

Guidelines for Utilization of Watershed Development Fund (WDF) under PMKSY-WDC, Assam

1. Watershed Development Fund (WDF):

Watershed Development Fund is created at each watershed level in all the Watershed Development Projects for ensuring the post project maintenance of community assets created in the watersheds. One of the mandatory conditions for selection of villages for watershed projects is people's contribution towards WDF. The contribution to WDF shall be a minimum of 10% of the cost of NRM works executed on private land only. However in case of SC/ST farmers the minimum contribution shall be 5% of the cost of the NRM works executed on their lands.

These contributions would be acceptable either in cash at the time of execution of work or in terms of voluntary labour. User charges, sales proceeds and income earned from assets created under the project on common property resources shall be deposited in the WDF bank account. Individuals as well as charitable institutions should be encouraged to contribute generously to this fund. The WDF bank account is jointly operated by President / Secretary of the concerned Watershed Committee and WDT nominee/leader of the respective Watershed project.

2. Utilization of WDF:

After completion of a watershed project the WDF funds shall be reserved for maintenance of assets created on community land or for common use under the project. Works taken up on private land shall not be eligible for repair maintenance out of this fund.

3. Availability of WDF:

The department has done an exercise to assess the WDF fund availability in various schemes since inception of the department and it is found that certain amount is available in the respective watershed development fund accounts.

4. Proposed Operational Guidelines for WDF:

a) Necessity of the Fund:

The high value water harvesting structures such as Check dams, Nala bunds, Percolation Tanks, Farm Ponds etc., created in the watersheds are prone to damages by stray cattle, rain, sunshine, wind and unexpected natural calamities after the project period. In such cases the damaged assets on private lands have to be repaired by beneficiaries themselves, but such assets damaged on the community lands cannot be repaired unless there is a source of fund. Hence in order to ensure longer sustainability of these assets, it is necessary to create a fund called WDF.

b) Creation of Fund:

As per respective project guidelines, the people's contributions, User charges, sales proceeds and income earned from assets created under the project on common property resources shall be deposited in the WDF bank account. Individuals as well as charitable institutions should be encouraged to contribute generously to this fund.

c) Monitoring of the Fund:

An Exclusive Joint Bank Account should be opened in a nationalized bank in the name of President and Secretary of the concerned Watershed Committee and all the money collected as per the above para should be deposited in that account. The bank account should be jointly operated by President / Secretary of the concerned Watershed Committee and the respective representatives of PIA. However, drawal for the account will be subject to approval of the concern Project Manager of the district.

The post project monthly remuneration of Watershed Secretary may be paid out of the WDF for a period of not more than one year depending on working period.

d) Preparation of Action Plan and approval of funds:

The Application received from User Groups for taking up of maintenance works of already executed works will be verified by the Watershed Committee. They will prioritize the applications on the basis of necessity of works in consultation with the WTD nominee. The Project Manager will take necessary arrangement for approving the Action Plan for the maintenance works.

e) Execution of Maintenance Work:

The project Implementing Agency (PIA) should frequently visit the completed/saturated watershed and find out the works which are needed to be repaired. The estimates are to be sanctioned by CEO, SLNA or Chairman of WCDC. After due sanctions, repair work can be taken up by PIA as per departmental account procedures.

The amount available in the WDF account will be spent in the slab s given bellow.

Year	Principal amount with Interest accrued
1 st year	50%
2 nd year	50%

All the availability amount in the WDF account may be utilized over a period of five years and not less than two years. The repair charges of such works should not exceed 25% of the basic cost of that work. After five years the assets has to be maintained by the respective Watershed Committee.

