

**Green-Ag: Transforming Indian Agriculture for Global
Environment Benefits and the Conservation of Critical
Biodiversity and Forest Landscapes**

Chapter – 2
Project Operations Manual

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New Delhi

Objective and Structure of the Manual

The objective of this Project Operations Manual (POM) is to provide operational guidance to the project personnel at National Project Management Unit (NPMU), State Project Management Unit (SPMU) and Green Landscape Implementation Unit (GLIU). The Project Operations Manual has been divided into seven chapters and addresses the processes of Project implementation and operational arrangements.

The following are the various chapters in the manual:

Chapter 1: Background

Chapter 2: Institutional Arrangements

Chapter 3: Project Implementation Arrangements

Chapter 4: Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

Chapter 5: Knowledge Management and Communication Strategy

Chapter 6: Procurement

Chapter 7: Managing Environment and Social Risk

List of documents referred

The following documents were consulted in the preparation of this Project Operations Manual:

1. Project Document
2. Operational Partner Agreement
3. FAO Operational Partners Implementation Modality Manual
4. FAO Environmental and Social Management Guidelines

CHAPTER 2: INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

This chapter gives an overview on the key institutions involved in policy guidance and implementation at national, state, district and village levels which will guide the project implementation.

2.1 Key Institutions

1. Various key institutions (national and state level) will be involved for the operationalization and implementation of the project. Roles and responsibilities of these institutions are summarized below:
2. The **Department of Agriculture, Cooperation, and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare (MoA&FW), Government of India (GoI)** is the lead Executing Agency of the Green- Ag project at the national level. The Department is overseeing and guiding the project implementation through two multidisciplinary committees namely National Project Steering Committee and National Project Monitoring Committee. The Rainfed Farming System (RFS) Division under the DAC&FW is the focal division for this project.
3. The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, (MoEF&CC)** is the GEF Operational Focal Point for India and has the overall responsibility to ensure that portfolio of GEF projects are well-coordinated. It will also play a critical role in the overall project implementation. The Ministry has direct management responsibilities for a national system of protected areas and thus, has a direct stake in promoting a sustainable Green Landscape approach.
4. **Operational Partner:** The project will be implemented using FAO's **Operational Partners Implementation Modality¹ (OPIM)** in the five project States. The State government designated by the office of the Chief Secretary of each State has identified "nodal agency/ operational partner" to lead the project implementation in each of these states. The nodal agency/ operational partner for the project in each of the five States are given in the following table.

Table: Project Nodal Agencies/ Operational Partner in Five Project States

¹ OPIM modality is "implementation of projects/programmes involving the transfer of funds to Operational Partners for implementation of program/project components on the basis jointly defined and shared program/project goals where FAO retains overall accountability to the Resource Partner and the Government for proper management of funds, technical quality and results achieved."

State	Nodal Agencies/ Operational Partner	Authorized Officer
Madhya Pradesh	Farmer Welfare and Agriculture Development Department	Director, Farmer Welfare and Agriculture Development Department, Government of MP / Additional Director, Farmer Welfare and Agriculture Development Department, Government of MP
Mizoram	Department of Agriculture (Crop Husbandry)	Secretary, Department of Agriculture (Crop Husbandry), Government of Mizoram / Director of Agriculture (Crop Husbandry), Department of Agriculture (Crop Husbandry), Government of Mizoram.
Odisha	Institute on Management of Agricultural Extension (IMAGE)	Director, IMAGE / Deputy Director of Agriculture, IMAGE Director, Soil and Water Conservation – Implementing Agency.
Rajasthan	Department of Agriculture	Commissioner Agriculture, Department of Agriculture, Government of Rajasthan / Joint Director Agriculture (ATC), Department of Agriculture, Government of Rajasthan
Uttarakhand	Department of Watershed Development	Chief Project Director, Watershed Management Directorate, Govt. of Uttarakhand / Additional Director/ Project Director, Watershed Management Directorate, Govt. of Uttarakhand

5. **Project Implementation Agency:** The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations is this project's GEF Implementing Agency. FAO's primary roles in the project as a GEF Implementing Agency² are summarized in paragraph 217 and 218 of the Project document³.

2.2 Overview of Institutional Arrangements

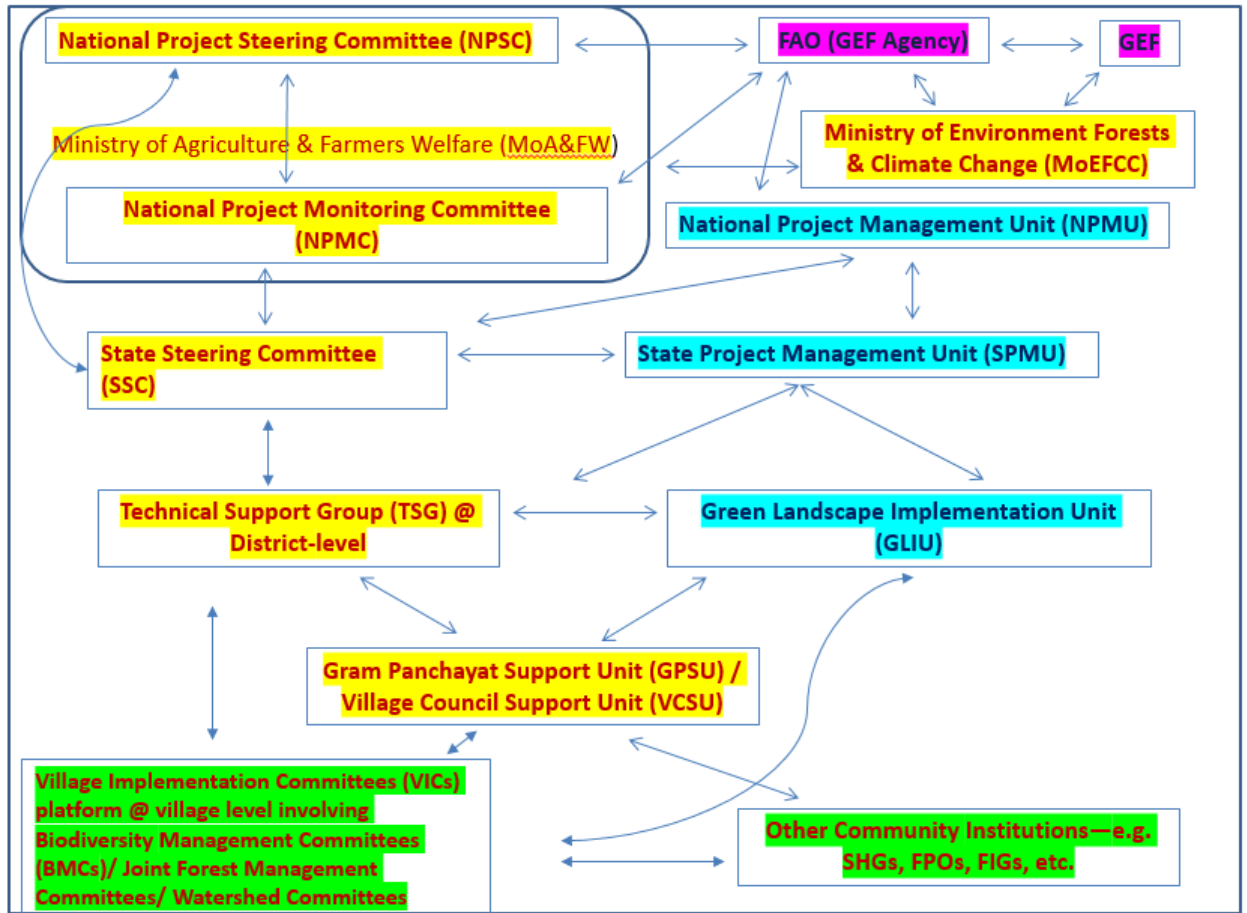
6. The project's implementation arrangements include three types of institutions. Broadly they can be categorised as
- a) Policy Guidance and Coordination;
 - b) Community Institutions, and

² https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/C.39.9_Fees_and_Project_Management_Costs%2C_October_20%2C_2010_4.pdf

³ In addition to the role mentioned in the project document, FAO will also submit six-months progress reports, GEF tracking tools and terminal report (under project closing documents).

c) Project Implementation Units.

The figure below shows the arrangement and interrelations between them.



a) National-level

7. FAO has signed a Government Cooperative Programme (GCP) agreement with the DAC&FW, MoA&FW. The GCP is an umbrella agreement that includes all the five agreements that FAO has signed with the Operational Partner (OP) in each state.

b) State-level

8. FAO has signed an agreement with Operational Partner (OP) in each state using FAO's Operational Partners Implementation Modality (OPIM) based on fiduciary assessments⁴, and development of risk mitigation and assurance plan⁵. An OP has to open a separate

⁴ An independent assessment by a qualified audit firm has already assessed the Operational Partners' processes and mechanisms for Funds Flow, Organizational Structure and Staffing, Accounting Policies and Procedures, Internal Audit, Financial Audit, Reporting and Monitoring, and information Systems and Procurement. Based on the assessment, the partner's capacity was classified into one of the following categories: high risk, significant risk, medium risk and low risk.

⁵ Appropriate mitigation plan for fiduciary risks has been developed for OPs based on risk assessment, which has been included as part of project implementation plan.

bank account for this project in a commercial bank. The account is to be operated under a dual signature. Fund will be transferred in this specific account directly by FAO.

9. OP is required to send requisition in specified format and as per budget approved by NPSC/NPMC to NPMU. The NPMU will examine the requisition on the basis of approved ABWP, the procurement plan for the period and unspent balance of previous release, if any with the OP and recommend to FAO for release of funds. The fund will be released normally in two instalments in a year by FAO.

2.3 Policy Guidance and Coordination Mechanisms

Policy Guidance and Coordination Mechanisms have been established at all levels - National, State, District and Gram Panchayat. Brief description of the various coordination units are given below:

a) National Project Steering Committee (NPSC)

- **Purpose:** The NPSC will provide overall guidance and strategic leadership to create synergies for multi-sectoral coordination during project implementation; and facilitate the ‘mainstreaming’ of relevant project findings and recommendations into national policies, strategies and action plans. It will be chaired by The Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers’ Welfare (DAC&FW), the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare (MoA&FW).
- **Role and Composition:** The project document⁶ has enumerated the role and composition of NPSC¹². The FAO Representative will be a special invitee to the NPSC. The proposed members of NPSC are attached as **Annexure 1**.
- **Frequency of Meetings:** The NPSC will meet at least once a year and the meeting locations may be in one of the five project States, as well as in Delhi. The NPMC in consent with the NPSC members will call for the meeting
- **Secretarial Assistance to Meetings:** The National Project Management Unit (NPMU) will act as secretariat to the NPSC and be responsible for logistical arrangements related to the holding of such meetings.

⁶ Details of role and responsibilities composition are given in para 223-228 of the project document

¹² Para 225 of the project document for a detailed list of NPSC members (Table 25)

¹³ Details of role and responsibilities composition are given in para 231 of the project document

¹⁴ Para 232 (Table 26) of the project document for a detailed list of NPMC members.

b) National Project Monitoring Committee (NPMC)

- **Purpose:** The National Project Monitoring Committee (NPMC) will monitor project implementation and provide general oversight in the project execution. It will be chaired by the Joint Secretary (RFS), DAC&FW, MoA&FW.
- **Role and Composition:** The project document has enumerated the role¹³ and composition¹⁴ of NPMC in detail. The FAO Representative will be one of its members. The NPMC may also invite relevant experts/professionals as and when required. The members of NPMC are attached as **Annexure 2**.
- **Frequency of Meetings:** The NPMC will meet at least twice in a year to review the six-monthly reports, with one meeting at the end of the calendar year focusing on work plans and progress of the project, and one meeting primarily focusing on policy and strategy issues. The NPMC will not only monitor but also facilitate the implementation of the project. However, as the project gains momentum, it is expected that policy and strategy issues will feature predominantly on the agenda of both meetings.
- **Secretarial Assistance to Meetings:** The NPMU will act as a secretariat to the NPMC and prepare draft agenda for NPMC meeting based on the project implementation requirements, which will be shared with RFS Division, DAC&FW. Further, NPMU shall provide logistical support for organizing and conduct of the meeting, prepare draft record of proceedings and share with RFS Division, DAC&FW, prepare compliance of decisions taken in last meeting and present it before NPMC for perusal, monitoring and further guidance, if any. The notice for the meeting will be issued by RFS Division of DAC&FW. The FAO and NPMU will also provide periodic updates to NPMC members on project progress in all the five landscapes.

c) State Steering Committee (SSC)

- **Purpose:** At the State level, State Steering Committee (SSC) will provide the overall execution oversight of the project, through guidance to the State Project Management Unit (SPMU), facilitate inter-sectoral coordination, ensure mobilization of co-finance, facilitate mainstreaming of relevant project findings and recommendations into state policy and ensure synergy in project implementation between various government departments, donors, private sector interventions, and project stakeholders. It shall also endorse State Annual Work Plan and Budget (S-AWP/B) and the State Annual Project Report (S-APR) from the previous year's technical activities. The committee will be chaired by the Chief Secretary or his/her designate.
- **Role and Composition:** The project document has enumerated the role¹⁵ and composition¹⁶ of SSC in detail. The proposed members of SSC are attached as **Annexure 3**.

- **Frequency of Meetings:** The SSC will meet at least twice yearly (or more as decided by the Committee). On the recommendation of SSC, the SPMU will organize the SSC meeting.
- **Secretarial Assistance to Meetings:** The SPMU will act as Secretariat to the SSC and will be responsible for logistical arrangements related to the holding of such meetings, circulating the meeting agenda and sharing the final meeting minutes.

d) Technical Support Group (TSG) at District-level

- **Purpose⁷:** The Technical Support Group (TSG) is a crucial institutional arrangement which provides multi-sectoral and strategic leadership towards the management of project Landscapes within each of the project districts and ensures synergy between them. Under the chairmanship of the District Collector, it oversees preparation of Green Landscape Management Plan (GLMP) based on landscape assessment and facilitates convergence with ongoing government programs and schemes, identify gaps in funding for sustainable management of the landscape, and provide project funds to achieve the project objective of sustainable management of natural resources and enhancing farmers' incomes.
- **Role and Composition:** The TSG will be constituted by State Operational Partner. The project document has enumerated the role¹⁸ and composition ¹⁹ of TSG in detail. The proposed members of TSG are attached as **Annexure 4**
- **Frequency of Meetings:** The TSG will at least meet quarterly or early as required.
- **Secretarial Assistance to Meetings:** The Green Landscape Implementation Unit will act as Secretariat to the TSG, initiate action for organizing meetings by seeking convenience of District Collector, prepare written minutes, provide the members with all required documents (quarterly implementation reports, draft quarterly action plan and budget) in advance, and be responsible for logistical arrangements related to the meetings.

e) Gram Panchayat (GP) / or Village Council (VC) Support Unit

- **Purpose:** The Gram Panchayat/ (Village Council) Support Unit (SU) will play a critical role in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Green Landscape

¹⁵ Details of role and responsibilities composition are given in Paragraph 237 of the project document

¹⁶ Para 236 (Table 27) for detailed list of SSC members

¹⁷ For further details, refer to paragraph 240-241 of the project document

¹⁸ Details of the role and responsibilities of the TSG is given in para 244 of the project document.

¹⁹ Para 243 (Table 28) of the project document

Management Plan (GLMP) at Gram Panchayat/Village Council level in the project. It will be established to facilitate synergy between GP development plans and project activities.

- **Role and Composition:** The role and composition of the GPSU is enumerated in the project document⁸. The Project Document has proposed a composition of GP/VC Support Unit during the project design phase. However, a few additions have been suggested, which might undergo further alternations as per local needs and requirements. The composition of the GP/VC support unit is proposed as follows:

- Chaired by the Sarpanch/ VC Chief
- Panchayat/ Village Secretary
- Officials of revenue, forest, agriculture, animal husbandry, horticulture, fisheries, women and child development, SC & ST department, KVK, Watershed Technical Officer, Sericulture, Project Representative of any specific project aligned with agriculture or forestry sector
- Representatives of Civil Society Organization, SHG federation, FPOs, Indigenous communities, Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), Joint Forest Management Committees, Watershed Committees

Adequate representation of women will be ensured.

- **Frequency of Meetings:** The GPSU will meet once in every quarter of the project period or more frequently as per project requirement to review the implementation of the GP-level Green Landscape Management Plans.
- **Secretarial Assistance to Meetings:** The local Community Resource Person (CRP) will provide secretarial assistance to the GPSU.

f) Village Implementation Committees (VICs)

The Village Implementation Committees (VICs) will be set up, to serve as a common platform, where community institutions ((Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs), Watershed Management Committees (WMC), Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMs), etc.)), Eco-Development Committees, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and other local government functionaries such as forest guards, agriculture extension workers, Panchayati raj Institution representatives etc. work together to monitor day-to-day management of Green Landscape Management Plans (GLMPs).

Purpose: The VICs will aid preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of GLMPs at the village level

⁸ Para 245 (Table 29) of the project document

- g) **Meeting Frequency:** The VICs will meet once in a month during the project period.
- h) **VICs interface with Gram Panchayats:** Project implementation will be facilitated by Gram Panchayat (GP) through VICs.

2.4 Project Implementation Units

10. The project implementation will be primarily supported by National Project Management Unit (NPMU) at the national level, State Project Management Unit (SPMU) at the state level and Green Landscape Implementation Unit (GLIU) at the landscape level.

a) National Project Management Unit (NPMU)

- **Purpose:** Established by FAO-India, National Project Management Unit (NPMU), will provide technical assistance and ensure effective implementation of project components, coordinate all monitoring and reporting tasks and be responsible for the day-to-day project operations at the national level.
- **Composition:** The NPMU consists of a National Technical Coordinator, Budget and Finance Officer, Administration and Operations Officer to support the technical team comprising of subject matter experts hired as consultants to the project.
- **Role:** The NPMU's role has been elaborated in project document⁹.

b) State Project Management Unit (SPMU)

- **Purpose:** Established by the Operational Partner in each state, the State Project Management Unit (SPMU) will work in close coordination with the NPMU for effective implementation of project components, coordinate all monitoring and reporting tasks and be responsible for the day-to-day project management at the state-level.
- **Composition:** The SPMU consists of a State Project Director¹⁰, State Technical Coordinator, a Communication Officer, a Budget and Finance Officer, an Administration and Operations Officer cum DTP Operator, and an Office assistant. FAO may support OPs in establishment of SPMU by providing necessary support, if asked for.
- **Role:** The role of the SPMU has been elaborated in the project document¹¹.

⁹ Refer to para 250 and 251 in the project document

¹⁰ State Project Director will be co-financed by the state.

¹¹ Refer to para 254 in the project document

c) Green Landscape Implementation Unit (GLIU)

- **Purpose:** Established by the the Operational Partner (OP) in the landscape, the Green Landscape Implementation Unit (GLIU) will work in close coordination with the SPMU for effective implementation of project components, and coordinate all monitoring and reporting tasks at the landscape-level.
- **Composition:** The GLIU personnel will be recruited by the State Operational Partners. FAO may support OPs in the recruitment process upon their official request. The ToRs, if necessary to be shared with OPs.
- **Role:** The role of GLIU has been elaborated in the project document¹². The GLIU will also host most of the technical experts. The expert team in GLIU will focus on conceptualizing implementation strategies, designing a variety of knowledge products catering to multiple stakeholders, and documenting good practices and lessons learnt.

¹² Refer to para 257 in the project document

Annexure1: Proposed Members of the National Project Steering Committee (NPSC)

S.N.	Name and Designation	Status
1	Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers' Welfare (DACFW) the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare (MoAFW)	Chair
2	Additional Secretary (NRM), DACFW, MoAFW	Member
3	FAO Representative in India	Member
4	Chair Person Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Authority (PPV&FRA), MoAFW	Member
5	Director, National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, ICAR	Member
6	Joint Secretary (IC & Nodal GEF Project), MoEFCC	Member
7	Joint Secretary (NRLM), MoRD	Member
8	Joint Secretary (Medicinal Plantation-Ayush), Ministry of Ayush	Member
9	Joint Secretary (IWMP), Department of Land Resource, MoRD	Member
10	Joint Secretary (Climate Change), Department of Science and Technology	Member
11	Deputy Director General (NRM), ICAR	Member
12	Animal Husbandry Commissioner, Department of Animal Husbandry	Member
13	Advisor (Agri.), NITI Ayog	Member
14	Chair of the State Steering Committee (SSC) or his representative from the States of Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Uttarakhand	Member
15	Joint Secretary (NRM&RFS), DACFW, MoAFW	Member Secretary
16	Representative of National Biodiversity Board	Member
17	Additional Director General, Wildlife, Department of Forest	Member
18	Director, National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources	Member

Note: It has been decided that representatives of departments of mining, roads, irrigation and Member Secretary, NTCA and Director General, ICAR/ Deputy Director General (Crops) be added as members of National Project Steering Committee (NPSC) after receiving concurrence from them officially on the same. Hence, this list would be modified accordingly.

Annexure 2: Members of the National Project Monitoring Committee (NPMC)

S.N.	Name and Designation	Status
1	Joint Secretary (NRM&RFS), DACFW, MoAFW	Chair
2	Representative of MoEFCC dealing with GEF Project not below the rank of director	Member
3	FAO Representative to India	Member
4	Representative of National Rain fed Area Authority (NRAA)	Member
5	Inspector General of Forest, Wildlife, MoEF&CC	Member
6	Director (AH), Dept. of Animal Husbandry, Dairy & Fisheries, MoA&FW	Member
7	ADG (Soil/Agronomy), ICAR	Member
8	Additional Commissioner (NRM), DACFW, MoAFW	
8	Representative of Director General, PPVFRA, DAC&FW, MoA&FW	Member
9	Additional Commissioner/ Director (RFS), DAC&FW, MoA&FW	Member Secretary

Annexure 3: Proposed members of State Steering Committee (SSC)

S.N.	Name and Designation	Status
1	Chief Secretary	Chair
2	Agriculture Production Commissioner (where present)	Member
3	Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment	Member
4	Secretary, Department of Forests and Environment	Member
5	Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry	Member
6	Secretary, Department of Horticulture	Member
7	Secretary, Department of Women Empowerment and Child Welfare, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare (or similar institution in States where not applicable)	Member
8	Secretary, Department of Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Castes Development (if present)	Member
9	Secretary, Department of Rural Development	Member
10	Secretary, Department of Finance	Member
11	Member Secretary, State Biodiversity Board (SBB)	Member
12	Vice Chancellor, State Agriculture Universities (SAUs)	Member
13	Expert on project related issues drawn from the state and other parts of the country	Member
14	Representative from NPMU	Member
15	FAO Representative	Member
16	State Project Nodal Officer ¹³ / Project Director	Member Secretary
17	District Collector(s)	Special Invitee
18	State Technical Coordinator	Observers
	Others as decided by the Committee	

Note: Representatives of Departments of Mining, Roads, Irrigation, and Watershed may be added as members of State Steering Committee (SSC) after receiving concurrence from them officially on the same. Hence, this list would be modified and updated accordingly.

¹³ The Project Nodal Officer in each state is appointed by the Chief Secretary of the particular State Government.

Annexure 4: Proposed members of the Technical Support Group (TSG)

S.N.	Name and Designation	Status
1	District Collector cum District Magistrate	Chair
2	J D/ DD ,Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment	Member
3	FD/ Director/ DFO, Department of Forests/ Director/Representative of the National Park/Wildlife Sanctuary;	Member
4	JD/DD ,Department of Animal Husbandry	Member
5	JD/DD, Department of Horticulture	Member
6	Department of Women Empowerment and Child Welfare, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare	Member
7	Department of Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Castes Development	Member
8	Department of Rural Development	Member
9	<i>Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)</i>	Member
10	NABARD	Member
11	Representatives from relevant educational and research institutions	Member
12	Representative Gram Panchayat heads from different ecoregions	Members
13	SPMU Representative	Member
14	State Project Nodal Officer/ Project Director or their representative	Member
15	Team Leader	Observer

Note: Representatives of Departments of Fisheries, Mining, Roads, Irrigation, and Watershed may be added as members of Technical Support Group (TSG) after receiving concurrence from them officially on the same. Hence, this list would be modified and updated accordingly.