



Contents lists available at SciVerse ScienceDirect

Journal of Cleaner Production

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jclepro

'Does watershed development implemented through public private partnership empower women? a case review from Rajasthan, Western India'



Debadayita Raha ^{a,*}, Henny Osbahr ^{a,b,c,d,1}, Chris Garforth ^{a,2}

^a School of Agriculture, Policy and Development, University of Reading, Whiteknights, P.O. Box 237, Reading, Berkshire RG6 6AR, United Kingdom

^b Graduate Institute of International Development & Applied Economics, School of Agriculture, Policy and Development, University of Reading, Whiteknights, P.O. Box 237, Reading RG6 6AR, United Kingdom

^c Walker Institute for Climate Systems Research, School of Agriculture, Policy and Development, University of Reading, Whiteknights, P.O. Box 237, Reading RG6 6AR, United Kingdom

^d Centre for Food Security, School of Agriculture, Policy and Development, University of Reading, Whiteknights, P.O. Box 237, Reading RG6 6AR, United Kingdom

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 1 April 2011

Received in revised form

11 June 2012

Accepted 26 August 2012

Available online 2 October 2012

Keywords:

Asia
India
Watershed
Poverty
Equity
Environmental services

ABSTRACT

This paper critically examines the impact of the 'Guidelines for Hariyali' – a rural watershed development policy launched in Rajasthan, Western India which has been implemented through a Public Private Partnership (PPP) – for local communities. In 2003, the Government of India launched the 'Guidelines' (a comprehensive Integrated Wastelands Development Programme and Drought Prone Areas Programme and Desert Development Programme), the purpose of which is to restore ecological balance by harnessing, conserving and developing natural resources in drought-prone and arid rural areas for the benefit of villages. In the particular case-study area, the policy has been implemented through institutional linkages between a corporation and the government with the aim of sharing responsibilities for finances, planning, implementation and monitoring, the end goal being to enhance the livelihoods of rural households. The analysis focuses specifically on how the 'Guidelines' have affected the livelihoods of Rajasthani women, drawing upon findings from focus groups with men and women in the project catchment area, as well as interviews with key actors at public and private sector institutions. Findings reveal that there are significant gaps between policy objectives and the realities on the ground, particularly in the context of women's accessibilities and entitlements. The paper also broadens understanding of how PPPs, if implemented properly, could empower women in the area of watershed management across rural South Asia.

© 2012 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

List of acronyms: CEDAW, Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women; DDP, Desert Development Programme; DNK, Danji Khera (Village 1); DKK, Dudaji Ka Khera (Village 2); DPAP, Drought Prone-Areas Programme; FES, Foundation for Ecological Security; FGD, Focus Group Discussion; ITC, Indian Tobacco Company; HYV, High Yielding Variety; IPNM, Integrated Plant Nutrient Management; IWDP, Integrated Wasteland Development Programme; JKK, Jassuji Ka Khera (Village 5); MDGs, Millennium Development Goals; MDP, Madhupuriya (Village 3); MKK, Mala Ka Khera (Village 4); NGOs, Non-Governmental Organisations; OBC, Other Backward Caste; PIA, Project Implementing Agency; PPCP, Public Private Community Partnership; PPP, Public Private Partnerships; PRI, Panchayati Raj Institutions; SC, Scheduled Caste; SHG, Self Help Groups; SSI, Semi Structured Interview; ST, Scheduled Tribe; WDT, Watershed Development Team.

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +44 (0) 115 82 32535; fax: +44 (0) 115 95 15249.
E-mail addresses: debadayita.raha@nottingham.ac.uk (D. Raha), h.osbahr@reading.ac.uk (H. Osbahr), c.j.garforth@reading.ac.uk (C. Garforth).

¹ Tel.: +44 (0) 118 378 8314.

² Tel.: +44 (0) 118 378 8134.

1. Introduction

This paper critically examines the impact on local communities of the 'Guidelines for Hariyali', a rural watershed development policy launched in Rajasthan, Western India which has been implemented through a Public Private Partnership (PPP). Water scarcity is a serious livelihood constraint in the semi-arid regions of Rajasthan (Bhandari and Sumita, 2009; Foundation for Ecological Security, 2007), reinforcing problems of rural poverty and limited agricultural development (Ellis, 2000; Scoones, 1998). Addressing water scarcity is critical in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in water security, poverty reduction, and rural development (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2009). Over the years the Government of India has developed

policy responses to prioritise improvements in water availability and water conservation across the semi-arid regions, through the implementation of watershed projects (Government of India, 2008a,b,c,d). One of the processes of delivery promoted by the government since 2005 is public private partnerships, where watershed projects are joint development initiatives between private sector corporations, non-governmental organisations in India and the government (Government of India, 2006).

The impacts of water scarcity are experienced differentially by men and women in rural semi-arid regions (D'Souza, 1998; Pangare, 1998). Developing institutional partnerships that promote gender equality, women's empowerment and good governance is a policy objective of the Indian government watershed initiatives (Government of India, 2008a,b,c,d). This reflects the MDGs requirement of better attention to partnerships for development, gender equity and women's empowerment (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2009). Women are the backbone of the rural economy as primary users of natural resources for agriculture, as well as the custodians and conservators of these resources (Prasanna and Pitamber, 2007). There has, however, been limited assessment of the effectiveness of these policy processes in Indian watershed projects and their impact on women's livelihoods. Assessing impact is challenging because entitlements of men and women are dynamic, interactive and interwoven. It is important to assess how these interactions of power between men and women change across different economic class or between different caste groups (Bhan, 2001; Krishnaraj, 2007). As economic and social circumstances alter, so do the environmental entitlement profiles of individuals and groups relative to each other. The respective social rights and responsibilities of men and women, extending to the environmental domain, are continually redefined to a greater or lesser extent and it is important to identify the linkages between policy, wider institutional context and local profiles (Joekes et al., 1996). At a local level, it is essential to understand the relative power equations between, and within, different 'actors' at different institutional scales including the community, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), the private sector and the government.

This paper reviews a case from rural semi-arid Rajasthan to explore the effectiveness of PPP in implementing a watershed development project to reduce water scarcity and enhance gender equity and women's empowerment. The paper will explore different institutional levels of PPP and dynamics of participation of men and women in watershed development programmes to assess the gap between policy rhetoric and practice. Socio-cultural factors at the local level like gender dynamics and social stratification can enable or constrain particular women's participation in the watershed project. Section 2 outlines useful frameworks of gender dynamics and social relations (social stratification and role of institutional actors) adopted by this research to explain how women's lives are influenced by the relations and interaction within the household and the village. A background to the study area (Section 3) and methodology (Section 4) are provided. Section 5 discusses women's participation in the watershed development project, the role of collective action approaches within a patriarchal and institutional context, and mechanisms through which policy implementers can engage women. Section 6 discusses the advantages and disadvantages of the policy delivery mechanism of PPP. The findings of this paper are highly relevant to women and water debates about the role of watershed development through PPP, keeping in mind that from the beginning of the implementation process, there needs to be space for women to capitalise on new opportunities by improving their self-confidence using 'women-specific' activities, and at the same time for an inclusive and sustained effort that makes men within

a patriarchal context, recognise the contribution of women through a 'gendered' approach.

2. Women and public private partnership within the development policy discourse

This paper has identified and summarized ways of engaging women in the reviewed Rajasthan watershed implementation case which have proven successful in the context, thus showing what works at local level in particular places, may help to generate related strategies in other places. Starting in local communities, with women's leadership, and communicating with others who are also facing similar challenges, is a promising way forward to engage women and water management in times of climate change through participatory and inclusive processes (Figueiredo and Perkins, 2013). There are two lines of discussion and analysis in this paper, firstly dealing with women and water (within a watershed project) and the second thread is about the implications for women as a result of implementation of watershed through the delivery mechanism of public private partnership.

Women are affected by poor water management and water scarcity, yet they face great difficulties in participating effectively in local water governance bodies due to gendered roles and responsibilities (Figueiredo and Perkins, 2013). Water is gathered and used predominantly by women in rural areas of developing countries, yet they are not always included in the development planning (Shonsey and Gierke, 2013). The ultimate objective of watershed projects is to develop the natural resource base, sustain its productivity, improve the standard of living of millions of poor farmers and landless labourers, and endeavour to restore the ecological balance (Arya, 2007). This article focuses on a community-based watershed project in dryland regions such as Rajasthan to provide a better understanding of how social, institutional and ecological dynamics affect women's participation in the water management initiatives of the Government of India. The Climate Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007 Synthesis Report suggests that climate change is going to aggravate the water stress currently faced by many countries, while some countries that currently do not experience water stress will become at risk of water stress (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007).³

Climate change does not happen in a vacuum in developing countries, existing developmental challenges, such as poverty, gender and structural inequalities, and inadequate infrastructure further aggravate the vulnerability of the poor, and women in particular (Figueiredo and Perkins, 2013). We must recognize and address the many interactions between climate change and existing gender inequalities, in order to reduce the likelihood that the livelihoods of already vulnerable and marginalized people will be significantly worsened by climate change (Arya, 2007; D'Souza, 1998; Kerr, 2002; Pangare, 1998).

The first thread of this paper discusses literature based on women and water and related issues. Kerr (2002) mentions, that watershed projects in India have been successful in achieving conservation and productivity benefits but also show evidence of skewed distribution of benefits toward larger landholders. He points out that it is clear that satisfaction with watershed projects is positively correlated to land holding size, while poor and landless people only indirectly benefit through increased agricultural employment or peripheral activities such as microfinance (Kerr, 2002).

Arya (2007) indicates that Government of India watershed initiatives of soil and water conservation measures undertaken have failed to take into consideration the imbalance between men

³ Available at: <http://www.ipcc.ch> - accessed 05.05.2012.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/8107160>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/8107160>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)