

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recognizing the importance accorded by the Planning Commission, Government of India for a district centric approach to devolution of Finances for the integrated local area development, a district centric audit of Lower Subansiri district was carried out to assess the status and impact of implementation of various socio-economic developmental activities in the district during 2005-11 and to evaluate whether quality of life of the people has improved.

The review covered key sector programme relating to health, education and water supply, economic sector programmes relating to creation of roads and other infrastructure, employment generation, provision of basic civic amenities and use of information technology (IT) to provide better public services etc.

While audit brought out many positives in the Social Sector programmes relating to education; there were quite a few areas where the State/District Administration needs to focus greater attention.

PLANNING

The District Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committee (DVMC) had not prepared any Perspective Plan prior to 2007-08. Though the department claimed that the schemes were selected and planned by gram sabha and later approved by the DVMC, but records in its support were not available. The committee had met four times during 2005-11 to review the progress of implementation of the developmental schemes.

Due to non-preparation of Perspective Plan and Annual Action Plan for the development of the District and launching development effort without inputs from the blocks and the gram panchayats, gaps in various developmental schemes/programmes remained unidentified with the result that the felt needs of the weaker section of the society and the disparities between various regions and communities within the District could not be addressed.

Recommendation

Holistic Perspective Plan and Annual Plan should be prepared for the district, based on a structured process of obtaining inputs from Blocks and the Gram Panchayats and other stakeholders for a more realistic assessment of the needs of the District.

There should be regular meeting of DVMC to monitor and review the progress of implementation of various developmental schemes being executed in the District.

ACCOUNTING FRAMEWORK AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The total flow of funds in the District during 2005-11 and expenditure incurred was not available either with the Addl. DC, who is the Chief Planning Officer or with the District Planning Officer and other District Authority like DRDA. Funds were shown as fully utilised in the books of the DRDA, societies and controlling officers the moment the amounts were released to the implementing agencies rather than actual expenditure incurred on execution of projects by the implementing agencies. Substantial amounts of funds was parked in banks without utilizing them within the prescribed time frame due to inadequate project management, skewed planning, lapses in execution, ineffective monitoring and supervision. Accounts of zila parishads, anchal samitis and gram panchayats were not being maintained in proper format in an on-line computerized system as envisaged due to lack of infrastructure and non-appointment of secretaries

Recommendation

Financial management, in general, needs improvement and funds provided for various socio-economic developmental programmes needs to be efficiently and effectively utilized. A system needs to be evolved to show actual utilisation of funds as distinct from mere release of funds by suitable modification in the reporting statements.

Concrete action should be taken to maintain the accounts of Panchayat Raj Institutions in proper format as envisaged.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Health

Perspective Plan for the entire health mission period (2005-2012) has not been prepared in the District. However, District Health Annual Plan was prepared by involving lower functionaries and by doing house-wise survey to identify the gap in health care facilities in the rural areas. Community participation was not ensured. Though the number of healthcare centres in the District was more than prescribed norms, most of these centres did not provide the basic healthcare services expected from them due to non availability of skilled manpower and infrastructure.

The overall achievement in the district with regard to immunization of children between zero to one-year age group covering BCG, DPT and OPV was low. However, the shortfall in achievement of targets in secondary immunization ranges from 0 to 9 percent. During 2005-11, 230 cataract surgeries were carried out and 2055 schoolchildren were screened for eye problems against the target of 330 and 8600 respectively. The rate of prevalence of leprosy in the district was less than one percent.

Scrutiny revealed that District Health Society did not interact with or obtain inputs from the concerned departmental functionaries relating to drinking water, sanitation and

hygiene, nutrition etc. leading to disjointed efforts of effects on various agencies towards achieving the same goal.

In the absence of proper planning involving identification of gaps in the health care infrastructure and non-availability of stipulated facilities and skilled manpower in the health institutions, the aim of providing accessible and affordable healthcare to the people remained to be fully achieved in the district.

Recommendation

The District Health Society should commission a survey to identify the gaps in healthcare infrastructure and facilities and draw up a strategic plan specifying time frame to provide accessible and affordable health care to the rural poor and vulnerable sections of society as per NRHM guidelines. Community involvement should be ensured at every stage in planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes.

Basic health infrastructure and amenities and skilled human resource should be provided at all healthcare centres by proper utilisation of the available funds to achieve the objective of the programme.

The district administration should implement various health programme viz., JSY, NPCB, NVBDCP, Universal Immunisation Programme etc. in a more concerted manner so that the benefit of the programme is extended to entire population of the district.

Education

A review of the status of education in the district, especially in the context of implementation of SSA, revealed that the number of Primary and Upper Primary Schools (up to class VIII) as well as the enrolment of children in the targeted age group of 6 to 14 years in these schools increased during 2005-11. Drop out rate in schools has also declined during the period.

Though overall Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in the district was favourable compared to the prescribed norms, there were excess teachers in certain schools (mostly in urban areas) while there was shortage of teachers in schools located in rural/remote areas. Three schools having 92 student had no teachers and 30 primary schools were having single teacher against the norm of minimum two teachers. Lack of trained teacher was another matter of concern.

During 2005-11 all the schools were having two rooms showing a significant improvement. However, 16 primary schools and 9 upper primary schools required major repairs. There was an all-round shortfall in basic amenities, such as drinking water, separate toilets for girls and ramps for disabled children, both in primary and upper primary schools.

Pass percentage of students studying in government schools in Class X examination was low in comparison with private schools even though books and other learning materials were supplied to the student.

Further, mid-day meal was not served regularly at schools in the district.

Recommendation

Basic infrastructure amenities such as drinking water and toilets etc. should be provided on a priority basis in all the schools.

Rational deployment of teachers in schools should be ensured and effective steps should be taken to train all the untrained teachers at the earliest to improve the quality of education imparted to the students.

Hygienic Mid-day Meals should be served to all eligible students on all schooldays as envisaged under the programme.

Drinking Water

Out of 323 habitations, 108 habitations (33 percent) were fully covered, 180 habitations (56 percent) were partially covered and 35 habitations (11 percent) remained uncovered as on March 2011. During 2005-11, Despite 176 water supply schemes having been implemented at a cost of ₹ 44.64 crore covering a population of 21,514, the number of fully covered habitations declined from 160 in March 2005 to 108 in March 2011. The Department had no Perspective Plan. Therefore, the water supply schemes requiring augmentation, renovation and construction could not be prioritised and taken up for execution in a phased manner for optimising results.

53 water supply schemes taken up for execution during 2003-04 and 2004-05 at an estimated cost of ₹ 6.57 crore remained incomplete even though these schemes were to be completed within one year of their sanction. An expenditure of ₹ 1.45 crore has been incurred so far on these schemes. 114 water supply schemes completed at a cost of ₹ 8.58 crore were not provided with slow sand filter component. As a result, a population of 18,875 covered under the schemes were supplied with untreated water During six year period 2005-11, 947 persons suffered from acute gastroenteritis and there were 29 deaths.

Recommendation

The district administration needs to prepare a strategic action plan to provide potable drinking water to all the habitations in the district, especially to the uncovered habitations in a time bound manner.

Water treatment facility system should be improved/ upgraded to ensure supply of safe drinking water to avoid any causality and reduce water borne diseases.

Sanitation

During 2005-11, the Division had constructed 4494 numbers of sanitation facilities (APL -1164, BPL - 2963, Sanitary Complex - 13, Latrine for School - 232, Latrine for Anganwadi - 119 and Rural Sanitary Mart - 03) against the total 7310 approved schemes though the entire allotted funds were spent.

Further, the District has only one census town, namely Ziro also district headquarters, where sanitation facilities were yet to be provided.

Recommendation

District authorities should initiate effective steps for achievement of the target fixed for household latrines for all APL and BPL families.

Suitable plan should be framed to create proper sanitation facilities to urban area of the district, especially Ziro town which is district headquarters also.

ECONOMIC SERVICES

Road Connectivity

There is no Railway connectivity and Airport in the district and only link with the rest of the country is by road.

As of March 2011, there were 788 Km (Black Topped - 344 Km, WBM - 77 Km, Unsurfaced - 367 Km) roads in the district, of which 276 Km road was constructed by BRTF. There was no District Rural Road Plan indicating the core network required to ensure that each eligible habitation is provided with a basic access (single and all-weather road connectivity) to essential social and economic services. Public Works Department and Rural Works Department were two main departments responsible for construction and maintenance of roads in the district.

Public Works Department did not had any Perspective Plan. But Annual Operative Plan was prepared without any survey or proper inputs. None of the six major works taken up between 2001 and 2008 have been completed.

The internal road condition of the district was very poor even though ₹ 26.48 crore was spent for its maintenance during 2005-11.

Out of 22 villages in the district, as of March 2011 Rural Works Department had provided road connectivity to 74 villages (State fund - 46 Nos. and PMGSY fund - 28). Division did not maintain Asset Register for both roads constructed under State fund and PMGSY fund.

18 Rural Link Road (RLR), taken up between 1993-94 and 1999-2000 at an estimated cost of ₹ 3.85 crore, was partially completed by incurring an expenditure of ₹ 1.39 crore and no action had been taken to complete the remaining work, rendering the expenditure incurred partially unproductive.

Two PMGSY works (i) Construction of road from Pitapool to Sagalee road to Kebi (5.01 Km) approved at an estimated cost of ₹ 2.44 crore and (ii) Construction of road from Deed to Radhpu (5.25 Km) approved at an estimated cost of ₹ 2.26 crore were not completed till date. These works were awarded to a contractor on single tender basis, but the work remained incomplete at different stages rendering the expenditure incurred unfruitful.

Recommendation

Steps should be taken to prepare a perspective plan and identify the gap in the road connectivity and a broad action plan to provide connectivity to all eligible habitations in the district within specified period of time.

Annual operational plans should be framed in line with the perspective plan and specific milestones be drawn to ensure timely completion of the projects planned for execution during the year.

All incomplete work should be completed without further loss of time to avoid already completed work becoming wasteful due to long delays.

Timely completion of work taken up should be ensured by adhering to codal and other formalities required for the execution of the work.

Asset registers should be maintained properly and proper timely maintenance of the road constructed should be ensured.

Irrigation

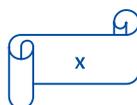
In the district there is no Major or Medium but only Minor Irrigation Projects (MIP) with open trench weir type head work. The total agriculture land is fifteen thousand hectares.

Up to 2005, 127 MIPs were completed. But irrigation potential created in terms of hectares was not on record. During 2005-11 out of 291 targeted MIPs 221 MIPs were completed and irrigation potential created was 931 hectares against the target of 1171.66 hectares.

Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) projected in the estimate was between 5 percent and 400 percent. But in terms of production there was decline in production of three major crops of the district which could be attributable to poor co-ordination among farmers, Agriculture Department and Irrigation Department.

Recommendation

A perspective plan be framed with detail of irrigational potential required to be created in the district with identification of the source of water detailing the time frame and funds required for implementation of the irrigation schemes so planned.



The execution of projects/scheme should be appropriately monitored Asset register should be maintained properly.

Completed irrigation schemes should be handed over to the beneficiaries, under intimation to the agriculture department. An impact assessment of the completed schemes should be carried out to assess whether BCR projected has been achieved or not. Efforts should be made to collect water usage charges from the recipients.

Internal control mechanism should be strengthened and the department should introduce the system of awarding works by calling tenders.

Employment Generation

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes (MGNREGS) is being implemented in the district from 2008-09. The basic objective of the scheme is to ensure security of livelihood in rural areas by providing at least 100 days guarantee wage employment.

While SGRY could generate 2.98 lakh mandays employment in three years (2005-08), 1.62 lakh mandays were generated under MGNREGS during the period 2008-11. Out of 18,800 Job Card holders in the district only 69 persons were provided 100 days employment.

During 2005-11, 47 Self Help Groups and 678 individual Swarozgaries were assisted under SGSY. But no mechanism was evolved to evaluate the impact of implementation of the programme.

Recommendation

Ensure proper utilization of funds so that minimum guaranteed wage employment is provided to each job-card holders who demand wage employment.

The authorities should take steps to monitor and evaluate projects undertaken under SGSY schemes to assess the progress/performance of swarozgaries.

Power

Out of 226 inhabited villages as per 2001 census report in the district, 196 villages (87 percent) were electrified and energized till date (March 2011).

During 2005-10, 11 KV line work to cover 134 villages was taken up in June 2008 at an estimated cost of ₹ 34.67 crore and stipulated to be completed by December 2009. As of March 2011, work in 110 villages was completed while in the remaining 24 villages was yet to be completed. Of the 110 villages where the work was completed, 107 villages were energized. A total amount of ₹ 20.30 crore was spent till March 2011.

About 40 *per cent* of the consumers in the district paid their electricity bills regularly, but the rest paid them only when revenue realization drives were conducted or when lines were disconnected due to defaults in payment. The outstanding electricity dues stood at ₹ 8.25 crore.

Recommendation

The department should take steps to complete the project without further delay and electrified uncovered villages, so that benefits of programme is extended to villagers living in those uncovered villages.

Revenue on electricity should be realised as and when due and also vigorous efforts should be made to collect the revenue arrears on account of electricity charges.

Horticulture and Fisheries

The soil and climatic conditions of the District are favourable for growing of large cardamom and kiwi fruit. However, the cultivation of these crops have not increased as the farmers did not have access to proper marketing facilities and were not getting support price for their produce.

Recommendation

Proper marketing infrastructure should be created so that kiwi fruit and large cardamom growers get remunerative prices for their produce thereby safeguarding the economic interest of the growers. This would encourage other farmers to take up cultivation of these cash crops and contribute towards growth of the economy of the district as well as the State.

GENERAL SERVICES

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI)

Panchayat is a institution of Self Government constituted for the rural areas. According to 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, the States were required to devolve adequate powers and responsibilities on PRIs in order to make them effective institutions of local self-government. The responsibility for preparation of plans for economic development and social justice and its implementation in respect of 29 subjects listed in Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution were to be assigned to Panchayats and to this effect, the State Governments were expected to transfer the functions of department dealing with these 29 subjects including the officials under the control of the Panchayats.

As of March 2011, neither functions nor functionaries, as envisaged in the Constitution, have been transferred under the control of the Panchayats in the District as no progress in this regard has been made in Arunachal Pradesh. Role of PRIs were very limited even in the preparation of plans for economic development and social justice. No Gram

Panchayat Secretaries were appointed as the Arunachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1997, had no provision for appointment of Gram Panchayat Secretary. The post of Zillah Parishad Secretary was not yet created. The Project Director, DRDA, is in charge of the Zillah Parishad. Further, there was no Panchayat building and the Panchayat accounts were not computerized.

Recommendation

Steps should be taken in earnest to make PRIs fully functional at the earliest so that the vision envisaged in the Constitution amendment of having a decentralised approach in district planning is accomplished.

Waste Management

The District has only one census town, namely Ziro, which is district headquarters. As urban civic body is not yet formed, the function of municipality is discharged by the District Urban Development Agency. No proper solid waste management exists in the district. However, an estimate for solid waste management submitted to the authority in July 2009 was awaiting approval. As a result, proper disposal of garbage was not being done. Further, there was no proper facilities for the disposal off bio-medical waste generated by the healthcare centres in the district. These issues posed a serious threat to the public health and the environment.

Recommendation

Waste management needs to be improved to ensure proper disposal of solid waste for preventing environmental pollution.

Awareness for cleanliness should be spread among common man.

Proper disposal of bio-medical waste should be ensured, which otherwise poses a serious treat to public health and the environment.

MONITORING MECHANISM

Monitoring and supervision of the progress of implementation of various schemes at all tiers of local administration in the district was perfunctory. Though the DC stated that field visit and inspection were carried out by DC, Planning Officer and Block Officers there was no documentary evidence of such inspection or the decision taken/follow up action initiated consequent to such inspection.

No Grievance Redressal Cell has been set up in the district. DC claims that the complaints are forwarded to the concerned department who in turn address the same with intimation to DC. However, there was nothing available on record in support of this claim.

Recommendation

Supervision and inspection of the various schemes/projects undertaken by different departments in the districts should be carried out regularly so that corrective measures could be taken before too late.

Internal control mechanism of various departments involved in the implementation of schemes/projects and discharge of public responsibilities should be strengthened so that wasteful expenditure, misappropriation, etc could be prevented.

The grievance redressal cell should be set up and grievances should be properly attended to

CONCLUSION

Local government at the district, block and gram panchayats levels were not involved in the planning process, as envisaged in the Constitution, to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in delivery of key services like rural development, health, employment, etc.

There are a multiplicity of programmes and schemes and an even larger number of implementing agencies, presenting challenging situation to the district administration to effectively monitor and supervise the developmental activities. While almost all developmental programmes are targeted at the same set of beneficiaries, the existence of a myriad programmes requires an integrated focus, rather than their implementation in a standalone mode.

An adequate monitoring mechanism was not functioning as envisaged with regard to execution of schemes. While plans have been formulated for providing integrated development of a sector/service, these could not be executed due to delay in release of funds and inadequate project management.

The State Government will have to address these issues in order to accelerate the process of development of the district at the desired pace. Good governance, effective and efficient delivery mechanism and sustainable development buttress high level of performance and play a crucial role in the overall socio-economic development of the district by providing essential and quality public infrastructure and services.