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**Rural Development Department**
**3.5 Implementation of Watershed Development Programmes**
**Highlights**

*The main objectives of all the three programmes viz Desert Development Programme, Drought Prone Area Programme and Integrated Wasteland Development Programme are development of waste/degraded lands, restoration of ecological balance by harnessing, conserving natural resources such as land, water and vegetative cover and promoting overall economic development and improving the socio-economic conditions of resource poor and disadvantaged sections of the people inhabiting the project areas.*

*A performance review of implementation of above programmes revealed that funds provided for these programmes were not fully utilised, evidence of area treated had not been maintained in some cases, Watershed Development Teams were not formed to the prescribed extent and did not have qualified members. No Self Help Groups were formed in nine selected Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) comprising 165 watersheds. Funds provided for capacity building and training were not fully utilised. No mechanism for proper exit protocol had been evolved. Some significant audit findings are as under:*

- *The State Government had not prepared a long term perspective plan for treatment of waste/degraded lands, drought prone and desert areas.*

*(Paragraph 3.5.8.1)*

- *Shortfall in achievement of treatment of area during 2002-07 in the State under Drought Prone Area Programme, Desert Development Programme and Integrated Wasteland Development Programme ranged between 31 and 52; 50 and 85 and 16 and 53 per cent respectively.*

*(Paragraph 3.5.10.1)*

- *Due to non-adherence to cost norms for watersheds, District Rural Development Agency, Kinnaur and Una spent Rs 9.97 crore under Desert Development Programme and Drought Prone Area Programme in excess of the permissible limit.*

*(Paragraph 3.5.10.4)*

- *Against an area of 2,24,064 hectares to be developed during 2004-07 only 98,127 hectares of area (44 per cent) was actually treated as of March 2007 after incurring an expenditure of Rs 73.71 crore (53 per cent) resulting in shortfall in physical achievement of 1,25,937 hectares.*

*(Paragraph 3.5.11.1)*

- *Four selected Project Implementing Agencies spent Rs 6.06 crore on treatment of waste/degraded lands under Drought Prone Area Programme (Rs 1.69 crore) and Integrated Wasteland Development Programme (Rs 4.37 crore) during 2002-07 but no evidence of area actually developed/treated was kept in Measurement Books/Muster Rolls. The expenditure of Rs 6.06 crore was, thus doubtful.*

*(Paragraph 3.5.12.1)*

- *Four selected Project Implementing Agencies paid wages aggregating Rs 1.04 crore for 1,22,189 mandays (Desert Development Programme: 1,06,050; Integrated Wasteland Development Programme: 16,139) during 2002-07 to outside labourers resulting in non-providing of employment opportunities to resource poor and disadvantaged sections inhabiting the programme areas.*

*(Paragraph 3.5.12.5)*

### **3.5.1 Introduction**

The GOI launched three Centrally sponsored programmes viz. Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP) and Integrated Wasteland Development Programme (IWDP) between 1973-74 and 1989-90 for sustainable development of natural resources through watershed development and community empowerment. The main activities involved in watershed development plan are land development including *in-situ* soil and moisture conservation measures within watershed approach<sup>1</sup> like:

- afforestation including block plantation, agro-forestry and horticulture development;

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<sup>1</sup> A watershed is a geo-hydrological unit which drains into common point and watershed approach is ridge to valley approach for development of land and water, afforestation, etc.

- development of small water harvesting structures such as low cost farm ponds, check dams and *nallah* bunds, etc.;
- pasture development, renovation and augmentation of water resources;
- crop demonstration for popularising new crops; and
- promotion and propagation of non-conventional energy saving devices.

The benefits to be derived from watershed development works include increase in water table, yield of crops and milk besides mitigating the adverse effects of extreme climatic conditions such as drought, desertification, etc.

The three programmes were brought under a common set of guidelines for watershed development with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1995 which was subsequently revised in 2001 to ensure improved role for Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). To further simplify procedures and involve PRIs more meaningfully in planning, implementation and management of economic development activities, GOI brought out (April 2003) new guidelines called “Hariyali”. The projects sanctioned prior to this date were, however, allowed to be continued as per guidelines of 2001.

### ***3.5.2 Implementation in Himachal Pradesh***

In Himachal Pradesh, DDP has been in operation from 1977-78 in three Development Blocks of Kinnaur and Lahaul and Spiti districts and IWDP has been in operation from 1992-93 in 62 Blocks of nine districts<sup>2</sup>, whereas DPAP has been in operation from 1994-95 in 10 Development Blocks of Bilaspur, Solan and Una districts in a phased manner. DPAP was launched in those areas which were constantly affected by severe droughts and DDP in cold desert areas. IWDP was launched for the development of waste/degraded lands in those areas which were not covered under DDP and DPAP.

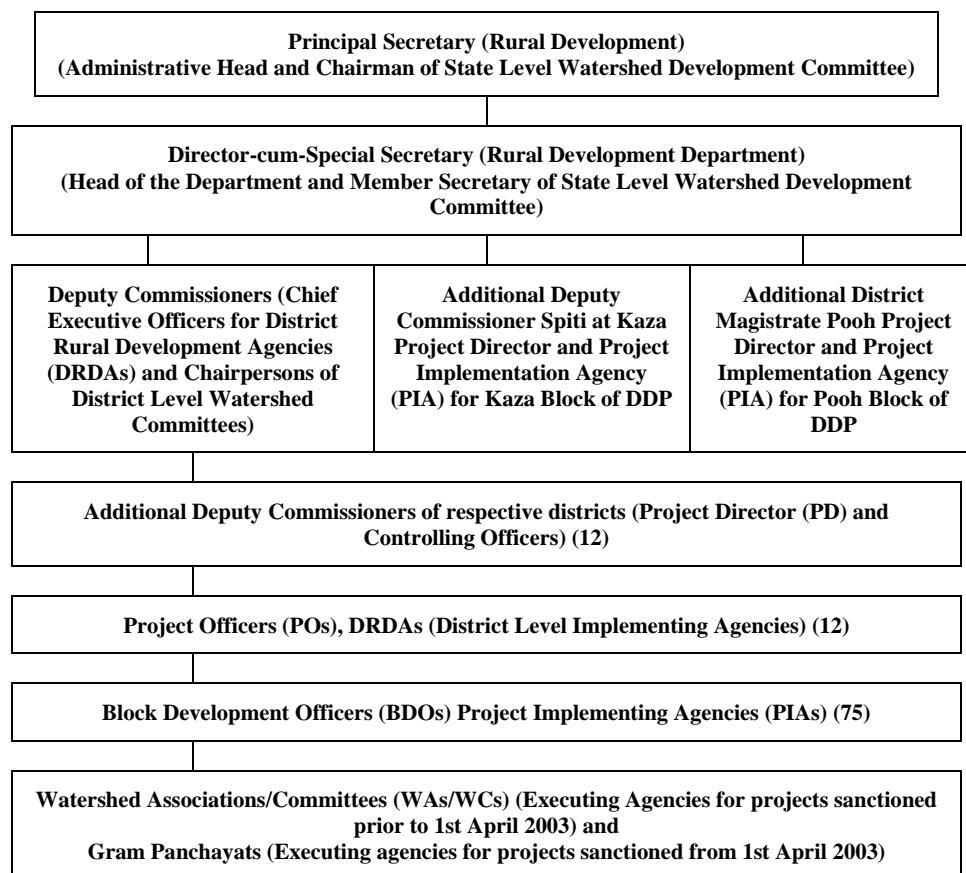
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<sup>2</sup> Chamba: Seven; Hamirpur: Six; Kangra: 14; Kinnaur: Two; Kullu: Five; Mandi: 10; Shimla: Nine; Sirmour: Six and Solan: Three.

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### 3.5.3 Organisational set up

The organisational set up for implementation of all the three programmes in the State is as under:



### 3.5.4 Scope of audit

The performance review covered the period from 2002-07 and was carried out during September 2006-January 2007 through a sample check of the records in the Directorate of Rural Development, offices of seven<sup>3</sup> out of 12 Project Officers (POs), District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs), 23 Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs)<sup>4</sup> and 65 Watershed Committees/panchayats under the selected PIAs. Out of the total expenditure of Rs 154.05 crore incurred on three programmes during 2002-07, expenditure of Rs 84.68 crore

<sup>3</sup> Bilaspur, Hamirpur, Kangra, Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti, Solan and Una.

<sup>4</sup> BDOs of Amb, Bamsan, Bangana, Bilaspur, Bijhari, Bhoranj, Dehra, Dharampur (Solan), Gagret, Ghumarwin, Haroli, Jhandutta, Kalpa, Keylong, Kunihar, Nagrota Bagwan, Nadaun, Nichar, Nurpur, Pragpur and Una Blocks and Project Directors of Kaza and Pooh (Sub-DRDA Blocks).

(55 per cent) was audited. Audit findings as discussed in the succeeding paragraphs are based on analysis of records, data, information and replies furnished to questionnaire/audit memoranda by the aforementioned units.

### **3.5.5 Audit objectives**

The audit objectives of the review were to verify whether:

- planning for implementation of various watershed development programmes was adequate and identification procedure under all the three programmes was appropriate with regard to benchmarks;
- allocation, release and utilisation of funds provided for various programmes was judicious, adequate and effective;
- criteria for selection of watersheds and norms prescribed in the guidelines for execution of works were followed;
- role of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the implementation of watershed development programmes was adequate and effective;
- the monitoring system at various levels was functioning effectively.

### **3.5.6 Audit criteria**

The audit criteria applied for assessing the performance of all the three programmes were:

- benchmarks for identification of area;
- the GOI guidelines, supplementary guidelines issued by State Government and instructions issued by the Central and State Governments from time to time;
- guidelines for watershed projects; and
- mechanism laid down for monitoring and evaluation.

### **3.5.7 Audit Methodology**

An entry conference was held (December 2006) with the Secretary and Director Rural Development Department (RDD) wherein the audit objectives, audit criteria and scope of audit were explained and suggestions/perceptions of the Department relating to implementation of the programmes were discussed. Five POs (Project Officers) and 13 Project Implementation Agencies (PIAs)

(DPAP: 10<sup>5</sup> and DDP: three<sup>6</sup>) were selected cent *per cent* whereas for IWDP: three<sup>7</sup>, districts were selected on the basis of PPSWR<sup>8</sup> method and 10 PIAs on the basis of SRSWOR<sup>9</sup>. The audit findings were discussed (May 2007) with the Secretary (RDD) in an exit conference and the views of the Government wherever offered, have been incorporated at appropriate places in the report.

### **3.5.8 Audit Findings**

#### **3.5.8.1 Planning for implementation of the programmes**

The guidelines (2001) for implementation of all the three programmes provided for preparation of a long term perspective plan by the State Government for treatment of waste/degraded lands, drought prone and desert areas over a period of 15 years, keeping in view the availability of funds under DPAP, DDP and IWDP and other such programmes being implemented through national and international cooperation in a phased manner. It was noticed (January 2007) that the Department had not prepared requisite perspective plan for proper and effective implementation of these programmes.

The Secretary (RDD) contended (May 2007) that preparation of a long term perspective plan was not possible due to topography of the area but informed (August 2007) that the Department has already taken initiative in this regard.

#### **3.5.8.2 Identification of Areas**

The Department informed (September 2007) that under DDP and DPAP, the GOI sanctioned projects to the districts/blocks declared to be covered under respective programmes on the basis of available data of waste/degraded lands identified by the High Level Technical Committee of GOI and National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA). After receipt of funds from GOI, the area is identified by the district authorities with community participation and local needs of the public. Under IWDP, the concerned districts prepare the project proposal on the basis of remote sensing data available with the State Council for Science, Technology and Environment and wasteland Atlas of GOI after conducting proper survey.

As per GOI Atlas, the area of waste/degraded lands in the State was 31,659 square kilometres (31,65,900 hectares) against the total area of

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<sup>5</sup> Amb, Bangana, Bilaspur, Dharampur, Gagret, Ghumarwin, Haroli, Jhandutta, Kunihar and Una.

<sup>6</sup> BDO Lahaul at Keylong, PD DDP, Kaza and PD DDP, Pooh.

<sup>7</sup> Hamirpur, Kangra and Kinnaur.

<sup>8</sup> Probability Proportionate to Size With Replacement.

<sup>9</sup> Simple Random Sampling Without Replacement.

55,673 square kms (55,67,300 hectares) of the State. The State Government identified 8,52,975 hectares<sup>10</sup> area (DDP: 1,93,831 hectares; DPAP: 2,05,833 hectares and IWDP: 4,53,311 hectares) for treatment upto March 2007 since inception of the programmes.

As of March 2006, 59 out of 62 blocks of IWDP were included for treatment of waste/degraded lands. The remaining three blocks of Chamba (Chamba district), Seraj (Mandi district) and Narkanda (Shimla district) were also included under the programme between March 2006 and July 2006.

DDP is being implemented in arid blocks, including cold desert blocks of the State and DPAP in semiarid and dry subhumid blocks based on the Moisture Index.

### 3.5.8.3 Status of Projects

After bringing all the three programmes for implementation under a common set of guidelines from Ist April 1995, the GOI sanctioned 109 Watershed Development Projects for the State, of which, 60 projects were sanctioned during 2002-07. The status of area to be treated under the three programmes and area actually treated upto March 2007 is indicated in **Appendix-XVII**.

As can be seen from **Appendix-XVII**, out of 109 projects, 49 projects were due for completion during 2002-07, of which only 11 projects<sup>11</sup> had been completed during the aforesaid period covering 62,640 hectares area against the targeted area of 68,000 hectares. In the remaining 38 projects only 2,45,438 hectares (61 *per cent*) area was treated against the targeted area of 4,05,635 hectares as of March 2007. Thus, there was delay in completion of these 38 projects ranging between five and 24 months as of August 2007. Therefore, only 65 *per cent* land was treated.

### 3.5.9 Financial Management

#### 3.5.9.1 Funding Pattern

Funding pattern for implementing the three programmes was as under:

|      |                         |                                               |
|------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| DDP  | Prior to April 1999     | 100 <i>per cent</i> by the Central Government |
|      | From April 1999 onwards | 75:25 basis by Central and State Governments  |
| DPAP | Prior to April 1999     | 50:50 basis by Central and State Governments  |
|      | From April 1999 onwards | 75:25 basis by Central and State Governments  |
| IWDP | Prior to April 2000     | 100 <i>per cent</i> by the Central Government |
|      | From April 2000 onwards | 11:1 basis by Central and State Governments   |

<sup>10</sup> Prior to April 2002: 4,75,335 hectares and during 2002-2007: 3,77,640 hectares.

<sup>11</sup> 10 projects in seven test-checked districts and one project in non-test-checked district.

GOI sanctioned the projects to be implemented over a period of five years and released Central share direct to DRDAs in seven instalments in case of projects sanctioned prior to April 2003 and in five instalments for projects sanctioned after April 2003 under *Hariyali* guidelines. Funds so received are kept in savings bank accounts. The cost norm per hectare was Rs 4,000 for the projects sanctioned prior to April 2000 and Rs 6,000 for those sanctioned thereafter under all the three programmes.

### 3.5.9.2 Financial Outlay and Expenditure

The details of funds provided for implementation of DPAP, DDP and IWDP in the State and expenditure incurred thereagainst during 2002-07 was as under:

*Table: 3.5.1*

(Rupees in crore)

| Name of the programme | Year         | Opening balance | Funds received |              |             | Total availability of funds | Expenditure incurred | Shortfall in utilisation |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
|                       |              |                 | Central share  | State share  | Interest    |                             |                      |                          |
| DPAP                  | 2002-2003    | 4.96            | 3.65           | 0.82         | 0.07        | 9.50                        | 4.75 (50)            | 4.75 (50)                |
|                       | 2003-2004    | 4.75            | 5.30           | 2.21         | 0.07        | 12.33                       | 4.51 (37)            | 7.82 (63)                |
|                       | 2004-2005    | 7.82            | 4.25           | 1.41         | 0.22        | 13.70                       | 5.73 (42)            | 7.97 (58)                |
|                       | 2005-2006    | 7.97            | 6.60           | 1.01         | 0.39        | 15.97                       | 6.67 (42)            | 9.30 (58)                |
|                       | 2006-2007    | 9.30            | 3.69           | 1.98         | 0.28        | 15.25                       | 6.61 (43)            | 8.64 (57)                |
|                       | <b>Total</b> |                 |                | <b>23.49</b> | <b>7.43</b> | <b>1.03</b>                 | <b>66.75</b>         | <b>28.27</b>             |
| DDP                   | 2002-2003    | 4.90            | 7.08           | 1.62         | 0.81        | 14.41                       | 7.21 (50)            | 7.20 (50)                |
|                       | 2003-2004    | 7.20            | 7.01           | 1.68         | 0.42        | 16.31                       | 5.01 (31)            | 11.30 (69)               |
|                       | 2004-2005    | 11.30           | 3.35           | 2.27         | 0.52        | 17.44                       | 7.58 (43)            | 9.86 (57)                |
|                       | 2005-2006    | 9.86            | 3.88           | 1.51         | 1.07        | 16.32                       | 8.56 (52)            | 7.76 (48)                |
|                       | 2006-2007    | 7.76            | 10.41          | 2.58         | 1.06        | 21.81                       | 10.57 (48)           | 11.24 (52)               |
|                       | <b>Total</b> |                 |                | <b>31.73</b> | <b>9.66</b> | <b>3.88</b>                 | <b>86.29</b>         | <b>38.93</b>             |
| IWDP                  | 2002-2003    | 13.65           | 15.22          | 0.88         | 0.47        | 30.22                       | 13.22 (44)           | 17.00 (56)               |
|                       | 2003-2004    | 17.00           | 13.50          | 0.96         | 0.75        | 32.21                       | 15.69 (49)           | 16.52 (51)               |
|                       | 2004-2005    | 16.52           | 13.45          | 0.75         | 1.37        | 32.09                       | 16.66 (52)           | 15.43 (48)               |
|                       | 2005-2006    | 15.43           | 26.62          | 1.91         | 0.74        | 44.70                       | 18.49 (41)           | 26.21 (59)               |
|                       | 2006-2007    | 26.21           | 18.23          | 1.82         | 0.61        | 46.87                       | 22.79 (49)           | 24.08 (51)               |
|                       | <b>Total</b> |                 |                | <b>87.02</b> | <b>6.32</b> | <b>3.94</b>                 | <b>186.09</b>        | <b>86.85</b>             |

Source: Figures supplied by the Director, RDD. Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage.



Funds ranging between Rs 4.75 crore and Rs 26.21 crore were not utilised during 2002-07. The percentage of shortfall in utilisation of available funds during the period ranged between 48 to 69 *per cent*. Moreover, the Department had failed to adhere to the prescribed schedule of incurring 15 *per cent* expenditure in the first year; 30 *per cent* in the second year; 30 *per cent* in the third year; 15 *per cent* in the fourth year and 10 *per cent* in the last year of the project period.

It was noticed that there was difference of Rs 20.61 crore<sup>12</sup> between the total expenditure intimated by the Department and the expenditure shown against the financial achievements during 2002-2007 under the three programmes. The Deputy Director intimated (September 2007) that only the expenditure incurred on work component had been given in the statement of financial targets and achievements whereas in the other statement total expenditure of the programme i.e. expenditure on work activities, community organisation/entry point activities, training and administrative overheads was included. The contention is not tenable, as the targets fixed and achievements made thereagainst should include the expenditure incurred on all the components because per hectare cost norm of Rs 6,000 fixed by the GOI for treatment of waste/degraded land includes all these components.

The Director-cum-Special Secretary (RDD) attributed (March 2007) carry forward of unspent amount from year to year and shortfall in financial achievements to preparatory works done in first year, training of PRIs, topography of the State and limited working season in the snow bound areas. The contention lacked justification as out of 75 blocks, only seven blocks<sup>13</sup> under all the three programmes were snow bound. Moreover, planning for execution of development works in the watershed areas and utilisation of financial resources should have been made keeping in view all such factors. The lackadaisical approach of the Department to take appropriate steps for timely utilisation of funds had, thus, adversely affected the implementation of the programmes.

### 3.5.9.3 Non-refund of unspent balances of completed projects

Three projects (DDP-one and DPAP-two) taken up (March 1995 to March 1997) against provision of Rs 14.60 crore were completed between 2002-03 and 2003-04, but the unspent balance of Rs 68.54 lakh was not refunded to the GOI by PO, DRDA, Lahaul and Spiti (Rs 63.79 lakh) and Solan (Rs 4.75 lakh) as of March 2007 as required. The PO, DRDA, Lahaul and Spiti stated (September 2006) that due to non-receipt of utilisation certificate from PIA Kaza the unspent amount could not be refunded. The

<sup>12</sup> Rupees 154.05 crore (as per expenditure column of Table-3.5.1) - Rs 133.44 crore.

<sup>13</sup> Bharmour, Kalpa, Lahaul at Keylong, Nichar, Pangi, Pooh (Kinnaur district) and Spiti at Kaza.

Joint Secretary (RDD) intimated (May 2007) that the matter was being taken up with the DRDAs concerned for taking necessary steps to refund the balance amount as per guidelines.

#### **3.5.9.4 Diversion of funds**

As per guidelines, even temporary diversion of funds from one project to another under the three programmes is not permissible. Records of PO, DRDA, Bilaspur and PD-cum-PIA Pooh (Kinnaur district) revealed that out of Rs 9.98 crore received for implementation of six projects (DDP: two and DPAP: four), Rs 81.86 lakh<sup>14</sup> were diverted between 2002-07 from one project to another for execution of other watershed works in contravention of guidelines and the amount had also not been got refunded subsequently. The PO, DRDA, Bilaspur stated (February 2007) that diversion of funds was made to complete the ongoing works and necessary refund would be made on receipt of funds from GOI and the State Government. The PD-cum-PIA, DDP, Pooh stated (September 2006) that keeping in view the working season in the tribal areas, funds were diverted for ongoing works. The replies are not tenable as funds for these projects were provided keeping in view the working season in tribal areas from April to October. Further, despite diversion of funds, five projects<sup>15</sup> stipulated to be completed by March 2007 were still in progress as of August 2007.

#### **3.5.9.5 Inadmissible expenditure**

As per guidelines, the DRDAs/PIAs were not authorised to incur expenditure on items like furniture, vehicles, computers or any other kind of machinery items. It was noticed that PO, DRDA, Una and five PIAs<sup>16</sup> spent Rs 29.15 lakh<sup>17</sup> during 2002-07 irregularly for the purchase of computers, cameras, LCD projectors, furniture, utensils and gas connection. The PDs DDP Pooh and Kaza stated (September 2006) that these purchases were made to run the project activities smoothly. PO, DRDA, Una stated (February 2007) that these purchases were made from administration part of the scheme. The contention is not tenable as the purchase of these items is not permissible under the guidelines.

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<sup>14</sup> PO, DRDA Bilaspur: Rs 11.36 lakh; PD-cum-PIA Pooh: Rs 70.50 lakh.

<sup>15</sup> DDP: two projects (VI and VII) and DPAP: three projects (V, VI and VII).

<sup>16</sup> BDOs of Bamsan, Bhoranj, Nichar Blocks, PD-cum-PIA, DDP Pooh and Kaza.

<sup>17</sup> PO, DRDA Una: Rs 4.55 lakh; Five PIAs: Rs 24.60 lakh.

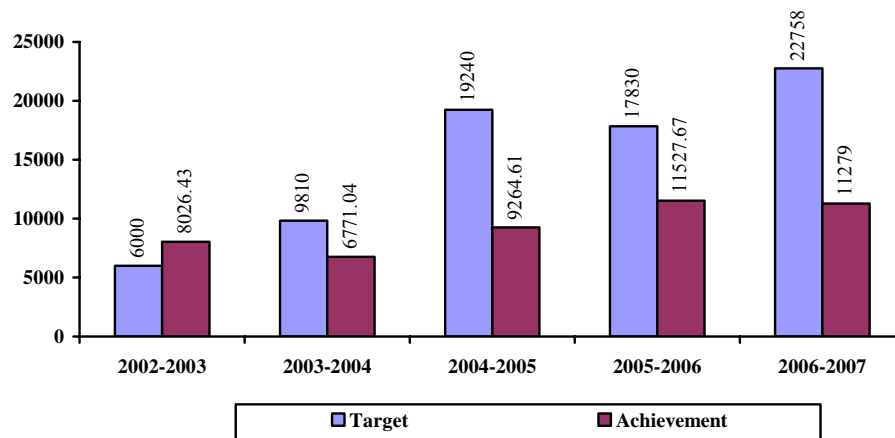
## Implementation of programme

### 3.5.10 Planning

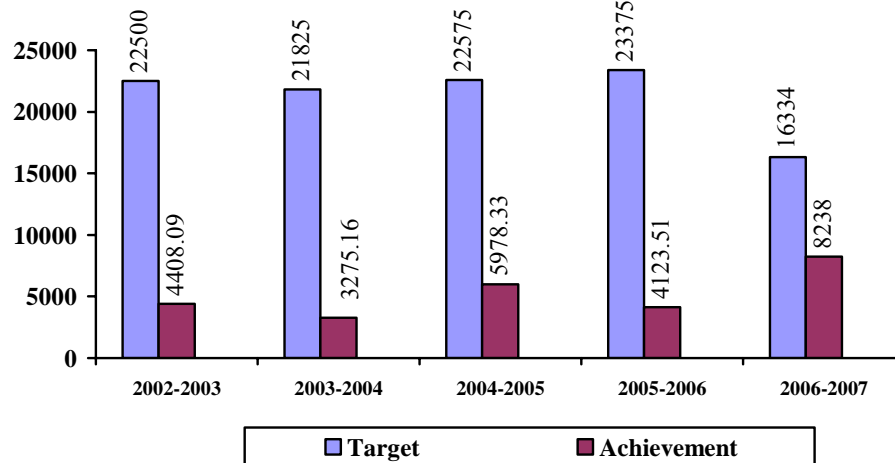
#### 3.5.10.1 Targets and achievements

During 2002-07, 3,94,012 hectares<sup>18</sup> were targeted to be treated through 60 projects under the three programmes, against which, only 2,17,372 hectares<sup>19</sup> were treated resulting in shortfall of 1,76,640 hectares (45 per cent). The shortfall in achievement of treatment of area during 2002-07 ranged between 31 and 52 per cent under DPAP, 50 and 85 per cent under DDP and between 16 and 53 per cent under IWDP as can be seen below.

Targets and achievements for DPAP (In hectares)



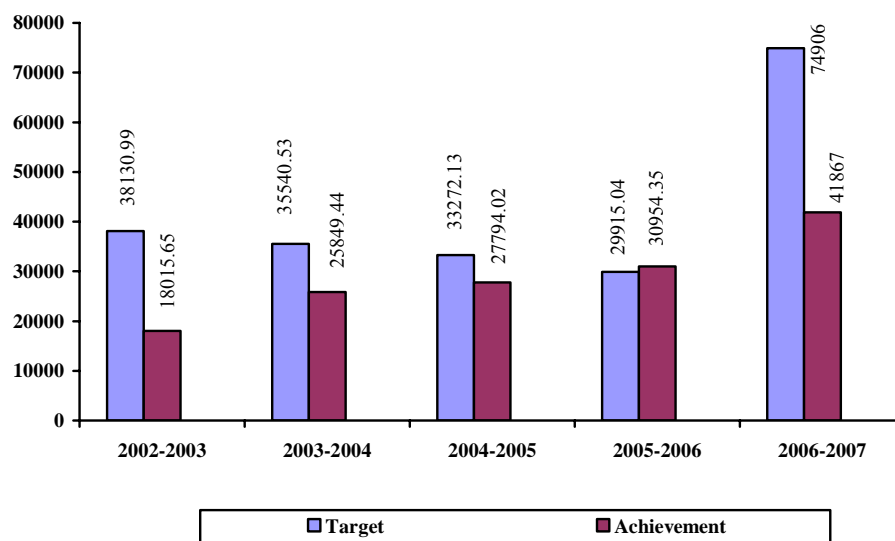
Targets and achievements for DDP (In hectares)



<sup>18</sup> DPAP: 75,638 hectares; DDP: 1,06,609 hectares and IWDP: 2,11,765 hectares.

<sup>19</sup> DPAP: 46,869 hectares; DDP: 26,023 hectares and IWDP: 1,44,480 hectares.

Targets and achievements for IWDP (In hectares)



The Director-cum-Special Secretary, (RDD) attributed (March 2007) shortfall in achievement of targets to initiation of preparatory work such as imparting training to PRIs, awareness camps, identification of watershed area and time taken for obtaining approval for the annual action plan from the respective Gram Sabhas in the Ist year. He further stated that the topography of the State is tough, mountainous and snow bound, with limited working season. The contention of the Director is not acceptable, as the above constraints should have been taken into account at the time of initial planning. Also, out of 75 blocks, only seven blocks are snow bound.

In respect of seven DRDAs<sup>20</sup>, the year-wise position of area targeted to be treated and achievement thereagainst under DPAP, DDP and IWDP during 2002-03 to 2006-07 is given in **Appendix-XVIII**. It will be observed that shortfall in achievement of treatment of area during the above period ranged between 31 and 52 per cent under DPAP, 50 and 85 per cent under DDP and three and 62 per cent under IWDP respectively. The PO, DRDA, Solan intimated no reasons for shortfall in achievements. The POs of remaining six DRDAs<sup>21</sup> attributed (September 2006-January 2007) shortfall in achievement to slow pace of work on the part of executing agencies, receipt of funds at fag end of year, late conducting of mid-term evaluation and lack of interest by the public.

<sup>20</sup> Bilaspur, Hamirpur, Kangra, Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti, Solan and Una.

<sup>21</sup> Bilaspur, Hamirpur, Kangra, Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti and Una.

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### 3.5.10.2 Execution of works without preparation of detailed action plan

As per guidelines, a detailed action plan (DAPs) in the form of an integrated project was to be prepared by the WDT in consultation with watershed community and got approved from the DRDA/ZP.

Test-check of the records of PO, DRDA, Lahaul and Spiti at Keylong and PD-cum-PIA, DDP, Pooh revealed that during 2002-07 against allocation of Rs 118.80 crore for treatment of 1,64,423 hectares, Rs 41.26 crore (DRDA, Keylong: Rs 33.50 crore as of June 2006 and DDP Pooh: Rs 7.76 crore as of March 2005) were spent on carrying out watershed development activities such as soil and moisture conservation, water harvesting structures, afforestation, agriculture and horticulture plantation, etc., in an area of 49,655 hectares but the requisite action plan setting forth the aforementioned goals was not prepared so as to ensure timely delivery of benefits to the beneficiaries concerned. The PO, DRDA, Lahaul and Spiti had not prepared any such action plans for 2002-07. The PD-cum-PIA DDP, Pooh had, however, started preparing action plans since 2005-06. This indicated implementation of programme without proper planning. The PO, DRDA, Lahaul and Spiti at Keylong admitted the fact and stated (August 2006) that the DAPs were not prepared due to shortage of staff and expert personnel. The PD-cum-PIA DDP, Pooh also admitted the facts (September 2006). Thus, at Directorate level monitoring of implementation of the programme was also poor as due to non-preparation of the requisite detailed action plan three projects sanctioned during 1999-02 in Lahaul and Spiti district and stipulated to be completed between 2004-05 and 2006-07 remained incomplete as of March 2007.

### 3.5.10.3 Non-adherence to criteria for selection of watersheds

As per the guidelines of 2001 (revised and renamed as *Hariyali* from 1st April 2003), area of a selected watershed was to be about 500 hectares. The cost norm for treatment of area had been fixed at Rs 6,000 per hectare from 1st April 2000. During 2002-07 GOI sanctioned five projects for development of 99 watersheds in Pooh block (Kinnaur district) under DDP at a cost of Rs 29.70 crore. In addition, two projects for 70 watersheds sanctioned during 2000-02 at a cost of Rs 21 crore were also being implemented in the aforesaid block. Accordingly, for 169 watersheds 84,500 hectares (500 hectares per watershed) of area was required to be identified and included in the treatment plan of respective watersheds.

It was noticed that in respect of three projects of 54 watersheds sanctioned between 2004-05 and 2006-07, the required area of 27,000 hectares was not identified and in the remaining four projects, against 57,500<sup>22</sup> hectares area

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<sup>22</sup> 115 watersheds x 500 hectares = 57,500 hectares.

required to be identified for 115 watersheds, only 27,903 hectares area was identified. Thus, identification of area fell short by 56,597 hectares.

The Joint Secretary (RDD) intimated (December 2006) that due to sandy loam soil, water carrying capacity is considerably low and in view of the available resources, the target area is comparatively less as compared to hot desert of the DPAP area. The reply is not acceptable as the Department should have obtained relaxation in this regard from GOI before undertaking the works.

#### **3.5.10.4 Excess expenditure on watershed projects**

For treatment of degraded/wastelands, cost norm per hectare was Rs 4,000 for watershed projects sanctioned prior to April 2000. For treatment of an area of 11,501 hectares under DPAP in Una district, GOI sanctioned two projects comprising 23 watersheds during 1995-96 (16 watersheds for 8,001 hectares) and 1996-97 (seven watersheds for 3,500 hectares) at a cost of Rs 4.60 crore (11,501 hectares at the rate of Rs 4,000). These projects were required to be completed over a period of five years reckoned from the date of sanction i.e. by 1999-00 and 2000-01 respectively.

It was noticed that against watershed area of 11,501 hectares, only 10,882 hectares were treated and projects were shown as completed (October 2002).

According to the approved cost norm, expenditure on treatment of 10,882 hectares should have been restricted to Rs 4.35 crore. As against this, Rs 4.79 crore had been spent. This resulted in excess expenditure of Rs 0.44 crore over and above the approved cost norms which was met from interest accrued on savings bank account and less area treated.

Similarly, the PD-cum-PIA Pooh block under DDP had incurred an expenditure of Rs 12.53 crore on treatment of only 5,004 hectares of land as of June 2006 against the permissible limit of Rs 3 crore as per the prescribed cost norm resulting in excess expenditure of Rs 9.53 crore.

The PO, DRDA, Una stated (December 2006) that excess expenditure was incurred due to hike in price of raw material whereas Joint Secretary (RDD) in case of DDP intimated (December 2006) that the topography of the area under cold desert is tough due to which the treatment area is less and treatment expenses were more. The replies confirm that there is a need for better coordination and financial management and wherever necessary, relaxation for incurring expenditure over and above the cost norms need to be obtained from GOI.

### 3.5.11 Physical and Financial performance

#### 3.5.11.1 Spill over of projects

GOI sanctioned (1999-2000 and 2001-02) 19 projects in selected DRDAs for the development of 475 watersheds at a cost of Rs 138.91 crore for the treatment of an area of 2,24,064 hectares to be completed<sup>23</sup> during 2004-07. Against this, only 98,127 hectares of area (44 per cent) was actually treated as of March 2007 after incurring an expenditure of Rs 73.71 crore (53 per cent) resulting in shortfall in physical achievement of 1,25,937 hectares. The shortfall in physical progress of these projects ranged between eight and 95 per cent. Additional Director-cum-Joint Secretary (RDD) stated (March 2007) that the targets could not be achieved due to the project preparatory works done in the first year and tough topography of the State. The reply is not acceptable as project preparatory works should have been done before commencement of projects and the factor of topography was already in the notice of the Department. Thus, the Department failed to complete the projects in time.

#### 3.5.11.2 Non-commencement of special project

As per guidelines, the GOI may sanction special projects for treatment of wastelands in special problem areas such as high altitude regions, land sliding areas, slopes having more than 30 degree gradient or for any other specified technical reasons.

Test-check of records of PO, DRDA, Lahaul and Spiti revealed (September 2006) that special project “Tandi Sumnam *kuhl*<sup>24</sup>” for treatment of 5,500 hectares (11 watersheds) was sanctioned under DDP by the GOI during 2003-04 for Rs 3.30 crore for completion in five years. Rs 37.13 lakh were released (February 2004) by the GOI and Rs 12.38 lakh by the State Government (March 2004). The project had not started so far (March 2007) and the entire amount remained unutilised. Rs 3.07 lakh was earned as interest on this amount. Perusal of records revealed that the inhabitants did not agree to flow irrigation scheme due to fears that it would lead to soil erosion. The Joint Secretary (RDD) stated (May 2007) that as the inhabitants of the area did not agree for flow irrigation, a revised proposal for lift irrigation scheme had been sent (May 2007) to GOI.

Action of the Department to initially build a flow irrigation scheme indicates that the aspect of land erosion at the proposed site was not taken into account and also participatory rural appraisal was not done before preparation of action

<sup>23</sup> 2004-2005: four projects; 2005-2006: seven projects and 2006-2007: eight projects.

<sup>24</sup> *Kuhl*: Irrigation channel in hilly areas.

plan and the scheme was framed without keeping in mind the whole objective of land preservation.

### **3.5.12 Execution of watershed development works**

#### **3.5.12.1 Doubtful expenditure on watershed development works**

For post evaluation of watersheds completed (October 2002) in Una block, the State Government appointed (September 2004) an evaluator<sup>25</sup>. The evaluator in his report pointed out that there was no supporting record/ground measurement done and no revenue papers collected in support of watershed development works executed.

Audit also noticed that six watershed projects (Kangra: two and Una: four) were sanctioned (December 1999 to July 2003) by the GOI at a cost of Rs 38.81 crore to be implemented by four PIAs<sup>26</sup>. The works were started between December 1999 and July 2003 and stipulated to be completed between December 2004 and July 2008. An expenditure of Rs 6.06 crore was incurred during 2002-07 on treatment of waste/degraded lands under DPAP (Rs 1.69 crore) and IWDP (Rs 4.37 crore) but there was no evidence of area of land actually developed/treated in the basic records such as measurement books and muster rolls in support of the expenditure.

It was further seen that while sending periodical reports on physical progress of watershed development works to the POs, DRDAs (Kangra and Una), PIAs worked out the area developed under various activities of watershed by dividing the whole expenditure as per the prescribed cost norms of Rs 4,000/6,000 per hectare. In the absence of any record of measurement, the authenticity of expenditure could not be verified and the possibility of misappropriation and expenditure proving doubtful cannot be ruled out.

The PIAs concerned admitted the facts and assured (December 2006-March 2007) that in future watershed committees (WCs) would be instructed to maintain the records properly as per guidelines.

**The reply is not acceptable, as it is not just a matter of non-maintenance of records but depiction of expenditure without any proof of its occurrence, which tantamounts to fraud and needs investigation.**

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<sup>25</sup> Shri Prakash Mehta, Retd. Professor.

<sup>26</sup> Dehra, Nagrota Bagwan, Pragpur and Una.



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### 3.5.12.2 Non-commencement of watershed development works

Six<sup>27</sup> PIAs entrusted (May 2002-June 2006) execution of soil and moisture conservation and water harvesting structure works in 14 watershed areas to the respective WCs and released (March 2002-June 2006) Rs 8.42 lakh to them in piecemeal against the sanctioned (2002-07) cost of Rs 17.13 lakh. It was noticed that the WCs concerned had not commenced (March 2007) the execution of such works and the whole amount remained deposited in bank accounts of WCs and PIAs.

The PIAs concerned stated (November 2006-January 2007) that efforts were being made to get the amount refunded from the concerned WCs. The replies of the PIAs are not acceptable as timely execution of works should have been ensured for providing intended benefits to the beneficiaries of the respective areas. The Joint Secretary (RDD) stated (May 2007) that the instructions were being issued to all the DRDAs to start development activities as pointed out in audit.

### 3.5.12.3 Misuse of funds under Integrated Wastelands Development Programme

Expenditure on installation of pumping machinery for lift irrigation schemes is not a permissible activity for watershed development. Records of the PO, DRDA, Kangra revealed that the BDO, Fatehpur undertook execution of two pump houses for lift irrigation schemes in villages Charuri-Tohud and Ganoh in Kangra district (not covered under watershed development) unauthorisedly and spent Rs 12.15 lakh received from DRDA Kangra for the implementation of IWDP-III project between February-June 2002 out of IWDP allocations on construction (Rs 6.41 lakh) and purchase of pumping machinery and GI pipe fittings (Rs 5.74 lakh) respectively. The Deputy Commissioner-cum-CEO, DRDA, Kangra also objected (March 2002) to the execution of above pump houses as the PIA had not submitted the annual action plan and incurred expenditure without approval of the CEO. The works were lying incomplete as of March 2007. This resulted in wastage of programme funds. The Joint Secretary (RDD) intimated (May 2007) that the matter was still under investigation.

### 3.5.12.4 Excessive failure of plantation and failure to establish own nurseries

For the achievement of long term objective of checking land degradation and fulfilling the broad objectives of sustainability, equity and environmental conservation, good survival rate of plantation was a crucial parameter.

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<sup>27</sup> Bamsan, Bhoranj, Bijhari, Dehra, Nurpur and Pragpur.

Test-check of records revealed that seven<sup>28</sup> out of 23 PIAs, incurred an expenditure of Rs 56.62 lakh out of IWDP during 2002-07 for horticulture (Rs 38.69 lakh) and forestry plantation<sup>29</sup> (Rs 17.93 lakh) in an area of 1,573 and 185 hectares respectively. It was noticed that survival of plantation in case of horticulture was between five and 32 *per cent* whereas in respect of forest plantation, it ranged between 40 and 47 *per cent*. The PIAs concerned attributed (December 2006-January 2007) the failure of plantation to scarcity of water and climatic factor, etc., and nurseries were not raised due to non-availability of skilled/technical personnel and lack of interest on the part of beneficiaries. The replies are not tenable as these factors should have been taken into consideration before selection of site for plantation work. The mortality of horticulture (68 to 95 *per cent*) and forestry (53 to 60 *per cent*) plantation being so high, the State Government should have devised a system/method to improve survival percentage of plantation to achieve the objective of environmental conservation.

As per guidelines, activities for watershed development included nursery raising for fodder, timber and fuel wood, etc. It was noticed that instead of raising their own nurseries, 17 PIAs purchased plants for plantation valuing Rs 1.75 crore during 2002-07. The very purpose of providing short term benefits of employment to the people of watershed area by raising of such nurseries was thus defeated.

### **3.5.12.5 Non-deployment of local labourers**

The guidelines envisaged creation of wage employment opportunities to poor and disadvantaged sections inhabiting the programme areas to promote their overall socio-economic development. It was noticed that four selected PIAs<sup>30</sup> had paid Rs 1.04 crore under DDP (Rs 0.92 crore and IWDP: Rs 0.12 crore) as wages for 1,22,189 mandays (DDP: 1,06,050; IWDP: 16,139) to labourers from other States engaged on works during 2002-07.

The PD-cum-PIA, Pooh intimated (September 2006) that due to non-availability of local labour in the area, outside labourers were engaged. The contention is not tenable as according to 2001 census 47,811 workers were available in Kinnaur district. While confirming the facts the PO, DRDA, Hamirpur stated (April 2007) that in respect of three PIAs (Bamsan, Bhoranj and Nadaun) under its jurisdiction labourers from other States were engaged as the local labourers were busy in agriculture activities.

Reply of the PO is not tenable as wage employment was to be provided only to resource poor and disadvantaged sections inhabiting the programme areas.

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<sup>28</sup> Bamsan, Bijhari, Dehra, Nadaun, Nagrota Bagwan, Nurpur and Pragpur.

<sup>29</sup> Khair, Kinoo, Mango, Orange, Pine, etc.

<sup>30</sup> BDOs of Bamsan, Bhoranj, Nadaun Blocks and PD-cum-PIA, Pooh.

The objectives of providing employment opportunities to target groups of beneficiaries in the respective watershed area for improving their overall economic conditions, thus, remained unachieved and the provision of guidelines were not followed. Further, for smooth implementation of the projects within stipulated period, the works are to be taken up during off season by local labour so that they are engaged in some activity.

#### **3.5.12.6 Irregular execution of works through machinery**

As per guidelines, emphasis should be on vegetative measures in watershed development works and costly masonry/cement works, use of machinery should be discouraged.

It was noticed that contrary to the provisions of the guidelines 43 works (DPAP-16 and IWDP-27) sanctioned at a cost of Rs 53.28 lakh were executed (April 2002 to December 2005) by three PIAs<sup>31</sup> through machinery (JCB<sup>32</sup>) at a cost of Rs 20.54 lakh resulting in non-providing of wage employment for 31,593 mandays. The PIAs, stated (January 2007) that the works were executed through JCB where the execution was difficult manually. The replies are not tenable as works were executed in similar reaches of adjacent areas by the people of the watershed area. Thus, the local people of the area had been deprived of the intended benefits of employment.

#### **3.5.13 Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions**

##### **3.5.13.1 Non-involvement of user community**

As per guidelines, watersheds were to be selected after due participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and the watersheds with greater participatory response were to be preferred.

Under DPAP, the GOI sanctioned (July 2000 to June 2002) two watershed development projects (DPAP: VI and VIII) comprising 65 watersheds at a cost of Rs 19.50 crore. Of 65 watersheds, treatment of 2,000 hectares of area in four watersheds of Una block was entrusted (January 2002 to November 2004) to WCs. The sanctioned cost of these four watersheds was Rs 1.20 crore and the PIA Una released Rs 40.90 lakh to WCs concerned against the availability of Rs 57.76 lakh. These watersheds were stipulated to be completed in July 2005 (three) and June 2007 (one).

Test-check of the records (December 2006) and further information obtained (September 2007) from the BDO concerned revealed that the development activities in these watersheds were taken up without the active involvement of

<sup>31</sup> BDO Fatehpur, Gagret and Pragpur.

<sup>32</sup> Heavy earth cutting machine.

the user community of the area. As a result, activities in the respective watersheds were suspended after incurring an expenditure (June 2004 to May 2006) of Rs 38.16 lakh due to lack of coordination and personal disputes amongst WC members. Watershed development activities for balance sanctioned cost of Rs 81.84 lakh had not been taken up as of March 2007. Besides, out of unspent funds of Rs 19.60 lakh, Rs 14.61 lakh were transferred to other watersheds of the same projects for utilisation and Rs 4.99 lakh remained unspent with the PIA in a savings bank account as of September 2007. The BDO concerned admitted (December 2006) the facts. The Joint Secretary (RDD) stated (May 2007) that the PO, DRDA, Una was being directed to settle the dispute.

Thus, due to non-involvement/participation of local user community, the desired benefits of watershed development to the people of the respective watershed area could not be achieved.

### **3.5.14 Formation of watershed development teams**

#### **3.5.14.1 Inadequate formation of watershed development teams**

The guidelines envisaged that each PIA shall carryout its duties through a multi disciplinary team designated as watershed development teams (WDTs), consisting of at least four members, one each from the disciplines of forestry/plant science, animal science, civil/agriculture engineering and social sciences and should include one woman member. These teams may handle developmental activities relating to agriculture, horticulture, afforestation, etc., in 10-12 watersheds.

Test-check of records revealed the following points:

- 646 watersheds were carried out through 26 WDTs<sup>33</sup> against the required 54 WDTs<sup>34</sup>. Thus, handling of 646 watersheds with shortage of 28 (51 per cent) WDTs had affected the implementation of watershed development as 475 watershed<sup>35</sup> works due for completion during 2004-07 out of 646 had not been completed as of March 2007;
- these teams had only 85 members against the required 104 members resulting in under representation of 19 members;
- these teams had only 10 women members against the required number of 26, resulting in non-provision of required representation to the women;

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<sup>33</sup> DRDA, Bilaspur: three; Hamirpur: four; Kangra: four; Kinnaur: five; Lahaul and Spiti: three; Solan: two and Una: five.

<sup>34</sup> DPAP: 25 WDTs; DDP: 18 WDTs and IWDP: 11 WDTs.

<sup>35</sup> 2004-2005: 98; 2005-2006: 203 and 2006-2007: 174.

➤ seven PIAs<sup>36</sup> had appointed (December 2000-September 2006) 26 WDT members (IWDP: 11 and DDP: 15) without having requisite qualifications and were paid honorarium of Rs 20.36 lakh<sup>37</sup>. Thus, the concerned PIAs had not ensured execution and supervision of watershed development activities through qualified multi-disciplinary teams envisaged in the guidelines. The expenditure incurred on engagement of unqualified WDT personnel was, thus, injudicious and resulted in delayed completion of projects.

The PIAs concerned stated (September 2006-January 2007) that qualified personnel did not join WDTs due to low rate of honorarium. The contention of these PIAs is not acceptable as the other PIAs had engaged full strength of WDT members as prescribed in the guidelines. This was indicative of lack of efforts on the part of PIAs, to engage requisite strength with requisite qualifications.

#### 3.5.14.2 Non-constitution of Self Help Groups

As per guidelines of 2001 and Hariyali guidelines of 2003, PIAs (in respect of projects sanctioned upto March 2003) and gram panchayats (in respect of projects sanctioned from April 2003 onwards) respectively were to constitute Self Help Groups (SHGs) and User Groups (UGs) in the watershed area with the help of WDTs from amongst landless/assetless poor, agricultural labourers, women, shepherds and scheduled castes/scheduled tribes persons. Around 50 *per cent* of villagers, who are directly or indirectly dependent on the watershed should generally be enrolled as members of at least one SHG. Besides, formation of separate SHGs for women, SHGs for scheduled castes/scheduled tribes were also required to be formed for undertaking the watershed development activities.

It was noticed that during 2002-07 nine selected PIAs<sup>38</sup> took up execution of 19 projects comprising 165 watersheds under DPAP (134 watersheds), DDP (18 watersheds) and IWDP (13 watersheds) respectively at a cost of Rs 116.50 crore but no SHGs were formed (March 2007) to ensure delivery of benefits to the above categories of beneficiaries. Of these, nine projects stipulated to be completed between 2004-07 remained incomplete as of March 2007. As of March 2007, the physical achievement against these projects in term of area treated was 52,224 hectares (47 *per cent*) against the target of 1,10,964 hectares whereas expenditure incurred was Rs 36.46 crore against the sanctioned cost of Rs 64.90 crore. User Groups were also not formed during 2002-07.

<sup>36</sup> Bamsan, Bhoranj, Bijhari, Dehra, Kaza, Pragpur and Nurpur.

<sup>37</sup> At the rate of Rs 2,500 per month with gradual annual increase of upto Rs 250 per year subject to maximum of Rs 3,500 per month.

<sup>38</sup> Bangana, Dharampur (Solan district), Ghumarwin, Haroli, Jhandutta, Keylong, Kunihar, Nadaun and Una.

Seven PIAs attributed (September 2006-January 2007) non-formation of SHGs/UGs to shortage/non-availability of staff/WDTs and lack of interest of local people whereas two PIAs (Kunihar and Nadaun) attributed non-formation of SHGs to formation of SHGs under other programmes such as Sampooran Grameen Rozgar Yojna (SGRY). The contention of these PIAs is not tenable as the SHGs of other programmes participated in watershed development activities. This was indicative of lack of efforts on the part of PIAs to motivate the people in the watershed area concerned.

### **3.5.15 Capacity Building and Training**

#### **3.5.15.1 Short utilisation of earmarked financial resources**

For successful implementation of watershed development programmes, the DRDAs/ZPs were required to ensure that relevant training programmes were organised for all the functionaries involved in watershed development. For this purpose, five *per cent* of the grant sanctioned for a watershed development project was to be utilised.

Records of seven selected DRDAs revealed that during 2002-07, 19 watershed development projects having 472 watersheds sanctioned for Rs 136 crore were in operation, but expenditure incurred on training was only Rs 2.65 crore i.e. two *per cent* of total sanctioned cost, against the required limit of Rs 6.80 crore. PIAs concerned stated (September 2006-January 2007) that due to shortage of staff, expenditure on training could not be incurred as required in the guidelines. The contention of PIAs is not acceptable, as most of the personnel concerned with the planning, execution and maintenance of watershed projects remained untrained inspite of provision of adequate funds.

### **3.5.16 Exit protocol**

#### **3.5.16.1 Non-evolving of exit protocol for completed works**

The DRDAs/ZPs are to evolve proper exit protocol for the watershed development projects by motivating panchayats to takeover the assets created in the completed watershed projects for the purpose of operation and maintenance. In exit protocol, a locally acceptable, proper mechanism for equity and sustainability of the benefits of the assets created should be clearly spelt out by PIA before its exit from the area. Besides, the protocol should also specify utilisation of watershed development funds for post project maintenance and its regular augmentation.

In five DRDAs<sup>39</sup> out of the seven test-checked<sup>40</sup> it was noticed that no such mechanisms of exit protocol had been evolved for the purpose of operation

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<sup>39</sup> Bilaspur, Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti, Solan and Una.

<sup>40</sup> In Kangra and Hamirpur no projects completed during 2002-2003 to 2006-2007.

and maintenance of seven projects containing 123 watersheds under DDP (two projects: 80 watersheds) and DPAP (five projects: 43 watersheds) completed at a cost of Rs 28.89 crore during 2002-2004. The POs concerned had thus not taken any effective steps to persuade the PIAs to hand over the completed assets to the concerned panchayats for proper operation and maintenance as of March 2007<sup>41</sup>.

While admitting the facts, the POs of DRDAs, Solan and Una stated (January 2007) that steps were being taken to hand over the assets to the panchayats. The POs of remaining three DRDAs intimated no reasons for non-handing over of completed watersheds through exit protocol. Hence audit was unable to verify whether panchayats were satisfied with the workmanship of watersheds.

Thus, in the absence of any exit protocol for handing over of completed assets proper upkeep and operation of assets is likely to be affected and might result in non-delivery of intended benefits to the people of the area.

### **3.5.17 Monitoring and supervision**

#### **3.5.17.1 Non-holding of meetings of State Watershed Development Committee**

To oversee the implementation of watershed development programmes and to ensure co-ordination among various Government departments/institutions and voluntary agencies, the State Government constituted a State Watershed Development Committee (SWDC) consisting of 27 members. The SWDC however, does not have representation from all the groups specified in the guidelines. The SWDC was required to meet twice a year.

It was noticed that SWDC had not convened any meeting during 2002-07 to monitor and evaluate the progress of watershed projects. As a result of non-constitution of SWDC according to the revised guidelines and non-holding of its meetings, the execution of works under all the three programmes could not be monitored effectively.

It was noticed in seven<sup>42</sup> selected districts that only 39 meetings (28 per cent) were held during 2002-07 against the required number of 140 meetings of the district level watershed development committees.

The mechanism of State/district level Vigilance and monitoring committee as required under the guidelines had not been created as of September 2007. Although all the three programmes were being implemented on watershed approach under a common set of guidelines since April 1995 and an

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<sup>41</sup> No projects completed during 2004-2007.

<sup>42</sup> Bilaspur, Hamirpur, Kangra, Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti, Solan and Una.

expenditure of Rs 224.12 crore<sup>43</sup> had been incurred on the implementation of these programmes as of June 2007 yet the department had not conducted any overall assessment studies of implementation of these programmes to ascertain the impact by way of benchmarks like increase in water table, yield of crops and milk, etc., *vis-à-vis* the decrease in desertification, drought prone and waste/degraded lands.

The Director (RDD) stated (September 2007) that a meeting of the SWDC was held in July 2001 and no meeting was held thereafter as there was no provision of SWDC in Hariyali guidelines. The reply is not acceptable as the projects sanctioned prior to issue of Hariyali guidelines in April 2003, were required to be implemented according to guidelines issued in 2001 and required monitoring by SWDC.

#### **3.5.17.2 Non-submission/delayed submission of quarterly progress reports (QPR)**

The guidelines provided that gram panchayat/watershed association/committee should submit a QPR to PIA after its scrutiny and approval by WDT. The PIAs were also required to submit the QPR to ZP/DRDA for further submission to the GOI through the State Government. The guidelines were silent regarding due date of submission of QPR by State Government to GOI.

Following points were noticed:

- The State Government furnished these reports during 2002-07 to GOI, 37 to 199 days after the end of relevant quarter. The Additional Director, RDD intimated (April 2007) that the QPRs could not be submitted in scheduled time due to non-receipt of the same from field functionaries.
- Audit scrutiny of QPRs furnished by the PIAs to DRDAs revealed that while submitting QPRs, ending September 2006 POs, DRDAs, Hamirpur and Kangra had reported (October 2006) achievement of 30,611.88 hectares treated (September 2006) under IWDP against actual achievements of 29,116.41 hectares. An area of 1,495.47 hectares treated (September 2006) was shown as achievement under Entry Point Activities (EPAs) without any details and expenditure on works executed under EPAs.
- The Director-cum-Special Secretary (RDD) (September 2001) prescribed regular submission of QPRs by PIAs to DRDAs by 5<sup>th</sup> and DRDAs to Director (RDD) by 10<sup>th</sup> of a month succeeding the relevant quarter. It was

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<sup>43</sup> IWDP: Rs 116.42 crore; DDP: Rs 65.92 crore and DPAP: Rs 41.78 crore.



noticed in audit that there was a delay of 10 to 150 days in submission of such reports at DRDA level. The PO DRDAs, attributed the delay to late receipt of reports from PIAs.

➤ Further, out of 23 selected PIAs, two PIAs (Dharampur and Kunihar) had not prepared or submitted any QPR to DRDA concerned during 2002-07 in respect of watershed projects sanctioned under DPAP. In case of remaining 21 PIAs, 13 PIAs<sup>44</sup> ensured timely submission of these reports whereas eight PIAs<sup>45</sup> had delayed submission of such reports by 10 to 123 days.

The BDOs, Dharampur and Kunihar admitted the facts and attributed (January 2007) non-preparation of reports to non-posting/shortage of staff. In respect of delayed submission of reports, the BDOs concerned intimated (September 2006-January 2007) that due to late receipt of report from watershed committees, the same were not sent on the prescribed date. The contention is not acceptable as the BDOs should have ensured timely receipt of reports from the watershed committees. Thus, at State level monitoring mechanism was in fact non-existent.

### 3.5.17.3 Inspection of works

For effective implementation of the programme, the Director-cum-Special Secretary (RDD) prescribed (September 2001) the following yearly inspection schedule:

Table: 3.5.2

| Level of Inspection | Percentage of works to be inspected |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| WDT Members         | 100                                 |
| PIA                 | 50                                  |
| PO                  | 25                                  |
| PD                  | 15                                  |
| CEO                 | 10                                  |

It was noticed that no record of inspections had been maintained either at DRDA or at PIA level.

### 3.5.18 Conclusion

The State Government had not prepared a long term perspective plan for treatment of waste/degraded lands, drought prone and desert areas. Implementation of programmes was not satisfactory as out of 49 watershed

<sup>44</sup> Amb, Bamsan, Bangana, Bijhari, Bilaspur, Dehra, Ghumarwin, Haroli, Jhandutta, Kalpa, Keylong, Nadaun and Nagrota Bagwan.

<sup>45</sup> Bhoranj, Gagret, Kaza, Nichar, Nurpur, Pooh, Pragpur and Una.

projects due for completion during 2002-2007, only 11 projects were completed as of August 2007. 38 projects were still lying incomplete though stipulated time for completion had already expired.

Evidence of area treated had not been maintained in some cases, norms/system to reduce the high mortality of plants had not been devised and there was inadequate employment generation. WDTs were not formed to the prescribed extent and did not comprise qualified personnel to ensure proper technical supervision and timely completion of watershed works. Funds provided for capacity building and training were not fully utilised. Mechanism for proper exit protocol had not been evolved so as to ensure operation and maintenance of watershed projects by beneficiaries. Monitoring mechanism to oversee the implementation of the programmes was also inadequate and ineffective. In the absence of proper benchmarks, the impact of the programme in terms of increase in water table, yield of crops and milk, etc., *vis-a-vis* the decrease in desertification, drought prone area and waste/degraded lands could not be assessed by the State Government.

#### **3.5.19 Recommendations**

- **The State Government should consider preparation of long term Master plan for treatment of waste/degraded land, drought prone and desert area in a time bound manner.**
- **Strict adherence to the time schedule prescribed by the GOI for completion of projects will ensure speedy implementation of the programme and optimum utilisation of funds and timely benefits to the people.**
- **Greater participation of beneficiaries should be ensured in the programmes to avoid disputes over work sites and transfer of assets to the community.**
- **Capacity building and training need to be strengthened and State Government should ensure full utilisation of grants.**
- **Internal control mechanism needs to be strengthened by setting up Vigilance Committees at State and district levels on priority basis.**
- **Proper system needs to be evolved for exit protocol so that completed projects are transferred to the beneficiaries.**
- **Benchmark for gauging impact of the programme activities need to be devised by the State Government.**

The Secretary accepted (June 2007) the recommendations and assured that compliance would be reported soon.