

**POVERTY TARGETTING AND INITIATIVES TAKEN TO ATTEND THE
POOR IN AAJEEVIKA PROJECT**

Project Management Unit

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UPASaC

Uttarakhand Livelihoods Improvement Project



IFAD

Poverty Targeting Strategy in the Project during inception stage

Well being ranking exercise:

Based on the above guidelines in PAR, the project has followed proper targeting strategy to reach the poorest households. One of the important challenges of the project was identification of 42,690 poor house holds (HH) in the remotest and vulnerable villages within the project blocks. Project identified 959 remotest and most vulnerable villages through the participatory zoning exercise (**Annex I**) to reach these 42,690 HH, which approximately forms 40% population of the block. The list of villages selected by Aajeevika has been distributed to all the stakeholder departments, commodity boards, NGOs and corporate partners for appropriate convergence.

The Project Appraisal Report (PAR) had identified three classes of poor- Ultra poor , Hard core poor and Moderate poor to work with. It has been envisaged that at least 60% of the hard-core poor and more than 90% of the moderate poor will be out of poverty line by end of project. Taking this clue from the PAR, project conducted detailed inventory of the HH through participatory **well being ranking (WBR)** exercise in 959 project villages. The district wise category of poor identified by the project are as under:

S No	District	Category of households as per WBR					Total
		I Vulnerable	II Ultra poor	III Hardcore poor	IV Moderate poor	V Well off	
1	Almora	643	3607	3917	2149	1935	12251
2	Bageshwar	840	4571	3387	2622	2071	13491
3	Chamoli	843	3809	2849	1965	2610	12076
4	Tehri	1449	3688	4186	2409	2023	13755
5	Uttarkashi	682	3101	3042	2193	2570	11588
Total		4457	18776	17381	11338	11209	63161
% coverage		7.06	29.73	27.52	17.95	17.75	

% of poor HHs covered under SHG in in different categories

Category of HH as per WBR	I	II	III	IV	V	Total
Project target HH	3655	15396	14342	9297	-	42690
HH covered under SHG	2588	10666	10574	5575	-	29403
% coverage	71	69	74	60	-	-

Strategy to include the poorest during implementation

- Identification of Poorest households: chronically ill, old, single member family, widows/widowers, girl children, orphans etc as Vulnerable in WBR - I.
- Activities in current year for strengthening coping strategy against poverty
 - Coding village HH starting from poorest.
 - Coding villages on basis of remoteness and poorest factor.
 - Identify persons unable to contribute in SHGs
 - Categorization of persons: number, type and extent of vulnerability,
 - Make the relief measures of the state reach the poorest.
- Baseline data structured to cover the nature and extent of poverty, health, education and nutrition data, especially for women has been kept as the focus area.
- From the first year onwards, the project started catching the stage of poverty through case study of poorest HH in every villages. These HH are specifically supported and monitored over the project period to assess project impact.
- All the project interventions have been organized around these categories with focus on **WBR - I, II and III.**
- More than 97% of SHG members are women.
- Total of 8007 SHG members (25% of total covered) belong to SC category and 572 SHG members (1.8% of total) belong to ST category.

CASE STUDY

Reaching the most vulnerable first

The project has made concerted effort to link the vulnerable households with disabilities with government welfare schemes and charitable trusts. The most significant contribution was made by linking with Social Welfare Department. Project facilitated the submission and processing applications by organizing special camps and doing diligent follow ups. Till date 2420 cases comprising of widows, old aged and handicapped persons have started receiving pension benefits (Rs400/month for widows and old aged and Rs.900/month for handicapped) This amounts to approximately Rs.1.13 million per year. This effort not only led to improving the project image at the community level, most importantly it elevated the self-esteem of otherwise vulnerable person within the family and the community as earning members of their households. The project is committed to have more than 100% coverage of eligible vulnerable in next two years. The next step is to link these eligible pensioners with micro-level economic activities that suit their skill, interest and resources.

The project identified Kuroiler having potential for enterprise during the initial years. Tracking of the benefits accrued to project HHs during 2005 and 2006 was carried out as per well being ranking categories, coverage achieved and the profitability of the enterprise amongst various HH categories. The compiled data showed positive uptake of the intervention amongst the project HHs with category I, II and III households covered under the intervention. The same has been depicted in the following table:

Targeting the poor in Kuroiler enterprise in Aajeevika

Parameters identified	WBR Category				
	I	II	III	IV	V
Total No. of H/H (Y1+Y2)	2860	11090	11797	7675	7543
No. of H/H covered against total No. of H/H in each category covered	1073	2195	1820	536	255
% of covered H/H against total No. of H/H in each category covered	38	20	15	7	3
Average no of chicks distributed per H/H	4-6	6-10	6-10	10-15	15-20
Contribution rate in Rs. per chicks	6	15	15	20	30
* Mortality rate	10%	5 to 10%	5 to 10%	5 to 10%	5 to 10%
Net profit earned/ H/H in Rs	1000	1250 to 1500	1250 to 1500	1500 to 2000	2000 to 3000

* Mortality due to predation. Y1= Year One. Y2= Year Two

From 2007 onwards UPASaC interventions were initiated in five project blocks. The tracking of the HHs has been done category wise for interventions related to capacity building and demonstrations with focus on category I, II and III households. The same is explained below for interventions during 2007-08 and 2008-09 (upto 31 August 2008).

Category wise details of persons covered by UPASaC interventions (2007-08)

	WBR Category				
	I	II	III	IV	V
Training	395 (10.8%)	1145 (7%)	664 (4.6%)	229 (2.5)	37
Workshop	114 (3%)	238 (2%)	205 (1%)	83 (1%)	60
Exposure	152 (4%)	476 (3%)	385 (2.7%)	149 (1.6%)	34
Demo	458 (12.5%)	667 (4.3%)	1668 (11.6%)	436 (4.7%)	257*

* Nb: Demonstration on full cost. Only capacity building has been attended to organize the value chain

Category wise details of persons covered by UPASaC interventions
(Apr - Aug 08-09)

	WBR Category						
	I	II	III	IV	V	Female	Male
Training	28	172	148	65	16	314	115
Workshop	4	4	3	2	1	10	24
Exposure	25	47	55	19	10	109	47
Demo	871 (23.8%)	1778 (11.5%)	2015 (14%)	891 (9.6%)	476	4874	1207 *

* Nb: Demonstration on full cost. Only capacity building has been attended to organize the value chain

The project observed that well being ranking exercise is an effective participatory tool to identify the poverty layers in the village in a relative manner. The acceptability of this exercise at the grass-root level is good. The project tried to validate its observations by conducting and **impact study on project targeting** keeping in view the importance of targeting of the poorest households through its M&E agency to understand the process followed by project staff for conducting well being ranking exercise and the results achieved. To track the improvements in the target households the following points have been recommended by the study :

1. Well Being Ranking (WBR) is to be done more systematically and regularly.
2. The methodology used for the WBR to be strengthened and made more participatory. Project staff to be trained.
3. Project Management Information System (MIS) to be designed to include the WBR and its tracking as a part of project progress
4. Better targeting of project benefits to be ensured.
5. Issue of 'secondary demand' after successful demonstrations of project interventions to be addressed

The project also identified challenges for attending the poorest by project which are as follows:

1. Review of the well being ranking to be done in a village every two years through NGO partners
2. Well being ranking process to be handed over to SHG federations within one year of their being operational
3. Project to keenly monitor the process of well being ranking application in all implementation activities carried out by UPASaC.

Steps ahead:

The strategic empowerment issues of the poor were addressed by the project through active participation of NGOs in the areas of good governance, legal empowerment of women, child care, food security, awareness of NREGA etc.

In future the challenge would be to integrate the business aspiration of the poor into the sub-sector business development framework of UPASaC through appropriate service and finance support by UPASaC and Aajeevika staff and NGO.

Project has so far done sizable amount of ground level work to create a conducive environment for the poor to enter into an enterprise mode that could empower them socio-economically both from the community's end and from the market framework conditions end. This is clearly reflected in the financial capacity built in the SHGs coupled with their confidence and enthusiasm to take up the enterprises.

The ground work for viable enterprise creation has also been attended very scientifically in the project through sub sector approach to Business Development Services for the poor, where, every effort are being made to identify and reach every level of value chain actors. These actors are mainly the business development service providers and the financial institutions. By organizing the demonstrations carefully, the project could narrow down the sub-sectors to actually what could work in the project area through an elaborate value chain mapping exercises within the selected sub-sectors. So far UPASaC have been able to narrow down into seven value chains namely Off-season vegetables, kuroiler, dairy, organic farming, non-farm sector, medicinal& aromatic plants and tourism. The UPASaC has also worked out modalities in identifying business development services providers in various sub sectors in considerable cases so that the business effort made by the poor do not stand as unviable stand alone effort.

Project has adequately tested ideas, approaches and activities proposed in the PAR till the MTR in order to further clarify what works and what doesn't, what needs to be refined and what needs to be discarded. The findings of these experiments will be discussed in the ensuing Mid-Term Review of the project during September '08 and changes in the project structure as well as targets will be made accordingly where poor could be integrally involved in the economic activities that has fool-proof backward and forward linkage support.

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