

National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA)

INTRODUCTION

Rainfed areas constitute about 57% of the total 140.30 million hectares cultivated in the country. Rainfed agriculture is characterised by low levels of productivity and low input usage. Variability in rainfall results in wide variation and instability in yields. The bulk of the rural poor live in the rainfed regions. Therefore, Government of India accords highest priority to the holistic and sustainable development of rainfed areas through watershed development approach.

The scheme of National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA) was launched in 1990-91 in 25 States and 2 Union Territories based on twin concepts of integrated watershed management and sustainable farming systems. During IX Plan, the scheme was extended to 3 newly formed States of Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. The scheme of NWDPRA has been subsumed under the Scheme for Macro Management of Agriculture (MMA) from 2000-2001. At present, this scheme is being implemented as a programme of Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Macro Management of Agriculture in 28 States and 2 UTs. Funds are released to the States based on Approved Annual Work Plan. The Scheme is presently being implemented on the basis of Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects issued by National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA).

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the scheme are as under :-

- *conservation, development and sustainable management of natural resources.*
- *enhancement of agricultural production and productivity in a sustainable manner.*
- *restoration of ecological balance in the degraded and fragile rainfed eco-systems by greening these areas through appropriate mix of trees, shrubs and grasses.*
- *reduction in regional disparity between irrigated and rainfed areas and;*
- *creation of sustained employment opportunities for the rural community including the landless.*

FINANCING PATTERN

Financing pattern of NWDPRA programme is applicable as per the financing pattern of MMA i.e. 90:10 of Central & State Government. For North Eastern States it is 100% grant.

MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE NWDPR

The main components include :-

- Preparatory phase:
 - Entry point activities
 - Institution and capacity building
 - Detailed Project Report (DPR)
- Watershed Works Phase:
 - Watershed development works
 - Livelihood activities for the assetless persons
 - Production system and micro enterprises
- Consolidation phase

PROGRESS OF NWDPR

Planwise area developed and expenditure made under NWDPR programme are as under :

Area in lakh ha. / Expenditure in Rs. crore

Sr. No.	Plan period	No. of Micro Watersheds	Area developed	Expenditure
1.	VIII	2554	42.232	966.93
2.	IX	3007	27.663	910.81
3.	X	6315	24.133	1156.92
	Total up to X Plan	11876	94.028	3034.66
4.	XI	3854		
	2007-08		3.736	219.08
	2008-09		2.532	271.82
	2009-10		2.534	252.68
	2010-11(Target)		2.976	300.79

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

Impact evaluation studies both on the ground and through remote sensing techniques have shown that watershed based interventions have led to:

- *increase in groundwater recharge.*
- *increase in number of wells and water bodies.*
- *enhancement of cropping intensity.*
- *changes in cropping pattern.*
- *higher yields of crops and reduction in soil losses.*