

# **Executive Summary**

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In recognition of the importance accorded by the Planning Commission, Government of India, for a District-centric approach to devolution of finances towards integrated local area development, a District-centric audit of Malda district was carried out to assess the status and impact of implementation of various socio-economic developmental activities in the District during 2007-12 and to evaluate improvement in the quality of life of the people. The review covered key Social Sector programmes relating to health, education, nutrition and water supply, Economic Sector programmes relating to creation of roads, supply of power, development of agriculture, generation of employment etc. and provision of basic civic amenities to provide better public services, etc. Malda being one of the major flood prone Districts, an assessment of the efficacy of the anti-erosion works undertaken by Government was also done by Audit.

For reviewing various issues of implementation of all these schemes at various levels, records of the nodal Departments/ State level nodal agencies, District level records of the District Magistrate/ Zilla Parishad/ District Rural Development Cell/ other District level nodal authorities were test checked by Audit. Moreover, for assessing ground level implementation issues, five Development Blocks and seventeen Gram Panchayats were visited by audit.

Summary of significant observations arising out of the District centric Audit are discussed hereunder:-

### *Social Sector schemes*

Under **Social Services**, though implementation of key flagship programmes has resulted in some positive impacts especially in health and education sector, there was still scope for improvements.

- ❖ Under the **Health Sector**, performance analysis of implementation of various components of National Rural Health Mission disclosed that in the absence of household survey and survey to assess the facilities, planning was not sufficiently linked to reality. There were noticeable shortages in terms of availability of health centres, especially Community Health Centres and Primary Health Centres in the District based on rural population as per Census 2011. Sample checks showed that even the existing health centres lacked basic infrastructure /services. Shortage of manpower as compared to Indian Public Health Standard (IPHS) norms was also a matter of serious concern. Although Institutional deliveries showed an upward trend during last five years, it still registered significant shortfall ranging from 50 to 66 *per cent* during 2007-12. The aim of providing accessible and affordable healthcare to the people thus remained unachieved in the District.
- ❖ As regards **Education Sector**, the quality of plan was compromised as District Project Officer prepared Annual Plan based on available data of Census 2001 and District Information for School Education (DISE) database without conducting household survey and ensuring community participation. Number of primary schools increased marginally during last five years with 45 *per cent* increase in

Project Reports resulted in non-completion / non-commencement of works leading to eligible habitations being deprived of the benefit of all weather road connectivity.

- ❖ Malda being one of the flood prone districts of the State, a performance appraisal of the **Anti Erosion** activities was conducted. It was observed that in the absence of long term Master plan coupled with prioritisation on temporary /short term protective measures instead of permanent measures, anti-erosion schemes did not yield the desired results. The same was compounded by delays in commencement of many schemes on the vulnerable zones even after their approval, which was often due to inefficient management of tender formalities. Adequate monitoring mechanism was not functioning to exercise proper checks on timely completion of the schemes as well as on quality of materials being utilised during execution of schemes.
- ❖ The **Employment Generation** schemes could not achieve their intended objectives of providing sustained level of income. While only 0.6 *per cent* of the Self Help Groups could be credit-linked in Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) could not ensure 100 days jobs to a substantial percentage of targeted population. Non-utilisation of assets created through SGSY assistance was indicative of unplanned creation of infrastructure, coupled with lax monitoring and intervention.
- ❖ National Food Security Mission (NFSM) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, (RKVY) being two major schemes under **Agriculture Sector**, were subjected to performance assessments. It was observed that the aim of increasing production of pulses through enhancement of area and productivity remained unachieved while cultivated area and yield in 2011-12 showed an overall decline as compared to those of 2007-08. Failure of timely distribution of inputs among the beneficiaries factored behind such non-achievement. This indicated that the District is falling short of NFSM targets achievable in 2011-12. As regards of RKVY, the District authority failed to effectively implement the interventions under the components test checked as transpired from low level of expenditure, un-co-ordinated purchase of implements, etc. Implementation of both NFSM and RKVY was affected by lax monitoring.
- ❖ Implementation of Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY) under **Energy Sector** was adversely affected by deficiencies in planning and consequent revision of targets to the end of the Plan period. The slow progress of work and non-achievement of target even after 19 months from the scheduled target date of completion was indicative of lax implementation of the scheme. Instances of below the poverty line households being illegally charged money for the electricity connection should be viewed seriously as the scheme had envisaged free connections.

### *General Sector*

- ❖ As regards performance of the District Police authorities in maintaining **law and order** it was observed that the police force had to perform with acute shortage of manpower. Wings like District Intelligence Branch, Narcotic Cell, Highway Traffic and Women Cell was operating with 74 to 100 *per cent* shortage in manpower. As compared to norms fixed by Police Regulation of Bengal, Malda police authority had been maintaining law and order with only 31 *per cent* of the required number of staff.
- ❖ Under **Municipal Services** as observed in English Bazar Municipality, there was shortage of 43 *per cent* in drains as compared to requirement. Further, the municipality discharged untreated drain water into Mahananda river polluting the river and the adjoining environment. Segregation of solid wastes, including bio-medical / hazardous wastes, etc., was not done by the Municipality. The municipality did not have any treatment plant for effective disposal of the waste and untreated waste was dumped in ditches and private low lands situated outside the town.

### *Other general issues*

- ❖ The basic objective of preparation of comprehensive District Plan through participative planning process for balanced and co-ordinated development remained largely unachieved due to deficient functioning of the District Planning Committee and irregular preparation of District plan. Resultantly, gaps in various developmental schemes/ programmes could not be identified defeating the purpose of preparation of District Plan.