

Chapter 2

Performance Audit

- 2.1 Performance Audit on Improvement, Strengthening and Maintenance of State Highways, District and Other Roads by Public Works and Public Works (Roads) Department***
- 2.2 Performance Audit on National Food Security Mission in the State by Agriculture Department***

Chapter 2: Performance Audit

Public Works and Public Works (Roads) Department

2.1 Improvement, Strengthening and Maintenance of State Highways, District and Other Roads

Executive Summary

Public Works & Public Works (Roads) Department, West Bengal is responsible for construction and maintenance of the State Highways, District and Other Roads of the State and play a vital role in the socio-economic development of the State. These provide connectivity between rural and urban centres, facilitate the growth of industrial and commercial activities, enhance mobility and scope for employment, connect communities to markets, and allow timely and affordable delivery of basic services like health and education leading to overall development of the State.

Performance Audit of “Improvement, Strengthening and Maintenance of State Highways, District and Other Roads” was undertaken with a view to assess the performance of the road development work undertaken by the department covering the period from 2007-08 to 2011-12 which revealed:

Highlights:

- Perspective Plan, Vision Plan and Road Development Policy were not prepared; as a result road works were selected for execution on ad-hoc basis. The department did not maintain adequate database of roads as per Indian Road Congress guidelines which are essentially required for planning, maintenance and improvement of roads.

(Paragraph 2.1.8)

- Though the number of vehicles increased gradually during 2007-11, the length of roads under the department remained static. In nine selected divisions 217 km of State Highways (SHs) and 334 km of District and Other Roads in urgent need of major repair remained unrepaired for a period ranging upto 13 years. Similarly in 17 selected divisions, 279.92 km of SH and 687.39 km of District and Other Roads required to be widened immediately.

(Paragraph 2.1.7)

- Budget estimates were prepared on the basis of annual meetings with the Divisions and not as per the West Bengal Financial Rule. Audit observed in 13 selected divisions funds to the tune of ₹ 52.53 crore was not utilised. Moreover, six divisions parked funds (₹ 16.16 crore) with the Resource Division to avoid lapse of budget grant.

(Paragraph 2.1.9)

- In 26 selected divisions, 75 road works were executed at a cost of ₹ 413.65 crore without/inadequate traffic survey and 30 road works were executed at a cost of ₹ 60.43 crore without/ inadequate CBR test resulting in non-compliance of Indian Road Congress guidelines.

(Paragraphs 2.1.10.1.1 and 2.1.10.1.2)

- 124 road works (estimated cost ₹ 444.35 crore) were delayed by five months to 53 months due to non-availability of land, delay in finalisation of tenders and delay in issue of work orders.
(Paragraph 2.1.10.3)
- Road works were executed in flood prone area at a cost of ₹14.12 crore without drainage facility.
(Paragraph 2.1.10.4)
- There was no mechanism in the department to ensure use of quality materials like bitumen etc. Audit scrutiny revealed that in eight selected divisions bitumen test certificate was not attached with the passed bills for 65 road works executed at a cost of ₹ 340.57 crore.
(Paragraph 2.1.12)
- Planning and Monitoring Cell of Public Works Directorate did not discharge its function as no information of road works was provided to them. Monitoring Cell of Public Works Roads Directorate did not make any field visit to monitor the ongoing road works.
(Paragraph 2.1.14)

2.1.1 Introduction

Public Works Department (PWD) and Public Works (Roads) Department (PWRD), West Bengal is responsible for construction and maintenance of the State Highways, District and Other Roads of the State and play a vital role in the socio-economic development of the State. These provide connectivity between rural and urban centres, facilitate the growth of industrial and commercial activities, enhance mobility and scope for employment, connect communities to markets, and allow timely and affordable delivery of basic services like health and education leading to overall development of the State.

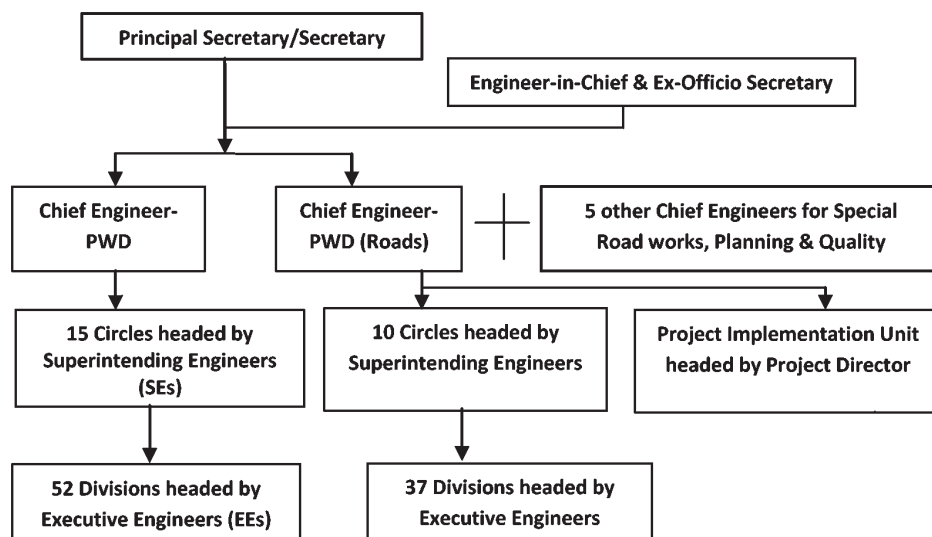
In the State of West Bengal, as of 31 March 2011⁵ the total registered vehicles stood at 36.34 lakh⁶ showing a 29 *per cent* increase over vehicles as on 31 March 2008. The total length of the roads, however, remained static during the last five years. At present (March 2012) WB has 3798 km of State Highways (SHs) and 12174 km of District and Other Roads (DORs) under the PW & PWRD.

⁵The registered vehicles as on 31 March 2012 has not yet been finalised by the Transport Department, Government of West Bengal

⁶ This figure excludes 7.74 lakh old M.V. in respect of which registration was cancelled in 2009-10.

2.1.2 Organisational Set Up

PW & PWRD is headed by the Secretary, who is assisted by the Engineer-in-Chief regarding all technical matters. Organisation structure of PW & PWRD is indicated in the chart below:



2.1.3 Audit Objectives

We conducted the Performance Audit to ascertain whether:

- the operational activities of the department were planned to achieve its goals;
- the financial management was efficient;
- road works were executed economically, efficiently and effectively and
- the mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of the road works was adequate and effective.

2.1.4 Audit Criteria

The main sources for audit criteria were as under

- Goals fixed in Five Year Plan (2007-12)/Master Plan;
- Targets set in the Annual Plans of 2007-12;

- Standards fixed in Project Reports of the department during last five years;
- Instructions issued in Government orders relating to road works;
- Guidelines issued by Indian Road Congress (IRC), National Bank of Agriculture And Rural Development (NABARD), Central Road Fund (CRF) and 12th Finance Commission;
- Provisions of West Bengal Financial Rules and PWD Code.

2.1.5 Scope of Audit and Audit Methodology

We conducted the Performance Audit between March and July 2012. Two directorate offices, four circle⁷ offices and one project implementation unit (West Bengal Corridor Development Project) were selected. Besides, 26 divisions⁸ out of the total 64 divisions⁹ executing road works¹⁰ under two directorates were selected through “Stratified Random Sampling Method”. Information and clarifications were gathered through questionnaires issued to the authorities, examination of the records and organizing meetings with the stakeholders in presence of the divisional officers. Photographs were also taken at the work site, where considered necessary, to support the facts.

2.1.6 Acknowledgement

An Entry Conference was held in March 2012 with the Secretary, PW & PWRD, Engineer-in- Chief, Chief Engineers and other officials of the department, wherein the audit objectives, scope, criteria and methodology of audit were explained to the department. The findings of the Performance Audit were forwarded to the Government in September 2012 and discussed with the Secretary, and other senior officials in an Exit Conference held in November 2012. The reply of the department was received in December 2012. The views of the department have been suitably incorporated in the report.

We acknowledge the cooperation of the PW & PWRD in providing necessary information and records to audit.

Audit Findings

2.1.7 Status of roads

As there was 29 *per cent* increase in registered vehicles from 2007-08 to 2010-11, the load of traffic on roads was increasing. Thus, the department was required to construct new roads, improve and widen the existing roads

⁷ NBCC-I PWD; SW Circle PWD; SHC-IV and SHC-VI.

⁸ Divisions under PWD- Diamond Harbour, Burdwan-I, Midnapore-I, Barasat, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Bankura, Nadia, Berhampore-I, Alipur and Alipurduar Construction.

Divisions under PWRD - Howrah HW, Darjeeling HW, Coochbehar HW, Hooghly HW-I, Bankura HW, Birbhum HW, Jalpaiguri HW, Tamluk HW, Burdwan HW-I, Murshidabad HW-I, Malda HW, Midnapore HW-II, Barasat HW-II, Dakshin Dinajpur HW and 24 Parganas HW

⁹ Out of total 89 divisions under two Directorates, 64 divisions execute road works

¹⁰ Any kind of road construction activities viz. widening, strengthening, improvement, maintenance including bridge and culvert works.

to ease traffic movement. Though, there was need for construction of new roads for establishing connection with existing unconnected 8291 habitations in the State as on March 2012, PW & PWRD did not construct any new road in the last five years. They, however, undertook road works for improvement, strengthening and maintenance of the existing SHs and DORs.

During 2007-12, 12 selected divisions¹¹ sent proposal for 318 road works (improvement and strengthening) against which only 209 road works were approved by the directorates for execution as detailed in the table below:

Table No 2.1.1 Roads works proposed for approval and execution

Year	Road works proposed		Road works approved and taken up		Percentage of road works not taken up
	No.	Km.	No.	Km.	
2007-08	30	187.98	20	157.03	33
2008-09	43	335.27	26	189.53	40
2009-10	75	310.51	43	245.09	43
2010-11	84	422.15	80	291.10	05
2011-12	86	599.84	40	308.65	53
Total	318	1855.75	209	1191.40	-

(Source: Divisional records)

Non-execution of road works ranged between five *per cent* and 53 *per cent* during 2007-12 as works were not approved by the Directorates. The actual requirements assessed by the divisions were, thus, not addressed by the Directorates.

As on March 2012 in the selected divisions, 217 km of SHs and 334 km of DORs were in urgent need of major repair which remained unrepaired for periods ranging upto 13 years. Similarly in 17 selected divisions, 279.92 km of SHs and 687.39 km of DORs were required to be widened immediately.

The department stated (December 2012) that the proposed works could not be executed due to inadequate flow of fund. The reply is not tenable as in selected divisions even the available fund during the period under audit could not be fully utilised as discussed in the paragraph 2.1.9.2.

2.1.8 Deficiency in planning

In 11th Five Year Plan, the State emphasised on improving the capacity and strengthening of roads. Planning for new roads and widening /strengthening of the existing ones is an ongoing process and requires regular up-dation of data regarding several parameters such as density of traffic, repeated repairs, socio-economic importance for each road. Audit scrutiny revealed following deficiencies in maintenance of database and planning as enumerated below:

¹¹ Berhampore-I, Bankura, Diamond Harbor, Jalpaiguri, Midnapore-I, Darjeeling divisions under PWD, Coochbehar HW, Birbhum HW, Howrah HW, Barasat HW-II, Hooghly HW-I, Dakshin Dinajpur HW divisions under PWD

2.1.8.1 Non-maintenance of database of roads

IRC guidelines stipulate that the divisions are required to keep a detailed record of the roads covering year of construction, subgrade CBR, soil characteristics, pavement composition and specifications, traffic, pavement performance, overlay history, climatic conditions etc. The updated database is essential for proper planning for maintenance and improvement of roads which was stated to be maintained by the respective divisions.

Audit scrutiny, however, revealed that the database maintained in 26 selected divisions contained only the name, type, length and width of the roads. No other vital information as stipulated in the IRC guidelines was maintained. The divisions stated that a comprehensive database could not be maintained due to shortage of manpower and non-availability of fund.

Thus, due to incomplete database, planning and prioritisation of road works were affected. We observed that several estimates were prepared without inputs of basic data viz. msa¹² and CBR¹³ (required as per IRC) which are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

2.1.8.2 Non-existence of Plan at Divisional level

Earlier a 20 year Master Plan was prepared by the department which was effective till 2000-2001. Thereafter, Master Plan was not prepared by the department. Planning documents viz. Perspective Plan, Vision Plan, Road Development Policy etc. for the period under audit were not available in the department. The department stated (December 2012) that consolidated Five Year Plan was prepared as per discussion/meetings with the concerned SEs/EEs on the basis of actual need, public demand and anticipatory availability of fund. Further, the Vision Plan for the year 2012-17 was not yet (December 2012) approved by the State Planning Board.

Scrutiny of records, however, revealed that Five Year Plan and Annual Action Plans of the department contain only year wise lump sum target in km of road works to be undertaken for the plan period without any detail. Following irregularities were noticed in the selected divisions:

- Only four selected divisions¹⁴ had prepared five year plan, but the same were not sent to the directorate for approval. Although these divisions had included year-wise list of works to be implemented in the five year plan, but did not follow the prioritisation sequence at the time of execution. As a result, two roads¹⁵ which were included in the plan were not taken up (March 2012). Interaction with the stakeholders revealed that the condition of Pakuria-Kumarganj Road became so deplorable that the bus services were subsequently withdrawn from it. Similarly, Dewanganj-

¹² million standard axles indicates the design traffic.

¹³ California Bearing Ratio is a unit to measure the strength and plasticity of the sub-grade/soil

¹⁴ Barasat HW-II, Malda HW, Burdwan HW-I and Jalpaiguri HW divisions under PWRD

¹⁵ Pakuria-Kumarganj Road and Dewanganj – Hemkumari Road

Hemkumari Road, despite having importance as a border road was not considered for development. In reply the division stated (March 2012) that as the public movement near the border is restricted by the Border Security Force (BSF) to check illegal movement of goods and unauthorised immigration, the widening and strengthening of the road was not considered in the interest of “national security”.

The reply is not tenable since the division (Jalpaiguri Highway) stated that a proposal had already been sent to the District Authority to consider surfacing of the road under Border Area Development Programme (BADP). The deplorable conditions of the two roads as of March/April 2012 is indicated in the photographs below:



Pakuria-Kumarganj Road

Dewanganj-Hemkumari Road

- Three divisions¹⁶ stated that they had prepared five year plan, however, failed to furnish the same.
- In remaining 19 divisions, no micro level plan was prepared. The divisions stated (May 2012) that the proposals for individual road works sent to the directorate were selected considering the parameters such as increased density of traffic, importance of the road, repeated repairs, socio-economic role of the roads and demand raised by the local MLAs and MPs. However, documentary evidence in support of reply was not furnished.

2.1.9 Financial Management

Funds for construction and maintenance of roads were provided through the annual budget of the department. Expenditure on maintenance of roads under non-plan head was financed from the State's own resources and grants under 12th and 13th Finance Commission. Construction of new roads and activities such as “Improvement” and “Strengthening” were financed under plan head from the State's own resources, NABARD loans, Central Road Fund (CRF) and loans from the Asian Development Bank. A number of deficiencies in

¹⁶ Bankura HW, Coochbehar HW divisions under PWRD and Midnapore division-I under PWD

financial management were noticed which indicated lack of proper planning and budgetary control as discussed in succeeding paragraphs.

2.1.9.1 Improper Budget formulation

As per Rule 333 of West Bengal Financial Rules (WBFR), each division was required to send budget estimate for the next year to the circle office by 15th September every year. The circle office was to send compiled budget to the department by 1st October. The department was to submit the budget to the Finance department by 1st November of each year.

We observed during audit that five¹⁷ out of 26 selected divisions sent the budget estimates during the period under audit. Further, instead of seeking inputs for preparation of budget from divisions, the Chief Engineers of the directorates allocates fund among the divisions after holding annual meeting with them. Thus, the budget prepared was not on the basis of feedback from divisions, rather it was allocation of fund on the basis of the meetings, thereby, rendering budgetary control ineffective.

2.1.9.2 Allocation and utilisation of fund

Budget estimate vis-a-vis expenditure incurred on road related activities under revenue and capital head during the period 2007-08 to 2011-12 is shown in the table below:

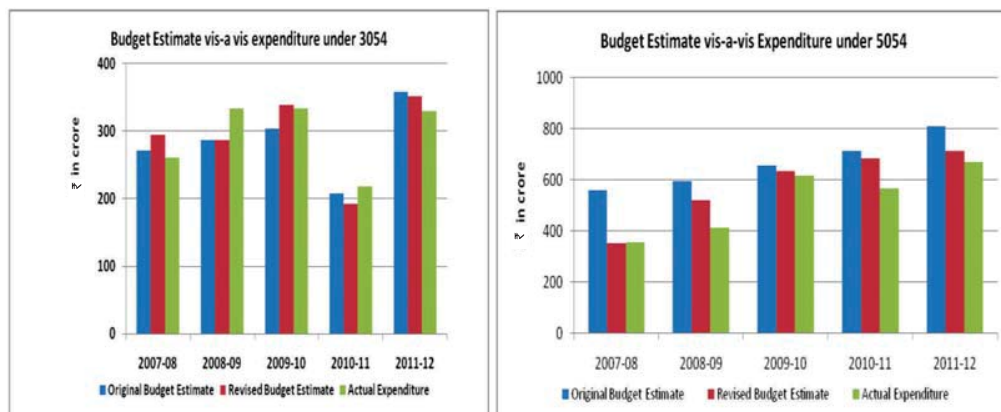
Table No 2.1.2 : Budget Provision vis-à-vis Expenditure
(₹ in crore)

Year	Revenue Expenditure-3054-Roads and Bridges				Capital Expenditure-5054-Roads and Bridges			
	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	(+) Excess/(-) Savings (per cent)	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	(+) Excess/(-) Savings (per cent)
1	2	3	4	5= (4-3)	6	7	8	9= (8-7)
2007-08	270.96	294.55	261.25	(-) 33.30(11)	558.93	353.36	357.19	(+) 3.83(1)
2008-09	286.68	286.68	333.56	(+)46.88(16)	595.44	518.57	414.32	(-)104.25(20)
2009-10	304.04	338.22	333.65	(-) 4.57(1)	654.71	632.20	616.43	(-)15.77(2)
2010-11	207.24	192.45	218.08	(+)25.63(13)	711.36	684.27	566.64	(-)117.63(17)
2011-12	358.47	351.58	329.21	(-) 22.37(6)	807.32	710.98	668.39	(-)42.59(6)
Total	1427.39	1463.48	1475.75		3327.76	2899.38	2622.97	

(Source: Budget Publication, Government of West Bengal and Finance Accounts prepared by AG (A&E), WB)

¹⁷ Berhampore-I, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Midnapore-I divisions under PWD and Hooghly HW-I under PWRD

Bar Chart No. 1



There was savings of ₹ 276.41 crore (RE ₹ 2899.38 crore - Actual expenditure ₹ 2622.97 crore) under plan head (Capital Expenditure) for the last five years ended with 31 March 2012. The savings was mainly due to delayed release of fund. Audit observed that fund ranging between 25 *per cent* and 63 *per cent* was released during last quarters of 2007-08 to 2011-12. Further, audit observed that 13 selected divisions¹⁸ could not utilise ₹ 52.53 crore (27 *per cent*) out of ₹ 197.33 crore received under plan and non plan head during the period under audit. Divisions where savings were noticed by audit, stated (January 2013) that they could not utilise the entire amount due to delayed release of fund, with adverse impact on development and maintenance of road works.

2.1.9.3 Diversion of Funds

As per the NABARD guidelines for Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF), the loan amount was to be utilised solely and exclusively for the purpose for which it was sanctioned by NABARD. Scrutiny of Status Report of core plan schemes revealed that PWD released a sum of ₹ 293.86 crore to the executing divisions for road works against the receipt of a total fund of ₹ 281 crore as of March 2012. The excess release of ₹ 12.86 crore was made by diverting the fund meant for RIDF works. The department while admitting the fact stated (April 2012) that the diversion was resorted due to want of committed fund from the budget provision, otherwise the progress of other works under plan head could have been hampered. Further, the diverted fund would be adjusted just after receipt of authorisation of fund for those works under State plan head during the year 2012-13. Hence, while releasing funds to the executing divisions, the directorate office diverted the funds of RIDF loan to other works in violation of NABARD guidelines.

Similarly in Berhampore division-I and Howrah Highway division, a part of RIDF loan amounting to ₹ 4.01 crore was spent in works other than NABARD

¹⁸Diamond Harbour, Berhampore-I, Nadia, Bankura, Burdwan-I, Alipurduar Construction, Alipur divisions under PWD and Dakshin Dinajpur HW, Barasat HW-II, Midnapore HW-II, Hooghly HW-I, Bankura HW, 24 Parganas HW under PWRD.

sanctioned road works during the period 2011-12 which is depicted in the table below:

Table No 2.1.3: Diversion of RIDF loan
(₹ in crore)

Name of Division	Year	RIDF tranche	Fund received	Expenditure	Amount diverted
Berhampore division-I, PWD	2011-12	XV	4.24	2.03	2.21
Howrah H/W division	2011-12	XVI	1.80	Nil	1.80
Total					4.01

(Source: Divisional records)

In reply the department stated (December 2012) that such diversions were made due to scarcity of fund and was normally adjusted at the end of the financial year through transfer entries (TEs). The reply was, however, not tenable as adjustment through TEs were not reflected in the monthly accounts. Scrutiny further revealed that five divisions incurred expenditure of ₹ 4.57 crore on works under plan head in 2008-09 and 2009-10 by diverting fund from non-plan head as detailed in **Appendix – 2.1.1**.

The department while admitting the fact stated (December 2012) that due to inadequacy of funds received under plan head during the year 2008-09 and 2009-10, the department executed the work under the budget provision of 12th Finance Commission grant.

2.1.9.4 Parking of Funds

As per rule 35 (ii) of WBFR, expenditure should not *prima-facie* be more than the occasion demands. Public Works divisions made advance payment to the Resources division-II for procurement and supply of bitumen for construction and maintenance of the roads. Records revealed that a substantial fund ranging between ₹ 6.08 crore and ₹ 15.51 crore remained outstanding during 2007-08 to 2011-12 under deposit head of the Resources division-II. This head was operated for amount received from various executing divisions for procurement of material. In spite of such huge accumulation of fund, the executing divisions, to avoid the lapse of budget at the end of each financial year, used to park their savings under this head of Resource division-II where the same does not lapse with the end of the financial year. Scrutiny of records revealed that six divisions made an aggregated advance payment of ₹ 16.16 crore to the Resources divisions-II in the month of March of the respective year during 2007-08 to 2011-12 as detailed in **Appendix-2.1.2**.

The department stated (December 2012) that such payment was made in anticipation of material required during the 1st quarter of the next year. The reply is not tenable as Resources division-II was already having fund of those divisions for supply of materials.

2.1.9.5 Excess expenditure not regularised

As per Para 282 (1) of PWD Code Vol-I, when a sanctioned estimate tends to exceed by five *per cent* or more, a revised estimate must be submitted for obtaining approval. In four selected divisions audit observed that five works

involving an estimated cost aggregating to ₹ 12.61 crore were executed at an expenditure of ₹ 14.88 crore. The expenditure incurred in excess of the sanctioned estimates ranging between 8 *per cent* and 41 *per cent* is shown in the Table below. The excess expenditure for which revised estimates were to be prepared and got approved, were not yet approved (December 2012) by the competent authority.

Table No 2.1.4: Details of excess expenditure beyond sanctioned estimate and yet to be approved

(₹ in crore)

Sl. no.	Name of work	Name of the Division	Date of completion	Estimated cost	Actual expenditure	Excess expenditure
1	Improvement and strengthening of Husludanga-Susthirhat Road (0 to 10 kmp) under RIDF-XIV	Jalpaiguri HW division	15.02.10	2.65	3.03	0.38 (14 %)
2	Improvement and strengthening of Changrabandha-Mathabhanga-Coochbehar Road (SH-12A) from 18-31 kmp & 40-44 kmp	Coochbehar HW division	07.01.11	6.23	6.72	0.49 (8 %)
3	Improvement and strengthening of Burdwan-Katwa Road	Burdwan division PWD	In progress	2.56	3.62	1.06 (41 %)
4	Widening & improvement of Anandanagar Health Centre Road 0.00-2.66 kmp	Hooghly HW division-I	24.06.11	0.77	1.01	0.24 (31 %)
5	Construction of multi-cell box culvert-Kalachara - Bhagibatipur Road at 2nd kmp	Hooghly HW division-I	Not available	0.40	0.50	0.11 (28 %)
Total				12.61	14.88	2.28

(Source: Divisional records)

The department stated (December 2012) that by following necessary formalities, such excess expenditure would be regularised as soon as possible.

2.1.10 Project Implementation

Project implementation entails timely approval of the road works, issue of work orders in time, ensuring timely commencement and completion of road works. Compliance of IRC specification regarding drainage system, pavement design and application of appropriate grade of bitumen *inter alia* are the key parameters for sustainability of road.

Audit noticed several deficiencies in implementation of the road works as discussed below:

2.1.10.1 Design of the road

As per IRC: 37-2001, the pavement thickness was required to be designed considering the projected vehicular traffic load and the mechanical strength of the soil (CBR¹⁹). Any deficiency in determining the above parameters would affect the stability and design life of the road. Scrutiny of the selected divisions revealed deficiencies in designing pavement thickness as discussed in the following sub-paragraphs:

¹⁹ California Bearing Ratio

2.1.10.1.1 Assessment of Vehicular Movement

As per para 3.3.1.3 of IRC 37- 2001, the estimation of design traffic is necessary for the purpose of structural design of the pavement. To obtain a realistic estimate of design traffic, due consideration should be given to the existing traffic. Estimate of the initial daily average traffic flow for any road should be based on at least seven days X 24 hours classified traffic counts. Unless the pavement thickness is determined correctly based on actual traffic count and if there is any deviation from the normative crust thickness, the roads may not be able to withstand the traffic load. We observed that in 13 selected divisions, 50 road works for improvement, widening and strengthening were executed at a total cost of ₹ 327.31 crore by conducting traffic survey of less than seven days. The survey was conducted ranging from one day to three days. Further, no traffic survey was conducted for 25 road works executed at a total cost of ₹ 86.34 crore in five selected divisions (*Appendix-2.1.3*). Concerned divisions stated that due to time constraints, shortage of manpower and fund constraints, required traffic survey was not conducted. As a result, all these road works were exposed to risk of damages due to non compliance of IRC guidelines.

The Department admitted (December 2012) that some divisions while preparing estimates did not follow IRC norms. However, they would ensure that no estimate be prepared deviating the IRC norms in future.

2.1.10.1.2 CBR Test

CBR test is a penetration test for evaluation of the mechanical strength of soil. This is conducted prior to preparation of the estimates for deciding the pavement thickness of road. Moreover, as per para 3.4.6.4 of IRC: 37-2001 at least three samples should be tested on each type of soil having the same density and moisture content.

We observed that in five selected divisions²⁰, no CBR test was conducted in 23 road works executed at a total cost of ₹ 46.46 crore. In other four selected divisions²¹, seven road works were executed at a total cost of ₹ 13.97 crore where pavement thickness of two roads were calculated considering the CBR value of other roads and that of remaining five roads were calculated considering the CBR value of other stretches of the same roads which was in violation of IRC guidelines. The concerned divisions admitted the fact and stated that due to inadequate competent personnel in the departmental laboratory, shortage of staff etc. CBR test was not done correctly. The department stated (December 2012) that necessary instructions would be issued to the divisions to conduct CBR test at the time of preparation of estimate.

²⁰ Alipurduar Construction, Bankura, Barasat division under PWD and Tamluk HW and Hooghly HW division under PWRD.

²¹ Berhampur-I, Bankura, Midnapur-I division under PWD and Dakshin Dinajpur HW under PWRD.

2.1.10.1.3 Assessment of crust thickness of pavement

Seven selected divisions prepared estimates for widening and strengthening of 14 roads involving an estimated cost of ₹ 83.68 crore with crust thickness²² less than the requirement as per IRC: 37-2001. Divisions stated that to cover the total length of road with the available sanctioned fund less crust thickness were provided. The reply is not tenable as the road works were sanctioned as per the estimates prepared by the divisions.

We observed that a road²³ was constructed (January 2011) with deficient crust thickness with an expenditure of ₹ 3.64 crore. Subsequently, the road suffered deterioration within the warranty period of three years.

We observed that in three selected divisions²⁴ five road works were executed with excess crust thickness than the actual requirement resulting extra avoidable expenditure of ₹ 5.15 crore. Even, in three works extra Bituminous Macadam (BM) layers were provided though the existing thickness of the roads was more than the actual requirement. Divisions replied (April 2012) that as per site condition and in anticipation of increased traffic load extra layers were provided. Reply is not tenable as the crust thickness of a road is determined on the basis of site condition as well as projected growth of traffic during the design life of the road.

2.1.10.2 Planning of maintenance work

The State faces heavy shower of monsoon for around four months a year. Pre and post monsoon inspection of road help to identify the defects so that roads can be kept traffic worthy. It is also necessary to keep the roads free from potholes, cracks and depressions. Such defects, if rectified timely, reduce public inconveniences and the cost of repairing.

When we enquired, all test checked divisions stated (March–June 2012) that such inspections were carried out but inspection reports were not documented in a systematic way.

Further, we observed that during the period under review two sub-divisions²⁵ under Malda and Bankura Highway divisions had proposed 27 post monsoon road maintenance works at an estimated cost of ₹ 1.17 crore (for repairing pot holes). Of these, only three works were executed before next monsoon at a cost of ₹ 24.43 lakh. Thus, due to non-execution of remaining maintenance works, 24 road works remained exposed to further deterioration during monsoon.

The department while admitting the fact stated (December 2012) that due to paucity of fund they could not execute the road maintenance works, however, necessary action would be taken for repair/maintenance work after proper planning.

²² Total thickness from sub-base to bituminous layer

²³ “Kholapota-Baduria-Maslandapur-Habra” under Barasat Division (PWD).

²⁴ Berhampur Division-I, PWD, Tamruk HW and Dakshin Dinajpur HW divisions under PWRD

²⁵ Gazole and Bishnupur HW sub-divisions

2.1.10.3 Delay in completion of road and bridge works

For successful implementation of the road works, assessment of availability of land, finalisation of tenders, issue of work orders and timely commencement and completion of road works are essential.

In 24 selected divisions, 453 works were taken up during 2007-08 to 2011-12 of which 124 road works (estimated cost ₹ 444.35 crore) were delayed by five months to 53 months (*Appendix- 2.1.4*) due to non availability of land, delay in finalisation of tenders and issue of work orders. Some of the instances of delay are discussed below:

- Two road and five bridge works in six divisions²⁶ were commenced (2007-12) at an estimated cost of ₹ 57.16 crore without assessing the availability of land and consequently, the works got delayed ranging between five months and five years. Further, three bridge works undertaken between October 2004 and May 2006 remained incomplete (July 2012) as the department failed to acquire the required land. This resulting in cost escalation of ₹ 14.87 crore as detailed in the table below:

Table No 2.1.5: Cost overrun due to delay
(₹ in crore)

Sl No	Name of work	Name of Division	Original estimate	Scheduled date of completion	Actual date of completion	Period of Delay	Revised Estimate	Cost overrun
1	Construction of a bore pile and well foundation bridge across the river Pagla-Bhagirathi on Gour-Mahadipur Road in the district of Malda.	Malda HW division	4.86	12.08.08	In progress	3 years 7 months	7.90	3.04
2	Construction of a bridge over Mundeswari at Digruighat at 8 th kmp of Pursurah- Radhanagar road.	Hooghly HW division-I	11.20	21.05.09	-Do-	2 years 10 months	17.19	5.99
3	Construction of Bridge- with both side approaches over river Jalangi on Rajapur Garaimari Road at Boxipurghat.	Murshidabad HW division	7.45	31.03.07	-Do-	5 years	13.29	5.84
Total			23.51				38.38	14.87

(Source: Divisional records)

²⁶ Murshidabad HW-I, Burdwan HW-I&II, 24 Pgs HW, Diamond Harbour HW and Nadia HW under PWRD



Bridge without approach road on river Mundeswari in Hooghly District



Bridge without approach road on river Khari in Burdwan District

While admitting the above facts, the department stated (December 2012) that necessary orders had already been issued for not taking up any construction and/or improvement of roads and/or bridge works before substantial completion of its pre-construction works i.e. land acquisition and physical possession thereof, shifting of utility lines, felling of trees, removal of encroachments, etc.

2.1.10.4 *Inadequate provision of drainage system:*

Water logging is one of the major reasons for damage of roads for which side drainages are required to be constructed to drain off the water from the roads, especially where there are chances of water logging. IRC specification (Section 309.2) stipulates that drains are to be completed in proper sequence with road works ensuring adequate drainage for the area and minimising erosion. Audit observed that in all the selected divisions, provision for drainage facilities were not considered in most of the road works.

Records further revealed that in six road works in Hooghly district, which is one of the flood prone districts, provision of 'V' type side drain was provided in the tenders. However, against the total provision of 12305 meter side drain, only 150 meter drain was constructed in one work only. The concerned EE attributed the reason (August 2012) to unwillingness of the local people for using their land as outlet of the drainage water. Thus, the road works executed at a cost of ₹ 14.12 crore were exposed to damage due to water logging which could have been avoided, had the department made a provision to lay mastic on the road suitable for water logging area with no drainage facility.

The department, however, stated (December 2012) that generally surface drain was not considered in road works. Construction of drains are considered in town and market areas. The reply is not tenable since as per IRC guidelines, drainage has to be provided along with road work.

2.1.10.5 *Use of Lower grade bitumen*

As per para 4.2.3.5 of IRC: 37-2001, 80/100 grade bitumen was required to be used for BM course for roads in moderate/cold climatic zone and 60/70 grade bitumen was to be used in hot climatic zone. In case of laying of Mastic Asphalt

course 10/20 grade bitumen was required to be used for hot/moderate climatic zone and 30/40 grade bitumen was required for areas where difference between maximum and minimum atmospheric temperature is less than 25 °C. High stability requirement cannot be met effectively by less viscous bitumen. Use of less viscous bitumen would affect the stability of the roads.

Audit observed that in three selected divisions²⁷, 80/100 grade bitumen was used in 15 Bituminous Macadam works though the roads were in hot climatic zone (Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri). Further, in two selected divisions²⁸, 30/40 grade bitumen was used for five mastic works which was not suitable for hot/moderate climatic zone (Bankura and plains of Darjeeling district). The divisions stated that for minimising the construction cost lower grade bitumen was used.

The department stated (December 2012) that for all road works in Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar districts, 80/100 grade of bitumen should be used considering high altitude, snow, fog and low temperature. The reply is not tenable as the roads where 80/100 grade of bitumen used were located in the plains of Jalpaiguri district. Besides, the department itself used 60/70 grade of bitumen in various other road works in those areas.

2.1.10.6 Inconsistent laying of binder course

As per IRC guidelines, roads having two million standard axle (msa) or more must be provided with a bituminous binder course. If bituminous binder course is not provided, sub-grade deformation can occur due to vertical compressive strain at the top of sub-grade resulting in permanent deformation of the pavement surface. Audit observed that five roads under two selected divisions were strengthened during 2007-12 at a total tendered amount of ₹ 24.61 crore, having msa ranging from 2.8 to 8.9, without providing any bituminous binder course making the roads prone to rapid deterioration. The details are indicated in the table below:

Table No 2.1.6: Roads having more than 2 msa constructed without bituminous binder course

Sl No	Name of Work	Name of Division	msa	Tendered Amount (₹ in crore)
1	W/s of Bolpur-Kankalitola-Lavpur Road from 0.00-11.50 kmp	Birbhum HW division	8.9	5.95
2	W/s of Bolpur-Kankalitola-Lavpur Road from 11.50-23.50 kmp	-Do-	4.47	4.46
3	W/s of Kotasur-Ramnagar Road from 0.00-17.25 kmp	-Do-	5.87	4.53
4	W/s Chowhata- Hatia-Sainthia Road from 0.00-18.67 kmp	-Do-	2.80	7.47
5	Improvement of Domjur-Andul Road from 1.00 -6.00 kmp	Howrah HW division	2.82	2.20
TOTAL				24.61

(Source: Divisional data)

Audit further observed that the surface of “Bolpur- Kankalitola-Lavpur Road” got damaged within the defect liability period of three years after completion of the work in September 2010 as binder course was not laid.

²⁷ Alipurduar Construction, Jalpaiguri division under PWD and Jalpaiguri HW under PWRD.

²⁸ Darjeeling and Bankura division PWD

The Divisions, however, replied that the sanctioning authority (NABARD) did not approve the binder course. The reply is not tenable as the department did not include binder course in the estimate. Further, in other division binder course was allowed by NABARD for the road having more than 2 msa.

Further, as per IRC guidelines, roads having design traffic of less than 2 msa did not require any bituminous binder course. Audit observed that nine roads having less than 2 msa under five selected divisions, bituminous binder course were provided though it was not required. This led to excess expenditure of ₹ 9.77 crore for providing binder course. The details are indicated in the table below:

Table No.2.1.7: Roads having less than 2 msa constructed with bituminous binder course

SL No	Name of Work	Name of Division	msa	Binder course laid	Expenditure incurred (₹ in crore)
1	W/S of Mankur-Bokshirhat Road (0 to 3 kmp) under RIDF-XI	Howrah HW division	1.00	50 mm BM & 75 mm BM	0.64
2	W/S of Kulgachhia-Tulsiberia Road (0 to 5.50 kmp) under RIDF-XII	-Do-	1.00	50 mm BM	0.28
3	W/S of O.T. Road to Kola (0 to 5.775 kmp) under RIDF-XIV	Midnapore division-I, PWD	1.00	50 mm BM	0.41
4	W/S of Khejuri-Heria Road (0 to 13 kmp) under RIDF-XV	Tamluk HW division	1.37	50 mm BM (2 layers)	3.60
5	W/S of Khejuri-Heria Road (13 to 22 kmp) under RIDF-XIV	-Do-	1.37	50 mm BM	1.66
6	W/S of Nandigram-Chandipur Road (0 to 16 kmp) under RIDF-XII	-Do-	1.71	50 mm BM	1.81
7	W/S of Panchagram- Nabagram-Lalbag Road (14 to 17 kmp)	Murshidabad HW division-I	1.32	50 mm BM	0.34
8	W/S of Panchagram- Nabagram-Lalbag Road (17 to 19.375 kmp)	-Do-	1.32	50 mm BM	0.27
9	W/S of Jagatballavpur-Sitapur-Jangipara Road (0 to 10.225 kmp)	Hooghly HW division-I	0.35	50 mm BM	0.76
Total					9.77

(Source: Divisional data),

The department stated (December 2012) that the matter would be examined.

2.1.10.7 Repetitive works

Three work orders in Howrah Highway division were issued for special repair of Maheshpur-Birshibpur- Hatgachia- Gowalia Ghat (MBHG) Road in March 2009. The work was completed in May/June 2009 at a cost of ₹ 27.50 lakh. This work was carried out despite the fact that NIT for widening and strengthening (W&S) of the same road under RIDF scheme was circulated in February 2009 at an estimated cost of ₹ 5.67 crore. The W&S work was commenced in June 2009 and was still ongoing (July 2012). Again, special

repair works on the same road were taken up in July 2010 and completed in March 2011 at a cost of ₹ 80.72 lakh. Thus, expenditure on special repair works amounting to ₹ 1.08 crore (₹ 80.72 lakh + ₹ 27.50 lakh) was redundant.

The department stated (December 2012) that the matter would be examined.

2.1.11 Contract Management

The following deficiencies were noticed in the contract management for road works during 2007-12.

2.1.11.1 Irregular expenditure on substituted /excess items

Estimates of road works are prepared by the divisions after conducting survey and the required tests. Further checks prior to sanction are carried out by the circle office. The estimates are then sent to the directorate with the approval of the circle office. Audit observed that out of 213 works executed under 10 divisions, 16 works (7.51 per cent) were accepted at considerably lower rate (ranged between 19.51 per cent and 38.10 per cent) than the approved departmental estimates (₹ 90.73 crore). Subsequently, extra expenditure for substituted items/excess items of ₹ 12.73 crore were incurred in these works (*Appendix- 2.1.5*). Since the extra cost remained within the limit of the estimated cost, the approval of these extra/substituted items were not obtained. Thus, the expenditure incurred on substituted items/excess items was irregular. Further, these instances raised doubt on the reliability and sanctity of the estimates prepared by the department.

The department in reply stated (December 2012) that necessary instruction for not executing works in excess of the estimated cost without specific permission from the competent authority, had been issued.

2.1.11.2 Deficiency in inviting Notice Inviting Tender

In Burdwan HW Division-I, the work of “Strengthening of Gouranga Setu approach road” (a part of SH) from 0 kmp to 6.70 kmp” was awarded (May 2009) after a delay of eight months from the date of technical sanction (September 2008). The department issued four corrigenda for extension of time. By that time the profile of the road got damaged to a great extent due to ensuing monsoon and the division had to incur an additional expenditure of ₹ 31.09 lakh to rectify those damages.

In six selected divisions²⁹, 43 tenders were invited after splitting seven road works with the intent for timely completion. However, only three works (seven per cent) could be completed within scheduled time; 37 works were delayed for the period ranging between one month and 11 months. The completion time of the remaining three works was not available in records. The reasons for abnormal delay as stated by the divisions were due to execution of supplementary items, delay in obtaining revised administrative approval, assembly election etc. In one work such delay resulted in extra expenditure of ₹ 27.42 lakh for execution of supplementary item. Thus, the purpose of splitting the works for early completion of these road works was totally defeated.

²⁹ Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar Construction divisions under PWD; Tamuk HW, Jalpaiguri HW, Bankura HW, Coochbehar HW divisions under PWRD.

The department admitted the audit observations and stated (December 2012) that they would try to minimise such delays in future. The department, however, did not give any specific reply on the reasons/justification for splitting of the works.

2.1.11.3 Delay in issue of work orders:

PWD code provides 30 days time limit for submission of tender from the date of Notice Inviting Tender. No time limit was, however, fixed for issue of work orders after the date of submission of tenders. The department in reply to an audit query stated (July 2012) that work orders were usually issued within two and half months from the date of issue of NIT.

It was observed in seven selected divisions that 53 work orders (estimated cost of ₹ 271 crore) were issued after a delay ranged between three and 11 months from the date of issue of NIT of which three work orders were issued after a delay of 10 to 11 months. The delay was mainly due to failure of the department in finalisation of tender. Audit noticed in respect of one work, due to delay of 10 months in issue of work order, supplementary items of ₹ 34.42 lakh were to be executed subsequently to repair potholes.

The department stated (December 2012) that work order must be issued at present within 120 days from the date of opening of Tender and a Committee was also constituted to review the tender form.

2.1.11.4 No action for delay in commencement of work

In one selected division (Hooghly Highway) the work “Widening and Strengthening of Jagatballavpur-Sitapur-Jangipara Road (0-10.225 kmp)” was commenced with a delay of seven months, which led to deterioration of the hard crust of the road due to ensuing monsoon. Thus, the department paid ₹ 15.69 lakh to the contractor to rectify the damages caused by monsoon. We noticed that the delay in commencement was due to the lapse on the part of contractor, but no action was taken by the division against the contractor. On the contrary an additional payment for damages due to monsoon was made to the contractor.

2.1.11.5 Irregular extension of time:

In terms of clause 5 of the contract agreement (Form 2911), time extension was to be applied by the contractor within seven days if apprehending any hindrance to complete the work in time. The Divisional Officer shall authorise such extension if in his opinion such extension deemed essential.

In four selected divisions³⁰, audit observed that in four cases Divisional Officer had paid the final payment amounting to ₹ 6.90 crore without approval of extension of time. In remaining three cases the work was still in progress beyond scheduled date of completion but the contractors did not apply for extension of time.

The department stated that the matter would be examined and intimated to audit.

³⁰ Bankura, Berhamopore-I divisions under PWD; Dakshin Dinajpur HW and Howrah HW divisions under PWRD

2.1.12 Quality Control

For effective quality control the department should ensure that adequate technical personnel and a well-equipped laboratory system are available. Periodical tests on material, concrete and finished works were to be conducted as per the requirements of the Indian Road Congress (IRC). Following deficiencies were noticed during the course of audit:

- As per para 901.10 of IRC, the contractor should furnish test certificates of materials to be used in work. As per contract clause authenticated documents for purchase of bitumen alongwith test certificates were to be submitted from any government approved testing laboratories. In eight selected divisions³¹, 65 road works valuing ₹ 340.57 crore were executed. Audit scrutiny revealed that no such test certificate was attached with the bills when those were passed for payment.

The department stated (December 2012) that testing was not conducted as the bitumen was purchased from Indian Oil Corporation and Hindustan Petroleum. The reply is not tenable as the bitumen was purchased by the contractor and in absence of challans and test certificates the source of purchase as well as quality of bitumen could not be ensured.

- To ascertain the thickness of the WMM, BM etc laid on the road surface bore hole test was to be conducted by digging holes in the finished layers of the road. Scrutiny of records revealed that none of the selected division except Barasat Highway division-II was in possession of bore hole test report.

2.1.13 Road Safety issues

For smooth traffic movement and to reduce traffic accidents road safety measures like sign boards, guard post, road marking, parapet³² etc. were required to be assessed while taking up any road works. In Malda Highway division, guard post was fixed while taking up the work of widening and strengthening of Mothabari-Sadullahpur road from 0-6.795 kmp. Though setting up of 12 signboards was considered in the estimate but only two were fixed. In Darjeeling Highway division, audit observed that road safety measures like “construction of parapets in the road curves” were not taken into account while preparing the estimate by the division for the work of “Improvement of Garidhura-Mirik-Simanabusti road”. In other selected divisions road safety measures were not at all considered while preparing the estimates.

³¹ Burdwan-I, Nadia, Midnapur-I, Berhampur-I, Darjeeling divisions under PWD, Howrah HW, Tamluk HW and Barasat-II HW under PWRD

³² Low protective wall along the edge of the road



Garidhura- Mirik- Simanabusty Road without parapet

2.1.14 Monitoring

Monitoring at pre-work, post-work and during execution stages is essential to ensure that execution has been carried out as per plan and is capable of fulfilling the desired expectation of the stakeholders. Audit scrutiny revealed following deficiencies in monitoring:

- The Department had two Planning and Monitoring units at the Directorate level viz. Planning & Monitoring Cell under PWD and Monitoring Cell under PWRD. Scrutiny revealed that Planning & Monitoring Cell of PWD was created to co-ordinate the activities of executing divisions. But no such function was discharged by the Cell. In reply, the Cell authorities stated (February 2012) that no information of road works was provided to the Cell by the directorate and the Cell had to restrict their activities only in preparation of Schedule of Rates and Telephone Directory of the department. However, directorate stated (July 2012) that the Cell would be made functional for checking the quality of works in a regular manner. Monitoring Cell of PWRD was at present entrusted with the task of vetting the estimates received from the divisions, prior to the approval of the CE. The CE also stated that the Cell did not make any field visit to monitor the ongoing road works. The department stated (December 2012) that at present the cells were being used for monitoring purpose.
- Physical and Financial Progress Reports are essential tools to monitor ongoing road works. PWRD stated (July 2012) that they received such reports from circle offices on quarterly basis. The directorates could not produce any report in support of their statement. State Highway Circle (SHC) -IV stated (March 2012) that such reports were prepared as and when required. SHC-VI stated (May 2012) that such reports were prepared time to time. Audit observed that the selected divisions did not prepare and submit any periodic progress report to monitoring authorities (SE and CE).
- In the project report intended benefits to the stakeholders from road works are highlighted. However, no post work analysis was done in any of the selected division to assess total benefits that were delivered to the stake holders after completion of the road works.

- Further, in 14 selected divisions there exists a total vacancy of 260 staff³³ meant for monitoring work at division level. Thus, the monitoring functions at divisional level could not be exercised properly due to the shortage of manpower.

2.1.15 Conclusion

The Performance Audit revealed that the length of roads under the department remained static during 2007-12 despite increase in traffic. Major repair and widening work was not taken up as required by the divisions. The department did not maintain adequate database of roads as per IRC guidelines which are essentially required for planning of maintenance and improvement of roads. Perspective Plan, Vision Plan and Road Development Policy were not prepared, in absence of which road works were selected for execution on ad-hoc basis. The department prepared the budget estimates on the basis of annual meetings with the divisions and not as per the West Bengal Financial Rule. Some selected divisions did not utilise the available fund fully where as some other divisions parked unspent fund with Resource Division to avoid lapse of budget grant. We also observed number of deficiencies in executing the road works where roads were improved and strengthened without/inadequate traffic survey and CBR test, with inadequate crust thickness. Further, some road works were executed ignoring road safety issue and without ensuring quality. Planning and monitoring cell was also non-functional.

2.1.16 Recommendations

- *A comprehensive data base should be maintained and updated regularly as per IRC guidelines.*
- *The department should prepare a long term master plan/perspective plan to be splitted into actionable items over the years for timely completion of the selected schemes according to the availability of the financial resources.*
- *Budget estimates should be realistically prepared and budgetary control to be strengthened to curb diversion of funds.*
- *Pre-work survey and tests needs to be strengthened.*
- *Work estimates should be prepared and executed strictly according to IRC specifications and departmental instructions/standards.*
- *Stringent quality control measures to be adopted for development and maintenance of roads.*
- *Effective monitoring of the execution of road works needs to be done to avoid unfruitful/wasteful expenditure.*

³³ Assistant Engineer-3, Sub Assistant Engineer-37 and Work Assistant-220

Agriculture Department

2.2 National Food Security Mission**Executive Summary**

With a view to increase production of rice, wheat and pulses through area expansion and enhancement of productivity, National Food Security Mission, a 100 *per cent* centrally sponsored scheme was launched in 2007-08 in India. In West Bengal, eight districts for rice, four districts for wheat and seventeen districts for pulses were selected under the scheme.

We conducted the Performance Audit to assess the performance of the scheme during the period from 2007-08 to 2011-12 which revealed:

Highlights:

- The scheme's objective to produce additional quantity of rice, wheat and pulses by the end of March 2012 remained unachieved despite expenditure of ₹ 206.62 crore for this purpose during the period 2007-08 to 2011-12.
(Paragraph 2.2.7)
- The potentiality of the districts to take up activities under the scheme was not determined in absence of base line survey and feasibility study.
(Paragraph 2.2.8)
- The objective of the scheme for distribution of quality seed at a subsidised rate was frustrated due to non-functioning of District Seed Committees. Farmers were not interested in receiving seeds under the scheme as the price of seeds supplied to them was more or less equal to the market rate.
(Paragraph 2.2.9.1)
- The objectives of Demonstration Centres meant to disseminate improved practices were not fulfilled mainly due to non-receipt of seeds and other inputs in time, shortage of manpower, non-involvement of scientist from State Agricultural Universities/Krishi Vigyan Kendras in running the Centre and monitoring deficiencies.
(Paragraph 2.2.9.2)
- Farm Implements required for improving efficiency of the farmers in field operations and for economising the cost of cultivation were neither demonstrated nor made available to the farmers in time and at affordable price. Besides, the procurement of farm implements valuing ₹ 47.52 crore was irregular as these were procured and distributed to the beneficiaries without fixing the price in violation of the guidelines.
(Paragraph 2.2.9.4)

- Farmers' Field Schools for dissemination of improved crop production technology for higher productivity remained unfulfilled as course curriculum suiting the local conditions were not devised.
(Paragraph 2.2.9.5)
- Adequate publicity of the scheme among the farmers was not made. The State did not prepare the list of beneficiaries according to the priority; thereby possibility of deprivation to the priority category beneficiaries cannot be ruled out.
(Paragraphs 2.2.9.7 & 2.2.10)
- The State could not utilise the approved annual outlay over the period of five years. The unspent balance stood at ₹ 13.12 crore at the end of March 2012. The State received less funds aggregating to the tune of ₹ 83.87 crore from the Central Government than the approved outlay due to their inability in spending the money received.
(Paragraph 2.2.11)
- Project Monitoring Team constituted in December 2007 remained non-functional due to lack of manpower.
(Paragraph 2.2.12)

2.2.1 Introduction

Agriculture in West Bengal (WB) is the most important means of livelihood. About 65 per cent of the population of the State lives in villages of which over 95 per cent are small and marginal farmers. Area-wise, WB is the 13th among 35 States and union territories of India having higher population density per unit area and lowest per capita land area among the States of the country.

National Food Security Mission (NFSM) was launched (from Rabi³⁴ season 2007-08) in 312 identified districts (136 districts under rice, 141 districts under wheat and 171 districts under pulses) in 17 States of the country to increase cereal and pulses production by at least 20 million tones (10 million tones rice, eight million tones wheat and two million tones pulses) by 2012 apart from the usual year to year production generated in the remaining districts. In WB, eight districts³⁵ with 26.7 lakh hectare, four districts³⁶ with 0.8 lakh hectare and five districts³⁷ with 130.30 lakh hectare were selected for production of rice, wheat and pulses respectively under NFSM. Further, under Accelerated Pulses Production Programme (A3P) another 12 districts³⁸ were included under NFSM from 2010-11.

The objectives of the scheme were to:

- increase production of rice, wheat and pulses through area expansion and enhancement of productivity in the identified districts;

³⁴ Rabi season is from November to May

³⁵ Coochbehar, Dinajpur (North), Howrah, Jalpaiguri, Midnapur (East), Midnapur (West), Purulia and 24 Parganas (South)

³⁶ Coochbehar, Dinajpur (North), Dinajpur (South) and Jalpaiguri

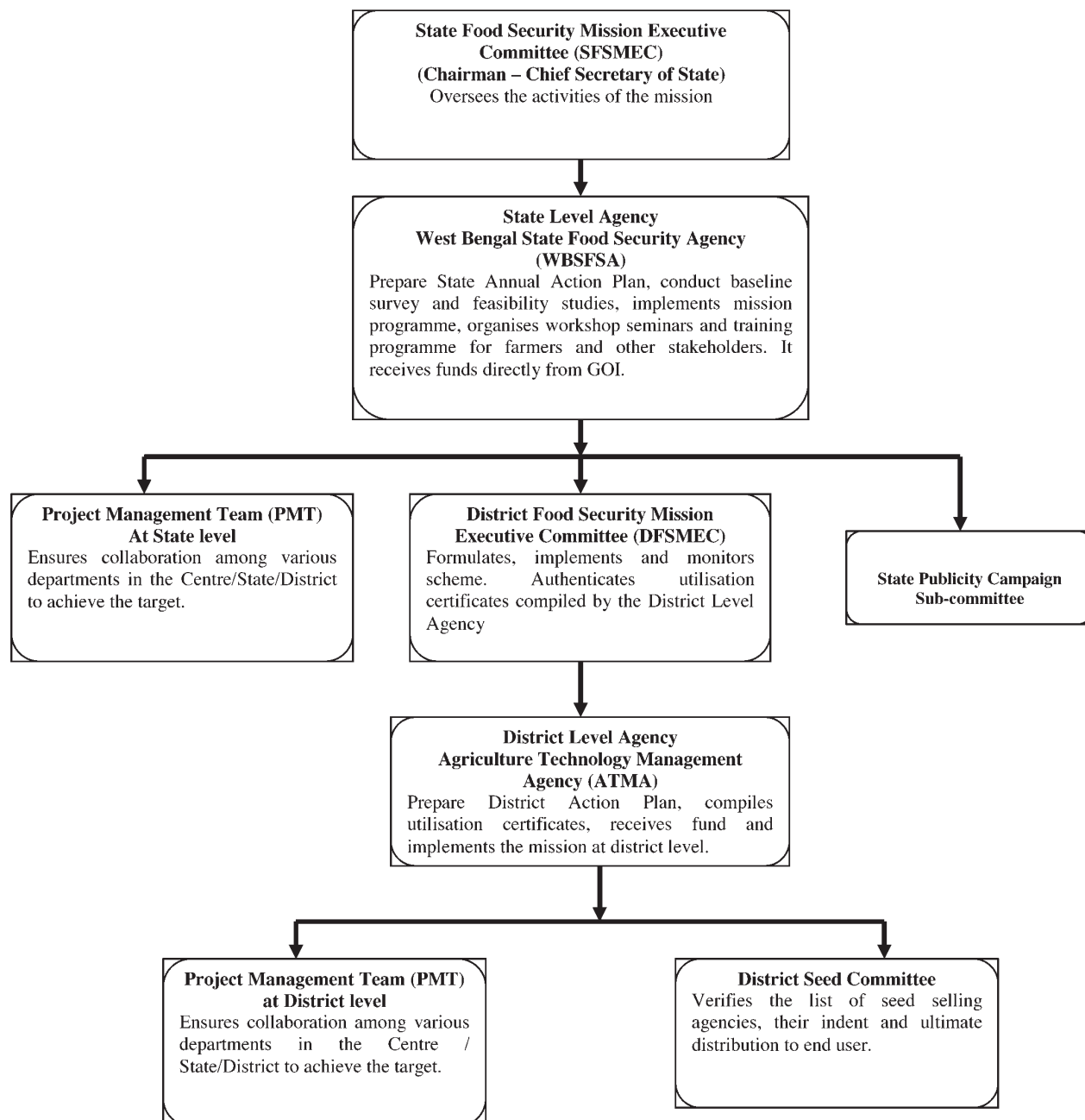
³⁷ Birbhum, Malda, Murshidabad, Nadia and Purulia

³⁸ Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar, Dinajpur (North), Dinajpur (South), 24 Parganas (North), 24 Parganas (South), Howrah, Hooghly, Bardhaman, Bankura, Midnapur (West) and Midnapur (East).

- restore soil fertility and productivity at the individual farm level and
- create employment opportunities and enhance farm level economy to restore confidence among the farmers.

2.2.2 Organisational set up

The Organisational set up in the State for implementation of NFSM is shown in the following chart:



National Food Security Mission Executive Committee (NFSMEC) oversees the activities of the Mission at the national level. It approves the individual

State Action Plans. The State Food Security Mission Executive Committee (SFSMEC) under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary of the State and the District Food Security Mission Executive Committee (DFSMEC) under the chairmanship of the District Magistrate are to oversee the activities, formulate and monitor the implementation of the scheme in the State and district level respectively.

2.2.3 Audit Objectives

We conducted the Performance Audit to ascertain whether:

- the objectives of the scheme to increase the production of rice, wheat and pulses were achieved in the identified districts;
- scheme was properly planned and executed economically, efficiently and effectively in compliance with the various interventions³⁹ of the scheme;
- funds were released, accounted for and utilised by the State Government in compliance with the provisions of scheme;
- all requisite records and data maintained at various levels and monitoring and evaluation has been done as per prescribed guidelines.

2.2.4 Audit Criteria

The main sources for the audit criteria were as under

- NFSM guidelines;
- Provision of General Financial Rules and
- Instructions issued through Government Orders from time to time.

2.2.5 Audit Methodology

We conducted the Performance Audit during January 2012 to July 2012. Out of 17 districts in the State of West Bengal where NFSM were launched, five districts⁴⁰ were selected for detailed examination through “Population Proportional to size Replacement Sampling Method” for coverage in Performance Audit. Besides, the Department of Agriculture and its directorates were also covered. In selected districts information and clarifications were gathered through questionnaires issued to the authorities, examination of records and organising meetings with the stakeholders in presence of the district level officers. Photographs were also taken at the work sites, where considered necessary, to support the facts.

2.2.6 Acknowledgement

An Entry Conference was held in May 2012 with the Secretary, Department of Agriculture wherein the audit objectives, scope, criteria and methodology of audit were explained to the department. The findings of the Performance Audit

³⁹ Like Demonstration Centers, Seed, Nutrient Management/Soil ameliorants, Mechanisation, Integrated Pest Management, Farmers Field School, Publicity, Mass Media and Information Technology, award for the best performing districts etc.

⁴⁰ Dinajpur (North), Jalpaiguri, Midnapur (East), Purulia and 24 Parganas (South).

forwarded to the Government in September 2012 were discussed with the Secretary, Agriculture Department and other senior officials in an Exit Conference held in October 2012. The replies received from the department have been suitably incorporated in the respective paragraphs. We acknowledge the co-operation of the Department of Agriculture in providing necessary information and records to audit.

Audit Findings

The Performance Audit revealed several deficiencies in production performance, planning, programme intervention and monitoring of the scheme which are mentioned in the succeeding paragraphs.

2.2.7 Production performance

Activities of the NFSM started in the State in the year 2008-09. Area under cultivation of rice, wheat and pulses and its production and yield in the State under NFSM during 2007-08 to 2011-12 over the base year level (i.e.; 2006-07 pre NFSM) is depicted in the table and diagram below:

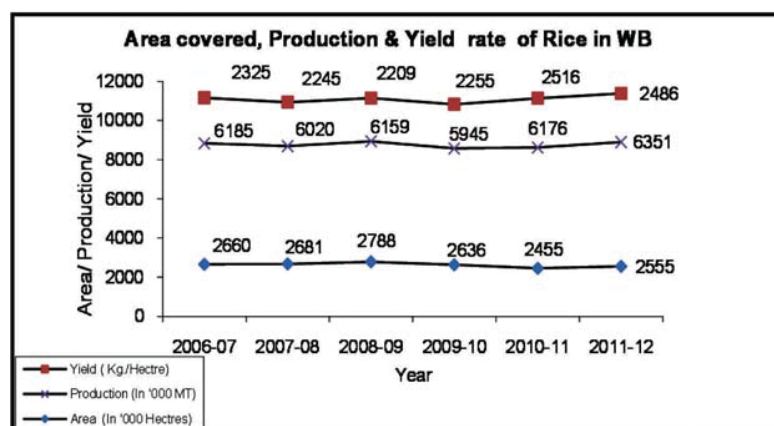
Table 2.2.1: Year-wise position of area, production and yield of rice, wheat and pulses in NFSM districts in WB during 2007-08 to 2010-12.

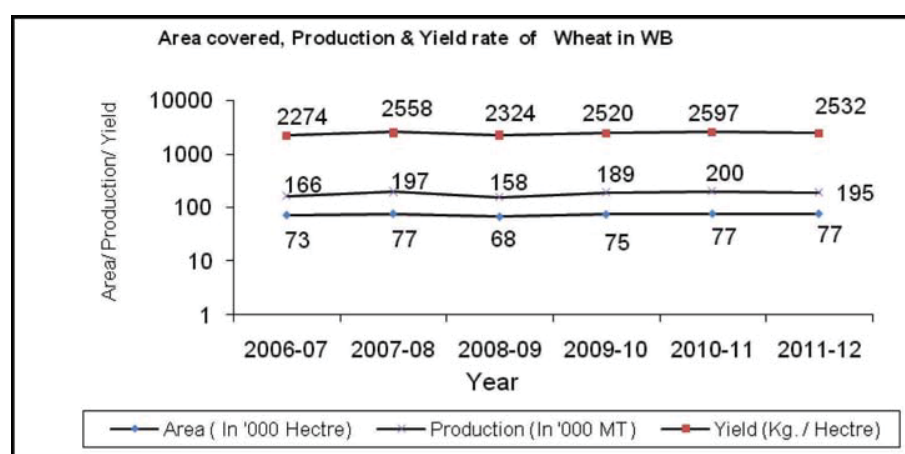
Year	Area (in 000'Hectare)			Production (in 000'MT)			Yield (in Kg/000 Hectare)		
	Rice	Wheat	Pulses	Rice	Wheat	Pulses	Rice	Wheat	Pulses
2006-07	2660	73	152	6185	166	109	2325	2274	717
2007-08	2681	77	142	6020	197	118	2245	2558	831
2008-09	2788	68	126	6159	158	97	2209	2324	770
2009-10	2636	75	123	5945	189	111	2255	2520	902
2010-11	2455	77	196	6176	200	176	2516	2597	898
2011-12	2555*	77	198*	6351*	195	176*	2486*	2532	889*
Percentage of shortfall in achievement of additional production**	No target fixed			88	64	52	No target fixed		

(Source: Departmental figures)

*Provisional figure

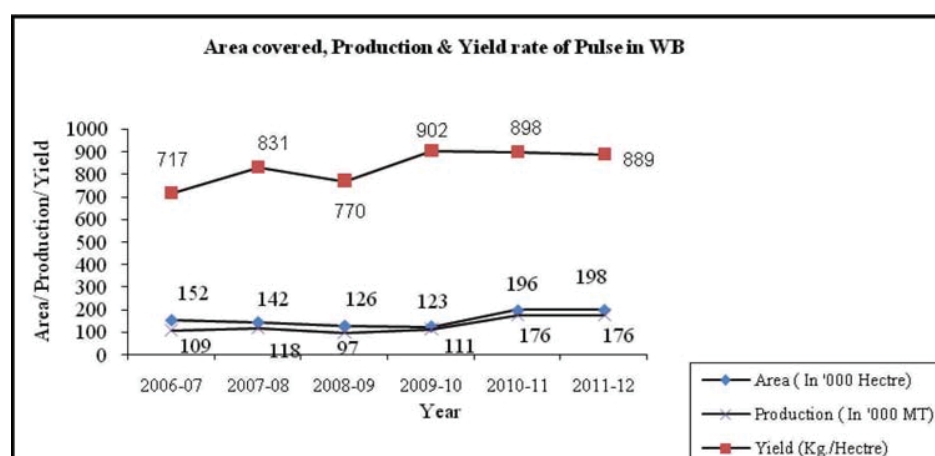
**During 2007-12 additional targets for production of 14 LMT, 0.8 LMT and 1.40 LMT were given in respect of rice, wheat and pulses respectively from those of the respective productions in 2006-07





The base year production level in 2006-07 (pre-NFSM) together with the additional quantity to be produced during the plan period was the targeted production by end of the plan (March 2012). Accordingly, the State was to produce additional 14 lakh MT rice, 0.80 lakh MT wheat and 1.40 lakh MT pulses in the 11th plan period.

Scrutiny, however, revealed that there was shortfall in achievement of additional targeted production by 88 per cent, 65 per cent and 52 per cent in rice, wheat and pulses respectively. The production of rice during 2007-08 to 2010-11 remained less than the base year production level in 2006-07. However, in 2011-12 the production increased marginally above the base level of 2006-07. The production level of wheat and pulses though increased but could not achieve the target.



The Department stated (November 2012) that due to rapid urbanisation and alternative cropping, the area of cultivation under rice got reduced causing stagnation in total production. Productivity of wheat could not be achieved due to short span of winter in the State. In the case of pulses, the department stated that there was difficulty in preservation of seeds due to climatic condition.

The reply of the department was not tenable as the area cultivated under wheat and pulses increased despite rapid urbanisation and the targets were fixed

considering the climatic conditions in the State. Thus, the department failed to achieve the mission objective to increase the production through area expansion.

We observed that though the yield in respect of rice, wheat and pulses was increasing yet, the performance of production could have been far better as there were instances of failure of the Government in implementation of the interventions like purchase and distribution of seeds, demonstration centers, soil ameliorants, farm implements, Farmers Field Schools etc which are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

Thus, the objective of the NFSM to increase production through area expansion and enhancement of productivity in the identified districts remained underachieved even after incurring expenditure of ₹ 206.62 crore under NFSM during 2007-08 to 2011-12.

2.2.8 Planning

NFSM guidelines (Paragraph 12.1) stipulate that the Department of Agriculture and Co-operation, Government of India (GOI) will communicate the tentative annual outlay to the States indicating component-wise and district-wise allocation. The district level agency named Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) will prepare the Annual Action Plan (AAP) keeping in view their priority and potential and submit the plan to the state level agency (WBSFSA). WBSFSA will consolidate district plans and prepare state level AAP duly vetted by the SFSMEC and submit to the Ministry of Agriculture, GOI for approval by the NFSMEC. WBSFSA will also prepare Perspective Plan in consonance with the mission's goals and objectives in co-ordination with State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Paragraph 4.9 of the guidelines further stipulate that base line survey and feasibility studies in the area of operation (district, sub-district or a group of districts) are to be conducted to determine the status of crop production, its potential and demand. The State Department of Economics and Statistics, Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics (BAES) in the State would be involved in baseline survey to know the resource endowment of the farmers and the level of productivity (Paragraph: 10 of guideline).

We observed that:

- On receipt of tentative AAP of each year from the GOI, the State was modifying the tentative annual targets without any inputs from the districts and the same submitted to the GOI for approval.
- Two⁴¹ out of the five selected districts confirmed that they had not prepared any AAP. One district⁴² submitted AAP at the State level review meetings without any input from block level though the plan was to be finally implemented at block level. Remaining two districts⁴³

⁴¹ Purulia and Dinajpur (North).

⁴² 24 Parganas (South)

⁴³ Jalpaiguri and Midnapur (East)

stated to have prepared the AAP, could not produce the same when asked for in audit.

- Neither the SAU and ICAR was consulted for preparation of APP nor the Perspective Plan prepared as envisaged in the guidelines.
- BAES was not assigned the job of preparation of baseline survey and feasibility study was also not conducted as envisaged under NFSM guidelines.

The department stated (November 2012) that due to shortage of manpower in the districts, Perspective Plan could not be prepared. In future, before preparing the AAP, the SAUs and ICAR institutes in the State would be consulted and BAES would also be assigned for preparation of baseline survey and data collection work.

Thus, in absence of Perspective Plan, baseline survey and feasibility study, the department could not assess the status of crop production, potential and demand. The requirement of the districts under NFSM could not be precisely ascertained in absence of feed back from the districts.

2.2.9 Target and achievements in “Programme Intervention”

In order to enhance the efficiency of the farmers in performing field operations and economise upon the cost of cultivation, there are provision of ‘Programme Interventions’ in NFSM which include the following activities:

- Seed procurement and distribution;
- Formation of Demonstration Centres;
- Nutrient Management / Soil ameliorants;
- Assistance/Distribution of Farm Implements and
- Training of farmers through Farmers’ Field School (FFS) etc.

In total there were 14 interventions under rice and 11 interventions each under wheat and pulses. Each intervention having an interactive role with other interventions and their synchronised implementation under each component could only produce the intended results.

Component wise intervention targets and achievements of the State and five selected districts are discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

2.2.9.1 Seed

Seed is one of the most critical input for enhancing productivity of crops. NFSM guideline (Paragraph 14.2) provides financial assistance for production of hybrid rice seed as well as breeder⁴⁴, foundation⁴⁵ and

⁴⁴ Breeder seed is the kind of seed directly controlled by the originating or sponsoring plant breeding institution, or person, or designee thereof. As applied to certified seed, breeders seed is the source for the production of seed of the other classes of certified seed.

⁴⁵ Foundation seed is seed which is the progeny of breeder or Foundation seed produced under control of the originator or sponsoring plant breeding institution, or person, or designee thereof. Foundation seed is a class of certified seed which is produced under procedures established by the certifying agency for the purpose of maintaining genetic purity and identity

certified⁴⁶ pulses seed. Similarly, provision for financial assistance was also made for distribution of hybrid and High Yielding Varieties (HYV) of rice seed and improved varieties of wheat and pulses seed. Further, to popularise recently released and pre-released varieties of rice and wheat seed, adequate allocation was made for distribution of rice and wheat seed minikits.

Physical and financial achievement in purchase, production and distribution of seeds under NFSM during last five years are indicated in the table below:

Table 2.2.2: Target and Achievement of purchase, production and distribution of Seed of the State and selected districts during 2007-12.

(Physical in Quintal and Financial in ₹in lakh)

Intervention	State				Selected Districts			
	Target		Achievement		Target		Achievement	
	Phy	Fin	Phy	Fin	Phy	Fin	Phy	Fin
Production								
Hybrid Rice Seed	18500	185.00	2240	22.40	9628	96.28	830	8.30
Foundation Pulses Seed	17582	175.62	1935	19.55	983	9.83	100	1.00
Certified Pulses Seed	15850	158.50	9202	92.02				
Distribution								
Hybrid Rice Seed	45431	908.62	180	3.60	23835	476.68	117	2.35
High Yielding Variety Rice Seed	826200	4131.00	279763	1167.98	460856	2386.78	155697	875.09
High Yielding Variety Wheat Seed	86000	430.00	24397	139.62	53150	265.75	18919	100.73
Certified Pulses Seed	43405	520.86	5431	65.86	5568	304.42	0	0.00
Purchase of Breeder Seed of Pulses	1367	71.65	19	0.97	91	4.74	0	0.00

(Source: Progress Reports of the State and selected districts)

Component wise (rice, wheat and pulses) target and achievement for the State as a whole and in five selected districts is indicated in **Appendix-2.2.1**.

2.2.9.1.1 Purchase and distribution of Seed

NFSM guideline emphasises importance of District Seed Committee (DSC) for effective implementation of the scheme. Accordingly, the DSCs were constituted (December 2007) with Principal Agricultural Officer (Chairman) and five other members from different fields for all NFSM districts. The objectives of the DSC were to bring the Seed Replacement Ratio (SRR)⁴⁷ upto 33 per cent (in respect of the rice and wheat) in identified districts and to enhance the productivity level to assist for purchase of high yield quality seeds released during last 10 years. The DSC was also to bring to the notice of the State Level Seed Committee any information, suggestion as may be deemed fit.

⁴⁶ Certified seed shall be the progeny of Breeder, Foundation or Registered seed so handled as to maintain satisfactory genetic purity and identity and which has been acceptable to the certifying agency.

⁴⁷ Seed Replacement Ratio is the percentage certified/quality seeds sown to the total seed utilised for the crop.

In selected districts, audit did not come across any minute of meetings of DSC, held during 2007-08 to 2011-12. Non-functioning of DSC affected purchase and distribution of high yield quality seeds adversely as discussed below:

Rice:

Distribution of certified HYVs seed and Hybrid Rice Seed had always been substantially less during 2008-09 to 2011-12 than the physical targets assigned to the State and thereby there was shortfall in utilisation of fund for providing assistance towards distribution of seeds. The shortfall was due to lack of monitoring by DSC.

Wheat:

Distribution of certified seed of HYV was very low during 2008-09 to 2009-10 which ranged between maximum 41 *per cent* in 2009-10 and minimum 10 *per cent* in 2008-09.

Pulses:

The breeder seeds provide the source of production of 'Foundation' and 'Certified' pulses seeds. Scrutiny, however, revealed that purchase of breeder seeds was 0.41 *per cent* and 19 *per cent* in the year 2008-09 and 2010-11 against the targets fixed. No purchase was made against the target in the year 2009-10 and 2011-12. As a result, target for production of 'Foundation' and 'Certified' seeds and distribution thereof was not achieved. During 2007-12 achievement of production of 'Foundation' seeds against the target ranged between 100 *per cent* in 2011-12 and three *per cent* in 2008-09. There was no achievement during 2009-10. Further, achievement of production during 2007-12 of 'Certified' seeds ranged between 100 *per cent* in 2011-12 and 25 *per cent* in 2009-10. There was no production in 2008-09. Also, achievement of distribution during 2007-12 of 'Certified' pulses seeds was 13 *per cent* in 2010-11 and 0.36 *per cent* in 2009-10.

Audit scrutiny revealed lack of infrastructure for cultivation of seeds, technical supervision by certification agencies and storage facilities at district level factored in non-achievement of target in the production of Hybrid Rice Seed. The district authorities stated (March to July 2012) that the farmers were not interested in receiving seed under NFSM as price of seed after subsidy supplied by WBSSC Ltd. was more or less same of the market rate. This indicated lapses on the part of the DSC to fulfill the objective of the NFSM in distribution of quality seed in a subsidised rate. Mid Term Evaluation Report of the department (2008-09) also pointed out that Seed Committees in the districts were not found working as scheduled in the operational guidelines due to non availability of quality seeds.

The Department stated (November 2012) that as the entire procurement of seed was centrally done by WBSSC Ltd., the function of the seed committee was not in picture. The reply was not tenable as the department itself entrusted DSC for monitoring the purchase and distribution of seeds. Further, the

responsibility assigned to DSC as per NFSM guidelines was not discharged by WBSSC Ltd.

2.2.9.2 Demonstration Centre

Demonstration of ‘improved package of practice’ (IPP) of rice and wheat, ‘System of Rice Intensification’ (SRI) and hybrid rice were to be conducted at farmers’ field to create awareness about the improved practices (Improved/hybrid seed, fertiliser management and other practices). Demonstration of pulses was introduced under the Accelerated Pulses Production Programme (A3P) from 2010-11. The department would run Demonstration Centres (DCs) in collaboration with State Agriculture Universities (SAUs), Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) Institutes, Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVK) and reputed NGOs. Identification of technologies and critical inputs were very important steps in a DC which should be identified in consultation with the SAUs / KVKs. As per NFSM guidelines, display boards should be put on demonstration plots with full information of the farmers and critical inputs applied on the plots. The results of the demonstration should be compiled at block, district and State level in the form of a booklet.

Year-wise target and achievement of DCs in the State and five selected districts under NFSM during last five years ended 31 March 2012 are indicated in *Appendix-2.2.2*. An abstract thereof is given in the table below:

Table 2.2.3: Target and achievement of Demonstration Centres in the State as well as in five selected districts during 2007-12 under NFSM

(Physical in number and Financial ₹ in crore)

	State					Selected District				
	Target		Achievement			Target		Achievement		
	Physical	Financial	Physical	Percentage	Financial	Physical	Financial	Physical	Percentage	Financial
Rice-IPP	22998	5.75	25680	112	6.32	15576	3.89	14892	96	3.58
Rice-Hybrid	7902	2.37	7558	96	2.26	4834	1.45	3588	74	1.03
Rice-SRI	10768	3.23	10289	96	3.05	6278	1.88	4930	79	1.42
Wheat	1727	0.35	1414	82	0.28	1121	0.22	961	86	0.19
Pulses	1500	0.30	1500	100	0.30	600	0.12	550	92	0.11
TOTAL	44895	12.00	46441		12.21	28409	7.56	24921		6.33

(Source: Progress Reports of the State and selected districts)

Scrutiny of reports and returns revealed that 46441 DCs were implemented at a cost of ₹ 12.21 crore in the State against the target of 44895 DCs during the period under audit. Selected districts implemented 24921 DCs at a cost of ₹ 6.33 crore during the same period against the targets of 28409 DCs.

Records of the selected districts revealed the following deficiencies in implementation of the DCs:

i) Timely delivery of agricultural inputs was essential for successful running of DCs. Scrutiny, however, revealed that in 12 selected blocks in three districts⁴⁸ supplying agencies delivered inputs in respect of 399 DCs after expiry of cut off dates and in staggered manner. Table-2.2.4 indicates some of the cases of delay in supply of DC inputs:

⁴⁸ Dinajpur (North), Purulia and Jalpaiguri.

Table 2.2.4: Some illustrations of delayed supply of inputs for DCs

Sl	District	Crop	Supply Order no and date	Cut Off date for supply	Sowing period	Date of supply
1	Dinajpur (North)	Rice 07-08 (Hybrid)	626 dt 09.06.08	-	June to August	21.01.09
		Rice (Kh) 08-09 (Hyb)	-Do-	-	June to August	17.12.08
		Rice (Kh) 10-11 (IPP)	685 dt 27.07.10	13.08.10	June to August	06.10.10
		Rice (Kh) 10-11 (SRI)	-Do-	-Do-	June to August	06.10.10
2	Purulia	Rice 07-08 (IPP)	746 dt 01.07.08	-	June to August	03.09.08
		Rice 07-08 (Hyb)	-Do-	-	June to August	03.09.08
		Rice 08-09 (IPP)	-Do-	-	June to August	03.09.08
		Rice 08-09 (SRI)	-Do-	-	June to August	03.09.08
		Rice 08-09 (Hyb)	759 dt 03.07.08	-	June to August	08.09.08
3	Jalpaiguri	Rice 07-08 (Hyb)	959 dt 03.06.08	25.06.08	June to August	13.01.09
		Rice 08-09 (Hyb)	-Do-	25.06.08	June to August	13.01.09

(Source: Supply orders and stock register of receipt by the concerned Block)

From the above it is evident that the inputs were delivered well after the sowing period. The delay for late supply was due to lack of infrastructure with WBSSC Ltd. which is the main supplier of seed to the department. The Impact of late supply of the inputs beyond the cut-off dates could not be ascertained as records of yield of food grain through DCs was not maintained. Thus, not only the desired objective of DCs could not be achieved but also the achievement in terms of number of DCs was doubtful.

The department in reply stated (November 2012) that steps would be taken to ensure timely supply of inputs and proper monitoring of DCs.

ii) As per NSFM guideline (para 14.1/XIV) the results of demonstrations should be compiled at block, district and State level. Audit scrutiny revealed that the Block level officers (ADAs) in all the selected blocks had not maintained complete information of the DCs. Further, the results of DCs were not compiled in the form of a booklet at State level, though required as per guidelines. As a result, the success and failure of DCs could not be ascertained.

The department stated (November 2012) that the results of DC would be compiled at the State level in the form of booklet.

iii) Records of the selected districts further revealed that expenditure of ₹ 30 lakh was incurred on distribution of publicity materials, placards, display boards, posters and pamphlets. Display boards were not placed in most of the DC plots and those placed at selected plots did not contain complete information required as per the guidelines. Thus, awareness about modern technologies in cultivation could not be disseminated to the farmers. Photographs given below indicate display board of DC with incomplete information / without display board.



Incomplete information in display board of DC at GP: Bahadur, Jalpaiguri, Sadar Block

DC without display board at GP: Patkata, Jalpaiguri Sadar Block

Out of selected districts, three districts Dinajpur (North), Midnapur (East) and Purulia admitted (March, April and June 2012) the audit observations.

iv) As per Para 14.1/XIII of the NFSM guidelines a field day was to be organised during reproductive phase of the crop preferably at grain filling stage with participation of scientists from SAUs/KVKs. All the selected districts in reply stated (March and April 2012) that they could not arrange visit of scientists to DCs. However, five selected districts had reported an expenditure of ₹ 62 lakh on visit of scientists from SAUs/KVKs to DCs. Thus, the expenditure incurred on this account was doubtful.

v) The DC registers maintained at Itahar and Raiganj Blocks under Dinajpur (North) district revealed that they had conducted demonstration at 156 and 296 DCs respectively during 2008-09 and 2010-11. Of which only 71 and 219 DCs achieved production more than the average yearly district production level. The remaining DCs failed to achieve the average district production level for the respective year. The facts were endorsed by the selected Itahar and Raiganj Blocks. Performance of DCs in other selected blocks could not be ascertained in absence of proper maintenance of records.

Thus, the objective of setting up of DCs was not fully achieved mainly due to non-receipt of seeds and other inputs in time, non-compilation of results of DCs and lack of monitoring.

2.2.9.3 Nutrient management / Soil ameliorant⁴⁹

As per Paragraph 11 of the NFSM guidelines, at least 33 *per cent* of the fund was to be allocated for small, marginal and women farmers. The allocation to SC/ST farmers was to be made proportionate to their population in the district. All the farmers were entitled to avail the assistance for various components of the mission limited to five hectares in a season. Lime / micronutrients / plant protection chemical was to be supplied to the farmers for use in cultivation for enhancement of soil fertility and productivity. Paragraph 14 of the guidelines also provides that the DFSMEC will finalise the list of beneficiaries in consultation with the Panchayat bodies.

⁴⁹ Stuff that makes the soil more pleasant for plants to grow in and/or provides nutrients for the plants.

Targets and achievements of distribution of lime, micronutrients and plant protection chemicals in the State under NFSM and five selected districts during the last five years are given in table below:

Table 2.2.5: Target vis-à-vis achievement of distribution of Lime, Micronutrients and Plant Protection Chemicals during 2007-12 under NFSM.

(Physical in ha and Financial ₹ in lakh)

	State					Selected districts					
Intervention	Target		Achievements			Target		Achievements			
	Phy	Fin	Phy	%	Fin	Phy	Fin	Phy	%	Fin	
Lime											App-2.2.3
Rice	690070	3450.85	581097	84	2880.52	396272	1981.38	339431	86	1689.45	
Wheat	30882	154.41	17986	58	89.39	21226	106.13	11191	53	55.52	
Pulses	78600	589.50	47415	60	361.07	11064	82.32	1410	13	8.67	
Total :	799552	4194.76	646498		3330.98	428562	2169.83	352032		1753.64	
Micronutrients											App-2.2.4
Rice	731700	3658.50	791121	108	3627.41	434752	2173.76	460853	106	1986.24	
Wheat	202300	1011.50	199902	99	908.33	142545	712.73	125015	88	581.61	
Pulses	81000	405.00	71400	88	342.68	10863	54.32	9981	92	48.37	
Total :	1015000	5075.00	1062423		4878.42	588160	2940.81	595849		2616.22	
P P Chemicals											App-2.2.5
Rice	444068	2216.34	477384	108	2129.27	262128	1310.29	271096	103	1112.09	
Pulses	98193	712.82	101671	104	732.31	11674	81.94	10927	94	76.86	
Total :	542261	2929.16	579055		2861.58	273802	1392.23	282023		1188.95	

(Source: Progress Reports of the State and selected districts)

We observed that though physical targets for nutrient management / soil ameliorant were almost achieved but the objective of enhancement of soil fertility and productivity were not fulfilled due to following deficiencies:

- Physical reports and returns of three selected districts⁵⁰ revealed that department sub-allotted all inputs received from the WBSSC Ltd. and from other agencies among Gram Panchayats without providing any guideline for distribution among the farmers and without preparing any list of beneficiary farmers with the help of the Panchayat bodies. In the remaining two districts⁵¹ audit noticed that the status of the farmers i.e. marginal/SC/ST/women etc. was not mentioned in the muster rolls. Thus, there was no scope to verify whether priority classes of the farmers as envisaged in the NFSM guidelines were benefited.

- Out of 119 supply orders the purchaser did not mention crop season in 88 orders for which the materials were to be supplied. We further observed that 14 orders were issued after the crop season for which agricultural inputs were required. The supplying agencies delivered inputs after expiry of cut off dates. Therefore, inputs could not be distributed among farmers within the cropping season. Interaction with the farmers of the selected blocks in presence of departmental staff with regard to supply of agricultural inputs revealed that 92 out of 95 farmers did not receive agricultural inputs in time. As a result, adverse impact was possible.

The department, while accepting the audit observations, stated (November 2012) that the implementing districts would be instructed to

⁵⁰ 24 Parganas(South), Medinipur(East) and Jalpaiguri.

⁵¹ Purulia and Dinajpur North.

circulate the guidelines to the block level officers to keep records properly. It also stated that steps have already been taken to ensure the supply of inputs within the stipulated time.

2.2.9.4 Farm Implements

NFSM guidelines provide that mechanisation in rice, wheat and pulses will help in timely completion of field operations, add to the efficiency of the farmers in performing field operations and also economise upon the cost of cultivation. Scheme guidelines also provide for assistance of 50 per cent cost of the farm implements⁵² or the ceiling amount fixed for each machines whichever is less would be paid to the beneficiary farmers. The SFSMEC would nominate the agency for supplying the farm implements to the selected farmers at a fixed price. The beneficiary list prepared by the District Agriculture Officer in consultation with the Panchayat bodies would be approved by the DFSMEC. Target and achievement of distribution of farm implements of the State during 2007-08 to 2011-12 is shown in the table below:

Table 2.2.6: Target and achievement of distribution of Farm Implements of the State during 2007-12 under NFSM

(Physical in number and Financial ₹ in crore)

Farm Implements	State				Selected Districts			
	Target		Achievement		Target		Achievement	
	Phy	Fin	Phy	Fin	Phy	Fin	Phy	Fin
Conoweeder & Others	55975	16.79	66823	15.41	33620	10.09	32203	8.99
K. S. Sprayer	47600	14.28	50244	9.59	23828	7.15	27149	4.82
Zero Till Seed Drill	1780	2.67	265	0.40	931	1.40	143	0.21
Multi Crop Planter	1785	2.68	117	0.17	580	0.87	98	0.15
Seed Drill	1615	2.42	179	0.27	717	1.08	135	0.20
Power Weeder	625	0.94	71	0.11	369	0.55	0	0.00
Rotavator	896	2.69	81	0.41	500	1.41	14	0.04
Sprinkler Set	638	0.48	133	0.10	61	0.05	0	0.00
Pump Set	23210	23.21	21550	21.06	11413	11.41	7492	8.07
Total	134124	66.16	139463	47.52	72019	34.01	67234	22.48

(Source: Annual progress reports)

The distribution targets fixed for Zero Till Seed Drill, Multi Crop Planters, Seed Drill, Power Weeders, Rotavator and pump sets remained unfulfilled to a large extent. Mid term evaluation conducted by the department in 2008-09 pointed out that fund (₹ 25.80 lakh as per progress report) for farm implements (like zero till seed drill and Rotavator) could not be utilised as these machines were neither affordable nor properly demonstrated. 86 out of 103 farmers interviewed in two⁵³ districts viewed that farm implements were not available in time and price was also higher than the market price.

Further scrutiny revealed that in the review meeting of NFSM (December 2009), it was decided to maintain a uniform and standard quality of improved implements and to distribute those machineries at reasonable

⁵² Conoweeder, Wheel Hoe, Seed Drill, Zero Till Seed Drill, Multi Crop Planter, Rotavators, Knapsack Sprayer, Sprinkler set, Pumpset and Power Weeders.

⁵³ Dinajpur (North) and Purulia.

price among the beneficiaries from the listed manufacturers and vendors. The meeting also decided to link up midterm bank loan through Kissan Credit Card which would be helpful to the farmers. Mid Term Evaluation Report (2008-09) conducted by the department also pointed out that price difference between the implements supplied by the WBSSC and implements available in local/ regional markets was often wide and hindering farmers availing the subsidy amount. However, the department yet to evolve any mechanism to make the farm implements affordable to the farmers.

The State department of Agriculture decided (December 2008) that all agricultural inputs including Farm Implements relating to NFSM would be supplied by the WBSSC Ltd. Audit scrutiny revealed that the department did not fix the price of different farm implements supplied by the agency during 2007-08 to 2011-12 though it was required as per NFSM guideline. Thus, the department had no control over the rates of farm implements fixed by the agency. Thus, procurements of 139463 farm implements at a cost of ₹ 47.52 crore (**Appendix-2.2.6**) during 2007-08 to 2011-12 for distribution among beneficiary farmers were considered irregular.

The Department accepted (November 2012) the audit observation and stated that necessary steps would be taken.

2.2.9.5 Farmers' Field School (FFS)

Paragraph 14.9 of the guidelines stipulates that the Farmers Field School (FFS) was to provide first hand information to the farmers in the field to adopt improved crop production technologies for higher productivity. Each school site should be selected in close proximity of a good DC for each season. DFSMEC would approve location and list of beneficiaries for each FFS prepared by the district Agriculture Officer in consultation with the Zilla Parishad. District level consultants should invariably be associated for running these schools and be responsible for development of course curriculum in consultation with State consultant as well as with the scientists of KVKs. There will be one FFS for every one thousand hectare of area. One facilitator would be identified by the department to run the school.

Statement of target and achievement of FFS under NFSM in the State and in selected districts during the last five years are indicated in table below:

Table 2.2.7: Target vis-à-vis achievement in conducting FFS during 2007-12

(Physical in number and Financial ₹ in crore)

Intervention	State				Selected Districts			
	Target		Achievement		Target		Achievement	
	Phy	Fin	Phy	Fin	Phy	Fin	Phy	Fin
Rice:	2666	4.53	2231	3.79	1593	2.71	1268	2.15
Wheat:	111	0.19	103	0.18	50	0.09	43	0.07
Pulses:	475	0.81	296	0.50	60	0.10	44	0.07
Grand Total:	3252	5.53	2630	4.47	1703	2.90	1355	2.29

(Source: Progress Reports of the State and selected districts)

The department conducted 2630 FFS in the NFSM district during the period under audit (at a cost of ₹ 4.47 crore) against the target of 3252 FFS (at an approved outlay of ₹ 5.53 crore). In selected districts 1355 FFS was conducted (at a cost of ₹ 2.29 crore) against the targets of 1703 (at an approved outlay of

₹ 2.90 crore) during the period under audit (details in **Appendix-2.2.7**). The districts⁵⁴ authorities stated (March to September 2012) in reply to audit observations that the shortfall in running FFS was mainly due to shortage of technical staff (consultant, technical assistant and facilitator).

Audit observed the following deficiencies in conducting FFS in the selected districts.

- District level consultant/assistant technician or other responsible agriculturists from the KVKs/SAUs was not associated for conducting FFS though required in the guidelines. Specific course curriculum to suit the local conditions was not developed by the District Consultant in consultation with State Consultant as well as with the scientists of the KVKs. As a result, expertise of the KVKs/SAUs was not put to use for dissemination of knowledge to the farmers.
- Facilitators to run these schools were not identified by the department. However, the Assistant Director of Agriculture (ADA) of the concerned blocks provided trainings with their limited local resources.
- In Midnapur (East) district, the district authority made advances of ₹ 44.20 lakh to three ADAs (Admn) during 2007-08 to 2010-11 and ₹ 2.89 lakh to 10 ADAs in 2011-12 for conducting 260 FFS and 17 FFS trainings respectively. Audit found that advances still remained unadjusted as on date (July 2012) and could not verify the expenditure incurred due to non-submission of expenditure details.
- In 20 blocks of Purulia district, an amount of ₹ 35.40 lakh sanctioned for conducting 263 FFS, eight blocks have drawn advance of ₹ 5.63 lakh for conducting 43 FFS during 2008-09 to 2010-11 and was still unadjusted (April 2012). The remaining blocks have not even drawn any advance for conducting 220 FFS.

Thus, the objective of higher productivity through improved crop production technology could not be disseminated to the beneficiaries.

The department accepted (November 2012) the facts and stated that proper course curriculum would be developed in consultation with SAUs/KVKs and the districts would be instructed to submit the correct report in this regard.

2.2.9.6 Award for Best Performing District

Paragraph 14.11 of the NFSM guidelines provided award of ₹ 5 lakh in every two years to the best performing district for each component – rice, wheat and pulses under NFSM. The State Level Agency will make proposals regarding awards to the GOI duly vetted by the SFSMEC.

The department even after receipt of funds from the GOI in this regard did not utilise same as it could not evaluate the performance of the districts. The State was deprived of the benefit of ₹ 30 lakh meant for awarding best performing districts and to make them motivated for better performance.

The department admitted the facts and stated (November 2012) that evaluation would be made in future for awarding best performing districts.

⁵⁴ Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur (North), Midnapur (East) and Purulia.

2.2.9.7 Media and Publicity

For popularising NFSM and to make the farmers aware of the benefits, Paragraph 14.10 of the guidelines stipulated wide publicity to be undertaken through print, electronic media and other methods.

The department allotted ₹ 18.66 lakh (July 2009) to 13 NFSM districts towards outdoor field publicity as detailed in table below.

Table 2.2.8: Allotment of fund for Media and Publicity

Sl. No.	Item	Unit (Nos)	Allotment of fund (₹ in lakh)
1	Wall Paintings	900	13.68
2	Hoardings(10ft x20ft)	45	2.61
3	Bus-Panels	150	2.37
	Total:	1095	18.66

(Source: GO No 1306-Inpt/9M-11/09 dated 01.07.09)

Audit scrutiny revealed that ₹ 7.59 lakh for outdoor field publicity in August 2009 was paid to the selected districts. Four districts⁵⁵ kept the entire fund of ₹ 5.63 lakh un-utilised while one district⁵⁶ utilised only ₹ 0.47 lakh against receipt of ₹ 1.97 lakh.

The department admitted (November 2012) the audit observation and stated that emphasis on publicity would be given in future.

2.2.10 Beneficiary Farmers

Paragraph 11 of NFSM guidelines stipulates that at least 33 *per cent* allocation of the fund is to be provided for marginal, small and woman farmers. Further, the allocation to Scheduled Caste (SC)/ Scheduled Tribe (ST) farmers will be made proportionate to their population in the district. Paragraph 5.1 of the guidelines also provides that the Panchayat institutions will be involved for selection of beneficiary and identification of priority areas for the implementation of mission interventions. The DFSMEC will finalise the list of beneficiaries in consultation with the panchayats.

Scrutiny, however, revealed that the details (like name, caste, land holding etc) of the farmers were not recorded at block/district/State level. Thereby, it could not be ascertained in audit how the department selected the targeted farmers for extending benefits of the mission.

The department admitted (November 2012) the observation and stated that the districts would be advised to maintain particulars of the farmers in future as required.

2.2.11 Financial Management

Paragraph 7 of NFSM guidelines stipulates that the WBSFSA shall receive funds directly from the GOI with the approval of the NFSMEC. The WBSFSA would make fund available to the ATMA according to the approved programme of the districts. The ATMA will furnish utilisation certificates to

⁵⁵ Dinajpur (North), Purulia, Midnapur(East) and Jalpaiguri.

⁵⁶ 24 Parganas (South)

the WBSFSA. The WBSFSA in turn will submit consolidated utilisation certificates authenticated by the SFSMEC to the Ministry of Agriculture, GOI for further release of fund.

Year-wise availability and utilisation of fund under NFSM during last five years ending 31 March 2012 is indicated in the table below:

Table 2.2.9: Year-wise availability vis-a vis utilisation of fund under NFSM during 2007-12.

(₹ in crore)

Year	Annual Outlay	Previous unspent balance	Receipt	Total	Expenditure	Current unspent balance
2007-08	10.22	Nil	10.22	10.22	Nil	10.22
2008-09	70.39	10.22	65.37	75.58	47.75	27.83
2009-10	100.04	27.83	71.65	99.48	77.00	22.48
2010-11	65.42	22.48	33.94	56.41	49.89	6.52
2011-12	57.56	6.52	38.58	45.10	31.98	13.12
Total	303.63		219.76		206.62	

(Source: Approved Annual Action Plan and Progress Reports of the State)

NFSM activities started in the State in the year of 2008-09 instead of 2007-08 due to lack of preparedness on the part of State. GOI had released ₹10.22 crore for the period 2007-08 to the State in February and March 2008. The WBSFSA did not release any fund to ATMAs for carrying out activities under NFSM. All 13 NFSM districts, as well as the State had, however, reported 100 percent achievement of physical targets except one intervention (Miscellaneous expenses) in the year 2007-08 in their Progress Reports. However, the fund was shown un-utilised in the utilisation certificates for the year 2007-08. The fund for the year 2007-08 was spent in 2008-09 and 2009-10 and utilisation certificates were accordingly issued. The department in reply admitted (November 2012) the audit observation.

The State could not utilise the approved annual outlays and the unspent balances were revalidated in the subsequent years, thereby, the State had short received ₹ 83.87 crore (₹ 303.63 - ₹ 219.76) than the approved outlay under NFSM during the period from 2007-08 to 2011-12. Further, the State could utilise ₹ 206.62 crore out of ₹ 219.76 crore received. Thus, there was non-utilisation of fund of ₹ 13.12 crore as on March 2012.

24 Parganas (South) district diverted NFSM fund amounting to ₹ 2.69 lakh, ₹ 5.44 lakh and ₹ 12.20 lakh out of total expenditure of ₹15.18 crore and spent on items not related to NFSM activities in the year 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 respectively. The department stated (November 2012) that effective steps would be taken in this regard.

Test check of Progress Reports of two selected districts⁵⁷ revealed that following components were not executed by the district authorities as shown in the table below:

⁵⁷ 24 Parganas (South) and Jalpaiguri

Table 2.2.10: Component wise non-utilisation of approved outlay under NFSM

(₹ in lakh)

Sl. No.	Component	Approved Outlay	Fund Received	Fund Utilised
A	24 Parganas (South)			
1	Rice 11-12	348.46	285.31	Nil
2	Pulses 10-11	17.38	11.38	Nil
3	Pulses 11-12	33.38	8.00	Nil
	Total	399.22	304.69	Nil
B	Jalpaiguri			
	Pulses 11-12	14.09	9.09	Nil

(Source: Annual Action Plan and Progress Report)

The reasons for non-utilisation of fund were mainly due to non-availability of certified seed in case of pulses and in case of rice, WBSSC Ltd. failed to supply the critical inputs in time.

Poor planning, inadequate manpower and dismal performance in achieving physical targets under some interventions were the main reasons for non-utilisation of fund and as a result the State received less funds from the GOI in the subsequent years.

2.2.11.1 Acco unts

Paragraph 4.8 of the guidelines stipulates that both the WBSFSA and the ATMA would maintain separate accounts for the NFSM fund as per the Account Code to be prescribed by the NFSMEC. The Annual accounts would be duly audited by the chartered accountants.

No prescribed Account Code had been received from NFSMEC. Mid-term evaluation by the department in 2008-09 pointed out that fund from other ongoing schemes like ATMA got mixed up with fund received under NFSM. Accounts, cash book and bank accounts were required to be maintained separately for NFSM fund. These were not maintained due to shortage of staff. Annual accounts of WBSFSA for the year 2007-08 to 2009-10 and one ATMA, Midnapur (East) for the year 2007-08 to 2010-11 were prepared and audited by the chartered accountants. The accounts of other four districts were not prepared. In the absence of preparation/certification of accounts, the reasonable assurance about regularity of the receipt and proper utilisation of fund could not be ascertained. Thus, intended purpose could not be obtained.

Audit further observed that several scheme funds (NFSM, AGRISNET and National Project on Management of Soil Health and Fertility) had been kept in one savings bank account opened in the name of the WBSFSA at State level and in the accounts of ATMA at district level. However, in Purulia district, interest on NFSM fund amounting to ₹ 44.93 lakh for the period from 2008 to 2012 was shown separately in the cash book. In other selected districts and State account, an interest of ₹ 5.21⁵⁸ crore shown in the cash book earned by different schemes including NFSM upto December 2011. In absence of separate bank account the amount of interest earned by NFSM fund could not be ascertained in audit.

⁵⁸ State: ₹ 309.80 lakh, Dinajpur (North): ₹ 80.73 lakh, 24 Parganas (South): ₹ 39.30 lakh, Midnapur (East): ₹ 55.04 lakh, Jalpaiguri: ₹ 35.96 lakh and Purulia: ₹ 44.93 lakh

Three selected districts⁵⁹ maintained separate cash book for NFSM and the remaining two districts⁶⁰ maintained single cash book for recording all transactions of schemes like ATMA, Rashtriya Krishi Bikash Yojana and NFSM.

The department stated (November 2012) that steps have been taken to prepare accounts and get those audited by different Chartered Accountants and steps were also being taken to maintain separate bank account for NFSM in the State as well as district levels.

2.2.11.2 Double Payment to WBSSC Ltd.

WBSSC Ltd. supplied micronutrients (Boron) to six blocks under Alipurduar Sub-division between 08 February 2010 and 09 February 2010 against a supply order (dated 04 January 2010). ATMA paid an amount of ₹ 11.69 lakh to WBSSC Ltd. on 23 April 2010. Against the same supply order, the WBSSC Ltd. had submitted another bill on 30 March 2010 for the same materials and same amount under similar challan number. The bill was paid again on 13 August 2010.

In reply to an audit query, WBSSC Ltd accepted (August 2012) the double payment pointed out by audit and committed to adjust the amount in future payment.

Audit further observed that WBSSC Ltd. had shown 159 bills of ₹ 1.31 crore receivable from Jalpaiguri District as of July 2012. ATMA, Jalpaiguri had stated (July 2012) that all these bills were already paid to WBSSC Ltd.

Audit noticed that bill related discrepancies were not reconciled between records maintained at WBSSC Ltd. and ATMAs. No system exists for obtaining confirmation about amount outstanding in bills from either side which were essentially required for correct accounting.

The department admitted the audit observation and stated (November 2012) that steps would be taken for recovery and fixing responsibility. Necessary reconciliation would also be made.

2.2.12 Monitoring and Evaluation

As per NFSM guidelines, a Project Management Team (PMT) will be constituted at the State and district level. The SFSMEC and DFSMEC will monitor progress of implementation of the NFSM in the identified districts through the Project Manager of the PMT at the State / district level assisted by technical experts appointed on contractual basis. The PMT will consist of the Principal Agricultural Officer (Chairman), representatives from KVK/SAU, NGO, agronomist, consultant and technical assistant (members). The PMT will closely monitor the implementation of each DC and other interventions as well as record the data of crop yield in DC plots through crop cutting experiment samples and concurrently evaluate success of the programme. The results of each demonstration will be compiled at block, district and State level in the form of a booklet with references to some success stories. Close monitoring of achievements of physical and financial targets of interventions

⁵⁹ South 24 Parganas, Purulia and Jalpaiguri.

⁶⁰ Dinaipur (North) and Midnapur (East).

will be conducted and submitted quarterly/annually to the district/State level. The State Statistical and Economic Department (SSED) was to evaluate the performance of the mission in each year.

Test check of records of the department and selected districts revealed that

- PMTs were constituted in December 2007 for all NFSM districts. The Evaluation Report prepared by the department in 2008-09 pointed out that PMTs were not found operational due to shortage of manpower. In reply to audit observation four out of five districts stated (March 2012 to July 2012) that PMT could not monitor implementation of NFSM properly due to shortage of consultants and technical assistants.
- Yearly concurrent evaluation by the State department of Economics and Statistics was not assigned to the Department of Statistics and Programme Implementation, West Bengal.

The department accepted the audit observation and stated (November 2012) that the State Department of Economics and Statistics would be assigned concurrent evaluation.

2.2.13 Man Power

As per Paragraph 4.16 of the guideline, the PMTs of the State and the district will be assisted by consultants and technical assistants who shall be appointed on contractual basis for implementation of the mission programme.

Sanctioned strength vis-à-vis men in position of consultants/technical assistant in the State are shown in table below:

Table 2.2.11 : Sanctioned strength vis-à-vis men in position of Consultants/ Technical Assistant in the State as on July 2012.

(Figures in numbers)

Component	Sanctioned		Engaged		Vacant	
	Consultant	Technical Assistant	Consultant	Technical Assistant	Consultant	Technical Assistant
Rice	10	34	7	12	3	22
Wheat	6	18	1	2	5	16
Pulses	6	12	3	6	3	6
Total	22	64	11	20	11	44

(Source: Departmental records)

Scrutiny revealed that 11 posts of consultant and 44 posts of technical assistant remained vacant (July 2012). The scheme has been suffering adversely in areas of preparation, submission of report/returns, field visits and smooth running of FFS etc. due to shortage of consultant and technician. Urgency to fill up the vacant posts for smooth functioning was raised (December 2008 and February 2011) in departmental note and meeting. But the department did not take any further action in this regard.

Besides, 625 posts of Krishi Prajukti Sahayak (KPS) in the selected districts, who provide training in FFS and prepare list of beneficiaries in consultation with local Gram Panchayat, were not filled up till July 2012. Dissemination of technical knowledge to the farmers was, therefore, badly affected due to vacancy in KPS posts.

The department in reply (November 2012) stated that efforts had been taken to fill up vacancies at different levels.

2.2.14 Other points of interest

2.2.14.1 Undue assistance to the farmers

As per NFSM guidelines, financial assistance of ₹ 500 per hectare was to be provided for micronutrients. Deputy Director of Agriculture (Admn), Dinajpur (North) had procured micronutrients at a cost of ₹ 1.58 crore for use in 24456 hectare under the component wheat in 2009-10. Expenditure for supplying micronutrients to 24456 hectare should have been ₹ 1.22 crore as per guidelines (24456 X ₹ 500/hectare). DDA (Admn), Dinajpur (North) had spent ₹ 35.64 lakh⁶¹ in excess of the entitlement.

The department stated (November 2012) that the matter would be looked into and would be regularised in due course.

2.2.14.2 Irregular Purchases

West Bengal Financial Rule⁶² provides that open tenders shall invariably be invited for supply of articles or stores or for execution of works and services worth ₹ 20000 and or more. The department issued orders in December 2008 to procure all agricultural inputs from the WBSSC Ltd. If WBSSC Ltd. failed to supply the required inputs within the period stipulated by NFSM districts, the Principal Agriculture Officer (re-designated as Dy. Director of Agriculture, Admn.) may locally procure the required inputs observing existing financial rules.

Records of the selected districts revealed that Dinajpur (North) procured agricultural inputs of ₹ 3.74 crore during December 2008 to August 2009 from agencies other than WBSSC Ltd. without obtaining any tender/quotation.

The department accepted (November 2012) the audit observation and stated that the matter would be investigated and action would be taken accordingly.

2.2.14.3 Infructuous Expenditure

In order to provide irrigation water to the marginal farmers during cultivation of aman paddy 2009-10, DDA/Admn, Dinajpur (North) issued work orders to Jaber Engineering Works in September 2009 for sinking 500 Krishak Bandhu Paddle Pump at an estimated cost of ₹ 12.18 lakh with the stipulation to complete the work of sinking within three months from the date of issue of work order.

Records revealed that for installation of pumps the name of the beneficiary farmers was recommended on or after June 2010. These pumps were installed after expiry of sowing period of aman paddy (sowing period June to August 2009). DDA/Admn had so far paid (January 2012) ₹ 3.34 lakh for installation of 137 pump sets. Site visit of 31 Krishak Bandhu Paddle Pumps in three selected blocks under Dinajpur (North) block revealed that 14 pumps were lying defunct. The beneficiary farmers stated that capacity of the pump

⁶¹ ₹ 157.92 lakh minus ₹122.28 lakh.

⁶² Note below 47(11).

installed was insufficient to provide irrigation water for paddy and wheat cultivation. Therefore, they were utilising the remaining 17 pumps for other purposes. Thus, expenditure of ₹ 3.34 lakh on installation of 137 Krishak Bandhu Paddle Pumps had turned to be unfruitful.



Defunct paddle pump in Sarkar Para

Goalpokha-I Block, Dinajpur (North)

The department also stated that detailed investigation would be done and steps would be taken accordingly (November 2012).

2.2.15 Conclusion

Performance of National Food Security Mission in the State was not satisfactory as the objective of the scheme to produce additional quantity of rice, wheat and pulse by the end of March 2012 largely remained unachieved despite expenditure of ₹ 206.62 crores for this purpose. There was absence of perspective plan, base line survey and feasibility study, due to which the department could not assess the status of crop production, potential and demand in various districts. Due to non-functioning of District Seed Committee, purchase and distribution of high yield quality seed was adversely affected. The objectives of Demonstration Centres to disseminate improved practices were also not fulfilled due to non-receipt of seeds and other inputs in time, shortage of manpower, non-involvement of scientist from SAUs/KVKs in running Demonstration Centres and deficiency in monitoring. Further, the Farm Implements required for efficiency as well as economy in cultivation were neither demonstrated nor made available in time and at affordable price. The objective of the scheme was also marred due to its inadequate publicity amongst farmers as well as non preparation of priority list. Further, the monitoring was also affected as the Project Monitoring Team constituted for the purpose remained non functional due to lack of manpower.

2.2.16 Recommendations

- *The Department needs to prepare plans based on the requirement of the districts under NFSM. Beneficiary lists should be prepared category wise as per NFSM guidelines.*

- *Adequate publicity of NFSM programme among farmers needs to be ensured. Demonstration Centres should be manned properly, supervised with technical experts and interesting case studies recorded to create awareness about the improved practices.*
- *The department needs to evolve mechanism to make the farm implements affordable to the farmers. Agriculture inputs should be procured so that the same may reach the beneficiary farmers for application in specified crops in appropriate time.*
- *District Seed Committee needs to be made functional to enhance the productivity level and to assist purchase of quality seeds of high yielding varieties.*