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NEWSLETTER

SUSTAINABLE CATCHMENT FOREST MANAGEMENT (SCATFORM) PROJECT



MESSAGE FROM CEO & PD

On behalf of SCATFORM, I am delighted to share the October 2021 newsletter of the project. The primary purpose of the newsletter is to inform the readers about the project and periodically share the progress and achievements of the project. This October 2021 newsletter overviews the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) and Management Information System (MIS) of the project.

The Project aims to improve quality of forest in the targeted catchment with main focus on catchment protection. The duration of this project is 10 years and the project components include bio-physical interventions (in forestry and soil & water conservation) and livelihood interventions.

The information contained in this and subsequent newsletters, I believe, would contribute towards maintaining transparency that SCATFORM would like to promote in its functioning and operations.

Dr. Avinash M Kanfode, IFS
Chief Executive Officer & Project Director



1. Introduction

The Overall Goal of the Sustainable Catchment Forest Management Project (SCATFORM) is to improve quality of forest in the targeted catchment by sustainable forest management, soil and moisture conservation and livelihood development, thereby contributing to development of forest ecosystem services and livelihood improvement of forest dependent communities in the State of Tripura.

1.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Strategy provides guidance in operationalizing a robust M&E plan for SCATFORM. M&E are effective tools in enhancing the quality of project planning & management and thus, assisting project partners track the progress throughout the project period. The M&E Strategy would define broad guidelines for evaluating and assessing the outcome and output indicators as identified in the project Log-frame.

Monitoring helps project managers understand whether the project is progressing as per schedule and ensure if project inputs, activities, outputs and external factors are proceeding as planned. Evaluation, on the other hand, is a tool to help project managers assess the extent to which the projects have achieved the objectives set forth in the project documents.

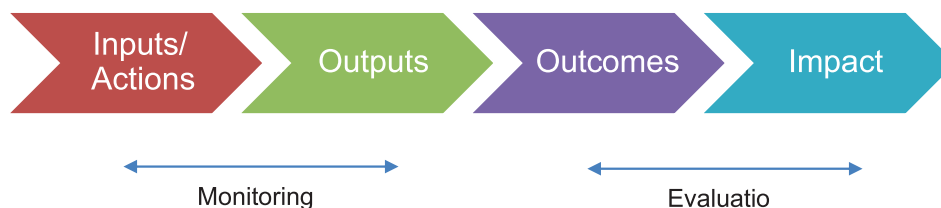
1.2 Scope of Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

To put it briefly, the document will guide project stakeholders especially Project Management Unit (PMU) to

- define and execute long term and short-term goals,
- measure and monitor activities and processes,
- take corrective steps as suggested by analyzing monitoring data and,
- assess the impact of the programme created on the target beneficiaries.

While the document would not guide the internal Management Information System (MIS) of the project, the M&E reports will utilize the data/information collected from MIS. It is expected that the MIS information is collected and stored in a fashion that reports can be generated at will and therefore will be useful for regular monitoring.

Figure - The logic model



The M&E strategy is different from MIS in the sense that where MIS is focussed on tracking inputs and activities, M&E strategy is focused on assessing the outputs, outcomes and impacts. While there is a direct and close link between MIS and M&E and M&E strategy uses information collected in the MIS for informing some of the indicators, it does not provide details of the MIS system i.e. what information the MIS system should collect and what should be the processes etc.

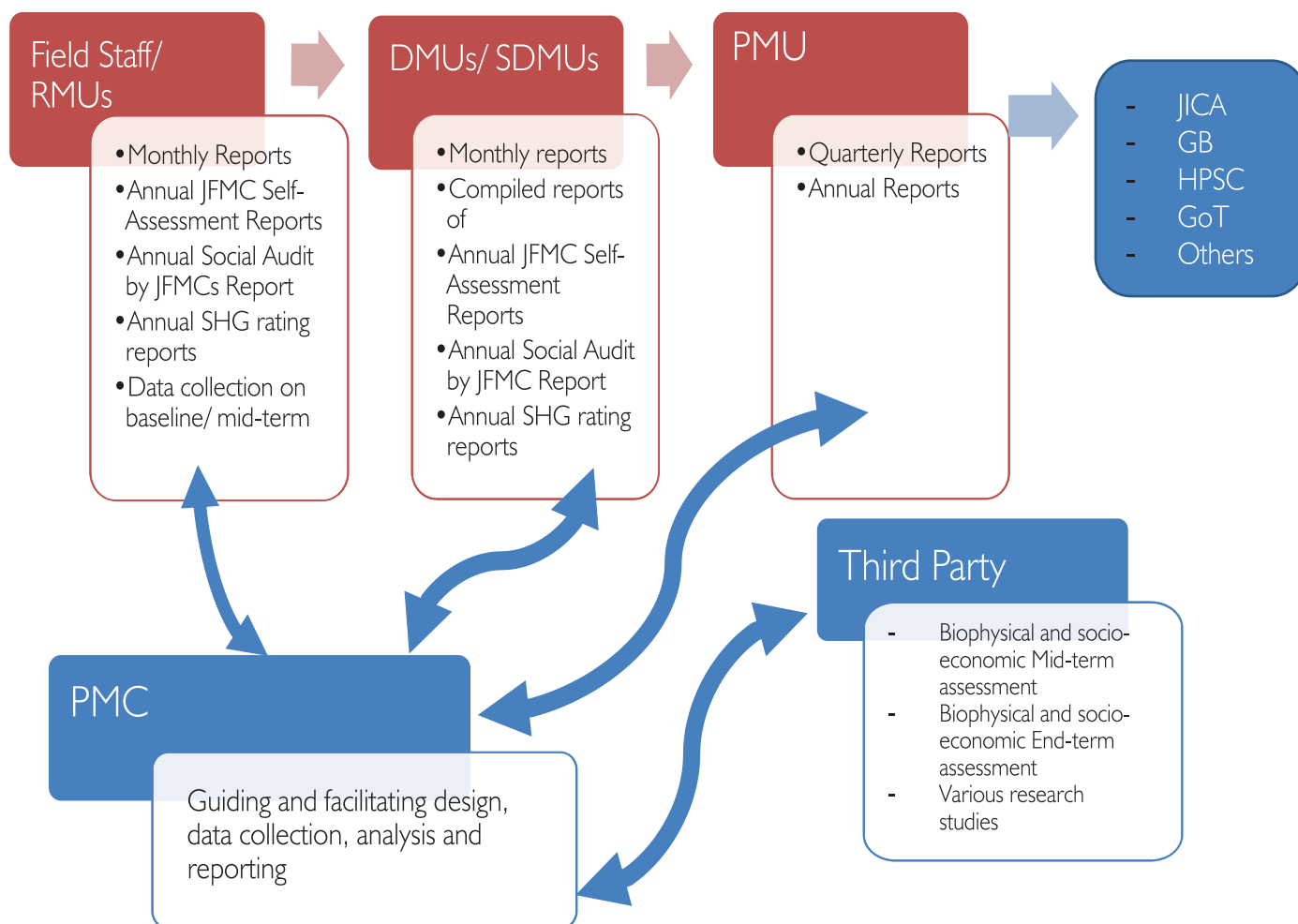
A web-based MIS application is being developed which would be integrated with GIS for planning and monitoring the project progress throughout the project duration.

2. Audience

Six different types of stakeholders benefit from the information collected in this M&E strategy document:

- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) - Mainly interested in overall direction of the program, outcomes and impacts
- PMU - Use information as basis for any strategic/operational adjustments or decisions, tracking progress
- District Management Units (DMUs)/ Sub-Divisional Management Units (SDMUs) - use information for operational adjustments/tracking progress
- Range Management Units (RMUs) - Use information for tracking progress
- Field Staff - Use information for tracking progress
- Government of Tripura - Use information for any policy uptake

3. Accountability, Responsibility and Roles



4. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

MIS is a system which provides information for monitoring, evaluation and other aspects (physical and financial tracking). An online MIS is proposed in the project which will provide almost real time information on different aspects in the project. Besides the information from MIS, qualitative and other information will be provided by field staff at RMU level and monitoring reports will be drafted.

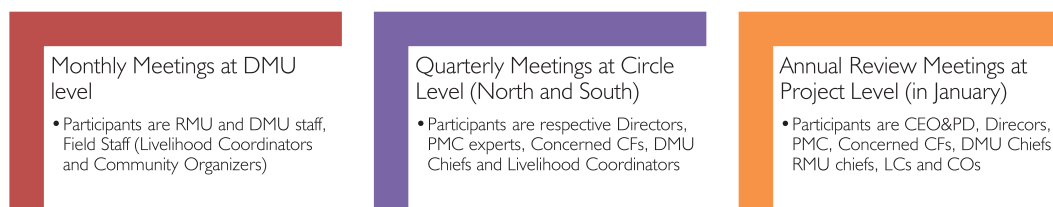
4.1 Implementation

The project implementation will be primarily undertaken by Forest Department with support from field staff and Project Management Consultants. The implementation will focus on achieving the outputs which are linked to the outcomes and strategic impact of the project. The project implementation will happen in batches in which the bio-physical work will be carried out in three batches.

4.2 Monitoring and Reporting

Each expected result (output, outcome and impact) generated by activities that the SCATFORM will undertake will be measured using the logical framework indicators. PMC, in consultation with PMU, will develop and make available user-friendly reporting tools to facilitate information collection and dissemination. Also, PMC will assist PMU in carrying out evaluation events/ studies internally or through third parties as envisaged in the indicator table. Given the scale and spread of the project as well as the variety of stakeholders, periodic monitoring events are essential. The details of such proposed periodic events are given in the following illustration.

Figure 2 - Periodic monitoring events



4.3 Measurement

The measurement of the output, outcome and impact indicators will be through different tools and processes. The timing, frequency and responsibility for carrying out these processes vary, which have already been developed. The trainings will be provided to stakeholders for conducting these processes and preparing these reports. These trainings will be facilitated by PMC in consultation with PMU.

4.4 Outcome

These different reports generated through M&E system and MIS would help project to plan, monitoring in better way in time bound manner. This would also be beneficial for PMU to mid-course correction and enabling PMU to take informed decisions on time for implementation of different project activities.

5. Progress so far

5.1 M&E

M&E Framework has been developed and approved by PMU. Baseline tool has been developed with assistance from PMC and a mobile and web-based application of this tool has also been developed for inhouse data collection from the JFMCs and SHGs. Presently data from batch-I & II has been collected and analysis is underway for DMU wise presentation. These baseline findings would also help PMU in planning the project activities and assess the progress and evaluation (mid-term and end-term) from time to time.

5.2 MIS

Agency for developing the MIS Application has been selected who would deploy human resources and also assist PMU in developing the infrastructure (Hardware and Software). It is proposed that MIS application would be for the entire TFD where all the centrally sponsored schemes, state plan

schemes and externally aided projects e.g. SCATFORM, IGDC etc. can be used for progress monitoring. This would also create dependency of TFD for generating the various reports as per requirement and would serve a single window reporting system for the entire TFD. Continuous use of this application by TFD would ensure post-project sustainability of this MIS would be continued in use by the department even after ending of this project.

Agency would carry out a SRS study where all stakeholders of the TDF would be consulted about their requirement and based on the outcome of this study Application framework and workflow would be developed. Based on the requirements for all the above applications (tentative) following MIS Modules will be developed. The above list is indicative and may have additional modules and reports. The final modules will be frozen in the SRS document.

1. Beat Forest Basic Plan (BFBP)
2. Microplanning
3. Baseline Survey
4. Sustainable Forest Management
5. Soil and Water Conservation
6. Livelihood development
7. Capacity building
8. Monthly Progress Report (MPR)
9. Analytical Reports
10. MIS Administration

Data input formats are being developed by PMC in consultation with PMU and TFD for these above-mentioned modules. Proposed web and mobile based applications would be developed using open-source software and also would be integrated with GIS application and database. Data on this application would be updated by RMUs at JFMC and SHG level which are the project implementation units and automatically data would be consolidated at RMU/SDMU/DMU/PMU level for viewing the progress reports in just a few clicks.

YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE NEWSLETTER

We request and encourage you to share your experiences under the Project. You can highlight activities and achievements of the Joint Forest Management Committee. We can also consider inspiring stories of individuals who are doing good work which needs to be shared with other people in the state. This will provide recognition to individuals and provide opportunities for other people to learn from the experiences. You can share your experiences with our field personnel / JFMC.

You can also write to us at : tripurajica@gmail.com

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