

Main Report

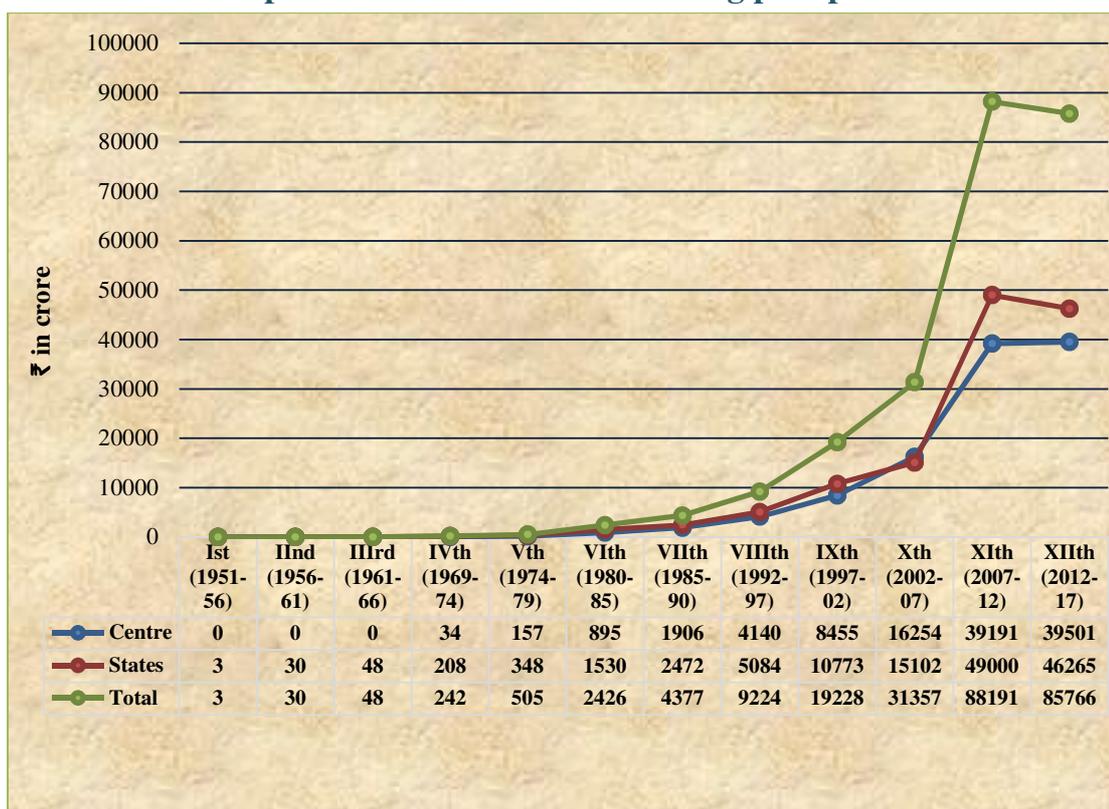
Chapter-I Programme Overview and Audit Approach

1.1 Introduction

Ever since independence, Government of India has undertaken various programmes to provide safe drinking water to the rural population. In 2009, Government of India launched the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP/Programme) by modifying the earlier Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme and subsuming various sub-missions, miscellaneous schemes and mainstreaming *Swajaldhara* principles.

The investments made by the Central and State Governments up to the 12th Five Year Plan on providing drinking water to the rural population is given in **Graph-1.1**:

Graph-1.1: Investment made during plan period



Source: Records of the Ministry

1.2 Programme Objectives

NRDWP was framed with the vision of providing safe and adequate drinking water in rural areas for all on a sustainable basis. The Programme had the following primary objectives:

a.	enable all households to have access to and use safe and adequate drinking water within reasonable distance;
b.	enable communities to monitor their drinking water sources;
c.	ensure that potability, reliability, sustainability, convenience, equity and consumers preference are the guiding principles while planning for a community based water supply system;
d.	provide drinking water facility, especially piped water supply, to <i>Gram Panchayats</i> that have achieved open defecation free status on priority basis;
e.	ensure all Government schools and <i>anganwadis</i> have access to safe drinking water;
f.	provide enabling support and environment for <i>Panchayati Raj</i> Institutions and local communities to manage their own drinking water sources and systems in their villages; and
g.	provide access to information through online reporting mechanism with information placed in public domain to ensure transparency and informed decision making.

1.3 Programme implementation strategy

In the 11th Five Year Plan (FYP), the basis for coverage under the rural water supply programme was shifted from habitations to households so as to ensure drinking water supply to all households in the community. In the 12th Plan, the emphasis was on piped water supply. The Working Group on Domestic Water and Sanitation in the Planning Commission had recommended the need to increase drinking water supply service level in rural areas from 40 lpcd¹ to 55² lpcd and to focus on piped water supply.

The Strategic Plan³ (2011-2022) envisaged providing every rural person in the country access to 70 lpcd of safe drinking water within their household premises or at a horizontal or vertical distance of not more than 50 meters from their household without barriers of social or financial discrimination by 2022. It recognized that States would adopt their own strategies and phased timeframes to achieve this goal. The Strategic Plan sets out the following timelines for achieving the set goals:

¹ litres per capita per day

² Drinking-3 lpcd, Cooking-5 lpcd, Bathing-15 lpcd, washing utensils and house-10 lpcd, Ablution/Toilets-10 lpcd, Washing of cloths and other uses-12 lpcd

³ Strategic Plan (2011-2022), Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation- Rural Drinking Water “Ensuring Drinking Water Security in Rural India”

by year 2017

- at least 50 *per cent* of rural households are provided with piped water supply;
- at least 35 *per cent* of rural households have piped water supply with a household connection; less than 20 *per cent* use public taps and less than 45 *per cent* use hand pumps or other safe and adequate private water sources;
- all services meet set standards in terms of quality and number of hours of supply every day;
- ensure that all households, schools and *anganwadis* in rural India have access to and use adequate quantity of safe drinking water;
- provide enabling support and environment for *Panchayati Raj* Institutions and local communities to manage at least 60 *per cent* of rural drinking water sources and systems.

by year 2022

- ensure that at least 90 *per cent* of rural households are provided with piped water supply;
- at least 80 *per cent* of rural households have piped water supply with a household connection; less than 10 *per cent* use public taps and less than 10 *per cent* use hand pumps or other safe and adequate water sources;
- provide enabling support and environment for all *Panchayati Raj* Institutions and local communities to manage 100 *per cent* of rural drinking water sources and systems.

1.4 United Nations Development Goals

The theme of providing safe drinking water was included by the United Nations in its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and subsequently the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Under the MDGs, nations committed to halving the proportion of households without access to safe drinking water sources from its 1990 level by 2015. The India Country Report⁴ on achievements made under MDGs showed that these targets had been achieved during 2012 in the rural areas.

The SDGs Agenda for 2030 came into effect in January 2016. Under the SDGs, universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all is to be achieved by 2030. The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in its Strategic Plan (2011-2022) envisaged providing drinking water to all rural households by 2017 and to enhance accessibility to piped water supply to households to 90 *per cent* by 2022.

⁴ Issued by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (2015)

On the issue of integrating national goals with the relevant SDG goals, the Ministry informed (September 2017) that its overarching goal is “*Har Ghar Jal*”- i.e. to achieve saturation with household water connections in rural India. The Ministry added that it would require ₹ 23,000 crore annually till 2030 (at present cost) to achieve this goal and given the present financial outlays, SDGs cannot be realised solely through NRDWP efforts.

1.5 Audit approach

1.5.1 Audit objectives

The performance audit was taken up with the objective of ascertaining whether:

- necessary planning and institutional mechanisms existed for effective implementation of the Programme;
- fund management for the Programme was economical and effective;
- implementation of Programme was effective and efficient; and
- adequate and effective mechanisms existed for monitoring and evaluation of the Programme.

1.5.2 Audit methodology and coverage of performance audit

The performance audit commenced with an entry conference with the Ministry on 16 March 2017 wherein the audit methodology, scope, objectives and criteria were discussed. Simultaneously, entry conferences were held in each State by the respective Principal Accountants General/Accountants General with the nodal departments involved in the implementation of the Programme. Thereafter, records relating to the Programme were examined in the Ministry and in States between April 2017 and August 2017.

The performance audit covered implementation of the Programme over a period of five years i.e. from 2012-13 to 2016-17 in 27 States⁵. An audit survey was also carried out using a structured questionnaire designed to assess the involvement of *Gram Sabha*/village/habitations and its representatives in the Programme. After conclusion of the audit, an exit conference was held with the Ministry on 16 February 2018 in which the draft audit findings were discussed. Exit conferences were also held at the State level. This Report has taken into account replies furnished by the Ministry and Programme implementing agencies at different levels.

⁵ Two States viz. **Haryana** and **West Bengal** were excluded from the selection due to coverage of audit of NRDWP in State Audit Reports of the previous year.

1.5.3 Source of audit criteria

The audit criteria were derived from the following:

- NRDWP Guidelines; Strategic Plan, notifications, orders and circulars issued by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation;
- Studies conducted by the erstwhile Planning Commission (NITI Aayog) and other monitoring agencies in Centre and State; and
- State Government orders relating to implementation of NRDWP;

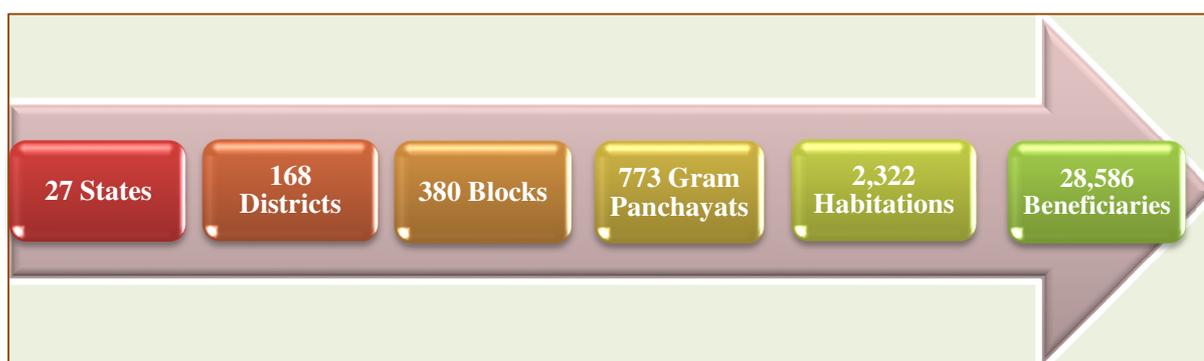
1.5.4 Audit sampling

Each State was divided into geographically contiguous regions and samples were taken from each region to make them representative of the entire State. The process and mechanism for sampling and selection of districts, blocks, *Gram Panchayats* and beneficiaries are detailed in **Annexe-1.1 (A)**.

An audit survey was carried out to review the institutional arrangements at the *Gram Sabha/Village* levels and their involvement in planning and implementation and awareness about the Programme. In addition, the impact of the Programme on beneficiaries was studied with reference to key issues *viz.* availability, access, regularity and reliability of drinking water. The details of habitations surveyed and profile of beneficiaries are given in **Annexe-1.1 (B) and (C)**.

The sample size covered during the performance audit is depicted in **Chart-1.1**:

Chart-1.1: Sample size



Details of the sampled districts, divisions, blocks, *Gram Panchayats*, habitations and beneficiaries selected are given in **Annexe-1.2**. Name of selected districts are given in **Annexe-1.3**.

1.5.5 Previous audit findings

The Programme was previously reviewed and included in the Comptroller and Auditor General of India's Report No. 12 of 2008 (Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme). The significant observations included in the Report pertained to deficiencies in the Annual Action Plans, delayed submission of proposals, slip-back habitations⁶, non-functional schemes, inadequate attention to water quality and infrastructure for testing and monitoring water quality.

The Public Accounts Committee (15th Lok Sabha), in their 35th Report (2011- 12) on the above-mentioned Report No. 12 of 2008 had made their recommendations. The Committee further reviewed the Action Taken Notes furnished by the Ministry (February 2012) in their 69th Report (2012-13).

The present performance audit of NRDWP for the period 2012-13 to 2016-17 revealed that the deficiencies pointed out in the earlier CAG's Report continued to persist. The details of deficiencies, corresponding recommendation and position as per current audit are given in **Annexe-1.4**.

1.6 Acknowledgement

Audit acknowledges the co-operation and assistance extended by the Ministry, State Governments and implementing departments and their officials at various stages during conduct of this performance audit.

⁶ Habitations shifted from category of fully covered to partially covered due to drying up of sources or contamination of water sources, etc.