

Executive Summary

Government of India has increasingly been entrusting the responsibility for delivery of key services like education, health, employment etc. at local level especially at PRIs and funds are being provided directly to districts by GOI. Responding to this devolution of finances to districts for an integral local area development a Performance Audit of Nagaon district was carried out to assess the status and impact of implementation of various Socio-economic development activities in the District during 2006-11 and to evaluate whether the quality of life of the people has improved. This audit covered the developmental activities and associated expenditure in the District in respect of Social and Economic Sector schemes, provision of basic civic amenities, use of Information Technology to provide better public services and focused on the role and responsibilities of DC in providing the essential public services and improving the quality of life of the people.

Audit scrutiny of social sector schemes brought out the successful efforts of the District Administration in improving the basic infrastructure in both Health and Education. Improvement in coverage of supply of drinking water during 2006-11 was also noticed. However, there are quite a few areas where the district administration needs to focus its attention as discussed below:

Planning

The District Planning and Monitoring Committee though formed in August 2004 had not prepared any Perspective Plans and Integrated Plan for overall development of the District. As a result gaps in various development activities remained unidentified and needs of weaker section of the society could not be addressed to. Community Participation in planning process was not ensured.

(Paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3)

Recommendation

Gaps in various developmental schemes needs to be identified through Perspective Plans and Integrated Plan by Community Participation in planning process.

Financial Managements

Funds remained unutilised and parked in banks at district as well as in lower level as works under different schemes could not be completed for want of land acquisition, slow progress of works by contractors/executing agencies, lack of monitoring and supervision. Besides lack of financial control resulted in non accountal of funds, loss due to cut imposed by GOI, excess payment and inadmissible expenditure.

(Paragraphs 4.1 to 4.9)

Recommendation

Financial management, in general, needs improvement, and funds provided for various socio-economic developmental programmes need to be efficiently and effectively utilised.

Social Services

Besides literacy, there are certain definite facilitators of ascertaining quality of human life in a region. Presence of such facilitators and accessibility and usability of these social overheads make way for higher standard of living in the region. Health, Education, Drinking Water, Sanitation etc. are some of the basic requirements of any region to maintain and sustain basic standard of living.

Health

Identification of gaps in the health care infrastructure, non availability of stipulated facilities and absence of skilled manpower etc. were not assessed to make proper planning followed by implementation. Thus, the aim of providing accessible and affordable health care facilities to the people was yet to be achieved in the District. However, improvements were noticed in reducing infant mortality rate, maternal mortality rate and total fertility rate, increasing institutional deliveries of child, immunisation of child population and eradication of leprosy.

(Paragraphs 5.1.1 to 5.1.11)

Recommendation

The District Administration should ensure of providing accessible and affordable health care as per NRHM guidelines within specific time frame.

Education

The number of Primary and Upper Primary Schools increased with increase of enrolment of children in the targeted group. Drop out level of students during 2006-11 was found reduced. There were also improvements in pass percentage of pass in Board's results in spite of shortage of teachers in schools. However, many schools in the District lacked basic infrastructure/facilities and shortfall in inspection of schools to be carried out by the Inspector of Schools. There was also irrational deployment of teachers in rural and urban areas in respect of primary and upper primary schools. Implementation of Mid Day Meal scheme failed to achieve its objective since it could not provide the children with meals for required number of days.

(Paragraphs 5.2.1 to 5.2.3 and 5.3)

Recommendation

Basic infrastructure/facilities should be provided on a priority basis in all the schools to ensure an appropriate environment for teaching and learning.

Water Supply and Sanitation

Though there was improvement in coverage of habitations in supply of drinking water during 2006-11, supply of safe drinking water to people of the district was not ensured by conducting water tests at regular intervals. Occurrence of water born diseases in the District raised doubt about supply of safe drinking water.

The coverage of Total Sanitation Campaign Scheme in the District so far as toilets for schools and Anganwadi Centres were concerned was partial. Further, the four towns in the District had no sewerage facilities and there was no plan to construct it, which indicated that the objective of providing hygienic sanitation facilities remained unachieved as a result quality of life of people in this aspect in the District was not improved as stipulated.

(Paragraphs 5.4.1 to 5.4.5 & 5.5.1 to 5.5.2)

Recommendations

- *Action plan needs to be chalked out to provide potable drinking water to all the uncovered habitations besides the quality of drinking water should be ensured by regular water testing.*
- *Steps needs to be taken to ensure completion of works under Total Sanitation Campaign in time to extent the desired benefit to people.*

Integrated Child Development Scheme

Implementation of the scheme was partial in the District as 75 to 113 feeding days per year during 2006-11 could be covered against the norm of 300 days per year, as a result improvement of nutritional status of beneficiaries remained unachieved. Besides AWCs were lacking in toilet and drinking water supply.

(Paragraphs 5.6.1 to 5.6.4)

Recommendation

Adequate funds should be provided to ensure coverage of entire feeding days as stipulated in scheme guidelines.

Economic Services

Infrastructure-Transportation and Road connectivity

Nagaon is well connected with different parts of State by road links. The National Highway No.36 and 37 provide easy access to important places of Nagaon district. The North East Frontier Railway has its divisional Headquarter in Lumding which is connected with all important centres in the District. Coverage of habitations under PMGSY was, however, deficient in the Districts as large number of works remained incomplete due to slow progress of works by the contractors, scarcity of materials, limited working period and paucity of funds.

(Paragraphs 6.1.1 and 6.1.1.1)

Recommendation

Roads connectivity of habitations/villages should be completed in a time bound manner by formulating long term/medium term plans.

Irrigation

Many irrigation schemes remained inoperative/defunct/incomplete due to paucity of funds as a result objective of creation of irrigation potential and its eventual utilisation for increase of production of crops both traditional and high yielding variety to improve the economic condition of the poor people remained unachieved. Schemes were taken up without ascertaining demand of water as a result created potential were also not utilised.

(Paragraphs 6.1.2 and 6.1.2.1)

Recommendation

Adequate funds should be provided so that schemes were completed in time to create irrigation potential for increase of production of crops.

Other Developmental Schemes

Many works under DDP, Untied funds, MPLADS, MLAADS etc. remained incomplete due to lack of planning and supervision. As a result funds remained unutilised and people were deprived from intended benefits. The assets created were not accounted for, as asset register was not maintained and future maintenance of assets were not ensured.

(Paragraphs 6.1.3 and 6.1.3.1)

Recommendation

A co-ordinated approach needs to be adopted by the District Administration in implementation of the projects/schemes so that the works are planned and completed.

Employment Generation

Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)

The shortfall in generation of employment under NREGS was due to under utilisation of funds and excess expenditure in material components. In both the schemes, adequate employment generation for women was not ensured. Thus, the District Authorities failed to provide the guaranteed wage employment in rural areas of the District thereby defeating the objective of providing security of livelihood to the needy and weaker section. Thus, the extent of poverty alleviation through these schemes was not upto the targeted level.

(Paragraphs 6.2.1, 6.2.2 and 6.2.2.1)

Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)

In the absence of monitoring mechanism to evaluate the status of economic viability of the projects undertaken by SHGs/Individuals, their economic upliftment was not ensured. Constant monitoring of release of funds to SHGs and individual beneficiaries by the banks as envisaged in scheme guidelines was deficient and selection of beneficiaries were also not based on ground realities.

(Paragraphs 6.2.3 and 6.2.3.1)

Recommendations

- *The objective of security of livelihood to the needy and weaker section of the society by generating more employment should be ensured by the District Administration.*
- *Monitoring should be strengthened to evaluate the status of economically viability of projects undertaken by SHGs.*

Housing Scheme

Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)

Due to release of funds at the fag end of the financial year by the DRDA to lower levels, huge funds remained unutilised at the end of each financial year and as a result targeted houses could not constructed. IAY funds were diverted for other purposes besides beneficiaries were selected outside BPL lists and funds were provided to ineligible persons.

(Paragraphs 6.3.1 to 6.3.3)

Recommendation

Selection of BPL beneficiaries by Gram Sabhas needs to be ensured.

Energy

Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY)

The implementation of the scheme was partial in the District. Only 54 per cent of targeted villages were electrified and 39 per cent of targeted BPL population could be covered during 2006-11. Delay in completion of the scheme led to cost overrun.

(Paragraph 6.4)

Recommendation

The district administration should ensure completion of work by co-ordinating among different agencies within specified period so that targeted villages can be electrified.

General Services

E-Governance

A District e-Governance agency for implementation of NeGP, monitoring the functioning of the Common Service Centres, delivery of G2C Services as required to be established, had not been established. As a result, the Citizens of the District remained deprived of getting the intended benefits under NeGP.

(Paragraph 7.1)

Waste management

The Municipal Boards (MBs) in the District failed to discharge their responsibilities in disposing municipal waste for deficient infrastructure and people of the District were exposed to the threat of untreated waste and pollution.

(Paragraphs 7.2.1 and 7.2.2)

Recommendation

Waste management plans need to be finalised by the MBs on priority basis for pollution free environment.

Other Civic Amenities

The District is deficient in drainage system, inadequate bank branches and fire stations. Increase in criminal cases was also noticed. The District Administration had not initiated any action to improve the quality of life by removing these deficiencies.

(Paragraphs 7.3.2 to 7.3.3)

Satisfaction level of the beneficiaries in the District

The responses to personal interviews and information furnished by the GPs indicate poor satisfaction level in respect of road conditions, drinking water supply, electricity supply, medical facilities etc.

(Chapter 8)

Recommendation

The District authority should take concrete and tangible efforts to improve the quality of life in the District by efficient implementation of the development programmes.

Monitoring Mechanism and Impact Evaluation

Monitoring and Supervision at various levels was deficient for which huge number of works under different schemes remained incomplete. As a result people were deprived of intended benefits of these developmental schemes. Documentation of receipts and disposal of complaints received, were not done. Thus, timely disposal of complaints/grievances received from the people of the district could not be ascertained.

(Paragraphs 10.1 to 10.5)

Recommendation

Monitoring, inspection and supervision needs to be strengthened at all the tiers of local administration to ensure that the programmes are executed on time and within cost, and timely corrective action is taken in cases of slippage.

Conclusion

Planning was not based on structural process of obtaining inputs from Blocks, GPs and other Stake holders. Financial management was poor. Funds remained un-utilised at different levels. Large number of works under different schemes remained incomplete due to funds constraint, slow progress of works, land problem etc. As a result, desired benefits are to be provided to the people of the District. There are multiplicity of programmes/schemes and even larger number of implementing agencies making it difficult for the District Administration to monitor and supervise the works. Although there were improvements in creation of infrastructure in both Health and Education Sectors but the District Administration needs to provide adequate skilled manpower to utilise the facilities in these sectors. Improvement in coverage of habitations though increased, supply of safe drinking water was not ensured through regular water testing. Employment generation in the District was deficient as a result the objective of improving livelihood of the weaker section of the

society remained unachieved. Further, inputs regarding satisfaction level of people through GP Secretaries indicated deficiency in providing better road communication, safe drinking water supply, adequate medical facilities, and elementary education to all children etc. The State Government/the District Administration need to focus its attention to address these serious issues in order to improve the quality of life of the people in the District.

(Chapter 11)