

Watershed Development Project in Gujarat.



A Quick Review



Gujarat Ecology Commission

GERI Campus, Race Course Road, Vadodara 390 007, India.

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PREFACE

This study is an attempt to get some early signals from the on-going implementation of over twelve hundred micro watershed projects in the state. To an extent it serves the purpose of a concurrent evaluation though, the analysis goes beyond that and discusses some of the larger issues pertaining to the project-design. In doing so, we have tried to obtain feedback from a wide range of people representing the three sets of stakeholders i.e. the funders (DRDAs); the facilitators (PIAs); and the actual doers (i.e. the village communities). Since project implementation in most cases, has moved only half way, it has constrained our analysis which at times has kept certain crucial threads open ended. Hence several of the observations made here may be treated as tentative rather than as final conclusions. Notwithstanding these limitations, we hope, that this study will help drawing attention to some of the vital issues that need a more detailed probing and discussions at larger forums where experiences from different parts of the country especially, from the similar agro-climatic situations could be shared and discussed.

We are glad that the Gujarat Ecology Commission has taken up this initiative to get an objective assessment of the current status of the Watershed Development Project in Gujarat. We would like to thank Shri C.J. Jose, IAS, Member Secretary and Shri Noel D'lima, Director at the Gujarat Ecology Commission for providing us an opportunity to look into this, one of the most critical interventions towards a ensuring sustainable development of the rural economies. We are also grateful to Shri Raval, Deputy Director at the Commissionerate of Rural Development and to the officials of the DRDAs at Rajkot, Amreli, Surendranagar, Panchmahals and Bharuch for providing the required information. We had long discussions with the members of 18 PIAs from which we collected a detailed information about their field experiences. We are particularly thankful to them and also to the members of the village communities for sparing their time, views and insights on the project. We are specially thankful to Shri Rajesh Shah and Shri Ramchandran for helping us sharpening our questionnaires.

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