

# Context Paper Four

## Underlying Principles of Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

### Introduction

The participatory approach to planning, monitoring, and evaluation is not new. The history of human civilisation reveals that the process of development is based on this approach. In developing countries, participatory approaches are used regularly by the poor in rural communities as they pursue day-to-day activities. In fact, most social, cultural, financial, and development work in villages is undertaken using the participatory approach.

### Participatory Approach

There is no fixed universal mode of participatory action since this approach is simply the involvement of a group of people in all stages of the development process, including initiation, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and follow-up. At the more dynamic level of mobilising people for development, the participatory approach involves the active involvement or collaboration of all groups including policy-makers, officials, and beneficiaries. In other words, the participatory approach is a model for action with a range of techniques designed to:

- develop self – reliance,
- share responsibility,
- create awareness,
- mobilise for self-help,
- empower the poor,
- use human resources,
- organize for collective action, and
- make people feel part of the process.

The participatory approach requires

- willingness to work voluntarily;
- dedication and contributions of time, energy, and labour; and
- commitment to and responsibility for participatory action.

### Participatory Planning

In participatory planning, the beneficiaries and other participating groups act as decision-makers. In other

words, farmers and other local people are invited to decide what community-level development interventions should be made. Each decision is made on the basis of the consensus of the members, men and women, young and old, and disadvantaged majority and minority groups. Participatory planning has the following advantages:

- helps a community to make a plan to meet its needs;
- emphasises mobilising local resources;
- helps translate a plan into reality;
- fosters interaction among local farmers;
- helps identify real problems and their solutions; and
- assists in recognising reality and avoiding the pitfalls, irregularities, and discrepancies associated with misapprehensions.

### Key Elements of Participation

Participatory groups should be fully authorised to ensure that they benefit fully from the participatory work. They should be action-oriented and responsibly committed to the development process. To fulfill these aims effectively, a combination of the following elements is necessary:



Effective participatory action requires empowering people and organizing them to contribute collective action to achieve a common goal.

### Empowerment

Delegating rights and authority to participatory groups in decision-making, planning, implementation, evaluation, and monitoring makes the groups more democratic and authoritative. Empowerment is necessary to :

- strengthen the capability of the participatory groups or organizations;

## Processes Involved in Participatory Planning

Process	Purpose	Tools	Who does	Participants
a) Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)	to identify community resources, problems, constraints, etc	Transect walk, time-line, land-use mapping,	Planning group	beneficiaries/ UG/ communities
b) Participatory Social Appraisal (PSA)	to assess social and local institutions and their set-up, community dynamics, historical background, gender roles and issues, division of labour, etc	Seasonal calendar, social mapping, time-line, venn diagram	Planning group	" " "
c) Participatory Needs Assignment (PNA)	to identify problems and solutions and proposed actions	Asking questions	Planning group	" " "
d) Community Envisioning Exercise (CEE)	to discover visions, perceptions, through interests, demands, expectations, etc	meeting/ workshop	Planning group	" " "
e) Participatory Community Planning (PCP)	to propose a draft PCP plan generated by discussion and interaction	meeting/ workshop	Planning group	" " "
f) Community Consultation (CC)	to submit a draft plan for discussion, suggestions, comments, queries, concerns, etc	" "	Planning group	" " "
g) Replanning	to replan, readjust	meeting/work shop	Planning group	" " "
h) Endorsement	to present the plan to the community for endorsement and commitment to implement the plan	" "	Planning group	" " "

- stimulate the capabilities of poor people in self-management and self-help;
- mobilise local resources sustainably;
- narrow the gaps of social and economic inequalities;
- promote equitable access to resources (especially for women and other disadvantaged groups);
- evaluate people's priorities based on their needs and choices;
- make development initiatives more sustainable; and
- develop people-centred organization.

**Organization** - Organizing participatory groups to express the needs and demands of poor sectors of the society helps prevent development activities from overlooking or exploiting the rural poor. It provides an equal chance for all to participate in meetings, make decisions, and plan activities. It also helps the poor to win greater access to resources and to improve the quality of their services.

**Contribution** - Contribution and dedication are the key elements of effective participation. Members of participatory groups or organizations can contribute in terms of labour, skills, materials, money, time, and energy.

### Modes of Participation

The term 'participation' is used by different people in different ways. Some people think 'participation' is just a tool for implementing development activities by mobilising local people to provide free labour while others view it as a contribution or cost-sharing by local people in government programmes. Some definitions and modes of people's participation based on these ideas are as follow.

- Initiated Participation

Initiated participation means participation which originates with people themselves. It is an indigenous initiative in which people act by themselves for themselves.

## • Facilitated Participation

Facilitated participation is that which is initiated by agencies, usually NGOs or donors, not by the people. Agencies work to stimulate participation by participatory groups; outsiders intervene in order to create awareness and to motivate the participatory groups to act. This type of participation is not self-generated.

## • Co-opted Participation

Co-opted participation is participation forcefully arranged by outsiders like NGOs and donors. In this case, the participatory groups are often persuaded to participate through the provision of incentives. This type of participation is not driven by people's demands.

## • Induced Participation

Induced participation is often arranged by government-line agencies. Various propaganda, extension, and incentives are used to attract the participatory groups to participate in government programmes.

## Indicators of Participation

Indicators of participation have to be defined so that the level of participation can be measured. Indicators are generally based on the key elements of participation: empowerment, organization, and contribution. Indicators include:

- the number of local groups or organizations,
- the presence of farmers' representatives in local governing bodies,
- attendance at group meetings,
- participation in decision-making processes,
- level of local planning,
- attendance at implementation and planning activities,
- representation of men and women,
- amount of group finance from local sources,
- amount of savings mobilised, and
- capacity to maintain and manage local facilities & co-operatives.

## Strategies to increase people participation

- Sharing decision-making in groups
- Strengthening internal leadership
- Introducing participatory planning and implementation
- Monitoring and evaluating participation
- Sharing benefits equitably

## Participatory Monitoring

Monitoring is a continuous process which checks to see that everything goes according to plan as far as possible. It involves the periodic review of each activity at every level of implementation. This continuous process of

collecting information and providing feedback should ensure that the following goals are met:

- plans are followed,
- people are informed,
- inputs are provided on time,
- resources are used properly,
- adjustments or corrective action are taken, and
- problems are identified and solutions proposed.

The system by which participatory groups or beneficiaries themselves monitor is termed participatory monitoring. This type of self-monitoring system is usually simple because it is designed by participatory groups for their own use. Participatory groups should be responsible for measuring, recording, collecting, processing, and communicating the information as well as for using it to facilitate decision-making.

## Participatory Evaluation

Evaluation is the systematic analysis of data or information collected by monitoring. It is usually carried out at regular intervals. Participatory evaluation differs from project evaluation. Participatory evaluation is an evaluation carried out by local participatory groups or beneficiaries themselves, whereas project evaluation is normally non-participatory and is carried out by an expert or a panel of experts. In participatory evaluation, participatory groups are responsible for making decisions based on their analysis of the information gathered from participatory monitoring. Participatory groups design an evaluation system which they can use easily.

## Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME)

The system that facilitates the continuous monitoring needed to evaluate project activities and their impact is a Monitoring and Evaluation System (MES). The system may also assess whether the process is sustainable in the physical and socioeconomic as well as the sociopolitical sense. If the monitoring and evaluation is carried out by the local participatory groups or the beneficiaries, the MES is called Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME). The PME system is usually designed by the participatory or beneficiary groups for their own use.

A monitoring and evaluation system, whether it is participatory or non-participatory, should be designed to answer the following fundamental questions about a project :

- effectiveness,
- efficiency,
- relevance, and
- impact.

In a PME system, the members of a participatory group should actively participate in designing a PME system

which includes :

- indicators,
- a data collection system,
- the tabulation and analysis of data, and
- reporting.

The monitoring aspect of a PME system assesses inputs and outputs, whereas the evaluation aspect examines impacts.

A model of the number and kind of inputs, outputs, and impacts that are considered essential elements of monitoring and evaluation is given in Figure 1.

- **Inputs:** Goods, services, persons, technology and other resources provided to an activity with the expectation that they will produce outputs.

Examples: Seedlings, seeds, water, fertilizer, wire, cement, stones, sand, soil, bamboo, participation, labour, meetings, money, time, skill, knowledge

- **Outputs:** Specific products or services which an activity is expected to produce from its inputs in order to achieve the planned objectives.

Examples: plantation done, check dam constructed, nursery established, water sources protected, embankments constructed, roads constructed, area fenced, user groups formed, forest handed over, forest demarcated, terraces improved

- **Impacts:** Overall outcome of the specific effects of projects or programmes. The expressions of the results are directly associated with the project. Impacts may be defined as the ultimate change in the condition of things resulting from the project or programme.

Example: Physical environment stabilised, soil erosion controlled, critical area rehabilitated, income of local farmers increased, productivity of land increased

## Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME)

PME is a monitoring and evaluation programme or activity conducted by the participatory groups (farmers, beneficiaries, user groups or communities) themselves. Since it has to be done systematically and independently, PME is a simple way of collecting and processing data. PME increases a target group's control over project designing, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. In sum, PME has the following characteristics:

- demonstrative, not instructive;
- collaborative, not individualistic;
- explanatory, not persuasive;
- listening, not lecturing;

- discussing, not dominating; and
- farmer-oriented, not project-oriented.

The Purposes of PME are

- to assess information or generate data at the grassroots' level,
- to help grassroots' beneficiaries monitor and evaluate a project,
- to increase beneficiaries' commitment to and understanding of designing, planning and implementing a community-based project or programme,
- to promote self-help and self-reliance,
- to increase people's control over programmes, and
- to hand over the measuring stick to farmers' communities.

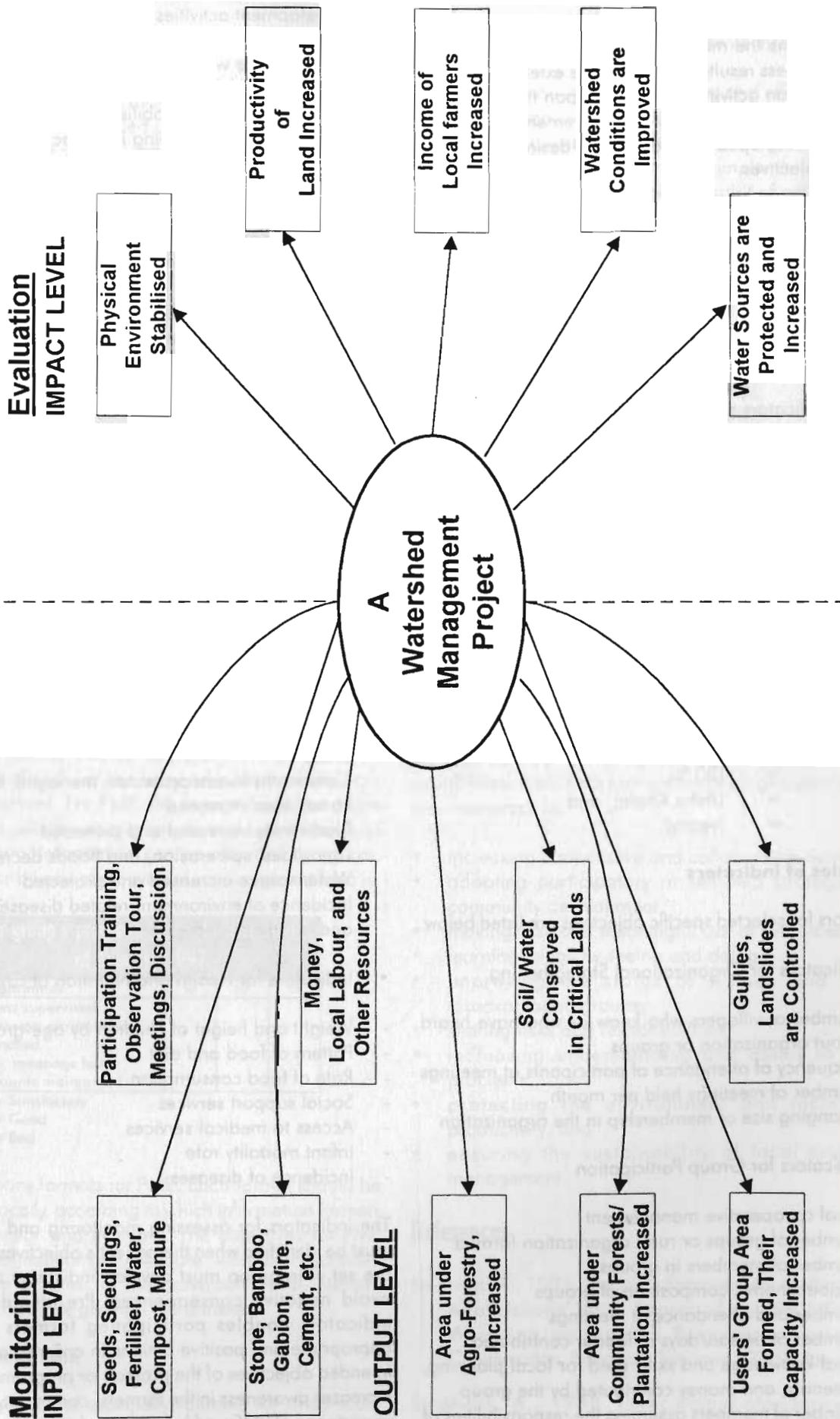
A tentative list of activities to be performed by farmers and development facilitators under a PME system is as follows.

Organize		Rank
Present		Score
Indiate		Quantify
Mobilize		Improve
Collect	Participatory	Map
Assess	Group	Sketch
Discuss	or	Write
Report	Farmers	Diagram
Control	or	Act
Reject	Beneficiaries	Implement
Change		Decide
Study		Analyse
Develop		Demonstrate
		Select
		Plan
		Learn
		Facilitate
		Catalyse
		Listen
	We	Watch
	or	Respond
	Development	Converse
	Facilitators	Inquire
		Obey
		Establish
		rapport

## Steps in PME

- Understand the project's goal and objectives
- Identify activities needed to achieve these objectives
- Develop indicators to measure each activity
- Develop tools to measure the indicator
- Present the information in simple formats
- Develop charts for each activity including its plan of action, target, and achievement

**Figure 1: Essential Elements of Monitoring and Evaluation to be Carried out in a Watershed Management Project**



## Indicators

An indicator is the measurement employed to measure changes, assess results, or to show the extent of progress achieved by an activity. Depending upon the objectives, there can be many kinds of measurements. Indicators should be developed for each activity desired to achieve specific objectives.

Indicators should be SMART

S = Specific  
M = Measurable  
A = Attainable  
R = Realistic  
T = Time-bound

and the indicators should reflect

- target group,
- quantity,
- quality,
- place, site, or location, and
- time.

For example, the specific objective is "The incomes of 100 farmer households in the Jhiku Khola watershed are to increase by 20 % yearly." In this statement the indicators to be measured are:

target group	=	(farmers household),
quantity	=	(100 farmers),
quality	=	(20 %),
site	=	(Jhiku Khola), and
time	=	(yearly).

### Examples of indicators

Indicators for selected specific objectives are listed below.

- Indicators for Organizational Strengthening
  - Number of villagers who know or who have heard about organization or groups
  - Frequency of attendance of participants at meetings
  - Number of meetings held per month
  - Changing size of membership in the organization
- Indicators for Group Participation
  - Local co-operative management
  - Number of groups or rural organization formed
  - Number of members in groups
  - Socioeconomic composition of groups
  - Number and attendance at meetings
  - Number of person/days of labour contributed
  - Local knowledge and skills used for local planning, materials, and money contributed by the group
  - Number of members assuming the responsibilities of office-bearing

- Number of times the members supervised or inspected development activities
- Funds collected from local sources and used for maintenance work
- Participation of farmers
- Amount of savings mobilised
- Capacity for maintaining local facilities

- Indicators for Gender Issues (Women in Development)

- Funds allocated for women in development activities
- Budget spent on women's activities
- Number of households headed by women
- Programme directly benefitting women
  - Women receiving credit
- Proportion of benefits shared with women
- Participation of women in decision-making, meetings, extension, motivation services, and rural organization
- Women trainees, employment, and remuneration
- Women trained in various activities
- Changes in literacy rate of women, health, and nutrition
- Changes in time spent by women on domestic and farm activities (division of labour)
- Change in women's income, expenditure, and savings
- Position of women in different statuses
- Women as land-owners and loan-takers

- Indicators for Environmental Issues

- Degree of rehabilitation of degraded and critical areas
- Community forests protected, managed, and utilised
- Forest area increased
- Biodiversity increased and protected
- Landslides, soil erosion, and floods decreased
- Water source increased and protected
- Incidence of environment-related disease, disasters, and accidents decreased

- Indicators for Health and Nutrition of Children

- Weight and height of children by age-group
- Pattern of food and diet
- Rate of food consumption
- Social support services
- Access to medical services
- Infant mortality rate
- Incidence of diseases

The indicators for assessing monitoring and evaluation must be identified when the project's objectives and goals are set. The group must develop indicators in order to avoid negative consequences. Pre-identification of indicators enables participating farmers to follow appropriate and positive actions in order to achieve the intended objectives of the projects or programme. It also increases awareness in the farmers' community about the importance of PME and helps them change their priorities

and actions, which, in turn, helps to sustain the projects and the programme.

## Tools

After designing the indicators, tools to measure the indicators should be decided upon. Some PRA tools can be used to collect data and information for PME. Participatory mapping, pie-charts, SSI, wealth-ranking, participatory group discussion, and field observation are some of the important PRA tools. At the community level, the beneficiaries, user groups, or farmers' community can also collect the data through discussion among themselves and direct observation of activities at the site.

Data should be collected in a simple form, in the local language, and at regular intervals (monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or yearly, etc).

Since monitoring and evaluation is an on-going and regular process, appropriate tools for participatory monitoring and evaluation of any field-level activities include:

- participatory field visits,
- discussion among farmers, and
- interviews with individual farmers.

## PME Charts and Formats

Data once collected should be presented in an accessible and readable format, with charts and graphs, on a regular basis. This format should represent the progress or achievement of each activity designed to meet the project's specific objectives. For PME, the format should be made as simple as possible so that any farmer can understand and fill in data. Information can be recorded by figures, diagrams, or by any other symbol, as suggested below.

User group's progress report for the month of January 1997			
Programmes	☺	☹	☹
Forest supervised			
Extension programme launched			
U.G. meetings held			
Accounts maintained			

☺ = Satisfactory  
 ☹ = Good  
 ☹ = Bad

There are many formats for PME. Each format should be developed locally, according to which information farmers want to monitor and evaluate. The objectives for PME should be to monitor and evaluate work-plan activities and to trace progress at the grassroots' level. Sample formats for PME are given in the annexes.

## Application of PME

PME has been found especially valuable for small-scale rural development projects in many developing countries.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation of a project is entirely the responsibility of the farmers' community. It is a self-reliance and self-help oriented practice for project monitoring and evaluation. PME serves three purposes:

- improves the farmers' efficiency and effectiveness in project management and decision-making;
- increases awareness and understanding of the various aspects of project planning and implementation; and
- strengthens and enhances the spirit of collaborative action and networking among farmers to make the project more beneficial for meeting their requirements.

PME is generally used to

- maintain records of progress;
- assess inputs, outputs, and impacts;
- obtain visible signs of achievement;
- indicate the timeliness of inputs;
- provide a data-base for discussion, review, planning, and decision-making;
- develop a basis for constructive changes in policy and for planning project activities; and
- justify the evidence of a project's effectiveness.

## Advantages of PME

PME is a participatory process that not only improves the capability of individual farmers to plan and manage their own resources but also empowers and equips groups of farmers to make appropriate decisions about management by increasing their knowledge, skills, and capabilities. It will help farmers and their groups manage their resources by:

- increasing cooperative and collaborative action;
- adopting participatory or self-help strategies for community development;
- making wise and meaningful use of resources;
- learning things by seeing and doing;
- improving the status of women and other disadvantaged groups;
- sharing risks and responsibilities;
- increasing understanding and ability to solve problems;
- protecting the environment and increasing productivity; and
- ensuring the sustainability of local resource management.

## References

- Stephens, A., 1996. 'People's Participation: Methods and Applications' In *A Report of the FAO/Finland Workshop on People's Participation in Upland Conservation*, Bangkok, Thailand 22-29 Nov. 1996.
- Stephens, A., 1988. *Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook for Training Fieldwork*.



## Annex: PME Workplan and Activities Monitoring Format

**Name of the Programme: Adult Education  
Target Sixty Adult Male/Female Farmers**

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Village, Ward No.:** \_\_\_\_\_ **VDC:** \_\_\_\_\_

Work Plan Format Activities	Months												Status	Rem.	
	Baisakh	Jestha	Ashadh	Shrawan	Bhadra	Aswin	Kartik	Mangsir	Poush	Magh	Falgun	Chaitra			
1. Site selection	✓														↔
2. Participant selection	✓														↔
3. Arrangement of teachers		✓													↔
4. Arrangement of teaching materials		✓													↔
5. Arrangement of class/ lectures			✓												↔
6. Class start				✓											↔
<u>Activities Monitoring Format</u>															
1. Site selection	✓														↑
2. Participant selection	✓														↑
3. Arrangement of teachers		✓													↑
4. Arrangement of teaching materials		✓													↑
5. Arrangement of class/ lectures			✓												↔
6. Class start				✓											↔

✓ = Work of Schedule

↔ = On Time

⇒ = Delay



## Annex: PME Workplan Format and Activities Monitoring Format

**Name of the Programme: Community Plantation**

**Target: 60 ha.**

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Village, Ward No:** \_\_\_\_\_ **VDC:** \_\_\_\_\_

Activities	Baishakh	Jestha	Ashadh	Shrawan	Status	Remarks
a. Site selection	●⇕					On time
b. Users group formation		●				On time
c. Estimation		●				On time
d. Site preparation for planting		●				On time
e. Plantation			●			On time

### Activities Monitoring Format

Activities	Baishakh	Jestha	Ashadh	Shrawan	Status	Remarks
a. Site selection	○	●			⇐	Slow in decision making
b. User group formation		●			⇕	On time
c. Estimation		●			⇕	On time
d. Site preparation for planting		○	●		⇐	Lack of labour/ participation
e. Plantation				●	⇐	Busy period of farmers community

● = Complete,  
○ = Delay,

○ = Partially Complete,  
⇕ = On Time

## Annex: PME Workplan and Activities Monitoring Format

Name of the Programme: **Agro-forestry**  
 Target: **Fifty households**

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Village, Ward No: \_\_\_\_\_

VDC: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Plan Format	Months												Status	Remarks	
	Baisakh	Jestha	Ashadh	Shrawan	Bhadra	Aswin	Kartik	Mangsir	Poush	Magh	Falgun	Chaitra			
1. Group meetings														On time	
2. Farmers' selection														On time	
3. Farm survey														On time	
4. Design/estimate														On time	
5. Group formation														On time	
6. Agreement														On time	
7. Farmers' meeting														On time	
8. Seeds/seedlings distribution														On time	
9. Planting/work completion														On time	
<b>Activities Monitoring Format</b>															
1. Group meetings						X		X	X						Farmers' busy
2. Farmers' selection								X	X						"
3. Farm survey									X	X					"
4. Design/estimate									X	X					Lack of participate & resource person
5. Group formation															Arrangement delay
6. Agreement															
7. Farmers' training															
8. Seed/seedlings distribution															
9. Planting/work completion													X		

----- Work Schedule  
 X Not on Schedule

## Annex: PME Formats for Target Monitoring and Evaluation

### Plantation (Fodder and fuelwood)

Sites	Area of Plantation	No. of fuelwood trees planted	No. of fodder trees planted	No. of seedlings survived	No. of seedlings dead	General condition of plantation			
						Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
A	--X	OO▲	OO▲	OOO	OO			✓	
B	--/	OOO⊖ ⊖	OOO	OOO ⊖	OO		✓		
C	--	OOO ⊖	OO⊖	OO	OOO ⊖				✓
D	--/	OOO O	OOO⊖	OOO OO	⊖			✓	

#### Legend

- /x = Area [ \_./, X = whole, half, quarter etc.]
- OOO▲ = Example = 5+5+2.5+1.25 = 13.75 ha./Ropani/any local unit
- ✓ = Number of plants ( = Whole number; = Half; = quarter, = Half quarter, Example = 1000+500+250+125 = 1875 seedlings

## Annex: PME Formats for Target Monitoring and Evaluation

### ii. Gully Control

Gully Site	No. of Check dams	No. of loose stone check dams	No. of galvanized wire check dams	No. of brush wood check dams	Area protected	General condition of work			
						Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
A					- /	✓	✓		
B					- / X				
C		I			- X			✓	
D				I	-				✓

**Legend**

- || = Numbers
- /, X = 10 ha., 5 ha., 2.5 ha., etc.
- X = Grading



### Annex: PME Formats for Target Monitoring and Evaluation

#### iv. Social Programme

Months	No of Lecturers	Female Participants	Male Participants	Male & Female Participants	General condition of the work			
					Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
1		○○○	○○	○○○○	✓			
2		○○	○	○○○			✓	
3		○	○	○○		✓		✓
4		○○○	○○○	○○○				
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								