

Operational guideline for Entry Point Activities

[Odisha PVTG Empowerment and Livelihoods Improvement Programme (OPELIP)]

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Operational guideline for Entry Point Activities (EPA) under Odisha PVTG Empowerment & Livelihoods Improvement Programme (OPELIP)

Entry Point Activities (EPA) are part of community mobilization process to get more and more participation of the community in the village planning. Preparation of village development plan in a participatory process takes time as it involves certain steps. It is difficult for the NGO/MPA to get full participation of the community in the village planning process which takes few months without doing any activity for the benefit of villagers. Such activities which may need to be addressed in urgency or as priority for the immediate benefit of villagers and some others for the community benefit/welfare are taken before execution of the Village Development Plan

Objectives of Entry Point Activities (EPA)

- To mobilize them for effective and participatory project implementation
- To gain confidence of the target community on the project and their management skills
- To endow tangible assets to target communities;
- To provide short-term financial benefit and incentives to the villagers (wages);

Guiding Principles of Entry Point Activities:

It was difficult for the MPAs to identify EPAs with rational, as the project sites are in the difficult areas with enormous problems. However to mobilize villagers an entry point activity identified, should not raise any conflict at village level and it should cater to the need of common people of the village. It is always suggested that an EPA should be of low cost investment and should give benefit to larger communities. So some of the general principles of EPA are:

- EPA may be a bundle of different activities and not necessarily a single activity for a village.
- EPA need not be capital intensive.
- No cost or low cost activities may be encouraged which can be achieved through community mobilization and linkages with concerned departments may also be considered as EPA.
- Villagers should not be encouraged for such entry point activity which may disrupt communal harmony at village level.
- Encourage villagers for maximum contribution in physical and financial form.
- Facilitate the process to get maximum participation of villagers at planning stage.
- The activities undertaken under EPA component shall have prior approval of general

body of Village Development Association

- The entry point activities should be the part of the Village Development Plan.

Implementing Bodies:

The NGO team members would inform the VDA for identifying the need of Entry Point Activities with priorities. Since the fund for EPA is limited, emphasis should be on activity that can be fully completed from the available fund, instead of taking of part only of several works. However, if VDA members agree to contribute cash, free labour to augment project support, more of projects can be taken up. EPAs may also include more than one activities. Preference shall be given to those items that will eventually have gainfully utilized by the villagers. Simultaneously, involvement of users in EPA has significant implication for improving the sustainability of assets created under this component. The user groups consist of those who derive direct benefit from a particular EPA work. It is suggested that appropriate level of user group participation may be ensured for implementation identified EPA.

As per the Programme Implementation Manual (PIM), the EPA will be implemented by the VDA/VDC and it should be facilitated by the NGO. The activities will be supervised by MPA and his team. NGO along with VDC members may form EPA Working Group for each proposed activity to oversee the implementation process. The working groups should implement, maintain and operate the assets created under the EPA.

General EPA identification procedure:

EPA under OPELIP will be executed in line with the Programme Implementation Manual (PIM) and EPA Operational guideline. Entry-Point Activities are necessary part to orient the community members towards project involvement. Direct dialogue about the intervention can create a negative attitude among them and hence, some innovative method should be applied to bring about a positive air in the project area. However, these activities cannot be implemented blindly. There has to be some need assessment to be carried out initially to identify the community needs. Need assessment should be followed by community mobilization meetings where consultations from the community can be included again. EPA must create tangible assets of community to support livelihood standard.

Needs Assessment & Identification of EPA:

- The Entry point activity should solve the pressing problems of the community and benefit larger sections of the society .These activities need to be area and community specific.
- Facilitate villagers for identification of EPA through a series of informal discussion in small groups instead of doing in a large group.
- The urgent need of the local as well deprived community should be accessed in small through Focused Group Discussions (FGD)
- NGO and their team should identify certain critical needs of the community through focussed group discussion on certain significant sectors of the area like agriculture, drinking water, health & sanitation etc.
- Using the participatory prioritizing methods NGO and their team shall prioritize the community problems & most critical needs and discuss the potential measures (EPA components) towards solving them.

Prioritization and Short-listing of Potential EPA Components:

- NGO and his team will prepare a list of potential EPA activities with community consultation, based on the problems and needs identify during focussed group discussion.
- Using the matrix ranking the community members will prioritize a number of key EPA activities.
- NGO will prepare a short list of potential EPA activities as suggested by the community members.
- With the general consensus, VDA will identify the location of each EPA activities prioritized above.
- The VDA should approve the final list of activities to be implemented in village.

Approval of EPA Plan:

- NGO will submit the short-listed potential EPA activities to Special Officer/Project Manager of MPA for final approval. Special Officer will approve the proposed activities based on technical, social and financial consideration of the proposed EPA. For any change/modification of EPA, Special Officer may send again to the VDA through NGO for consideration.
- The finalized EPA plan shall be an integral part of VDP. The detailed EPA plan shall be an Annexure in the VDP. The EPA details should include the proposed sources of funding i.e. through OPELIP or through convergence will be clearly mentioned against the prioritized EPA.

Funding Pattern & Cost Norms

The budgeted amount for EPA as per the PIM is Rs. 2.00 Lakhs for each revenue village. From the above budget allocation Rs. 20,000.00 may be utilised for community mobilization i.e, awareness generation, street plays, IEC materials, wall paintings etc.

Monitoring:

- Detailed engineering estimates should be prepared by the Junior Engineer of NGO and technical sanction & administrative approval should be accorded prior to execution as per prevailing procedures.
- The detailed case record for each activity should be maintained by the NGO for the same.
- The monitoring of EPA works under OPELIP shall form an integral part of overall M&E activities.
- Senior Officers of PMU shall undertake at least one field inspection / validation of the progress and quality of the EPA work.
- After completion of work, the Officers of PMU again shall undertake a field inspection / validation to assess whether the work was completed appropriately or not.

The entry point activities will include:

- Works based on urgent needs of the local communities such as rehabilitation of community shrines, drinking water, water harvesting, supply of solar lantern, supply of MGNREGs implements etc.
- Activities relating to health, sanitation and drinking water may be given preference above all other activities.
- Activities on social and nutrition focussed activities may also be undertaken basing on the need of the community.
- To address drudgery reduction , some activities such as creation or repair of assets for common use, especially targeting women, such as drinking water facilities, washing and bathing platforms, platforms for drying NTFPs/crops, etc can also be undertaken.
- The unique activities which may not fit in other programme component of the programme may also be given preference over other activities.

The activities which should be avoided under EPA are:

- The activity which will disrupt communal harmony

- Any other activity which does not link to livelihood enhancement.

Transparency in Entry Point Activities

Transparency is crucial for drawing more stakeholders and supporters in the implementation process. Transparency in the project would demonstrate that resources are being used wisely and for the stated purpose only. In view to these, it is paramount to ensure multiple levels of transparency through various strategies under EPA.

Photographs- For each activity auto documentation should be made at three stages:

- 1) Before the activity,
- 2) During the activity and
- 3) After the completion of activity.

Photo should have latitude and longitude details.

Display Boards- There should be a display board in each activity site with details of estimated cost and expenditure, year of execution, latitude & longitude & no of beneficiaries. The cost of the display board may be included in the estimates for this purpose. The display board should be of low cost and in case of engineering activity if possible it can be written on the structure itself. The writing of the display board should be in Odia language.