



JFM STAKEHOLDERS



DIRECTORATE OF FORESTS
GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL



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PREFACE

Joint Forest Management (JFM) is a programme where forest management is done through partnership between state forest departments and forest fringe local communities. The programme emphasizes on participatory method of working with the involvement of local villagers and forest officials forming a committee commonly known as Joint Forest Management Committee (JFMC). The stakeholders of this JFM programme include forest departments, JFMC members, PRI members, SHG members and NGOs members involved in forest management activities of specific areas. Each stakeholder has their own roles and responsibilities in the Joint Forest Management programme which has been elaborately described in this course material. The aim of the module is to develop the understanding of the trainees about the different roles and responsibilities of the JFM Stakeholders. As part of the JICA project on ‘Capacity Development for Forest Management and Training Personnel’ being implemented by the Forest Department, Govt. of West Bengal, these course material on JFM Stakeholders have been prepared for induction training of the Foresters and Forest Guards. The functions, roles and responsibilities of the JFM Stakeholders elucidated in this course material can be useful for the front line forest personnel in their professional career.

The subject covered in these training materials broadly conform to syllabus laid down in the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Environment of Forests, Govt of India, vide the Ministry’s No 3-17/1999-RT dated 05.03.13.

While developing this course material, references from related books, documents, available in the internet, and relevant government orders have been consulted.

The materials have been prepared in simple and easy language for better understanding of the subject and to provide appropriate idea of the covered topics among the frontline staff of forest department.

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SYLLABUS

JFM stakeholders (6 hour)		
1.Roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders	<p>Do the exercise as described below in terms of production, protection, harvest and provision of benefits.</p> <p>1.FD -enumerate functions of FD and in particular those of field staff. -compare the outcomes with the description in JFM guidelines.</p> <p>2.JFMC/EDC (joint forest management committee/eco development committee) -enumerate functions of FD and in particular those of field staff. -compare the outcomes with the description in JFM guidelines.</p> <p>3.SHG -enumerate functions of FD and in particular those of field staff. -compare the outcomes with the description in JFM guidelines.</p> <p>4.NGO -Enumerate functions of FD and in particular those of field staff. -compare the outcomes with the description in JFM guidelines.</p>	4 hours
2.what are the Stakes of each stakeholder determined in JFM guidelines?		1 hour
3.Discuss upon the outcomes of the above, what is your (trainees) understanding of stakeholders		1 hour



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Lesson 1

5 Hours

Lesson Plan

Objectives: This training module aims at developing understanding of the trainees about the different roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders under JFM.

Lesson Topic	Expected Outcome
Roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders	At the end of the module trainees will be able to explain the functions, roles and responsibilities of forest department, JFMC, PRI, SHG and NGOs under JFM as per the government resolutions.

Session 1:

- Objective of the lesson
- Concept of Stakeholder
- Stakeholders under JFM
- Group discussion on functions of FD, JFMC, SHG and NGOs in terms of production, protection, harvest and provision of benefits

Session 2:

- Presentation of the group findings by each group
- Functions, roles and responsibilities of Forest Department (FD) under JFM as per the Government Resolutions
- Functions, roles and responsibilities of JFMC under JFM as per the Government Resolutions
- Functions, roles and responsibilities of other stakeholders (PRI, SHG and NGO) in JFM

Session 3:

- Study the JFM guidelines to identify stakes of different stakeholders
- Prepare group report on stakes of different stakeholders as mentioned in the JFM resolutions
- Presentation of the group report

Concepts used in the module:

- The concept of stakeholder
- Concept of JFM
- West Bengal Government Resolutions on JFM



Approach:

- Trainer will use the concept and approaches of Adult Learning Principle to deliver the training
- Group discussion and group exercises will be done to engage the participants and have experiential learning.

Backward linkages: Module on JFM

Forward linkages: Module on CBO building

Materials

- Hand outs and reference material on JFM stakeholders
- Power point presentation
- Chart paper and sketch pen for group work

Time required:**Session 1:**

- Objectives of the lesson
5mins
- What is stakeholder
5mins
- Who are the stakeholders in JFM 10 mins
- Group discussion on functions of FD, JFMC, SHG and NGOs
in terms of production, protection, harvest and provision of benefits 40 mins

Session 2:

- Presentation of group findings 30 mins
- Functions, roles and responsibilities of Forest Department (FD) under
JFM as per the Government Resolutions 30 mins
- Functions, roles and responsibilities of JFMC under JFM as per
the Government Resolutions 30 mins
- Functions, roles and responsibilities of other stakeholders
(PRI, SHG and NGO) in JFM 30 mins

Session 3:

- Study the JFM guidelines to identify stakes of different stakeholders
in groups 60 mins
- Prepare group report on stakes of different stakeholders as mentioned
in the JFM guideline 30 mins
- Presentation of the group report 30 mins



1.1 Concept of Stakeholder

Stakeholders are persons or groups who are directly or indirectly affected by a project, as well as those who may have interests in a project and/or the ability to influence its outcome, either positively or negatively. The “stake” that different individuals or groups has in a project will vary. There may be people directly affected by the potential environmental or social impacts of a project. Others may be resident in another country altogether, but wish to communicate their concerns or suggestions to the project company. Then there are those who might have great influence over the project, such as government regulators, political or religious leaders, and others active in the local community. There are also stakeholders who, because of their knowledge or stature, can contribute positively to the project, for example, by acting as an honest broker in mediating relationships. ([http://www.sarpn.org/documents/d0002561/3-IFC Stakeholder Engagement May2007.pdf](http://www.sarpn.org/documents/d0002561/3-IFC%20Stakeholder%20Engagement%20May2007.pdf)<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/stakeholder.html>).

Joint Forest Management (JFM) is developed based on the approach of “co management” where forest department as the owner of the forest lands sets the objectives of forest management and the villagers organized in the form of JFMC and the forest department jointly share the management responsibilities and share the benefits.

1.2 Stakeholders under JFM

JFM program directly affects certain groups and are in turn gets affected through proper functioning or non functioning of such groups. They are the stakeholders under JFM.

The main stakeholders under JFM are

- i. Forest Department
- ii. Local villagers organized in the form of JFMC
- iii. Panchayat Raj Institutions
- iv. Self Help Groups formed under JFMCs
- v. NGOs working with the JFMCs

Forest department has the tenure right over the state controlled forest land of the country and is mandated for protection and conservation of the forest resources. JFM is adapted by the forest department to ensure protection of the forest from the forces of degradation by involving the local community. Under the circumstances the success and failure of the program directly affects the department in terms of achieving its objectives and goals.

The JFMC members are another major stakeholder of JFM. The effectiveness and proper functioning of the JFMC is envisaged as the key for improvement of the status of forest and its productivity. JFMC would get both better share of usufructory benefits from the forest and also the host of forest ecosystem services for their livelihood security and well being if the forest is conserved. They would also get support from the forest department in terms of community and village development interventions if they perform effectively.

The Panchayat Raj Institution (PRI) as the local self government is responsible for proper management and conservation of all the locally available resources under their jurisdiction. They are also involved in formation, supervision and monitoring of the JFMCs. Therefore, have a direct stake to ensure proper implementation of JFM.



SHGs formed under the JFMCs would not get the benefit of getting proper training and funding support if the JFMCs do not function properly.

The NGOs engaged in strengthening, training, facilitating in preparation of microplanning and monitoring the JFMCs would get recognized in terms of improving their credential and apply for funding from different sources if the JFMCs perform well or otherwise if the JFMCs do not perform as desired.

1.3 Functions, roles and responsibilities of Forest Department, especially the front line staff under JFM

Under JFM, certain functions, roles and responsibilities are designated for the forest department and the front line staff of the department as per the government resolutions to ensure protection, production, smooth harvesting and benefit sharing as per the Government Resolutions

- i. Resolution No 5971 – For dated 3.10.2008 for South West Bengal
- ii. Resolution No 5969 – For dated 3.10.2008 for North Bengal (excluding areas under Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council)
- iii. Resolution No 5970 – For dated 3.10.2008 for Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council Area
- iv. Resolution No. 3841 – For/d/11M – 7/95 dated 26th June, 1996 on EDC

Protection

Forest protection function has traditionally been entrusted upon the front line staff of the department, Range Officer, Beat Officer and Forest Guard. Forest Department is responsible for protection and conservation of forest. But it has mentioned in the Government Resolution on JFM that “*active participation and involvement of local people are vital for generation, maintenance and protection of aforesaid forests/plantations and successful implementation of the program.*”

Though the responsibility of protection of forest remains primarily with the department but under JFM the forest fringe villagers are involved in the form of Joint Forest Management Committee (JFMC) to help the department for protection of forest(s)/plantation(s)/wildlife through members of the committee.

Formation of JFMCs do not cease the function of the department for patrolling of the forest area but they would get support in the form getting information from the JFMCs about any person or persons attempting trespass and wilfully or maliciously, damaging the said forest(s)/plantation(s)/ wildlife or committing theft, encroachment, grazing, fire, poaching, theft or damage. Such support from JFMC would help in strengthening the protection of the forest.

Forest department personnel have the authority to take action against such offenders under the provisions of provisions of Indian Forest Act, 1927 and the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 as amended from time to time and any Acts and Rules made thereunder. Under JFM they are getting assistance from the JFMC to apprehend such person or persons committing any of the offences mentioned above and to take action or proceed against the offenders, including any erring members of the Committee found to be violating the Act or damaging the forest/ plantation/wildlife. This helps in ensuring action against the offenders with support from the locals and reduces tension and conflict between the department and the locals.



Therefore, it can be concluded that implementation of JFM nowhere reduces or ceases the protection function of the department. Forest Department is remains the primary stakeholder in terms of protection of forest.

Production

Forest department takes up various forestry development activities to enhance production and productivity. The activities that are taken up by the department to enhance the production includes plantation, Assisted Natural Regeneration, Artificial Regeneration in the forest areas. Silvicultural operations in terms of thinning, multiple shoot cutting, weeding, cleaning, climber cutting, protection and management of fire, grazing and illicit felling, removal of dead deceased and dying trees including cyclone damaged trees, felling of mature plantations are taken up. In situ and ex situ conservation measures are taken up for conservation of Non Timber Forest Produces (NTFP) and medicinal plants.

Soil and moisture conservation activities are taken up in the forest areas to enhance the productivity.

The forest development activities are planned and developed as per the prescription of the Working Plan. Working Plan is prepared by the department as per the prescribed National Working Plan Code.

It is mentioned in the National Working Plan Code 2014 that “proper guidelines for sustainable use of community forests; extraction, processing, market and trade of minor forest produce, etc. may be provided under separate working circles. Forest community rights related to community forest resources, minor forest produce, grazing grounds, water bodies, etc. recognized under the provision of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, can be exercised within the framework of sustainable use. Each JFMC would prepare a microplan for forest and fringe area development of their area. Micro-planning should be done in conformity with the overall working plan prescriptions of the forest division and may be reviewed by working plan wing of the state forest department. The compartments falling within any JFM may have to be realigned/ subdivided to keep them within the respective JFM/village boundary.”¹The area for plantation, choice of species and other forestry activities to be taken up for a period of five years are selected in consultation with the JFMC members. It becomes the responsibility of the department to orient the JFMC members about the prescriptions of the Working Plan for treating their forest area and sensitise the JFMC members to prepare the microplan in consistence with the working plan.

In case of Eco development Committees (EDC) every selected eco-development activity shall have direct or indirect linkage or relation with conservation of biodiversity and such linkage/relation is to be mentioned against each selected activity in the microplan.

Forest department implements the activities by engaging the local people. Under JFM it is mentioned in the Government Resolution that JFMC would assist the concerned forest officials for selecting/engaging the laborers required for forestry works.

Harvest

Harvesting of matured timber and poles as per the working plan prescription is the primary function of Forest department. Forest Department would undertake the harvesting operations including identification and marking the area to be felled, felling of the trees, staking, and carriage of the timber

¹ National Working Plan Code 2014



to the depot with active participation of the JFMC. The timber and poles are auctioned by the department.

JFM Resolutions state that JFMCs would assist the forest department to ensure smooth harvesting of the forest produce by the Forest Department.

Provision of Benefits

In South Bengal

Forest department retains 75% of the net sale proceeds of firewood and pole. JFMCs would get 25% of the net sale proceeds upon their satisfactory performance.

In North Bengal Plains and Hills

Forest department retains 75% of the net sale proceeds of firewood and pole harvested during thinning and cultural operations. JFMCs would get 25% of the net sale proceeds upon their satisfactory performance.

Forest department retains 85% of the net sale proceeds of timber which are harvested during final felling. JFMCs would get 15% of the net sale proceeds upon their satisfactory performance.

JFMC would assist the concerned forest official to distribute the share among the members of the JFMCs.

However, it is also mentioned in the Government Resolution that usufruct sharing are subject to restrictions imposed upon from time to time on account of silvicultural and management requirements and from preservation of wildlife point of view.

1.4 Functions, roles and responsibilities of JFMCs under JFM

JFM Resolutions have prescribed specific functions, roles and responsibilities for JFMC members in terms of protection, production, harvest and provision of benefits.

Protection

The JFMC members and its Executive Committee are entrusted with the following protection functions as per the Government Resolutions:

- (i) To ensure protection of forest(s)/plantation(s)/wildlife through members of the committee.
- (ii) To protect the said forest(s)/plantation(s) with the members of the Committee.
- (iii) To involve every member of the Committee in the matter of protection of forest(s)/plantation(s)/Wildlife as well as other duties assigned to the Committee.
- (iv) To inform forest personnel about any person or persons attempting trespass and wilfully or maliciously, damaging the said forest(s)/plantation(s)/ wildlife or committing theft thereon.
- (v) To prevent such trespass, encroachment, grazing, fire, poaching, theft or damage.
- (vi) To apprehend or assist the forest personnel in apprehension of such person or persons committing any of the offences mentioned above.

(vii) To prevent any activities in contravention of the provisions of Indian Forest Act, 1927 and any Acts and Rules made thereunder and the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 as amended from time to time.

(viii) To report about activities of particular member which are found prejudicial and detrimental to the interest of a particular plantation and or/forest wildlife to the concerned Beat Officer/Range Officer which may result in cancellation of membership of the erring member.

(iii) To assist the forest officials to take action or proceed under Indian Forest Act, 1927 and the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and any Acts and Rules made thereunder, against the offenders, including any erring members of the Committee found to be violating the Act or damaging the forest/plantation/wildlife.

Production

Microplan of each JFMC is to be prepared under the guidance and facilitation of the forest department where the forest development activities including scope for plantation, rehabilitation of degraded forest and choice of species would be mentioned.

The micro plan shall be in consistence with the working plan.

The Executive Committee of the JFMC shall meet at least once every two months and discuss issues related to ongoing forestry works, preparation and implementation of microplan and other emergent works etc.

JFMC would also assist the concerned Forest Officials in the matter of selection/engaging of labourers required for forestry work.

Harvest

JFMC is to ensure smooth harvesting of the forest produce by the Forest Department as per the Resolution.

JFMC members can harvest NTFPs such as grass, fruits (except cashew), mushrooms, flowers, seeds, leaves and intercrops raised by the JFMCs free of cost subject to any restrictions imposed from time to time. However, such harvest is not allowed in the Protected Areas.

It is mentioned in the Resolution that medicinal plants can be collected free of cost except from the Protected Areas but strictly based on the norms fixed in the approved microplan.

Provision of Benefits

Members of the JFMCs have to protect the forest for at least five years to become eligible for sharing of usufructs under JFM.

JFMC members can collect NTFPs and medicinal plants free of royalty without causing damage to the forest from their designated forest areas as mentioned above.



In South Bengal

Members will receive 25% of the net sale proceeds of firewood and pole harvested during coppice coup felling, thinning and cultural operations in South Bengal. The poles will be under 90 cm gbh for all species except teak. The upper limit for teak will be 60 cm.

In North Bengal Plains and Hills

In case of North Bengal and Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council Area apart from 25% share of the net sale proceeds of firewood and poles harvested during the thinning and cultural operations, members will get 15% of the net sale proceeds of timber during the final harvest. The share will be distributed equally among all the JFMCs under the division proportionate to the strength of their members.

Entire Sal seeds collected in all the regions have to be deposited to the local LAMPS who will pay the members against the approved tariff for their collection.

Forest officials will distribute the usufruct share to the eligible members upon satisfactory performance of the JFMCs. The JFMC members will assist the concerned Forest Official in proper distribution of the earmarked portion of the net sale proceeds among the members of the Committee (as per list maintained by SthayeeSamity).

JFMC also has to ensure that usufructuary rights allowed by the Govt. is not in any way misused by any of the members and forest/plantation sites are kept free from any encroachment whatsoever.

However, usufruct sharing is subject to restrictions imposed upon from time to time on account of silvicultural and management requirements and from preservation of wildlife point of view.

The Executive Committee of Joint Forest Management Committee shall hold an Annual General Meeting

once in every year where activities of Committee as well as details of distribution of usufructuary benefits are to be discussed, besides electing representatives of the beneficiaries to the Executive Committee.

In case of EDCs

From Wildlife Protected Areas

Upon permission granted from the Chief Wildlife Warden members for collection and removal of certain items of forest products from identified zone(s) of a protected area of EDCs become eligible to get

- 25% share of poles (upto 60 cm gbh/ for other species) and 100% share of firewood obtained from drift and over wood removal
- thatch/amlisho/other grass obtained from firelines and fire prone zones
- specified non edible fruits, flower, pods, seeds, decorative fungus and leaves
- The members of the EDC will have to protect and manage the protected area to the satisfaction of the forest officer for a minimum period of one year to become eligible for 25% share Government receipts on account of tourist and transport entry and photography and such other related activities in the protected area

From Non Forest Area

Produce obtained from plantations raised on public lands as village eco-development activity will be shared as follows :-

- (a) 100% share of intercrop to identified members of EDC who raise the crop(s)
- (b) 100% share of thinning produce & firewood obtained from final harvest to each member of EDC in equal proportion,
- (c) The forest officer shall deduct the cost of re-afforestation from the sale value of final harvest to timber and poles for deposit in the EDC fund. Balance amount will be distributed to each member of the EDC in equal proportion
- (d) Goods services generated by community benefits oriented village eco-development activities will be enjoyed by each member of the EDC in equal proportion. Those generated by individuals benefit oriented eco-development activities will be enjoyed by the individual concerned.

Microplans in respect of eco-development activities will be drawn up in a participatory manner prior to commencement of the activities, involving the Range Officer and Beat Officer of the Forest Department and the members of the EDC. Need-based and site-specific work programme, out of a basket of options, will be chosen within specific monetary limits, both for community and individual benefit, for implementation. Every selected eco-development activity shall have direct or indirect linkage or relation with conservation of biodiversity and such linkage/relation is to be mentioned against each selected activity in the microplan.

Protection provided to the wildlife-protected area against theft, grazing, fire, etc. would be considered as the involvement and contribution of the EDC. The forest officer may not release fund for village eco-development unless he is satisfied that contribution by the EDC, as stipulated above has been fulfilled.

Members of the EDC shall share a percentage of investment for every village eco-development work in cash, labour and/or physical resources. Agreed cost sharing arrangement will be incorporated in the microplan.

1.5 Functions, roles and responsibilities of other stakeholders under JFM

The government resolutions on JFM in West Bengal do not specify the roles of Non Government Organisations (NGO) and Self Help Groups (SHG) as the stakeholders in JFM. However, Panchayat Raj Institution (PRI)/local Self Government have been included as one of the stakeholders under the program with specified roles and responsibilities as follows:

Protection

Under JFM, the fringe dwellers organized under the JFMC institution would take responsibility for protection of the forest/plantation/wildlife of their area and would help forest department to protect the same and take action against the offenders under appropriate law and Acts.

As per the Resolutions the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) would select the members for constitution of the JFMC/EDC in consultation with the Bon of Bhumi Sanskar Sthayee Samity of the panchayat samity.

Constitution of the JFMC/EDC and its executive committee is approved by the DFO on recommendation of the Bon o Bhumi Sanskar Sthayee Samity of the concerned panchayat samity and in consultation with the councilor in Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council Area as the case may be.



The Executive Committee of the JFMC would consist of :

- The Sabhapati/karmadhakshya of the Bon o Bhumi Sanskar Sthayee Samity of the concerned panchayat samity or any member of the Panchayat Samity nominated by Sabhapati/Karmadhakshya
- Pradhan of the concerned Gram Panchayat or any member of the panchayat nominated by Pradhan or
- The Chairman of the Municipality or any councilor of the Municipality nominated by the Chairman/local councilor of the DGHC as the case may be.

The concerned gram panchayats shall extend necessary support and help to the JFMCs for their smooth functioning.

The Bon O Bhumi Sanskar Sthayee Samity of the concerned Zilla Parishad would monitor, review and supervise the functions of the JFMCs/EDC.

The Bon o Bhumi Sanska rSthaye Samity of the concerned Panchayat Samity can recommend to the DFO to take appropriate action or even dissolve the JFMC/EDC or its Executive Committee if they do not function as per the conditions laid down in the Resolution. Appeal against any penal action taken by the DFO can be made to the concerned Circle Conservator of Forests through the concerned Panchayat Samity and the Zilla Parishad.

Thus, the PRI/local self government has been provided with adequate role to ensure that the JFMCs function as per the Resolutions.

Production

No specific role is mentioned for the PRI for production of forest produces. However, during the planning process for forest development and preparation of microplan the representatives of the local panchayat representatives take part. The PRI representatives, both from the Panchayat Samity and Gram Panchayat level are present in the Executive Committee of the JFMC who are responsible to implement all the functions of the JFMCs laid down in the Resolutions.

The role of panchayat to monitor and supervise the activities of JFMCs also includes to oversee how the JFMCs are assisting the forest department to implement the activities meant to enhance the production.

Harvest

No specific functions of PRI are mentioned here. But as per the Resolution, the JFMC/Executive Committee has to assist the forest department to ensure harvesting of the forest produce.

Provision of Benefits

As per the Resolution the usufructory benefits would be distributed to the members of the JFMC/EDC as per the list maintained by the StahayeeSamity.

Role of SHGs and NGOs

Though West Bengal Government Resolutions do not specify the roles of SHGs under JFM but under various programs like National Afforestation Program, Green India Mission, India Eco Development Project, West Bengal Forest and Biodiversity Conservation Project etc, either the existing SHGs of the JFMC area are integrated or new SHGs are formed under the JFM area specially with the women members. Such SHGs are supported to take up alternate livelihood activities. JFMCs with the help of front line staff can form such SHGs.

JFMCs need to orient these SHGs on the need for conservation of forest and integrate them with the JFMCs to promote awareness among the villagers for conservation of forest resources. The SHGs have to function for a period of minimum six months conducting regular meetings, savings by the members, inter loaning and repayment of loans among themselves before they become eligible for any financial support from JFMC.

Based on the satisfactory performance of the SHGs for a minimum period of six months JFMCs would identify potential activities for income generation in consultation with these SHGs and help the SHGs to prepare business development plan. The number of SHGs based on the potential activities, the amount of monetary support required and the training needs to implement the activities will be discussed and included in the micro plan of the JFMC. In some states it is followed that the SHGs are provided with a revolving fund to support the members to initiate the activities based on the plan and upon signing an agreement with the JFMC on terms and conditions for repayment. JFMC would also organize training for the SHGs on skills related to group management, book keeping, and record keeping and on skills required for value addition and processing of the products that they would produce. The SHGs would repay the loan on agreed terms to the JFMCs.

Forest Department and the JFMC can take the help of NGOs to create awareness on forest conservation and JFM in the JFM and non JFM villages.

Forest department can take help of the NGOs to facilitate the process of preparation of microplan in the JFMCs.

The JFMC members can be oriented by the NGOs on record keeping.

NGOs can also help the department to organize various skill development training for the JFMCs and the SHGs.

NGOs can be involved to document the best practices and success stories from different forest divisions.

Forest department can engage reputed NGOs to conduct third party monitoring and evaluation of the JFMCs and to conduct social audits.



