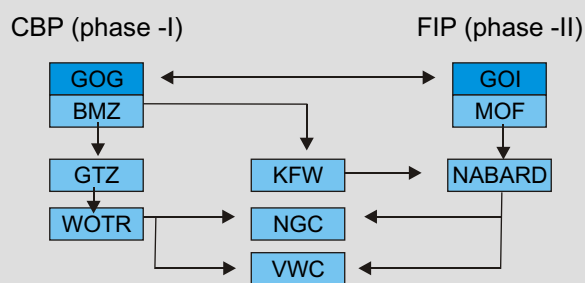
MYRADA's experience in watershed development has been the longest among the set of programs

Box 1: IGWDP-Operationalizing Partnerships

Forging linkages and creating partnerships between different stakeholders is an important prerequisite to scaling up. The experience with watershed implementation till date, clearly brings out that none of the agencies, be it government, NGOs or the community based organizations, are fully equipped to handle the complexities of watershed development. Each of these actors has certain unique advantages, which by way of collaboration can create synergies of great value. However, operationalization of these partnerships has been a challenge.

The Indo-German Watershed Development Program (IGWDP) presents a unique example of such collaboration among the three different stakeholders, viz. GO-NGO-Community with clear definition of roles and responsibilities. Figure 1 shows the inter-relationships among the different actors of the program.

Figure 1: The Interrelationships and Flow of Funds



Source: Lobo and D'Souza, 1999

- GoG- Government of Germany • GoI- Government of India
- GTZ- The German Agency for Technical Cooperation • KfW- The German Bank for Development • NABARD- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development

The program is divided in two phases -capacity building phase and full implementation phase. WOTR, as a coordinating and technical support organization, provides financial, technical and managerial training support to the NGOs and CBOs and also puts them in contact with the line departments of Government of Maharashtra (GOM) during the capacity building phase. It also serves as a monitoring body during this period. This is the foundation-building phase, from where the implementing NGOs and NABARD take over.

The presence of NABARD offers several unique advantages, one of which is that foreign funds become accessible to local NGOs and CBOs without facing the hurdles of obtaining FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) registration. Liaising and networking with government departments have helped facilitate the implementation of the program: [1] the forest department gave permission to treat forest land within watersheds;

[2] orders were issued by line departments to dovetail other developmental activities in watershed villages besides providing all administrative and policy support.

chosen for this study. Established in 1968, as an agency for resettlement of Tibetan refugees, MYRADA extended its portfolio and shifted to rural development programs. Land development activities were identified as a major intervention in bringing about sustainable development in rural areas. To enter into watershed development was seen as a logical extension. Building poor peoples' institutions occupies the centre-stage in MYRADA's strategies (Box 2).

Box 2: MYRADA- Promoting People's Institutions 'The Building Blocks Approach'

The mission statement of the organization gives a good insight into its approach and point of emphasis in its development interventions

“To foster a process of ongoing change in favor of the rural poor in a way in which this process can be sustained by them through building and managing appropriate and innovative local level institutions rooted in values of justice, equity and mutual support.”

(A part of MYRADA's mission statement)

MYRADA believes in development as a gradual process, where people are the point of intervention. This philosophy is reflected in its watershed activities. The organization is recognized as a pioneer in evolving the concept of the self-help affinity groups (SAGs). The SAGs are small groups having a common trait, which binds them together. This trait may be caste, class or language or any other similar character. These groups, because of their small size and homogeneity, are believed to be a more participatory and a better alternative to representative bodies to which members are elected/selected. In the beginning MYRADA encouraged these groups to undertake credit and saving activities. This effort of organization, though costly and time-consuming, has borne results, as these groups have become thriving village-level institutions, serving as a building block for promotion of watershed development activities. The organization focuses on area/farmers groups which comprise of 20-25 members. These groups are formed by taking all farmers of micro catchments of 100-200 ha.

MYRADA has been actively advocating the recognition of such small groups, and is promoting them as the ideal institutional apparatus for watershed interventions. The organization flaunts a 90 percent success rate in making such institutions in their project area effective. One of the greatest achievements of MYRADA was in changing a policy with the help of NABARD which now allows banks to directly lend money to the SAGs, even if unregistered.

One major achievement of the organization is the successful integration of loan concept with watershed intervention. It has demonstrated that people, even the poor, are ready to contribute large sums when the benefits appear to be sure and substantial. The difference lies in the point of emphasis. MYRADA gives more importance to livelihood aspects thus giving greater priority to treatment of individual farmers' land than treatment of drainage lines. This directly leads to better livelihood for the farmers.

In MYRADA, scaling up is demand-driven, and is largely facilitated by its initial work. It has implemented watershed projects with the support of various bilateral and multilateral agencies and the government. This variety of experience adds to its efficacy as the learning and experiences are incorporated in the newer projects. For example, much learning from the first watershed project (PIDOW) was incorporated in KAWAD and SUJALA. Presently MYRADA is spread over three states viz. Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh, through nineteen fully autonomous project offices. It is also supporting programs outside these states on a long-term basis including some in Myanmar and Cambodia, apart from states like Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The major role of MYRADA in these programs is capacity building of the local institutions and people associated with it.

Bharat Agro Industries Foundation

BAIF was born around the same time as MYRADA (1967). However, its entry into watershed development activities is more recent (1993). It has registered a fast growth covering more than 2.5 lakh ha in a short span of 10 years. A Gandhian NGO by origin, the organization aims at holistic development wherein creating opportunities of gainful self-employment for rural India is the major focus. Accordingly, the watershed development program of BAIF focuses on ensuring livelihood security for rural communities.

Like MYRADA, for BAIF scaling up was a result of pull or demand by the funding agencies and

local communities. Its success in scaling up of watershed intervention can be attributed significantly to the success of its cattle development program, a fact that is also accepted by the NGO. In watershed development, initial years are the most crucial and cost-intensive period, when the intervening agency has to build rapport with the community, gain their trust and convince them about the benefits that the programs brings in. When people start experiencing the benefit, the program takes off and this generally happens around the third year after inception (personal communication with BAIF personnel). But, for an NGO like BAIF, which has already built a strong 'social capital', investment in the initial phase reduces considerably. This lowers the transaction costs in dealing with the community. The same is true for MYRADA's interventions.

Presently, BAIF is working in 15,000 villages. The watershed program is implemented by six autonomous state level societies. The organization's success can be attributed to a successful devolution of roles and responsibilities. This approach helps make the program respond

BAIF's success in scaling up of watershed intervention can be attributed significantly to the success of its cattle development program. Other factor that contributes to successful scaling up is an effective activity-portfolio management.

to situational demands and come up with context-specific solutions. In Karnataka, BAIF focused on interlinking of farm-ponds. In Rajasthan, silvi-pastoral activities have been the focal strategy and in U.P. it has successfully taken up ravine land reclamation activities, all as per the needs of the area. Another factor that contributes to successful scaling up is an effective activity-portfolio management. BAIF has a large and diversified portfolio of activities with three core programs: livestock development, watershed development

and *Wadi*. It has successfully integrated the *Wadi* project with watershed development program, which helps it take care of one of the inadequacies of the program, i.e. the inequity in distribution of benefits between upstream-downstream areas².

Rajiv Gandhi Mission for Watershed Management

Rajiv Gandhi watershed mission is a unique attempt to address the concerns of poverty reduction and environmental regeneration through a large scale participatory watershed management program.

The mission was initiated in 1994 and has grown to be the largest watershed development program in the country. It now covers all the 45 districts of Madhya Pradesh covering a total area of 23.25

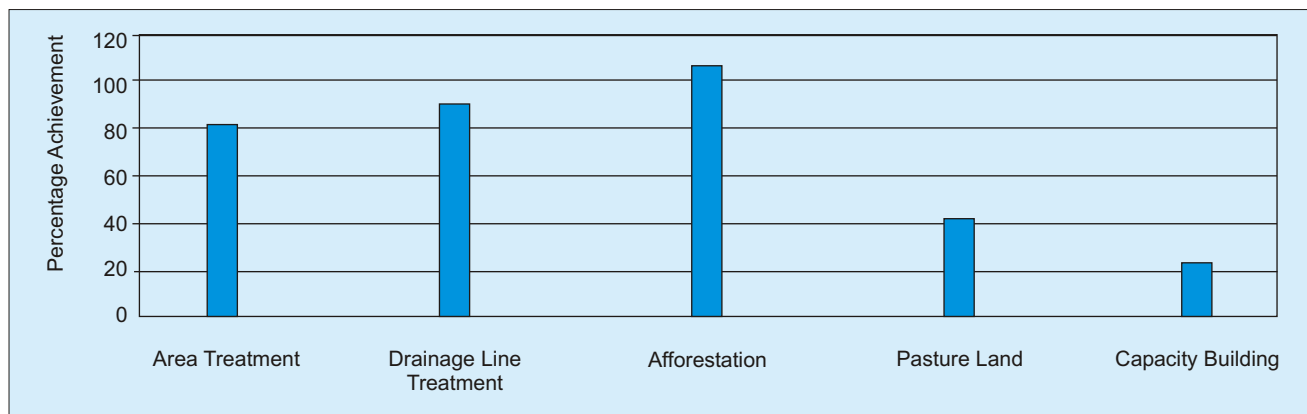
RGMWM is an interesting example of building on interrelationships and pooling together of unique advantages for greater effectiveness.

lakh ha.

The mission draws its strength from the political mandate it enjoyed at the time of its origin. It was based on creation of a central facilitative structure stationed at Bhopal for all the existing central government funded programs such as DPAP, DDP, EAS, IWDP etc. This central team acted as a coordinating and monitoring agency for the mission and was the link between the central government and the district authorities implementing the program. It could also be termed as a 'parent' body which regularizes the flow of funds from the centre to the district authorities. The mission also facilitates mobilization of additional funds for natural resource management from area development and rural development programs. It also facilitates coordination of different departments

²Wadi is a Gujarati term for kitchen garden. BAIF has promoted it as a tool for livelihood security in tribal areas. It helps farmers to develop fruit orchards in their Wadis. The initiative has been widely recognized and appreciated. In its watershed areas, it has integrated this activity with the core watershed activities by promoting wadis in the upstream areas, where the poor generally reside.

Figure 2: Emphasis on Different Activities (RGMWM, Shahdol)



Source: DRDA records, Shahdol, M.P.

implementing watershed development programs thus avoiding duplication of efforts.

RGMWM is another interesting example of building on interrelationships and pooling together of unique advantages for greater effectiveness. With no additional personnel costs the program gets the benefit of multi disciplinary teams with qualified personnel from the different government departments. The flip side to it is that the officials are unable to devote sufficient time for the watershed activities, which affects the quality of the intervention.

The thrust of the program is on soil and water conservation and drainage line treatments (Figure 2). Issues relating to local capacity building and creation of institutions for post intervention management of structures have not been adequately addressed by the mission. This has great implications on the sustainability of the intervention. Some of the watershed sites we visited in Shahdol and Chhindwara districts showed poor upkeep of the plantations. There were also signs of poor management on the side of state authorities as many villages in Chhindwara district were left half-way with sudden drying up of funds.

SOME NOTEWORTHY ASPECTS OF SCALING UP

It is generally assumed that scaling up is essentially a matter of size. Organizations scale up by

increasing their size, managing larger budgets and covering larger areas. However, recent research on scaling up has clearly brought out that scaling up is more about 'expanding impact' and not just growing large. The new paradigm of scaling up is that of multiplication and mainstreaming through creating spin-offs, letting-go of innovations, creating alternative knowledge, and influencing other social actors.

Many NGOs are experimenting with the idea of creating spin-offs, which helps them gain scale while maintaining responsiveness and accountability at the grass-roots.

According to Uvin and Miller, scaling up can be achieved by: expanding coverage and size (quantitative scaling up); increasing the scope of activities (functional scaling up); increasing indirect impact; and enhancing organizational sustainability (including management of resources). Indirect impact can be achieved by influencing others through training and knowledge creation, collaboration and advocacy. Scaling up in the context of watershed programs encompasses all these dimensions.

Organizational Design

One of the critical aspects in scaling up is the choice of the right organizational design. As organizations grow large, there is a shift to

People's Contribution: A Measure for Ensuring Sustainability

The issue of people's contribution has assumed importance as a measure for enhancing sustainability of the physical interventions. In a way, it is also a measure of effectiveness of a program, which can be judged by the demand that a development intervention is able to generate for itself in terms of the total private investment that it is able to catalyze. However, not all the programs lay equal emphasis on community contribution. Figure 2, 3 and 4 gives the community contribution mobilized in some of the watershed projects of RGMWM, BAIF-Gujarat and WOTR, respectively.

Figure 3: Community Contribution, Shahdol, RGMWM

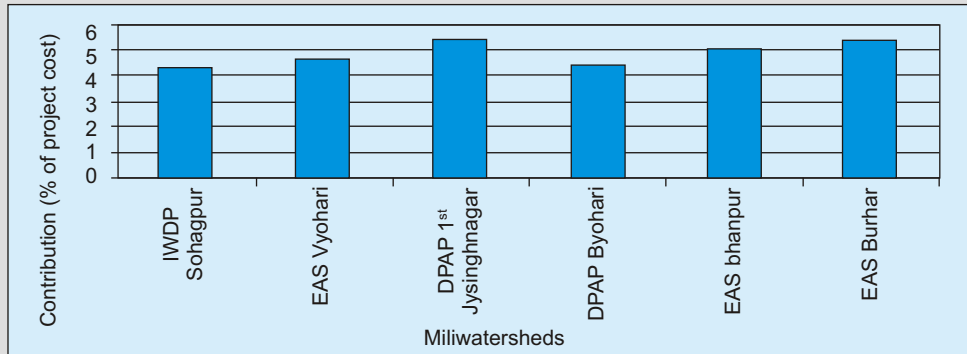


Figure 4: Community Contribution, BAIF-Gujarat

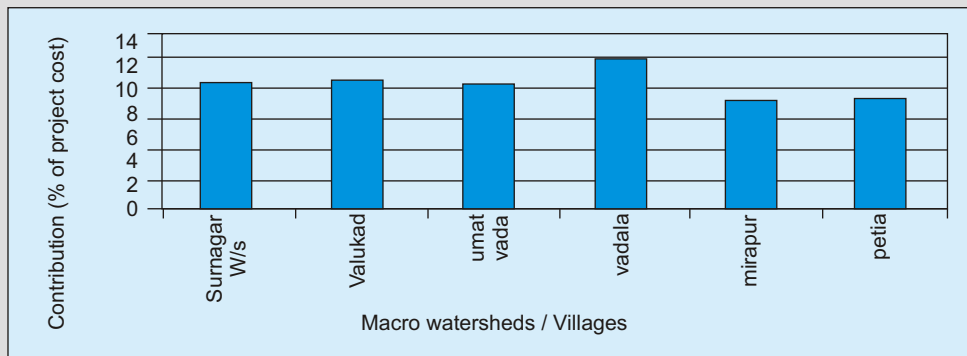
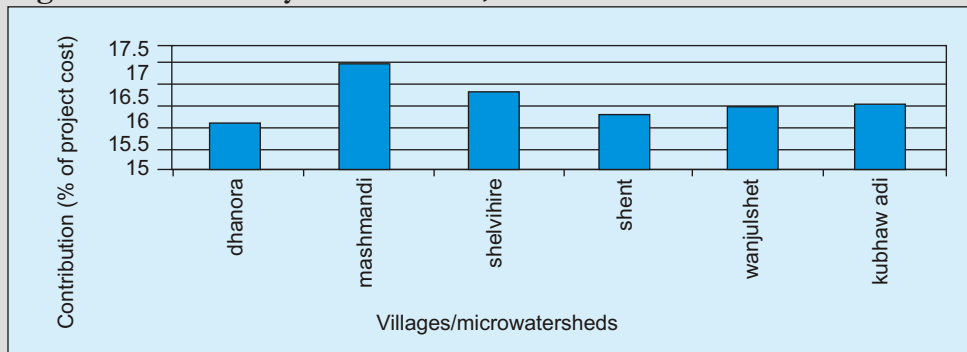


Figure 5: Community Contribution, WOTR



MYRADA depicts significant departure by laying emphasis on community using loans for watershed treatment. In its Kollegal project, the loan to grant ratio is 0.89, the loans accounting for almost half of the total investment. The repayment rates are also encouraging. This is done by putting greater emphasis treatment of private land.

divisional structure. All the programs discussed above have more or less adopted a divisional structure where each division is by and large autonomous. MYRADA has 16 project offices spread across 3 states; BAIF operates through 7 state level societies; WOTR has 9 regional resource centres for better interaction with partner NGOs and RGMWM has a wide network of DRDAs and Zilla Panchayats at district level. The divisional managers are responsible for performance and hold complete strategic and operational decision-making authority.

Fund security is an important variable influencing decisions regarding scaling up.

The central headquarters provides support services to these divisions. This support activity involves mobilization and regularization of funds, research and knowledge creation, training and capacity building, policy advocacy, networking and collaboration. Additionally, the central body also acts as a coordinating agency and as an overseer, evaluating and controlling performance. For instance, in BAIF a core team at the central office at Pune plays the important role of liaising with government and other development agencies and also provides technical and managerial support to the field functionaries. BAIF has helped all its 9 state level societies to develop an identity of their own. Many of these societies publish their annual progress report independent of the parent body.

Many NGOs are experimenting with this idea of creating spin-offs, which helps them gain scale while maintaining responsiveness and accountability at the grass-roots. It also allows them economies of scale in planning, acquisition of capital and spreading of risks. However, coordination between the different divisions becomes a major concern as the organizations expand further.

Fund Security

Irregularity in fund management is often cited as the major impediment to implementation. Thus, fund security is an important variable influencing

decisions regarding scaling up. The organizations covered under the study, however, belong to a category in which flow of funds, by and large, is not a serious issue. However, this does not mean that it is not a concern at all. These programs are relatively better off than scores of smaller NGOs because of their reputation and demonstrated capability in the sector.

WOTR originated as a support organization for a bilateral program with assured fund flow from *Kfw* and the *Gtz*, Germany. The regularity of funds was ensured by routing it through NABARD as well as directly to WOTR (See Box 1). The credibility gained through the work in initial years helped WOTR in securing funds regularly. Similarly, for BAIF and MYRADA, as scaling up has largely been a result of 'pull factor', they too enjoy a considerable degree of fund security. In some of the donor funded projects like German Agro Action's Hollalkere project MYRADA has got full flexibility to design the project structure and implement it accordingly. Besides, MYRADA has built a large endowment (worth 11 crore) for organizational sustainability. MYRADA has also initiated 'soft loans', shifting the reliance of the program from grants to loans. The strategy is particularly crucial for scaling up, as the same fund can be used number of times by rotation and more area can be covered under the program. However, the recent shift in focus of the funding agency to northern and eastern part of the country is a cause of concern.

In case of RGMWM, fund flows were interrupted, which affected the quality of the program. For instance in Chhindwara district which was receiving funds under IWDP and EAS for watershed development, only a few projects were completed. IWDP funding was recent but majority of the EAS projects were mid way through, as EAS funds had suddenly dried up.

Withdrawal

The policy on withdrawal is perhaps the most significant variable having a bearing on sustainable scaling up. The differing origin and philosophy of organizations have a significant impact on their withdrawal policy. For instance, BAIF does not

believe in the concept of complete withdrawal. It works in a program mode with a mission to ensure livelihood security of the people. Watershed development is used just as an approach towards achieving this larger objective. For MYRADA, withdrawal is gradual shifting of roles. The concept of creating resource centres (RC) in areas from where it is completely withdrawing, is a remarkable innovation. It helps MYRADA to be in constant touch with the village institutions it had built, and to know about their activities and progress. Till date, more than 40 RCs have been promoted. The RCs provide all necessary support and services such as training, information on markets, credit, insurance to the CBOs such as SAGs and WMAs. All the CBOs have to pay a monthly fixed amount for all new services they require from the RC. The continued support to community in case of BAIF and MYRADA is a critical factor explaining the social capital they built.

WOTR runs in an entirely project mode - after five years of intervention, the implementing agency walks off the village (IGWDP). With regard to its own projects, withdrawal is spread over several years post project completion. In case of RGMWM there is immediate withdrawal after the project duration is over. What happens to the treatment is left to the community. While it is reasonable to expect that the community would take care of the treatments, there is hardly any evidence of community utilizing the opportunity created by watershed programs. For instance, according to a NABARD official, not more than a few villages have utilized the watershed development fund, created under IGWDP. The funds are lying idle, in fact are fattening with interests. In case of RGMWM, at the time of withdrawal the watershed development fund is handed over to the Panchayat. This creates a role dilemma for the village watershed committee (VWC) and sustainability of treatments is hampered.

Indirect Scaling Up

In case of MYRADA, WOTR and BAIF, one important dimension of scaling up has been knowledge creation, capacity building, collaboration and advocacy. All these organizations perceive a significant role for

themselves in influencing policies, by capitalizing on the greater voice they command by virtue of

In case of MYRADA, WOTR and BAIF one important dimension of scaling up has been knowledge creation, capacity building, collaboration and advocacy.

their reputation.

One major achievement of MYRADA was in changing the policy with the help of NABARD which helped the SAGs access bank finance. Similarly WOTR has played a catalytic role in the passing of some resolutions and orders by Maharashtra government towards enhancing the effectiveness of watershed programs.

All the three NGOs studied, extend technical and managerial support to smaller NGOs. In Maharashtra both BAIF and WOTR serve as 'mother NGOs' training and monitoring watershed activities of smaller NGOs. MYRADA has 11 training centres called Centre for Institutional Development and Organizational Reform (CIDORs), spread in different project areas providing training to MYRADA staff, other NGOs and Government departments. Same is true for WOTR which conducts several training programs for smaller NGOs, CBOs and government officials. BAIF too has a large training centre at Pune and a central research station at Urulikanchan.

CONCLUSION

Sustainable scaling up of watershed development programs continues to be a challenge. Even after more than three decades of operation, the program has failed to generate a demand from the rural communities, and continues to run in a largely supply-driven mode. The impacts of the program are also yet to be fully comprehended. To make matters worse, there are doubts on the long-term sustainability of the bio-physical and institutional interventions. One reason for this is the origin of the program as a drought relief measure, with the limited objective of employment generation and soil and water conservation. Recent developments in terms of

making special efforts to involve the local communities for greater effectiveness and sustainability of the interventions had limited impact. Given the innumerable benefits of the program, however, it is expected that public investments in this sector would keep coming in the foreseeable future. The challenge is to ensure greater returns from these investments.

The organizations studied in this paper and many others which have spent considerable time and energy in implementation of watershed programs and are also known for their success, offer great learning grounds in understanding some of the innovations that make the programs more effective and sustainable.

For watershed programs to succeed on a large-scale, we need scores of local organizations of people. Organizations such as MYRADA, WOTR and BAIF can serve as support organizations to this web of small scale institutions. The concept of mother NGO and CAPART's Support Voluntary Organization (SVO) model, where NGOs with experience and demonstrated capability train and monitor smaller NGOs and CBOs, appears to be an ideal mechanism for driving the program on a country-wide scale.



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IWMI-Tata Water Policy Program

The IWMI-Tata Water Policy Program was launched in 2000 with the support of Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai. The program presents new perspectives and practical solutions derived from the wealth of research done in India on water resource management. Its objective is to help policy makers at the central, state and local levels address their water challenges – in areas such as sustainable groundwater management, water scarcity, and rural poverty – by translating research findings into practical policy recommendations.

Through this program, IWMI collaborates with a range of partners across India to identify, analyse and document relevant water-management approaches and current practices. These practices are assessed and synthesised for maximum policy impact in the series on Water Policy Research Highlights and IWMI-Tata Comments.

The policy program's website promotes the exchange of knowledge on water-resources management, within the research community and between researchers and policy makers in India.

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