

CHAPTER-I

SOCIAL SECTOR

1.1 Introduction

The findings based on audit of State Government units under Social Sector feature in this chapter.

During 2013-14, against the budget provision of ₹20,778.75 crore, total expenditure of ₹15,984.05 crore was incurred by 16 departments inclusive of Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) covered under Welfare of Plain Tribes and Backward Classes (WPT&BC) under Social Sector. Department-wise details of budget provision and expenditure incurred thereagainst are shown in *Appendix – 1.1*. Hill Areas department incurred expenditure of ₹1,188.53 crore (6.92 per cent of the total expenditure of Social Sector) during 2013-14 mainly for sixth schedule areas (NCHAC and KAAC) against budget provision of ₹ 1,563.73 crore (*Appendix – 1.2*) under the Sector.

Besides, the Central Government had transferred a sizeable amount of funds directly to the implementing agencies of the State Government for implementation of flagship programmes of the Central Government. During 2013-14, out of total major releases¹ of ₹14,685.03 crore, ₹7,787.00 crore were directly released to different implementing agencies under Social Sector. Details are shown in *Appendix – 1.3*.

1.1.1 Planning and conduct of Audit

Compliance audit is conducted in accordance with annual audit plan. The units are selected on the basis of risk assessment. Areas taken up are selected on the basis of topicality, financial significance, social relevance, internal control system of the units, occurrence of defalcation/misappropriation/embezzlement as well as findings of previous Audit Reports. Apart from the above parameters, all important departmental directorates and district level units are audited annually.

Inspection Reports are issued to the heads of unit as well as heads of departments after completion of audit. Based on the replies received, audit observations are either settled or further action for compliance is advised. Important audit findings are processed for inclusion in the Audit Report of C&AG of India.

The audits were conducted during 2013-14 involving expenditure of ₹12,284.03 crore (including expenditure of earlier years) of the State Government under Social Sector. This chapter contains two Performance Audit Reports and 21 Compliance Audit Paragraphs.

¹ Release worth ₹one crore and above.

The major observations detected in audit during the year 2013-14 are given below.

PERFORMANCE AUDIT

Public Health Engineering Department

1.2 Performance Audit of “Total Sanitation Campaign/Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan”

Government of India (GoI) launched the Central Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP) in 1986 with the objective of improving the quality of life of the rural people through proper sanitation facilities and also to provide privacy and dignity to women. CRSP was modified as ‘incentive based demand driven approach’ in 1999 and renamed as Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC), which was subsequently renamed (1 April 2012) as Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA) with the prime objective of accelerating the sanitation coverage with saturation approach. The performance audit of TSC/NBA covering period 2009-14 was carried out in selected districts, Gram Panchayats and Villages. Implementation of TSC/NBA revealed serious irregularities viz., deficiency in planning, improper fund management, inadequate awareness campaigning through Information Education Communication (IEC) activities, lack of monitoring, supervision and social audit. Besides, instances of idling of expenditure, fraudulent drawal, bogus construction and suspected misappropriation of funds were also noticed in Performance Audit. Some of the significant audit findings are as under:

Highlights

Baseline survey as required under the scheme to assess the status of hygienic practice among the rural people was conducted only once in 2012-13 during the last five years. Preliminary survey to define the scope of Baseline survey was not conducted.

(Paragraph 1.2.9.1)

State matching share of ₹68.27 crore for 2009-14 was not released to the implementing agencies till March 2014. Further, in five test checked districts, ₹8.72 crore was transferred from Central share by showing the same as State’s share during 2009-14.

(Paragraph 1.2.11.3)

During 2009-14, against the target of the construction of 5,90,538 BPL individual household latrines (IHHLs) in the five test checked districts, 3,27,782 IHHLs, could only be constructed leaving a shortfall of 2,62,756 IHHLs (44.49 per cent).

{Paragraph 1.2.12.1(ii)}

IEC activities to create general awareness for sanitation were not adequate to motivate the rural people for the benefits under the scheme.

(Paragraph 1.2.12.10)

Convergence with other programmes like MGNREGS etc., as required under the scheme was not done. As a result, 7,931 IHHLs had to be constructed with temporary bamboo made superstructure instead of brick wall structure.

(Paragraph 1.2.13)

Neither monitoring through field inspections was done nor any team of experts was constituted to review the implementation of TSC/NBA in the test checked districts.

(Paragraph 1.2.14)

1.2.1 Introduction

Central Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP) was launched by GoI in 1986 with the objective of improving the quality of life of the rural people through proper sanitation facilities. GoI modified the CRSP in 1999 by changing the high subsidy supply driven approach to incentive based demand driven approach and renamed the programme as Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC).

The revised approach emphasized the need to increase awareness among the rural people and to generate demand for sanitary facilities. Financial incentives were provided to Below Poverty Line (BPL) households for the construction and usage of individual household latrines (IHHL) in recognition of their achievements. Assistance was also extended for the construction of school toilet units, Anganwadi toilets and Community Sanitary Complexes (CSC) apart from undertaking activities under Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) under the scheme.

Meanwhile, GoI launched an award based Incentive Scheme called Nirmal Gram Puraskar (NGP) in October 2003 to give a fillip to the TSC. The NGP sought to reward the achievements made in ensuring full sanitation coverage. The NGP under the scheme is given to those Gram Panchayats, Blocks, and Districts which have become fully sanitized and open defecation free.

Encouraged by the success of NGP, the TSC was renamed as Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA) with effect from 1 April 2012. The objective was to accelerate the sanitation coverage in the rural areas so as to comprehensively cover the rural community through complementing the demand driven approach of TSC with saturation approach. NBA envisages covering the entire community for saturated outcomes with a view to create Nirmal Gram Panchayats.

The guidelines for implementation of NBA envisage a four tier implementation mechanism to be set up at the State/District/Block/Village level. Gram Panchayats

(GPs) were to play a pivotal role in the implementation of NBA. The programme was to be implemented by the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) at all levels including mobilisation for the construction of toilets.

The programme was being implemented through eight components of the scheme *viz.*, (i) start-up activities, (ii) Information, Education, Communication (IEC), (iii) alternate delivery mechanism (Rural Sanitary Mart/Production Centre), (iv) individual latrine for Below Poverty Line (BPL) households/families, (v) individual latrine for Above Poverty Line (APL) families, (vi) Community Sanitary Complex (CSC), (vii) institutional toilets including schools and Anganwadis; and (viii) Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM).

The implementation of TSC started initially in three districts² of Assam since February 2000 and was extended to all the districts by January 2008.

1.2.2 Objectives of TSC/NBA

Objectives of TSC/NBA are to:

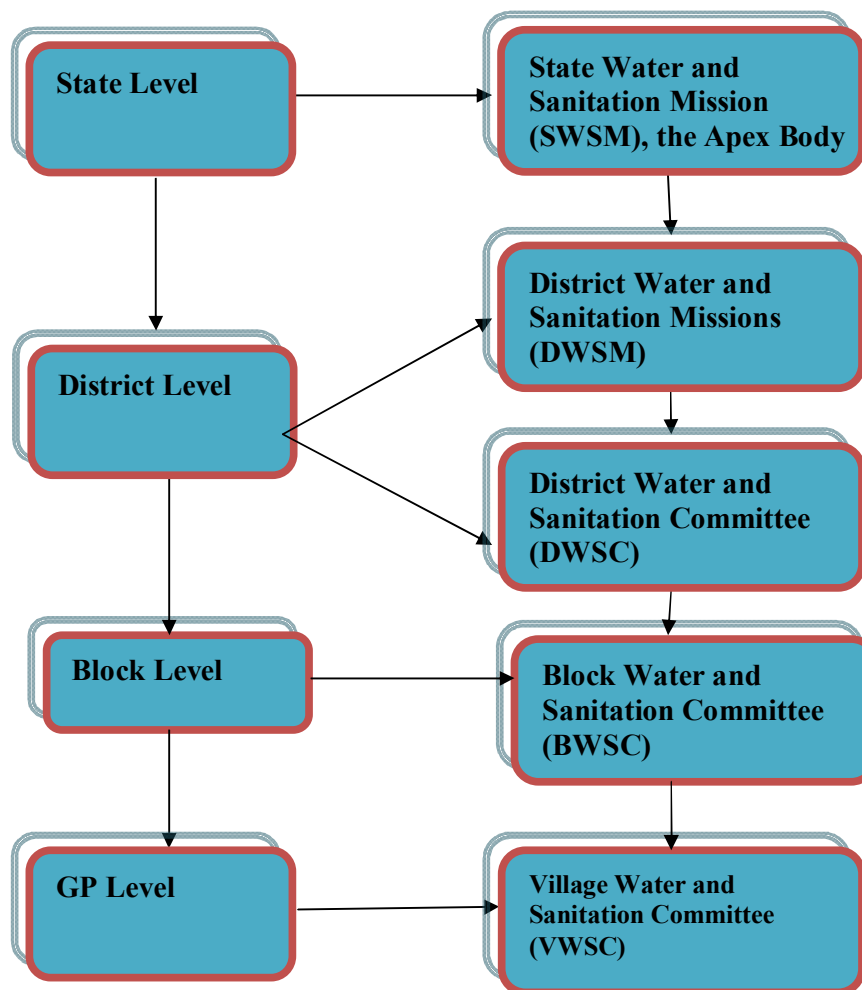
- bring about an improvement in the quality of life in rural areas;
- accelerate sanitation coverage in rural areas to achieve the vision of Nirmal Bharat by the year 2022 with all Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country attaining Nirmal status;
- motivate the communities and the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for promoting sustainable sanitation facilities through awareness and education;
- cover the remaining schools not covered under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) in the rural areas with proper sanitation facilities and to undertake proactive promotion of hygiene and sanitary habits among the students;
- encourage cost effective and appropriate technologies for ecologically safe and sustainable sanitation;
- develop community managed environmental sanitation systems focusing on solid and liquid waste management for the overall cleanliness in the rural areas.

1.2.3 Implementing Agencies (Organogram)

Public Health Engineering (PHE) is the nodal department for the implementation of TSC/NBA in Assam headed by Additional Chief Secretary. The Administrative set up for the implementation of TSC/NBA in the State is shown in Chart-1.

² Kamrup, Jorhat and Sonitpur

Chart 1: Organisational structure



Source: Departmental records.

1.2.4 Scope of Audit

The Performance audit of TSC/NBA was conducted during May-September 2014 covering the period 2009-14. The audit was carried out through detailed examination of records maintained in the offices of the Additional Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam (GoA), Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) ; Chief Engineer, PHE, State Water and Sanitation Mission (SWSM), five District Water and Sanitation Missions (DWSM) and 33 GPs/Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSCs) of five selected districts³. Besides conducting Joint physical verification in respect of the selected projects, interaction with beneficiaries and other stakeholders of the programme at grass root level was also done during the course of audit.

³Nagaon, Udalguri, Tinsukia, Nalbari and Goalpara.

1.2.5 Audit Methodology

The performance audit commenced with an entry conference, with the Deputy Secretary to the GoA, PHED and the Chief Engineer, PHE, held on 9 May 2014 wherein the audit objectives, scope and audit criteria were discussed and inputs of the departmental officers obtained. Five districts were selected based on Probability Proportional to Size Without Replacement (PPSWOR) method on the basis of the total approved project cost in each district. Records maintained at the Government, Chief Engineer, District, Block and GP levels were examined in details. Besides, responses to audit questionnaires issued at all level including the beneficiaries during survey were analyzed. Photographic evidence and physical verification were also taken into consideration to substantiate the audit observations. At the conclusion of audit, the findings were discussed in the exit conference held (3 November 2014) with the Commissioner and Secretary, PHED and the Chief Engineer, PHE and their replies have been taken into consideration at appropriate places in the Report.

1.2.6 Audit Objectives

The performance audit of the TSC/NBA was conducted to ascertain whether:

- i. the planning for the implementation of the scheme at different levels was adequate and effective towards achievement of the scheme objectives;
- ii. funds were released, accounted for and utilised by the State Government in compliance with the scheme guidelines;
- iii. the process of selection of beneficiaries was transparent and both the construction and upgradation of infrastructure created under the scheme was in compliance with the scheme guidelines;
- iv. the information, education and communication (IEC) strategy under the Scheme was effective in generating demand of TSC/NBA services through community mobilization;
- v. the convergence of the NBA activities with other programmes/stakeholders as envisaged was effectively achieved; and
- vi. the mechanism in place for monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes of the programme was adequate and effective.

1.2.7 Audit Criteria

The audit findings were benchmarked against the following sources of criteria:

- TSC guidelines 2007, 2010 and 2011 and NBA Guidelines 2012; notifications and circulars issued by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MoDWS), GoI;
- IEC guidelines 2010 issued by MoDWS;
- GoA orders relating to implementation of the TSC/NBA;
- Guidelines for engagement of *Swachhata Doot*;

- Guidelines for engagement of skilled and unskilled workers from MGNREGS;
- Guidelines for the *Nirmal Gram Puraskar*;
- Provisions of Financial Hand Books; and
- Physical and financial progress reported under Management Information System (MIS) available on the website of the Scheme (tsc.gov.in).

1.2.8 Acknowledgement

The Office of the Accountant General (Audit), Assam acknowledges the cooperation extended by the offices of the Additional Chief Secretary, GoA, PHED, the Chief Engineer, PHE and Water and Sanitation Mission at State/District and VWSCs during the course of Performance Audit.

1.2.9 Planning of the Implementation of the scheme

1.2.9.1 Preliminary Survey and Baseline Survey

As per guidelines of TSC/NBA, the start-up activities under the scheme include conducting preliminary survey to assess the status of sanitation and hygiene practices, people's attitude and demand for the improved sanitation etc., with the aim to prepare the district TSC project proposals for GoI assistance. The start-up activities also include conducting Baseline Survey (BLS), preparation of Project Implementation Plan (PIP), orientation and training of key personnel both at the district/GP level.

Examination of records revealed that since inception, no preliminary survey was conducted in Assam. During 2009-14, BLS was conducted only once in 2012-13. As a result, periodical review of the hygienic status and mid-term revision of plan as per periodical need remained unattended/unaddressed.

In reply, while accepting the audit observation, the GoA⁴ stated (November 2014) that the SWSM will take up the periodic review of hygienic status from 2014-15 onwards.

1.2.9.2 Project Implementation Plan (PIP)

The TSC/NBA is implemented in a district as a project. A PIP is prepared generally for 4-5 years for a district and is scrutinized by the State Government which transmits the same to the MoDWS, GoI for approval.

Examination of records of five test checked districts revealed that PIP at district level was prepared without initiating proposal from GP and Block level. Thus, the district PIP lacked area specific plan. As a result, bottom up approach *i.e.*, GP-wise target and saturation approach for attaining *Nirmal* status was not ensured.

⁴ Government of Assam.

PIP at the State level was not prepared/consolidated as of September 2014. On this being pointed out, the Government stated (November 2014) that Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) was prepared at State level for successful implementation of the plan.

However, in the absence of State PIP, there was no long term target set at State level to achieve the ultimate goal of Nirmal Bharat by 2022.

(a) Examination of records revealed that in three (Tinsukia, Goalpara and Nagaon) out of five test checked districts, implementation of TSC was started between 2002 and 2005 through preparation of PIP based on BLS. These PIPs were revised (2007) in consonance with the National target of "Sanitation for all by 2012", which was subsequently approved (2007) by National Scheme Sanctioning Committee (NSSC). While approving the revised PIP, the target for BPL IHHLs fixed as per BLS were reduced by 21 to 29 per cent compared to the figures in the original PIP by the NSSC. Detailed position is shown in the Table 1.1.

Table 1.1

Name of the project district	No. of BPL household without latrine as per original BLS	As per original PIP		As per revised PIP		Shortfall in revised target as per BLS	
		Year of sanction	Target for IHHL	Year of revision	Target for IHHL	In number (2-6)	In per cent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Tinsukia	92041	2005	92041	2007	68774	23367	25
Goalpara	82156	2002	23040	2007	65070	17086	21
Nagaon	237632	2004	237632	2007	168391	69241	29

Source: Departmental record.

On this being pointed out, the Executive Director (ED), SWSM stated (September 2014) that reduced targets were as per P&RD BPL list. Thus, the final target set under the PIP was not commensurate with what actually mapped through BLS.

(b) As per guidelines of TSC/NBA, PIP needed to be revised due to change in funding norms and BLS should be conducted to assess the exact requirement for different categories of hardware⁵ which may undergo change from time to time. Scrutiny revealed that during 2009-14, financial norms were changed thrice. However, except in the year 2012-13, revision of PIP as required was not carried out in all the test checked districts. Thus, requirement for different categories of hardware remained unascertained.

(c) As per NBA guidelines 2012, incentives were also required to be extended to specified categories⁶ of APL households. Cross check of the revised (2012-13) PIP⁷ along with the compiled BLS (2012-13) in respect of the test checked districts, however, revealed that targets set in the PIPs were also not based on the

⁵ Individual Household Latrine, Institutional toilets, Community Sanitary Complex etc.

⁶ SC/ST, small and marginal farmer, physically handicapped, women headed family etc.

⁷ Revised in 2012-13 but not yet approved by NSSC.

actual needs as assessed through BLS. According to BLS, large number of households (both APL and BPL categories) did not have access to proper toilets and they were either resorting to open defecation or using defunct toilets. Many households were using kutcha toilets as well. The targets projected in the PIPs were found to be deficient to the extent of 13.87 to 35.81 *per cent* than the requirement as per BLS as shown in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2

Name of the project district	IHHL to be constructed as per revised PIP 2013 based on BLS 2012-13			Requirement of proper toilet as per BLS 2012-13			Less projection in target	
	BPL	APL	Total	Using open defecation	Using kutcha toilet	Total requirement	In number	In per cent
							8 = (7-4)	9=(8/7x100)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 = (7-4)	9=(8/7x100)
Nagaon	23421	203083	226504	44091	231843	275934	49430	17.91
Goalpara	18567	92053	110620	28203	112904	141107	30487	21.61
Tinsukia	15264	111026	126290	10173	136446	146619	20329	13.87
Udalguri	1030	94745	95775	73252	47429	120681	24906	20.64
Nalbari	5863	63721	69584	21470	86933	108403	38819	35.81

Source: Departmental records.

From the above table it would be seen that a large number of households without toilets was not included in the plan for the construction of IHHL. The PIP thus prepared could not provide the benefits of sanitation for all.

1.2.9.3 Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)

As per NBA guidelines 2012, AIP should be prepared by identifying GPs to be covered in full for attaining the project objectives (Nirmal Grams). Then GP plans would require to be consolidated into Block Implementation Plans and further into District Implementation Plan (DIP). The SWSM has to suitably consolidate the DIPs as the State Implementation Plan.

Analysis of record revealed that the AIPs were prepared for all the five years in Nagaon and Goalpara districts. It was prepared for one, two and three years respectively in Udalguri (2012-13), Nalbari (2009-10 and 2010-11) and Tinsukia (2009-10 to 2011-12) districts during the period covered in audit. AIP at GP and Block levels was however, not prepared at all in any of the selected districts. As a result, bottoms up approach *i.e.*, GP-wise target and saturation approach for attaining *Nirmal* status was not ensured.

The GoA in reply stated (November 2014) that as it was a district project, it was presumed that the DWSCs would have prepared the District AIPs duly taking into consideration of GP and Block level AIPs.

The reply was not tenable as the responsibility to oversee the proper implementation of the programme rests with the SWSM.

As per guidelines of NBA, State AIP should *inter-alia* contain progress of previous year indicating the reasons for variation in achievement, monthly/quarterly targets, best practices, innovations introduced, new technologies etc.

Examination of records revealed that though AIP contained progress⁸ of previous year, reasons for huge shortfall in achievements were not recorded. Further, though the quarterly target was fixed in the AIP but there was no monthly target set by the State.

1.2.10 Implementation structure

1.2.10.1 Meetings

(i) As per guidelines, SWSM should meet at least twice a year and minutes of meeting should be documented. Scrutiny of records revealed that as against two meetings per year, SWSM met once a year in 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2013-14 whereas in the year 2012-13, it did not hold even a single meeting.

(ii) As per the guidelines, DWSM is required to meet once in every quarter *i.e.*, four times in a year. Year-wise position of DWSM meeting in five test checked districts is shown in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3

Year	Number of meetings to be held at district level	Number of meetings held				
		Tinsukia	Goalpara	Nagaon	Udalguri	Nalbari
2009-10	4	1	Nil	1	Nil	Nil
2010-11	4	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	1
1011-12	4	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	1
2012-13	4	Nil	1	Nil	Nil	1
2013-14	4	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Source: Departmental record.

Thus, due to not holding requisite number of meetings, progress of implementation, analysis of reasons for shortfall, strategy for betterment etc., could not be discussed as contemplated for successful implementation of the programme.

On this being pointed out in audit, the GoA in reply stated (November 2014) to have noted the audit comments for future guidance.

1.2.10.2 Block Resource Centres

As envisaged in the guidelines, Block Resource Centres (BRC) is to be set up to provide continuous support in terms of awareness generation, motivation, mobilisation, training of village communities, GPs and Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC). The BRC was to serve as an extended delivery arm of the DWSM in terms of software support and act as a link between DWSM and the GPs/VWSCs/village communities.

⁸ Progress of IHHL BPL 1,53,867 against the target of 5,03,109 *i.e.*, 30.58 per cent during 2012-13.

Examination of records, however, revealed that BRC was not set up in any of the test checked districts. In the absence of BRC, there was no link between DWSM and GPs, thus hampering awareness generation, motivation and mobilisation regarding various aspects of sanitation amongst the village communities.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that considering the audit observation, now onwards one fixed place will suitably be finalized in each block as a meeting point for BRCCs⁹ and CRCCs¹⁰ to address the issues relating to the implementation of the scheme.

1.2.10.3 Water and Sanitation Support Organization (WSSO)

According to the guidelines, State should set up WSSO under SWSM to deal with IEC, HRD and Monitoring and Evaluation at the State level. Communication strategy for the State should be planned by the WSSO and should be regularly monitored for effective implementation of the scheme. During the course of audit, it was noticed that WSSO was set up in April 2010 in Assam, but no training on TSC/NBA was conducted by WSSO since its inception till 2012-13. IEC activities and Monitoring Evaluation also had not been taken up by the WSSO during the period.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that the training on IEC of TSC/NBA was conducted by WSSO on several occasions during the period. The document attached alongwith the reply, however, revealed that two training programmes¹¹ were organised only during 2013-14.

1.2.10.4 Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC)

(i) Examination of records revealed that in Assam, though VWSCs were formed, no GP level specific personnel were found engaged in any of the test checked districts. Consequently, GP level activities like holding of Gram Sabha, preparation of GP-wise identified list of beneficiaries both for BPL and APL etc., could not be done. Besides, there was absence of linkage with GPs.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that PHED functionaries were carrying out the work of TSC/NBA at GP level which corroborated the audit observation that GP level specific personnel were not engaged in carrying out the GP level activities.

(ii) Analysis of records revealed that adequate staffs were not provided to the implementing agencies viz., VWSC, DWSC and SWSM. It was seen that VWSCs had been working with only one JE/AE acting as Member Secretary. Staff and

⁹ Block Resource Centres Coordinators.

¹⁰ Cluster Resource Centres Coordinators.

¹¹ (i) one day training for 75 elected representatives for Panchayats of only one (Kamrup) district organized (30 August 2013) by State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) in collaboration with WSSO and (ii) one training programme for 935 VWSC members organised by WSSO during 20 November 2013 to 10 January 2014.

officers of the office of Chief Engineer, PHE (B&S¹²) were engaged in the activities of SWSM without having any dedicated staff strength for the implementation of TSC/NBA in their jurisdiction. At the district level, though staffs were engaged on contractual basis, the same were not adequate enough to meet the requirement as detailed in *Appendix - 1.4*. Training to persons engaged for developing their skill and expertise was also found to be inadequate (*Appendix - 1.4*). During 2009-14, the department could train only three personnel only in 2013-14.

The GoA in reply stated (November 2014) that there was no provision for engagement of staff for implementation of NBA at State Level. However, the reply was silent about the shortage of deployment of staff at district level and about the inadequacy in conducting training programmes.

1.2.11 Financial Management

Under TSC/NBA, GoI funds are released to SWSM, which, in turn, has to operate a single savings bank account through which State Government funds are routed for all transactions relating to TSC/NBA including Central share, State share, beneficiary share or any other receipt. Up to 2010-11, as per TSC guidelines, 2007 and 2010, funds were to be released to SWSMs in four installments in the ratio 30:30:30:10. Subsequently, as per TSC guidelines 2011 and NBA guidelines 2012, the funds were to be released in two equal installments. The State was to release the Central grants received along with the matching State share to the District implementing agencies within 15 days of receipt of Central grants. The District Implementing Agencies were required to transfer the funds for the works to the VWSCs within 15 days of receipt of funds. The following deficiencies in financial management were noticed:

1.2.11.1 Release and expenditure of fund under TSC/NBA

TSC projects at a total estimated cost of ₹928.15 crore were approved by GoI between February 2000 and January 2008 for all the districts in Assam. Out of ₹928.15 crore, ₹715.62 crore was released to the State, of which, only ₹652.19 crore (70 per cent) could be spent till 31 March 2014 as detailed in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4 (₹ in lakh)

Description	Central	State	Beneficiary contribution	Total
Total project outlay approved by GoI	65248.07	20582.96	6983.77	92,814.80
Funds Released	55619.73	11684.66	4257.68	71,562.07
Expenditure	50367.00	10865.38	3986.52	65,218.90

Source: Data available in the website.

Year-wise funds available and expenditure incurred thereagainst by the State during 2009-14 are shown in Table 1.5.

¹² Barak valley and sixth scheduled area.

Table 1.5

(*₹ in lakh*)

Year	Unspent balance of previous year	Release during the year	Funds available	Expenditure during the year	Closing balance at the end of the year	CB as a percentage of funds available
2009-10	10,325.40	11,792.70	22,118.10	13,345.28	8,772.82	39.66
2010-11	8,772.82	13,379.70	22,152.52	10,161.66	11,990.86	54.13
2011-12	11,990.86	14,429.43	26,420.29	14,640.73	11,779.56	44.59
2012-13	11,779.56	13,733.09	25,512.65	11,487.04	14,025.61	54.98
2013-14	14,025.61	6,250.29	20,275.90	7,966.43	12,309.47	60.71

Source: Departmental (CE, PHE) information.

From the table, it would be seen that during 2009-14, funds available under the scheme could not be utilized to the extent of 39.66 and 60.71 per cent in the corresponding year by the State Government.

Further, funds available and expenditure incurred by the selected districts during 2009-14 indicated that there were unspent balances ranged between 9.80 and 28.14 per cent as shown in Table 1.6.

Table 1.6

Funds available and expenditure incurred by the selected districts during 2009-14

(*₹ in lakh*)

District/Project	Year	Total funds available during the year			Expenditure	Closing balance	Closing balance in percentage
		Opening balance	Fund received	Total			
Tinsukia	2009-14	62.22	1937.83	2000.05	1718.44	281.61	14.08
Goalpara	2009-14	75.93	2152.10	2228.03	1943.90	284.13	12.75
Nagaon	2009-14	454.36	5463.67	5918.03	5338.28	579.75	9.80
Udlaguri	2009-14	320.39	2677.20	2997.59	2404.69	592.90	19.78
Nalbari	2009-14	299.28	2310.02	2609.30	1875.01	734.29	28.14

Source: Departmental records.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that the districts were instructed to expedite both physical and financial progress by utilizing the available funds optimally.

1.2.11.2 Delay in release of central share

Analysis of records revealed that except in one case of timely release, in all other cases, release of funds was delayed ranging from 2 to 208 days.

Besides, during 2012-14, SWSM retained ₹5,472.76 lakh of central share as shown in the Table 1.7 for which no reason was recorded.

Table 1.7

(*₹ in lakh*)

Receipt from GoI		Released to DWSC		Retained by SWSM
Date of receipt	Amount	Release date	Amount	
29.03.2013	9,171.10	17.05.2013	7,104.72	2,066.38
31.12.2013	2,571.26	Not yet released	0.00	2,571.26
01.03.2014	835.12	-do-	0.00	835.12
Total				5,472.76

Source: Departmental records.

The delayed release of funds not only delayed implementation of the scheme but also would have impact (in terms of delay) in attaining Nirmal status by 2022 in the State.

While accepting the audit observation, the GoA stated (November 2014) that mechanism had since been finalized by them to avoid delay in release of central share from the SWSM to DWSC.

1.2.11.3 Non-release of state share

As per the scheme guidelines, the State needs to contribute its matching share under different components of the programme. Scrutiny of records, however, revealed that the State did not release its matching share of ₹6,826.89 lakh for the period 2009-14 as of March 2014.

Besides, Central share of ₹400.84 lakh was released to districts as State share during 2011-12 and was yet to be recouped (August 2014). Thus, the State was lagging behind in releasing its matching share as well as failed to release the central share within the stipulated time frame.

The records of five test checked districts revealed that a total amount of ₹872.11 lakh was transferred from Central share showing as State's share during 2009-14 as shown in Table 1.8.

Table 1.8

Name of district	Transfer of fund from Central share to State share	
	Year	Amount (₹ in lakh)
Nalbari	2011-12	10.53
	2013-14	46.20
Udalguri	2011-12	72.21
	2012-13	79.81
Goalpara	2011-12	12.47
	2012-13	92.08
Nagaon	2011-12	162.37
	2012-13	273.75
Tinsukia	2009-10	21.63
	2013-14	101.06
Total		872.11

Source: Departmental records.

The transfer of fund was made as per the decision taken at district level without taking approval from higher authorities and the same could not be adjusted till August 2014 due to non-receipt of matching share from the State.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that due to fund constraint, proportionate State share could not be released. The reply was not tenable as GoA did not make any specific provision for the TSC/NBA in the budget of respective years.

1.2.11.4 Non-transfer of fund to VWSC and delay in transfer by DWSC

As per guidelines, DWSC is required to transfer funds within 15 days of its receipt to the GP/VWSC for the implementation of the programme at grass roots level. Scrutiny of records revealed that in Udalguri district, DWSC made delayed transfer of fund to

VWSCs ranging from 1 to 349 days during the period September 2009 to March 2013.

In other four test checked districts, DWSCs released funds to VWSCs only on receipt of bills from VWSCs after completion of work. As a result, VWSCs were not aware of the availability of the funds allocated to it. As such, GP-wise target could not be set and GP plans were not prepared which ultimately affected the saturation approach at GP level. This also resulted in accumulation of unspent balances with the DWSCs besides denying decentralized approach.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that DWSCs were being instructed regularly to release funds to VWSCs and to ensure decentralized approach in implementation of the scheme. The fact however, remained that delayed release of funds to VWSCs had adversely affected implementation of TSC/NBA in the State.

1.2.11.5 Component-wise allocation not done

While releasing funds from GoI to the State, from the State to districts and onwards, component-wise¹³ allocation was not made at any level. As a result, component-wise financial targets were not set, which resulted in shortfall in financial progress and accumulation of unspent balances. As of March 2014, a total unspent balance of ₹123.09 crore (Table 1.5 refers) was lying with SWSM and DWSCs including Central share, State share and beneficiaries' share which had impacted the achievement of the intended objectives of the implementation of the scheme.

On this being pointed out, the GoA stated that district-wise fund allocation for a year was calculated based on the approved AIP covering all the components and district should utilize the released funds for all the components as per approved AIP.

The fact however, remained that component-wise allocation of funds was not made. As a result, component-wise financial targets were not set, which led to shortfall both in financial and physical progress and accumulation of unspent balances.

1.2.11.6 Diversion of fund

As per guidelines, funds released under NBA should not be spent for other purposes. Scrutiny of records, however, revealed that during 2011-14 in Nagaon district, ₹9.57 lakh was spent out of TSC/NBA fund for inadmissible purposes such as hiring of vehicles for law and order duty, Army duty, relief works, eviction duty, election related works etc., by the Deputy Commissioner, Nagaon.

¹³ Start up activities, IEC, capacity building, IHHL, revolving fund, community sanitary complex, school toilet, Anganwadi toilets, solid and liquid waste management and administrative charges.

The GoA in reply stated (November 2014) that a report on the diversion of funds will be submitted after examining the details of expenditure on its receipt from DWSC, Nagaon.

1.2.11.7 Idle expenditure on hoardings

Scrutiny revealed that 177 hoardings were installed during September 2013 to March 2014 in four test checked districts (except Udalguri) at a cost of ₹106.77 lakh by SWSM under IEC activities. While verifying (June-August 2014) the status of those hoardings, it was noticed that the same had been removed (March 2014) by district administration due to imposition of -Code of Conduct for Lok Sabha Poll - 2014 and were lying idle (August 2014) in stock. Position is detailed in Table 1.9.

Table 1.9

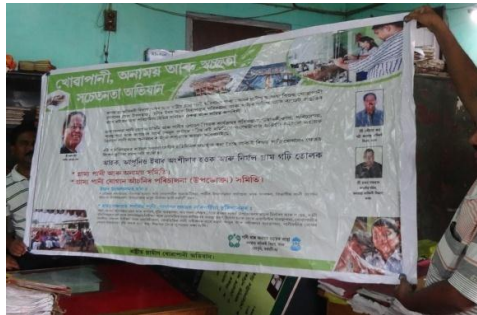
(In ₹)

Sl. No.	Name of the district	Number of hoardings supplied	Date of installation	Expenditure incurred	Present status of the hoardings
1	Tinsukia	30	March 2014	17,39,002	Dismantled due to imposition of code of conduct for Lok Sabha Poll 2014.
2	Goalpara	25	January 2014	14,49,168	-do-
3	Nagaon	92	September 2013 to January 2014	57,49,957	-do-
4	Nalbari	30	February 2014	17,39,002	-do-
Total		177		1,06,77,129	

Source: Departmental records.

The district authorities could have installed the hoardings after Election for meeting the intended objective instead of keeping them in the inventory.

During 2012-13 and 2013-14, GoA sanctioned ₹358.17 lakh for IEC activities, of which, ₹341.89 lakh was spent by SWSM for supplying and installation of hoardings during 2013-14 to all the districts of Assam. Status of installation of hoardings in the districts (except the five test checked districts) was not furnished by the SWSM, though called for.



Hoardings lying idle in Goalpara (17 July 2014)

The GoA stated (November 2014) that the DWSCs were instructed to submit the report regarding reinstallation of the hoarding after election which was awaited from the DWSCs.

1.2.11.8 Idle expenditure on material

In the test-checked districts, hardware material *viz.*, 20ö OT PAN, Siphon, 110 mm dia PVC Pipe, 110 mm PVC end Cap, 110 mm dia Plain Y and Solvent were procured at a cost of ₹331.37 lakh and supplied (December 2013 to May 2014) by SWSM for the construction of toilets under TSC/NBA. It was, however, noticed that the items were supplied by SWSM without any demand from the districts. As a result, the hardwares amounting to ₹331.37 lakh remained idle in stock as detailed in *Appendix -1.5*.



*PVC pipe Goalpara lying in open air
(18 July 2014)*



*PVC pipe lying idle in Tinsukia
(24 June 2014)*

The GoA in November 2014 stated that the idle stock of material will be utilized to achieve the target of 2014-15. The reply was not acceptable as the material were procured/supplied without assessing the actual requirement, which led to blocking of funds.

1.2.11.9 Revolving Fund

Provision for creation of Revolving Fund was kept in the scheme guidelines for (i) providing cheap finance to Cooperative Societies/SHGs/NGOs etc., (ii) opening Rural Sanitary Mart (RSM) and Production Centre (PC)¹⁴, (iii) covering APL households not entitled for incentives and landlords of AWCs in case operating from private building etc. Five *per cent* of the district project outlay subject to a maximum of ₹50 lakh¹⁵ was to be earmarked for Revolving Fund under the scheme. Further, loans from this fund were required to be recovered in 12-18 installments.

Examination however revealed that in the five test checked districts, Revolving Funds were not provided as required under the scheme. In Udalguri, Nalbari and Goalpara districts, altogether 412 AWCs operating from private buildings were found to be

¹⁴RSM/PC is an outlet dealing with materials, hardware, design required for the construction of sanitary latrine to be operated by SHG/NGO.

¹⁵The ceiling was ₹35 lakh under 2007 guidelines which was increased to ₹50 lakh under 2010 guidelines.

without baby friendly toilets. In none of the centres of the three districts, baby friendly toilets were constructed. Thus, sanitation with toilet facilities in these AWCs was denied. Further, there was no instance of providing loan to any APL household noticed in audit.

Loan of ₹12.75 lakh paid to eight Self Help Groups (SHGs)/Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in Tinsukia district during 2006-09 for opening of RSM/PC remained unrecovered though the RSM/PC became defunct since 2008-09. Similarly, in Goalpara district, ₹8.43 lakh remained unrecovered since 2004-05 from the defunct (since 2007-08) RSM/PC. In Udalguri district, one NGO was paid ₹2.50 lakh during 2009-11 for the construction of building to set up RSM but the NGO became defunct and the amount remained unrecovered. Thus, due to inaction on the part of DWSCs the loan amounting to ₹23.68 Lakh (₹12.75 lakh + ₹8.43 lakh + ₹2.50 lakh) remained unrecovered. Besides, the objective of creating Revolving Fund remained largely unachieved.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that Revolving fund was not utilized as recovery of loan from the households was a great problem. The fact however remained that non-utilisation of revolving fund, thus frustrated the very objective of creation of the fund. However, districts were instructed to recover the loan provided to the NGOs for running of RSM.

1.2.11.10 Non-release of funds

During audit, it came to notice that ₹188.45 lakh released to Bongaigaon district in September 2006 was fraudulently drawn, details of which were not produced to Audit, though called for. In reply to an Audit query, the Department stated that the case was investigated by CBI who advised (February 2011) to file a Civil Suit against the accused persons for the recovery of the amount. It was, however, noticed that till May 2014, Civil Suit had not been filed by the department for want of permission of Government of Assam (Home Department) despite being approached by SWSM and Bongaigaon DWSM. It was seen that consequent upon the fraudulent drawal in 2006, funds had not been released to Bongaigaon district since 2006-07 by the Government of India under the scheme.

The GoA in November 2014 stated that the Government had issued (June 2014) order to DWSC, Bongaigaon to file the Civil suit against the accused person and simultaneously, funds were also released to DWSC, Bongaigaon for implementation of the programme.

The fact however remained that for a long period of more than seven years (since 2006-07), the amount remained unrecovered due to slackness on the part of Government to initiate effective and prompt action for the recovery from the accused.

Resultantly, beneficiaries of the district were deprived of the intended benefit during 2006-07 to 2013-14 under TSC programme due to non-release of funds.

1.2.12 Project Implementation

1.2.12.1 Individual Household Latrine (IHHL)

One of the main objectives of TSC was to cover all rural families with sanitary latrines by 2012, which was subsequently extended to 2017. Again after introduction of NBA in 2012, the target was further extended to 2022. The NBA guidelines further stipulate that sanitation coverage in rural areas need to be accelerated to achieve the vision of Nirmal Bharat by 2022 with all GPs in the country attaining *Nirmal* status.

(i) SWSM had fixed a project target of constructing 22,20,017 and 11,61,020 (prior to revision of PIP in 2013) IHHLs in respect of BPL and APL families respectively, against which 18,07,515 and 4,73,507 IHHLs were constructed in the State upto March 2014. Thus, there was a shortfall of 4,12,502 (18.58 per cent) and 6,87,513 (59.22 per cent) IHHLs in respect of BPL and APL families respectively.

Further, incentive to specified categories of APL was extended in the NBA guidelines, but in Assam, no incentive was paid to APL households till March 2014 as construction of IHHL at APL households was not done.

(ii) Audit of records of five test checked districts revealed that during 2009-14, against the target of 590538 BPL IHHLs, 327782 IHHLs could only be constructed after incurring an expenditure of ₹11,023.06 lakh leaving a shortfall of 262756 IHHLs (44.49 per cent) as detailed in Table 1.10.

Table 1.10
Position of shortfall of achievement of IHHL (₹ in lakh)

Name of the component	IHHL-BPL				
	Physical Target	Physical Achievement	Shortfall (In Number)	Shortfall (In per cent)	Expenditure Incurred
Goalpara	88579	53391	35188	39.72	1596.02
Tinsukia	99954	48541	51413	51.44	942.58
Udalguri	125000	51126	73874	59.10	1950.79
Nalbari	79232	28054	51178	64.59	1707.79
Nagaon	197773	146670	51103	25.84	4825.88
Total	590538	327782	262756	44.49	11023.06

Source: Departmental record.

The reasons for shortfall in achieving the target were not found on record. The GoA in reply stated (November 2014) that it had planned to achieve the target of construction of IHHL during 2014-15.

The fact however remained that despite availability of fund (Table 1.6 refers), the targets could not be achieved which indicated inefficiency on the part of the DWSCs in execution of the programme as planned in the selected districts.

1.2.12.2 Non-involvement of beneficiary in construction of toilets

As per guidelines, beneficiaries should be involved in the construction of IHHL and after completion of construction; incentive would be released to them. Provisions for making available the sufficient funds under IEC campaign, door to door survey, inter-personal motivation etc., were made in the guidelines to generate the demand for sanitation amongst the people. But during the course of audit in the test checked districts it was seen that the construction of BPL IHHLs was done by SHGs/NGOs in contravention of schematic guidelines without involving beneficiaries. After construction, IHHLs were handed over to the beneficiaries and the incentive was released to SHGs/NGOs instead of beneficiary. In response to an audit query, SHGs/NGOs stated (June to August 2014) that most of the beneficiaries were not willing to pay their share and rarely agree to put labour as intended in the scheme. Hence, beneficiaries' share was deposited by SHGs/NGOs into VWSC's account and the same was deducted from the incentives meant for beneficiaries on receipt of the bill amount. No action was found to have been taken either by the DWSC or SWSM to ensure that beneficiaries share deposited by SHGs/NGOs was actually collected from the beneficiaries or deposited by the SHGs/NGOs in these cases.

As per the drawing and design, toilets were to be constructed with low cost superstructure. However, beneficiary survey/physical verification of 330 IHHLs constructed during 2009-14 revealed that 41 toilets (12.42 *per cent*) were without superstructure, 22 toilets (6.66 *per cent*) in defunct condition and existence of seven toilets¹⁶ (2.12 *per cent*) including beneficiaries were not traceable. This also indicated lack of proper monitoring and inspection by the DWSC in implementation of the scheme.

Scrutiny also revealed that out of the 323 IHHLs physically verified, 10 were found without own source of water, 13 were having water supply facility, three were collecting water from ponds and rest 297 were meeting the requirement of water from Ring Well/Hand Tube Well/Hand Pump/ponds.

Further, of these, 13 beneficiaries were to collect water from the distance of 300 to 500 meters whereas two beneficiaries had to travel one Kilometer distance for the collection of water. Thus, all the households could not be provided with the basic requirement of water facility.

¹⁶ i) NH Pramanik, ii) Sajibuddin under Jaleswar GP in Goalpara district; iii) Atar Ali, iv) Samsun Nessa, v) Joinuddin under Choudhury Bazar GP in Nagaon district; vi) Thumfa Basumatary under Dhansiri VCDC in Udalguri and vii) Narayan Deb Nath under Chataibari GP in Nalbari District.

As per the guidelines, households were to be trained for the maintenance and use of toilets constructed under TSC. But during physical verification, 11 toilets (3 per cent) were found to be unhygienic¹⁷ and 65 households (20 per cent) were resorting to open defecation despite having toilets constructed under TSC indicating lack of awareness amongst people for their maintenance and use.



Toilet without superstructure at Rongpuria GP, Tinsukia (26 August 2014)



Toilet without sub-structure at Gakhirvety GP, Tinsukia (27 August 2014)



Defunct toilet at Bheluguri GP, Nagaon (8 August 2014)



Incomplete toilet without pit at Hatbor GP, Nagaon (6 August 2014)



A toilet without door at Pub Bahjani GP, Nalbari (6 September 2014)



A complete toilet at 4 No. Khata GP, Nalbari (5 September 2014)

On this being pointed out in audit, the GoA stated (November 2014) that the audit observation had been noted by them for taking necessary corrective measures.

1.2.12.3 Over-projection of achievement

(i) In the test checked Tinsukia, Goalpara, Nagaon, Nalbari and Udalguri districts construction of 27,594; 9,033; 12,336; 20,840 and 13,584 IHHLs respectively by APL households were shown to have been done during 2009-14 through motivation. But during audit, list of identified APL as well as those already covered APL beneficiaries for the said IHHLs could not be produced in any of the test checked districts. Besides, motivators were not found engaged in Tinsukia, Goalpara and Nagaon district. Though 710 ASHA workers were engaged as motivators in

¹⁷ Overflowing toilet pan.

Nalbari district during 2010-11, they could not motivate any household for the construction of toilet. Thus, in the absence of the list of beneficiaries and motivators, the reported coverage of the construction of IHHLs was doubtful. However, in Udalguri district, 23 Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers were engaged as motivator and 8,696 IHHLs were constructed during 2010-12. A sum of ₹43,480 was paid to the motivators as incentive money for motivating the beneficiaries.

(ii) In three¹⁸ out of five test checked districts, construction of 1,53,058 BPL IHHLs during 2009-14 was reported as per progress report whereas as per annual accounts the same was shown as 1,32,077, thus, resulting in over projection of 20,981 BPL IHHLs (14 per cent) in Progress Report as detailed in Table 1.11.

Table 1.11

Position of over projection of IHHL-BPL during the period from 2009-14

Name of the District	IHHL as per Progress Report	IHHL as per Annual Account	Over Projection	Over projection (in per cent)	Remarks
Goalpara	53391	41688	11703	22	Expenditure incurred in terms of figure exhibited in the Annual accounts
Udalguri	51126	48866	2260	4	
Tinsukia	48541	41523	7018	14	
Total	1,53,058	1,32,077	20,981	14	

Source: Departmental records.

The over projection of IHHL occurred due to non-reconciliation of relevant figures exhibited in progress report with that of annual accounts.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that the issue will be taken up with the respective DWSCs for reconciliation of the discrepancy pointed out by audit.

1.2.12.4 School toilet

In the test checked districts, after conducting BLS in 2012-13, 8,360 school toilets in 3,364 schools were identified for their construction. However, construction work of the school toilets was not taken up due to non-fixing targets during 2012-14. The position as of August 2014 is detailed in Table 1.12.

Table 1.12

Name of the District	Number of School Toilet required to be constructed as per BLS & PIP 2012-13		Achievement
	Number of School	Number of toilets	
Nalbari	296	1680	Nil
Udalguri	215	1961	
Goalpara	246	1353	
Tinsukia	912	912	
Nagaon	1695	2454	
Total	3,364	8,360	

Source: Departmental records.

¹⁸ Goalpara, Udalguri and Tinsukia.

As a result, the target for the construction of school toilets could not be taken up and therefore, the objective on promotion of hygiene education and sanitation habits among students was defeated.

1.2.12.5 Anganwadi toilets

As per BLS conducted during 2012-13, a total of 2,833 baby friendly toilets were needed to be constructed in 2,833 AWCs in the test checked districts. Examination of records however revealed that no baby friendly toilet was constructed as of March 2014.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that Anganwadi toilet could not be constructed in the private buildings where AWCs were running. The reply was not acceptable as according to the scheme guidelines, loan could be provided to the landlords of private building for the purpose of construction of toilets in such buildings.

1.2.12.6 Suspected misappropriation

It was noticed in audit that the toilets in AWC and school were constructed by engaging SHGs/NGOs as was done in case of individual beneficiaries. Cross verification (June ó August 2014) of records in three test checked districts with reference to information collected from Education and Social Welfare Departments, GoA revealed that 10 school toilets and 350 toilets in AWCs involving ₹25.41 lakh were not at all constructed though the same were shown to have been constructed under TSC. Details are shown in Table 1.13.

Table 1.13

(₹ in lakh)

Name of district	Number of blocks involved	Component	Expenditure shown as incurred for construction of toilets in High school/AWC			Nos. of High school/AWC where toilets were actually constructed			Difference		
			Number of School/AWC	Number of unit	Expenditure Incurred	Number of School/AWC	Number of unit	Actual expenditure	Number of School/AWC	Number of unit	Amount
Tinsukia	NA	School Toilet	9	18	2.27	7	8	0.96	2	10	1.31
Goalpara	5	AWC toilet	510	510	34.81	310	310	21.21	200	200	13.60
Nagaon	9	-do-	306	306	21.42	156	156	10.92	150	150	10.50
Total			834	834	58.5	474	474	33.09	360	360	25.41

Source: Departmental record.

The above differences not only indicated lack of monitoring and inspection by implementing authorities, but also pointed towards suspected misappropriation of funds amounting to ₹25.41 lakh shown as incurred towards the construction of toilets, which were not actually constructed.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that the matter will be examined and results intimated.

1.2.12.7 Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM)

For the improvement in general quality of life in rural areas, mechanism for garbage collection and disposal, construction of soak pits, common compost pits, low cost drainage to prevent water logging etc., were to be made available in the villages.

In Assam, no such activity was undertaken as of March 2014 under SLWM. In Nagaon district, though 236 SLWM projects were targeted for 2009-14, not a single project was taken up as of August 2014. In other four test checked districts, even target was not fixed for undertaking activities under SLWM.

The GoA in reply stated (November 2014) that priority was given for the construction of toilets in first phase and SLWM activities would be taken up after attaining 60-70 *per cent* coverage of toilets under the scheme. The reply was not acceptable as total sanitation could not be achieved without carrying out SLWM activities.

Thus, the objective of developing community managed environmental sanitation systems focusing on solid and liquid waste management for the overall cleanliness in the rural areas remained unachieved.

1.2.12.8 Community Sanitary Complex (CSC)

The TSC aimed at construction of CSC comprising of toilet seats, bathing cubicles, washing platforms etc., for landless families in common and easily accessible sites. The achievement was test checked in the five selected districts and it was found that in Udalguri district, against the target of 35 CSCs, 30 were constructed during 2009-14 at a total cost of ₹51.06 lakh. In the other four test checked districts, neither requirement for CSCs was assessed nor was any target for the construction of CSC fixed, thereby depriving the beneficiaries from the intended benefits of CSC.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that CSCs will be constructed by the districts as per Action Plan assessing their viability.

1.2.12.9 Nirmal Gram Puraskar (NGP)

(i) To give a fillip to the TSC, GoI launched the NGP in October 2003 and gave away the first awards in 2005. NGP aimed at giving incentives to PRIs to make the villages -Open Defecation Free (ODF) and to adopt SLWM. Different incentives were provided under NGP depending on the population of GPs, blocks and districts. PRIs receive the incentive amount for using it to improve and maintain sanitation in their respective areas for sustaining ODF status.

Analysis of records of selected districts revealed that three GPs under Goalpara district received NGP award during 2005-07. It was also noticed that besides the construction of sanitary block, the award money was utilised for other works not permissible like installation of hand pump, waiting shed etc., as detailed in Table 1.14.

Table 1.14

Sl. No.	Name of GP	Year of receiving of award	Award money	Award money utilised towards non-permissible works	Unutilized award money	Nature of non-permissible purposes
1.	Dariduri	2005-06	₹4.00 lakh	₹2.96 lakh	-	Waiting shed etc.
2.	Mornoi	2006-07	₹5.00 lakh	₹3.00 lakh	₹2 lakh remaining with VWSC.	Installing of Hand Pump
3	Bardamal	2006-07	₹4.00 lakh	₹4.00 lakh	-	Installing of Hand pump

Source: Departmental records.

Further, even after receiving the award, none of the three GPs could sustain its Nirmal status as BLS 2012-13 disclosed that 96, 18 and 312 households respectively were with open defecation while 96, 394 and 758 toilets were not functional in Dariduri, Bardamal and Mornoi GPs respectively. None of the GPs were found to have undertaken SLWM activities. This indicated laxity on the part of DWSC and VWSCs in maintaining the Nirmal status.

(ii) During 2009-14, in four test checked districts no target was fixed for NGP award. Though Goalpara district fixed target of four GPs in 2012-13, none of the GPs could achieve the target. As per NBA guidelines, AIP should be prepared following the saturation approach highlighting comprehensive sanitation and water coverage on the basis of identification of GPs that could be made Nirmal during the year/in the coming years. None of the test checked districts identified any GP for saturation. Thus, comprehensive sanitation plan for GPs was not designed systematically to accomplish the objective of NBA.

The GoA in reply stated (November 2014) that, to address the issue of sustainability of NGP awards, IEC activities would be strengthened/planned.

1.2.12.10 Information, Education and Communication (IEC)

(a) IEC intends to generate demand for sanitary facilities in the rural areas by motivating the beneficiaries for the continued use and maintenance of toilets. For this, training programmes of motivators, GP representatives and masons were to be organised by DWSCs. At the community level, the mobilisation activities included audio-visual programmes, street dramas, wall paintings, incentive to motivators besides door to door campaigns for inter-personal communications. Each district is required to prepare an IEC plan with the identified components to reach all sections of the community. IEC should be conducted at all tiers i.e., districts, blocks and GPs to generate demand for sanitation amongst the people.

The following deficiencies were however, noticed in carrying out IEC activities:

- In all the test checked districts, it was observed that IEC plan, though prepared at district level as part of AIP, but lacked GP and Block-wise target as AIPs for GP and Block levels were not prepared. As such, IEC plans were

not area specific and involvement of all sections of rural people was not ensured.

- Observance of Sanitation day/Sanitation week/Sanitation fortnight etc., was not included in the Plan as envisaged in the guidelines.
- IEC activities did not continue throughout the year to generate sustained demand for sanitary facilities in rural areas through behavioral change.
- -Swachchata Doot¹⁹ was not engaged for inter-personal communication and door to door contact.
- Field functionaries like ASHA, Anganwadi workers, school teachers, Bharat Nirman Volunteers etc., were to be engaged as motivators for creating demand and taking up behaviour change communication. However, in the test-checked districts, engagement of motivators and their activities were far from being satisfactory (para 1.2.12.3(i) refers).
- Electronic media like television advertisement had been undertaken only in 2013-14 by SWSM but was not found adequate as it did not continue throughout the year. Detailed position is discussed in subsequent paragraph.

Target and achievement of IEC in the test checked districts is given in Table 1.15.

Table 1.15

Name of activities	Plan during the period 2009-14					Achievement during the period 2009-14					Percentage of achievement				
	Goalpara	Nalbari	Nagaon	Tinsukia	Udalguri	Goalpara	Nalbari	Nagaon	Tinsukia	Udalguri	Goalpara	Nalbari	Nagaon	Tinsukia	Udalguri
GP level awareness meeting (Nos.)	480	0	0	50	Targets not fixed for any activity	101	0	2	2	0	21	-	-	4	Not applicable
Printing media (Nos.)	13450	0	0	0		110	0	0	4	12	1	0	0	0	
Street play	528	165	75	14		22	40	18	2	3	4	24	24	14	
Mason Training (Nos.)	0	0	20	50		0	0	13	2	78	-	-	65	4	
Wall Writing (No./ft ²)	0	90	92,700 ft ²	420 Nos.		0	0	11,25,272 ft ²	1	135	0	0	1214	-	
Global hand washing day (Nos.)	0	0	0	500		0	163	0	3	42	0	-	0	1	
Door to door motivation (Nos.)	2681	0	156000	0		2	4830	0	0	9154	-	-	-	0	
Swachchata Saptah (Nos.)	0	0	76	86		0	0	57	5	0	0	0	75	6	

Source: Departmental records.

¹⁹ A local person with high visibility with motive of social serve than a post of profit is to be engaged as consultant for generating awareness for bringing out behavioral changes in individuals in respect of open defecation, hygiene, water safety, safe disposal of solid and liquid waste.

From the above table it would be seen that Nagaon district made significant achievement in wall writing, Mason Training and Swachchata Saptah. Coverage of other IEC activities in all the test checked districts were significantly low in terms of target fixed. Activity-wise targets were also not fixed every year. Besides, IEC plan was not prepared each year by test checked districts. In Udalguri district, though AIP was prepared only once in 2012-13 during the last five years but IEC plan was not incorporated. In Nalbari district, AIP was not prepared for 2009-10 and 2010-11. Thus, IEC activities were not adequate to generate demand for sanitation and hygiene practices amongst the rural people to achieve the 'Nirmal' status.

It was thus evident that IEC activities to bring the behavioral change and to create awareness for sanitation were not adequate and due emphasis was not given towards IEC to motivate the beneficiaries under the scheme. Further the State Government also did not conduct any survey for the assessment of the awareness and knowledge spread about the scheme through IEC activities and thus, effectiveness of IEC activities undertaken in the State remained unascertained.

The GoA in reply stated (November 2014) that the process of engagement of 'Swachchata Doot' had already been started to intensify the IEC campaign at grass root level to create awareness about TSC/NBA as contemplated.

(b) Injudicious expenditure

As per guidelines, IEC activities is not a one-time activity but an ongoing process and needed to be implemented not just to create demand but also for usage, maintenance and up gradation of facilities so that sanitation and hygiene become ingrained habits over a period of 2-3 years.

Analysis of records revealed that SWSM spent ₹38.79 lakh during December 2013 to January 2014 towards production and broadcasting of five advertisement films on various IEC activities to generate public awareness on sanitation which was telecast through a private TV channel²⁰ against the approved (September 2013) amount of ₹41.89 lakh. The films were telecast during 19 November 2013 to 18 January 2014 for 62 days covering 18,000 seconds.

Further examination in this regard revealed that:

- The advertisement films were telecast only on one channel. The basis of selection of the channel was not known.
- For the purpose of selection of the channel, no Notice Inviting Tender was floated. Hence, the assurance of the available lowest price could not be ascertained.
- The telecast was done only for 62 days without entering into any agreement.

²⁰ DY 365.

Thus, mere telecast of TV advertisement in a single channel for 62 days was not adequate enough to generate mass awareness on sanitation. This indicated poor planning of SWSM in telecasting the advertisement which could have been done throughout the year by negotiating with other TV channels including Doordarshan, the public sector channel which had much broader viewer base. Thus, the expenditure of ₹38.79 lakh spent on IEC activities had little impact in creating awareness among the targeted people.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that suggestions made by the audit had been noted by them for necessary action.

1.2.13 Convergence with programmes

In the guidelines of NBA, dovetailing of funds from other programmes like MGNREGS, MPLAD, MLALAD etc., through convergence were emphasized for effective implementation of the programme. As per IAY guidelines, for all IAY houses, construction of toilets under Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA) was mandatory. Examination of records in test checked districts revealed that construction of toilets in IAY houses through TSC funds were significantly low (as discussed in para 1.2.13.2) due to lack of coordination with the Panchayat & Rural Development Department (P&RDD), GoA. Convergence with other programmes also could not be done mainly due to lack of coordination. In reply to an audit query, SWSM stated (September 2014) that convergence with MGNREGS could not take place for want of clarity in the convergence guidelines.

The reply was not tenable as the SWSM did not seek any clarification to resolve the issue of convergence, if any.

Lacunae in convergence and impact thereof have been discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

1.2.13.1 Sub-standard toilet due to non-convergence with MGNREGS

As per NBA guidelines 2012, unit cost of each IHHL was ₹10,500 (Central share: ₹3,700, State share: ₹1,400, Beneficiary share: ₹900 and MGNREGS contribution: ₹4,500). The State Government, however, approved (September 2013) a model estimate of ₹6,000 per unit, which provided bamboo made temporary superstructure with one Galvanized Corrugated Iron (GCI) sheet on the roof without MGNREGS contribution.

Amongst the test checked districts, only Nalbari district constructed 7,931 IHHLs at a total cost ₹4,75,86,000 (7931x5600) during 2013-14. Since convergence with MGNREGS was not done, the unit cost had to be restricted to ₹6,000 *i.e.*, fund available per unit under NBA only. It was stated (September 2014) to audit that superstructure with brick wall could not be done within the unit cost of ₹6,000. Thus,

construction of 7,931 IHHLs at ₹4.76 crore with temporary bamboo-made superstructure was not in consonance with per the guidelines and thus, turned out to be substandard for want of sufficient fund through convergence with MGNREGS.

On being pointed out, the GoA admitted (November 2014) that implementation of TSC/NBA through convergence with MGNREGS remained unsuccessful in the State except in Jorhat district.

1.2.13.2 Coverage of IAY houses under TSC

Construction of toilets in IAY houses was to be done under TSC for which suitable coordination between P&RDD and DWSC was required. Beneficiaries' contribution along with list of beneficiaries was to be forwarded by P&RDD to DWSC for construction of IAY houses. In test checked districts, position of construction of toilets in IAY houses through convergence with P&RDD is shown in Table 1.16.

Table 1.16

Name of district	Number of IAY houses constructed	Number of toilets constructed in IAY houses	Percentage of coverage
Tinsukia	19465	337	1.73
Nalbari	15131	4260	28.15
Goalpara	20663	Nil	-
Udalguri	31943	50	0.16
Nagaon	73929	3575	4.83

Source: P&RD website and departmental figures.

From the above table it is evident that there was significantly less coverage of IAY houses under TSC (0.16 to 28.15 *per cent*) in five test checked districts highlighting lapses in convergence with IAY. On this being pointed out, DWSCs stated that the main reason for the shortfall was lack of coordination with P&RD.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that construction of IHHL through convergence with IAY was not successful due to inconsistency in the beneficiaries' list provided by P&RD Department. The reply substantiated the audit contention of lack of coordination between the two Government departments responsible for the implementation of the scheme in the State.

1.2.14 Monitoring and Evaluation

According to the scheme guidelines, regular field inspections by officers from the State and district levels were essential for effective implementation of the programme in the State. The TSC/NBA guidelines emphasized that project authorities were to constitute a team of experts in the district who were to review the implementation in different blocks frequently. Such reviews were to be held at least once a quarter. Similarly, the State Government was to conduct a review of projects in each district once a quarter. For this purpose, they were to constitute a panel of experts available in

the State. In addition, GoI was to send Review Missions to the State periodically to assess the quality of implementation.

Audit of records in the five test checked districts in this regard revealed that-

- (i) No team of experts were constituted to review the implementation,
- (ii) Inspection of works by any officer at field level was also not carried out in any of the test checked districts.
- (iii) As reported by the Department, though State Government constituted (May 2007) a State Level Review Panel, records relating to conduct of any review by such Review Panel could not be shown to Audit. None of the test checked districts were also aware about conducting any review by any Review Panel.

Thus, lack of periodical inspection by project authorities rendered the existing system of monitoring and evaluation ineffective.

1.2.14.1 The completion reports of 2,496 IHHLs in Goalpara district revealed that 1,562 (62 per cent), 1,209 (48 per cent) and 2,190 (87 per cent) completion reports were not signed by beneficiaries, Member Secretary of VWSCs and GP Presidents respectively. The completion reports were not supported with the date of completion and photographs.

This further upheld the dismal status of monitoring by the authorities in the construction of IHHL.

The GoA in reply stated (November 2014) that steps were being taken to strengthen the monitoring mechanism for proper implementation of the scheme.

1.2.14.2 Social Audit

GoI administered TSC with the objective to bring about improvement in the quality of life by providing access to improved sanitation to all in the rural areas. For effective monitoring of the programme, in addition to other statutory financial requirements, the mode of Social Audit was also adopted in TSC guidelines 2011 for strengthening the elements of transparency and efficiency under the programme. As per NBA guidelines, Gram Swachchata Sabha (GSS) at every six month and Swachchata Diwas (SD) once in a month were to be convened to ensure public participation, consultation and consent accountability, grievance redressal etc., under the scheme.

In all the test checked districts, it was noticed that neither GSS convened nor the SD was observed during the years 2012-14 while NBA was being implemented. Social Audit was also not conducted in any of the test checked districts. As such, not only

public vigilance was denied but plan and progress of implementation was also not disclosed to the villagers and the impact of the project remained unevaluated.

Besides, it was also noticed that there was no grievance redressal mechanism existed in any of the test checked districts. At State level, though a Cell was established (July 2013) by WSSO, the same was not made functional till August 2014. The beneficiaries, therefore, did not have any platform to lodge complaint on issues relating to implementation of the programme in the State.

The GoA stated (November 2014) that the Social audit will be introduced as per provision of the 'Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin' guideline.

1.2.15 Conclusion

The planning for the implementation of the scheme at different levels was inadequate and ineffective towards achievement of the intended objectives under the scheme. Neither a preliminary survey nor periodical baseline surveys were conducted to assess the status of hygienic practice among the rural people. Planning at GP and Block level was not done hence, bottom-up approach of saturation was not ensured. Funds were not released within the scheduled time-frame both at State and district levels hampering smooth implementation of the scheme. State was lagging behind in releasing its matching share.

Irregularities in implementation like construction of sub-standard toilets, defunct toilets, misappropriation of funds etc., were also noticed. Besides, instances of bogus construction of toilets were also noticed. IEC activities were not adequate to generate demand for sanitation and to bring about behavioural changes for improved sanitation and hygiene practices amongst the rural people.

There was either no convergence or significantly less convergence of components under NBA with other programmes like IAY/MGNREGS. In the absence of any review, periodical inspection by various authorities, irregularities persisted without being assessed and rectified.

Thus, the performance audit of TSC/NBA covering period the 2009-14 carried out in selected districts, Gram Panchayats and Villages revealed that the implementation of the scheme in the State was suffering from various irregularities viz., deficiency in planning, improper fund management, inadequate awareness campaigning through IEC activities, lack of monitoring and supervision coupled with instances of idling of expenditure, fraudulent drawal, bogus construction, suspected misappropriation of funds, which would require addressing on priority for its effective implementation in attaining the intended objective envisaged as per the scheme.

1.2.16 Recommendations

Government may ensure:

- *Adoption of bottom-up approach in preparation of AIP and PIP which should essentially emanate from the grass root level and consolidated in Block and district plan. PIPs should be revised periodically by conducting door to door survey to ascertain latest status of hygienic practice.*
- *Timely release of funds including state's matching share.*
- *Strengthening IEC activities by use of AV media with wider viewer base and community level advocacy.*
- *Convergence with other related schemes such as IAY and MGNREGS (as in Jorhat district).*
- *Strengthening, monitoring and evaluation mechanism by carrying out periodical review and inspection both by the State and district authorities and introduction of participative Social Audit.*

Social Welfare Department

1.3 Performance Audit of “Integrated Child Development Services” Scheme

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, launched in 1975 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, aims at holistic development of children up to six years of age, adolescent girls and pregnant and lactating mothers by providing a package of services. Apart from this, Government of India (GoI) introduced two more schemes viz., “Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY)” and “Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG)” in the years 2000 and 2002 respectively for implementation using ICDS infrastructure. Both the schemes were subsequently merged (2011) as “Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls-SABLA” for improvement of nutritional and health status of adolescent girls in the age group of 11-18 years including up-gradation of their home based vocational skills and self development. The performance audit of these schemes conducted covering period 2009-14 revealed the following significant audit findings:

Highlights

ICDS had not been universalised in the State as a number of the AWCs had not been made functional. Many SC/ST, OBC, Minority and Tea Garden areas were yet to be covered under the scheme.

(Paragraphs-1.3.3.1 and 1.3.3.2)

Against GoI release of ₹271.22 crore during 2011-14 for the construction of 15,000 AWCs, the department could complete the construction of 1,770 AWCs only (with an expenditure of ₹29.21 crore).

{Paragraph-1.3.4.1(i)}

The facilities provided at the AWCs were highly inadequate. None of the sampled AWCs had kitchens. Very few of them had functional toilets and access to drinking water.

{Paragraph-1.3.4.1(ii)}

There were short releases of State’s matching share of ₹33.62 crore (2009-14) under ICDS (General) and ₹15.36 crore (2010-14) under SABLA.

{Paragraphs-1.3.9.1 and 1.3.17.2(b) (i)}

Cases of avoidable expenditure (of ₹8.43 crore) and excess expenditure (of ₹3.48 crore) on procurement of ICDS materials and PSE kits respectively were noticed. Besides cases of excess payments of ₹87.70 lakh and ₹1.31 crore on procurement of ICDS materials and SNP foodstuff respectively were also noticed.

{Paragraphs-1.3.9.2 (i) to (iii) and 1.3.10.7}

During 2010-11, 1.34 lakh beneficiaries under the hill districts of Dima Hasao and Karbi Anglong were deprived of the intended benefit of supplementary Nutrition (SN) as the funds amounting to ₹3.72 crore drawn by the directorate were not released.

{Paragraph-1.3.10.4 (a)}

SNP funds amounting to ₹13.48 crore utilised in emergency for relief purposes remained unrecouped from Revenue Department depriving the benefits under SNP to the intended beneficiaries.

{Paragraph-1.3.10.6 (a) and (c)}

1.3.1 Introduction

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, a flagship programme of Government of India was launched on 2 October 1975 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, GoI. The objectives of the scheme are:

- (i) to improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group of 0-6 years;
- (ii) to lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of children;
- (iii) to reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout;
- (iv) to achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst the various departments to promote child development; and
- (v) to enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education.

The beneficiaries under ICDS Scheme are the children in the age group of 0-6 years and pregnant and lactating mothers. The Scheme envisages a package of six services viz., i) Supplementary Nutrition (SN), ii) Pre-school Non-formal Education of child between three and six years, iii) Nutrition and Health Education, iv) Immunization, v) Health Check-up; and vi) Referral Services through Anganwadi Centres.

Besides, MoWCD, GoI came up with two more schemes viz., -Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) and -Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG) in the year 2000 and 2002 respectively for their implementation using the existing ICDS infrastructure, with the aim to improve nutrition and health status of adolescent

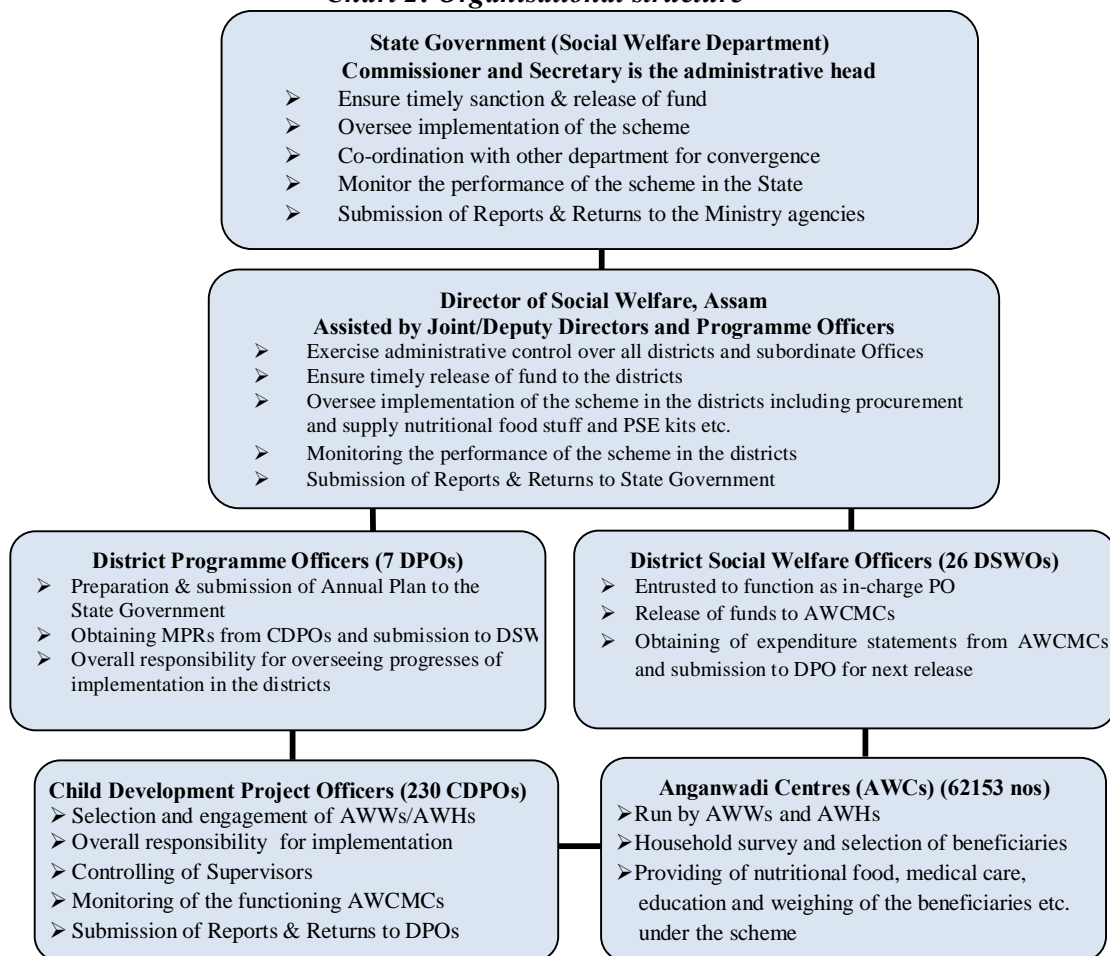
girls in the age group of 11-18 years including upgradation of their home based and vocational skill and to promote their overall development. In the year 2011, the GoI, came up with a more comprehensive scheme called 'Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls-SABLA' merging both the schemes to address the multi-dimensional problems of adolescent girls to be implemented through ICDS platform in 200 districts across the country. In Assam, SABLA is being implemented in eight²¹ districts and implementation of KSY continued in remaining 19 districts.

1.3.2 Framework of Audit

1.3.2.1 Organisational Structure

The organisational structure along with functions and responsibilities at various levels for implementation of ICDS in the State are shown in Chart-2.

Chart 2: Organisational structure



Source: Departmental records.

²¹ i) Darrang, (ii) Dhubri, (iii) Dibrugarh, (iv) Hailakandi, (v) Jorhat, (vi) Kamrup, (vii) Karbi Anglong and (viii) Kokrajhar.

1.3.2.2 Audit Objectives

The audit objectives for the Performance Audit were to ascertain whether:

- proper planning in attaining of the objectives and universalisation of the Scheme was done in the State;
- the funds allocated and released for the projects had been utilised economically and efficiently;
- adequate infrastructure facilities were provided in AWCs for effective delivery of services;
- Information Education and Communication (IEC) system in place was effective to create awareness about the services of ICDS scheme;
- the services rendered were adequate and effective in achieving the objectives of the scheme;
- the objective of skill development and improving the nutritional and health status of adolescent girls under -KSYø and -SABLAø were achieved; and
- monitoring and evaluation procedures put in place towards achievement of scheme objectives were effective.

1.3.2.3 Scope of Audit

The Performance audit of ICDS Scheme including KSY and SABLA was carried out during February-August 2014 covering the period 2009-14 to assess the efficiency, economy and effectiveness in implementation of the various components of Scheme. The audit was carried out through detailed scrutiny of records maintained in the offices of the Commissioner and Secretary, Social Welfare Department, Government of Assam (GoA); Director of Social Welfare (DSW), Assam, Divisional Programme Officers, 21 Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs) of eight selected Districts²², 210 Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) under the selected CDPOs. During audit, besides conducting physical verification of the AWCs and beneficiary survey, information collected from AWCs was cross checked with the records of the DSW and the respective CDPOs.

²² (i) Cachar, (ii) Kamrup, (iii) Karbi Anglong, (iv) Kokrajhar, (v) Lakhimpur, (vi) Nagaon, (vii) Nalbari and (viii) Sonitpur.

1.3.2.4 Audit sampling

All the 27 districts of Assam were stratified into four strata²³ geographically. From the four strata, eight districts (30 *per cent*) were selected by Probability Proportional to Size With Replacement (PPSWR) method on the basis of the total funds released under SNP in each District. In each selected district, 20 *per cent* of the CDPOs (Projects) were selected by using Simple Random Sampling without Replacement (SRSWOR) method for detailed examination of records. Under each selected CDPO, 10 Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) were selected by using SRSWOR for examination of records and physical verification. Within each selected AWC, 10 beneficiaries were selected by Simple Random Sampling method for survey.

1.3.2.5 Audit criteria

The criteria for the performance audit were benchmarked against the following sources:

- Guidelines of ICDS, KSY and SABLA issued by Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD), GoI;
- Circulars/instructions issued by the MoWCD, GoI and SWD, GoA;
- Directives of Honøble Supreme Court of India;
- Periodical reports/returns prescribed by the GoI/GoA;
- Reports of Working Group on Development of Children for the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012); and
- Annual Programme Implementation Plans (APIPs) of the Department.

1.3.2.6 Audit Methodology

The performance audit commenced with an entry conference held with the Commissioner and Secretary to the Government of Assam, Social Welfare Department (SWD) and DSW, Assam on 5 February 2014 wherein the audit objectives, scope and criteria were discussed and inputs of the departmental officers obtained. Based on the inputs and suggestion given by the Commissioner and Secretary, SWD, GoA, records relating to the schemes ‘KSY’ and ‘SABLA’ being implemented in the State using ICDS platform were also examined. Apart from examination of records of selected offices, responses to audit questionnaires and the information obtained through beneficiaries’ survey were analysed. Physical verifications regarding implementation of the programme were undertaken and photographic evidences were also obtained to substantiate audit observations. At

²³ 1) Upper Assam (Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sivasagar, Golaghat, Jorhat, Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Sonitpur); 2) Lower Assam (Nagaon, Morigaon, Kamrup Metro, Kamrup Rural, Goalpara, Nalbari, Darrang, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Dhubri); 3) South Assam (Cachar, Karimganj, Hailakandi); and 4) Hill Districts (NC Hills, Karbi Anglong, Kokrajhar, Baksa, Chirang, Udalguri).

the conclusion of audit, the findings were discussed in the exit conference with the Commissioner and Secretary, SWD and DSW, Assam held on 18 November 2014 and their reply had been considered and incorporated in the Report appropriately.

1.3.2.7 Acknowledgement

The office of the Accountant General (Audit), Assam acknowledges and appreciates the cooperation extended by the Secretariat of GoA, SWD, DSW, Assam, DPOs, DSWOs, CDPOs, Supervisors and AWWs during the course of Performance Audit.

1.3.3 Universalisation of ICDS

As per Report of Census 2001, there were 15.78 crore children aged between 0-6 years in the country and as per National Health Family Survey (NHFS)- 3 conducted during 2005-06, about 43 *per cent* children below five years in the country were underweight, of which, 16 *per cent* were severely malnourished. Universalisation of ICDS scheme was thus, imperative to extend all services offered under the scheme to every child under the age of six years and to all pregnant/lactating mothers.

1.3.3.1 Operationalization of AWCs

The Honøble Supreme Court directed²⁴ GoI to universalize the coverage of ICDS Scheme through operationalization of a minimum of 14 lakh AWCs throughout the country in a phased manner by December 2008. Audit noted that there were 37,082 sanctioned AWCs in the State of Assam as of March 2009. GoI sanctioned 25,071 more AWCs during 2009-10 (22,613 numbers) and 2010-11 (2,458 numbers) respectively raising the total to 62,153 AWCs for universalisation of the scheme in the State.

GoA/DSW showed all the 62,153 AWCs had been made operational by 2012-13. Analysis of Monthly Progress Reports (MPRs) submitted by the DPOs, however, revealed that altogether 615 AWCs were yet to be made operational (March 2014). Scrutiny further revealed that in the selected Cachar and Nalbari districts, 333 and 189 more AWCs/Mini-AWCs respectively were found non operational due to non-engagement of Anganwadi Workers (AWWs)/Angnwadi Helpers (AWHs). Thus, credibility of the information furnished by GoA/DSW remained doubtful.

1.3.3.2 Coverage of all habitations

The Honøble Supreme Court directed (November 2001) both the Central and State Governments to establish AWCs in every human settlement. Examination of records in this regard, however, revealed that there were 5,600 unreachable villages/habitations and these habitations remained uncovered till 2013-14.

²⁴ Vide interim order dated 28 November 2001, 29 April 2004, 7 October 2004 and 13 December 2006.

(a) The Honorable Supreme Court issued (December 2006) directions to both the Central and State Governments for identification of SC and ST hamlets/habitations for opening of new AWCs on priority basis. Information furnished (May 2014) by the department, however, revealed that there were requirement of 10,475 new AWCs in SC and ST habitations in 18 out of the 27 districts. Accordingly, proposal was submitted (March 2014) by the DSW to GoA for the same. Position of requirement of AWCs in the remaining nine districts could not be ascertained due to non-submission of report by the districts²⁵ concerned.

(b) Substantial portion of the population belonging to Tea Garden Tribes in the State was still to be covered under ICDS Scheme. The point was discussed in the meeting held on 2 November 2012 with MoWCD on APIP-2012-13 but no action was taken by GoA in this regard as of May 2014.

In reply to an audit query, the Programme Officer-I of the Directorate stated (May 2014) that information for establishment of AWC/Mini-AWC in Tea Garden areas were called from the concerned DPOs/DSWOs but their replies were awaited.

The above position indicates that the universalisation of ICDS scheme was yet to be achieved in the State despite elapse of more than five years period from the target date of 31 December 2008.

1.3.4 Infrastructure Development

1.3.4.1 Availability of AWCs

Guidelines of ICDS Scheme envisage that for providing nutrition and early learning of the beneficiaries under the Scheme, the States should have their own AWC buildings with adequate infrastructure facilities. The States may also arrange AWC buildings either through community support or by hiring the buildings on rent.

As per the information furnished by DSW, Assam, out of total 62,153 AWCs, 34,748 (55.91 *per cent*) were constructed by the Department, 427 (0.69 *per cent*) were constructed under Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) whereas the remaining 26,978 (43.40 *per cent*) were being run from schools/residence of Anganwadi Worker (AWW) Anganwadi Helper(AWH)/club/community building/rented house.

Joint physical verification of the 210 AWCs under 21 ICDS Projects of eight selected districts disclosed that 160 AWCs were constructed by the Department and the rest 50 AWCs were being run from different other buildings²⁶. Out of the 160 AWC buildings constructed by the Department, 17 were found in dilapidated

²⁵ 1. Baksa, 2. Cachar, 3. Chirang, 4. Dhemaji, 5. Dibrugarh, 6. Golaghat, 7. Karbi Anglong, 8. Kokrajhar and 9. Udalguri.

²⁶ Rented buildings: 2, houses of the AWWs/AWHs: 8, school building: 24 and temple/club/office building: 16.

condition of which four were abandoned and two buildings were occupied by Army personnel.



Abandoned Chalchali Dadara Chowk 18 no. AWC under Barhampur ICDS Project, Nagaon (12.06.2014)



Abandoned Indragarh 33 no. AWC under Tapang ICDS Project, Cachar (21.07.2014)

(i) Construction of AWCs

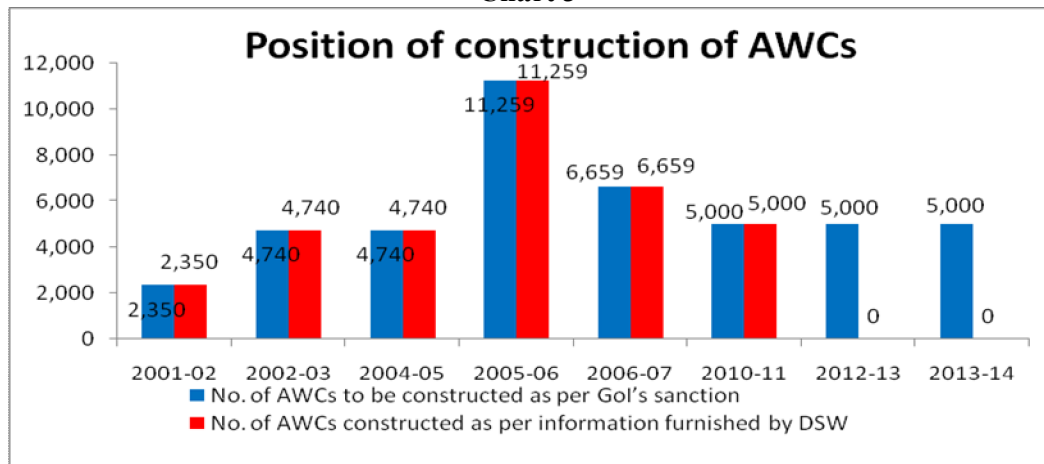
In view of the special condition of the North East, the MoWCD since 2001-02, has been providing 100 per cent funding to the State for the construction of AWCs. The State Government/local community were to provide the land for the construction of the AWCs. As per information furnished by the DSW, during 2001-14, GoI accorded sanction for construction of 44,748 AWCs, against which 34,748 had been constructed. The year-wise sanction and achievement made by the State is shown in Table-1.17 and Chart 3.

Table-1.17
Position of construction of AWCs

Year	No. of AWCs to be constructed as per Gol's sanction	No. of AWCs constructed as per information furnished by DSW	Unit cost
2001-02	2,350	2,350	₹1.25 lakh each.
2002-03	4,740	4,740	
2004-05	4,740	4,740	
2005-06	11,259	11,259	₹1.75 lakh each.
2006-07	6,659	6,659	
2010-11	5,000	5,000	
2012-13	5,000	Nil	₹4.50 lakh each.
2013-14	5,000	Nil	
Total	44,748	34,748	

Source: Departmental records.

Chart 3



Source: Departmental records.

During 2010-11, GoI released ₹87.50 crore for the construction of 5,000 AWCs. GoA/DSW submitted Utilisation Certificates (UCs)/Statement of Expenditure (SOE) for the year 2010-11 to GoI for the entire amount of ₹87.50 crore towards the construction of all the 5,000 AWCs. Scrutiny, however, revealed that as of March 2014, the DSW could complete only 1,770 AWCs at an expenditure of ₹29.91 crore (details in *Appendix-1.6*). Thus, the claim of the DSW to have completed all the 5,000 AWCs during 2010-11 was not correct.

Further, GoA/DSW could not utilize funds amounting to ₹87.50 crore and ₹96.22 crore respectively released by GoI during 2012-13 and 2013-14 for the construction of 10,000 AWCs. Reasons for failure to utilise the funds were neither on record nor stated to audit, though called for (May 2014).

The status of construction of AWC buildings thus, clearly indicated that adequate priority was not given by the State Government despite availability of funds and acute shortage of own buildings for AWCs.

(ii) Infrastructure facilities at AWCs

As per prescribed (March 2011) norms, an AWC is to provide basic facilities like sitting room, a separate room for kitchen, a store room for storing food items, child friendly toilet, separate space for children to play indoor and outdoor games and safe drinking water facilities.

During joint physical verification (May and August 2014) of the 210 test checked AWCs under eight selected districts, it was found that none of the centres complied with the basic infrastructural norms as under:

- None of the test checked AWCs had Kitchens for serving hot cooked meal.
- 27 out of 210 AWCs were having toilets and 14 of those were damaged and lying in unusable condition.
- 11 of the 210 AWCs were provided with Hand Tube Wells (HTWs) for drinking water, but eight of these were out of order.

Audit of records of the Directorate of Social Welfare revealed that the DSW in order to provide basic facilities in accordance with the prescribed norms, identified 1,303 and 1,584 AWCs which were without child friendly toilets and drinking water facilities respectively and reported (May 2010) to GoA for undertaking the corrective measures. Though Public Health Engineering department, GoA was approached (May 2010) for providing drinking water facilities, however till July 2014, no further progress was achieved. Besides, child friendly toilets were also not provided in any of the 1,303 AWCs.

These illustrated the state of unsatisfactory affairs as regards providing of basic facilities in AWCs in the State.

(iii) Construction of AWCs through other scheme

To meet up the shortfall in construction of AWCs and for providing better basic facilities in the existing AWCs, the Ministry advised (October 2012) GoA to construct AWCs by tapping funds from various other schemes²⁷.

Audit noted that out of total 62,153 AWCs in the State, only 427 AWCs (0.69 per cent) were constructed in minority areas under Multi-sectoral Development Project (MsDP) and no efforts were made by the DSW/GoA to tap funds from the other schemes for the establishment of AWCs.

On this being pointed out, the DSW stated (November 2014) that efforts were being taken to converge the construction of AWCs with other departments.

1.3.4.2 Availability of equipment

(a) Weighing Machine

According to the Scheme guidelines, each AWC must be provided with one Weighing machine each for baby and adult to determine normal, malnourished and severely malnourished beneficiaries and to maintain their growth chart so that the services required could be delivered appropriately.

As per Annual Programme Implementation Plans (APIP) 2013-14, Baby Weighing Machines were available in 49,354 (82.7 per cent) AWCs out of the existing 62,153 AWCs in the State.

(i) In the test-checked Karunabari ICDS Project under Lakhimpur district, it was seen that the DSW supplied (March 2012) 285 Baby-cum-Child Weighing Machines involving ₹5.32 lakh (285 machines @ ₹1,865 each) to the CDPO, who distributed 128 machines to AWCs keeping balance 157 machines worth ₹2.93 lakh in store without distribution as of July 2014.

Similarly, CDPO, Biswanath ICDS Project under Sonitpur district issued 195 out of 224 Weighing machines received (March 2012) from the DSW to AWCs keeping the balance 29 machines worth ₹0.54 lakh in store.

Reasons for non-issue of the machines were neither on records nor stated by the CDPOs.



Weighing machines lying in Karunabari ICDS Project, Lakhimpur District since March 2012 (25.06.2014)

²⁷ Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF), Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS).

(ii) In the three test-checked ICDS Projects under Kamrup district, the CDPOs received (March 2012) 575²⁸ Baby Weighing machines from DSW. Of these, 367 machines²⁹ were issued to the AWCs concerned leaving the balance 208 machines in store as the same were defective. Further, another 67 machines issued by the CDPO, Chayani Borduar were returned by AWCs as the same were not working. Thus, a total 275 defective machines worth ₹5,12,875³⁰ were lying in the store of the CDPOs concerned.

Audit of records revealed that in all the cases, the CDPOs concerned did not take up the matter with the DSW for replacement of the machines even after a lapse of more than two years rendering the expenditure of ₹8.60³¹ lakh incurred towards procurement of the defective machines, wasteful besides hampering the process of determination of malnourishment/severely malnourishment of infant population and recording their growth rate through weighing. Only recently, CDPO, Chayani Borduar requested (May 2014) the DSW for the replacement of the same by the new ones.

(iii) In Kokrajhar district, 4,501 Baby Weighing Machines at a cost of ₹69,56,205 (@ ₹1,458 each plus six per cent VAT) were procured only once (2011-12) since April 2009. It could not, however, be ascertained as to whether the said weighing machines were distributed to the ICDS Projects for onward distribution to the AWCs for monitoring of growth of the beneficiaries.

The Joint Secretary, BTC observed (June 2012) that many of the AWCs did not have Weighing Machines and directed Jt. Director, Social Welfare, BTC to enquire into the matter. However, it was not on record as to whether any enquiry was conducted as of July 2014 by the Joint Director.

Joint Physical verification of 210 AWCs under the eight selected districts revealed that 10 AWCs were running without weighing machine and machines in 59 AWCs were out of order. District-wise position is shown in Table-1.18.

Table-1.18
AWCs functioning either without baby weighing machines or with defective weighing machines

Sl. No.	District	No. of ICDS Project	No. of AWCs visited	No. of AWCs without machine	No. of AWCs with defective machine
1	Karbi Anglong	2	20	3	1
2	Nagaon	4	40	-	13
3	Lakhimpur	2	20	1	7
4	Kokrajhar	2	20	3	4
5	Sonitpur	3	30	1	7
6	Cachar	3	30	-	6
7	Kamrup	3	30	2	11
8	Nalbari	2	20	-	10
Total		21	210	10	59

Source: Joint Physical Verification.

²⁸ Bongaon- 69, Chandrapur Karara- 274 and Chayani Borduar- 232.

²⁹ Bongaon-53, Chandrapur Karara-85 and Chayani Borduar-229.

³⁰ ₹1,865X 275.

³¹ ₹2.93 lakh +₹0.54 lakh +₹5.13 lakh.

The objective of identification of exact number of malnourished children in the test checked ICDS Projects as well as in the State without the required number of weighing machines remained unachieved.

(b) Medicine Kits

Under the programme of Nutrition and Health Care of ICDS, Medicine Kits are provided to AWCs/mini AWCs every year for treating common ailments/providing first aids to children.

The DSW, however, did not supply any Medicine Kits to the ICDS Projects/AWCs during 2009-10 and 2010-11. During 2011-12, the Kits were supplied partially (not to all AWCs). Position of test-checked districts/ICDS projects/AWCs in this regard was as under:

(i) In the test checked Kokrajhar district, as per sanction accorded by DSW (July 2012) and BTC (March 2013), 4,050 Medicine Kits (consisting 10 items @ ₹621.90 per kit) for ₹25.19 lakh were procured and supplied to 17 ICDS Projects under BTAD Areas. Medicine Kits worth ₹42.79 lakh were also procured during 2012-13 based on the sanctions accorded by GoA (March 2012) and BTC (November 2012) respectively. Project-wise distribution of the same was, however, not made available to Audit.

(ii) In three³² test checked Projects under Cachar district, no Medicine Kits were supplied during 2009-13 whereas, the same were supplied twice during 2013-14.

(c) Pre-School Education (PSE) Kits

As per the Scheme guidelines and instruction (May 2009) of MoWCD, PSE kits were to be supplied @ ₹1,000 to each functional AWC and @ ₹500 to each Mini AWC every year. The Kit inter-alia should contain (i) Flash cards for story, (ii) Building blocks, (iii) Stuffed toys, (iv) Models of pictures, (v) Dolls for role play, (vi) Colour, number, alphabet & matching cards etc., (vii) Stacking rings/shape towers, (viii) Balls, (ix) Threading boards/Beads & Wires, (x) Kitchen Set, (xi) Wheel toys; and (xii) Simple Puzzle.

The DSW started supplying the material as a Kit (consisting 5,6,8 or 12 items) from 2012-13 only, prior to that two or three items were supplied separately and not as a Kit.

(i) In test-checked Kokrajhar district, PSE Kits containing three items³³ worth ₹64.37 lakh were procured and supplied to 57 ICDS Projects only during 2010-11.

(ii) In eight test checked ICDS Projects³⁴ under Cachar, Nalbari and Kamrup districts, the Kits were not at all supplied during 2009-13 whereas the same were supplied thrice during 2013-14.

³² Lakhimpur, Salchapra and Tapang.

³³ Counting Frame, Clay Pencil and Plastic Machine.

³⁴ Cachar-Lakhimpur, Salchapra and Tapang, Nalbari-Madhupur and Nalbari and Kamrup-Bongaon, Chandrapur-Karara and Chayani Borduar.

Thus, PSE Kits were not supplied every year during 2009-13 to AWCs complying the provision of the scheme guidelines and instruction of MoWCD, hampering the intended objective of smooth functioning of Pre-school Education.

(d) Vehicles

(A) MoWCD accorded (December 2009 and July 2010) approval for the procurement of 52 suitable vehicles³⁵ out of the grants released under ICDS for use in the activities related to implementation of the scheme.

Audit of records revealed that based on the sanction accorded (March 2010) by GoA, the DSW procured (May 2010 and September 2012) 45 vehicles³⁶ for use in the activities related to implementation of ICDS. Apart from this, the DSW procured four more vehicles³⁷ during 2009-10 and 2011-12 out of the available administrative charges recovered from the contractors engaged in construction of AWC buildings. Distribution of the total 71 vehicles including 22 existing vehicles to different level of offices is shown in Table-1.19.

Table – 1.19
Position of distribution of vehicles

Sl. No.	Level to which allotted	No. of vehicles allotted
1	Directorate level	19
2	Government level	3
3	Minister level	3
4	DSWO level	22
5	DPO level	5
6	PO level	1
7	CDPO level	18
Total		71

Source: Departmental records.

Analysis further revealed that out of the total 18 vehicles allotted to the CDPOs, nine were under the custody of Deputy Commissioners (DCs)/Sub-divisional Officers (SDOs) (Civil) concerned and were being used by them and not by CDPOs.

Thus, out of the available 71 vehicles, only nine (12.68 per cent) were being used by CDPOs and 221 (96 per cent) out of total 230 projects had no vehicles. This had adversely affected supervision/ monitoring of the scheme implementation by CDPOs at field level.

1.3.5 Planning

The services under the ICDS package are delivered through AWCs. Infrastructure like buildings for AWCs along with facilities of drinking water, toilets, tables and chairs, toys etc., were to be provided for the efficient and smooth delivery of quality services.

³⁵ 26 vehicles each during 2009-10 and 2010-11 in the price range between ₹4.75 lakh and ₹5.98 lakh.

³⁶ Bolero DI-2WD: 23, Mahindra THAR: 19, Bolero DI-2WD with AC/Music System: 2 and Bolero SLX: 1.

³⁷ Honda City: 1, Scorpio MZ D1 Car: 1, Toyota Innova Vx (75): 1 and Swift Dzire: 1.

In the backdrop of the dismal reports of the National Family Health Services (NFHS)-3 (2005-06) indicating large numbers of underweight children below three years, anaemic condition of pregnant women, maternal mortality rate (MMR) etc., the MoWCD felt the need of strengthening and restructuring of ICDS Scheme through a series of reforms including revamping the planning process by putting ICDS in a Mission mode by the end of 2014-15.

In order to augment the annual planning process, the MoWCD introduced (October 2012) Annual Programme Implementation Plans (APIPs). According to the guidelines, each State/Union Territory was to prepare APIP annually incorporating all activities in details along with their physical and financial targets. The main objectives of preparing APIP were to strengthen the existing programme management and monitoring mechanism to accelerate programme implementation in order to achieve the objective of ICDS universalisation with quality.

Audit noted that APIP 2011-12 submitted by GoA to MoWCD indicated details of regular activities, but State specific issues, gaps and constraints etc., though required, were not mentioned. The MoWCD reviewed (November 2012) the APIP and suggested GoA to rework in line with recent developments like providing of fortified Take Home Ration (THR), sample check of calibration and functionality of weighing machine by National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development (NIPCCD) and Roll out of MIS etc. These issues are yet (August 2014) to be taken up/completed by the GoA.

In APIP 2012-13 quality component of universalisation of ICDS, State specific issues like riverine areas, tea garden areas and migrant population were included. It, however, lacked fixation of specific targets related to certain important issues like reducing number of malnourished children, anaemic condition of pregnant women and Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), providing immunization to the children/Pregnant Women (PW) and Lactating Mother (LM), upgradation of old AWCs and providing child friendly toilets and drinking facilities to the AWCs etc.

The APIP 2013-14 also lacked a proper plan about achieving the objective of reduction in the number of malnourished children and MMR. Some new areas like construction of AWC-cum-Creche, Early Child Care Education (ECCE), establishment of 'Sneha Shivar' providing child friendly toilets and drinking facilities to the AWCs, providing of uniform/badges to AWWs/AWHs and rewards to AWWs/AWHs for best performance etc., though targeted in line with rolling out ICDS in Mission mode, did not materialise. Institutional reforms/rearrangements like setting up of a Mission Directorate, District Mission Unit and State Child Development Society as required under the ICDS scheme were not planned during the year to put ICDS in Mission mode.

The planning of the department in implementation of the scheme was therefore inadequate and not holistic.

1.3.6 Human Resources and training

1.3.6.1 Staffing Pattern of resource persons in ICDS projects

As per the scheme guidelines, 100 AWCs are to function under each ICDS project (50 AWCs in case of Tribal Block). CDPO being the head of the project is to supervise, coordinate and guide about the functioning of AWCs. For the purpose, five-six Supervisors are required to assist him. In addition, the Supervisors are responsible for providing continuous on-job guidance to AWWs through field visit at least once a month and by organising monthly meeting with village level health functionaries. The AWWs are to be assisted by the Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs) in carrying out the works of the AWCs.

(a) Availability of manpower

The position of sanctioned posts of resource persons and the persons in position in the State and selected districts as on 31 March 2014 are shown in Table-1.20 (A) and (B).

Table-1.20 (A)
Position of sanctioned strength and persons available

Name of the posts	Sanctioned strength	Person available	Vacancy
CDPO	230	208	22
Supervisor	2280	1913	367
AWW	62153	59263	2890
AWH	56728	54514	2214

Source: Departmental records.

Table-1.20 (B)
Position of sanctioned strength and person available in the selected districts

Sl. No.	District	No. of Projects	CDPO		Supervisor		Short-fall	AWW		Short-fall	AWH		Short-fall
			Sanc-tioned	Men-in-position	Sanc-tioned	Men-in-position		Sanc-tioned	Men-in-position		Sanc-tioned	Men-in-position	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Cachar	16	16	16	102	77	25	3733	3395	338	3582	3345	237
2	Sonitpur	15	15	15	131	102	29	3700	3593	107	3860	3742	118
3	Lakhimpur	10	10	10	102	83	19	2811	2776	35	3066	2928	138
4	Karbi Anglong	11	11	11	107	101	6	3070	2874	196	2449	2443	6
5	Kokrajhar	5	5	5	76	76	0	1554	1553	1	1687	1672	15
6	Nagaon	20	20	20	213	181	32	5307	5307	0	5307	5307	0
7	Kamrup	14	14	14	141	140	1	3953	3136	817	3201	3118	83
8	Nalbari	7	7	7	46	46	0	1516	1448	68	1489	1440	49

Source: Departmental records.

It would be evident that there was shortage of staff at the cutting edge in the cadres of AWW/AWH.

(b) Shortfall at DPO level

As per the GoI approved (May 2009) staffing pattern for District ICDS Cell, each district should have one post of Divisional Programme Officer (DPO) for implementation, supervision, monitoring and reporting of the scheme.

There were only seven DPOs and one Deputy Director (for Dima Hasao district) in the State who supervise and monitor the implementation of ICDS in 230 Projects in 27 districts.

The consistent absence of crucial staff at operational projects pointed towards poor implementation of the programmes as well as poor delivery of services under the scheme as discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

1.3.6.2 Training under ICDS

Training under ICDS is imparted by NIPCCD, Middle Level Training Centres (MLTCs) and Anganwadi Training Centres (AWTCs) across the States with financial support from MoWCD.

Audit of records revealed that as of 31 March 2009, 45 AWTCs and two MLTCs were functional for imparting training to AWWs/AWHs and Supervisors in the State. However, the number of training centres came down to 26 and one respectively by the end of 31 March 2014 as shown in Table-1.21.

**Table-1.21
Position of operational AWTC and MLTC**

Year	No. of centres run by NGOs		No. of centres opened during the year		No. of centres closed down during the year		No. in existence at the end of the year	
	AWTCs	MLTCs	AWTCs	MLTCs	AWTCs	MLTCs	AWTCs	MLTCs
2009-10	45	2	-	-	18	1	27	1
2010-11	27	1	-	-	2	-	25	1
2011-12	25	1	-	-	-	-	25	1
2012-13	25	1	1	-	-	-	26	1
2013-14	26	1	-	-	-	-	26	1

Source: Departmental records.

The above position indicates that though the State Government operationalised 45 AWTCs and two MLTCs through NGOs during 2009-10 as per the sanction accorded by GoI, it closed down 19 AWTCs and one MLTC by the end of 2013-14 due to non-availability of adequate infrastructure, hostel and library facilities etc. At present, only 26 AWTCs and one MLTC are in operation. Therefore, the training facility in the State for providing training to AWWs/AWHs and Supervisors was inadequate.

The DSW, in reply, stated (November 2014) that steps have been taken to revive the closed down AWTCs.

(a) Implementation of training programme

Under the scheme, the State Government fixes annual targets for training of ICDS functionaries based on annual training calendar prepared by the operational training centres.

(i) Job Training

Job/orientation training was required to be given to each functionary once in service period.

Audit scrutiny revealed persistent shortfall in achievement of targets fixed for Job/orientation Training of Supervisors and AWWs during 2009-14 as shown in *Appendix-1.7*.

(ii) Refresher Training

Refresher Training is to be provided to each ICDS functionary once in two years. Hence, every year at least half of the workforce in position is required to be imparted Refresher Training. Scrutiny revealed that the year-wise target set only for AWWs. Even the targets so set for the training of AWWs could not be met during 2009-12 as would be evident from *Appendix-1.8*. Shortfall ranged between 18 and 21 *per cent* during 2009-12.

(iii) Induction Training

Under ICDS, each field functionary was required to be trained on initial engagement/appointment. Scrutiny revealed that 300 AWWs were targeted for imparting training only in 2010-11. However, none of them was imparted training as of March 2014.

The above position indicated that AWWs delivering the services to the beneficiaries were not provided induction training. The failure to provide periodical training is likely to result in deficient implementation of the scheme.

1.3.6.3 Infertuous expenditure on training institutes

ICDS training aims at developing field functionaries into agents of social change and improving the quality of service delivery. Accordingly, MoWCD fixed (April 2009) a norm for imparting training to AWWs and AWHs in AWTCs for 348 days in a year.

Audit of records of 10 AWTCs under four selected districts revealed that there was a huge shortfall in imparting training in these institutes against the target set due to not deputing the functionaries by the DSW. The shortfall in training during 2009-14 ranged between 320 and 883 days. Though the institutes run by different NGOs remained without any work during these gap periods, the Department paid salaries of the idle staff and rent of the buildings resulting in an infertuous expenditure of ₹169.02 lakh (details are shown in *Appendix-1.9*).

1.3.7 Information Education Communication (IEC)

The State Government did not furnish any IEC Plan and communication material as required to be prepared/designed for creating awareness on ICDS among the people as per the provision of the scheme guidelines. The year-wise expenditure incurred on IEC activity was also not made available to audit. However, it appeared from the SOEs/UCs submitted that during 2009-14 (upto 3rd quarter of 2013-14), the department incurred an expenditure of ₹32.61 crore, which could not be

vouchsafed in audit due to non-maintenance of proper records in support. No fund was released to the field level offices to carry out the IEC activities.

The department/Government informed that quickies³⁸ were prepared and telecast through satellite channels as an IEC activity. The activities thus carried out were never evaluated to assess the impact of the ICDS activities on the community. No survey was also conducted to assess the awareness and knowledge about the scheme.

1.3.8 Financial management

1.3.8.1 Funding pattern

ICDS is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme funded on cost-sharing basis by GoI and GoA in the ratio of 75:25. However, in the case of North Eastern States and Sikkim, funding is shared between the GoI and the State Government in the ratio of 90:10. Besides, under the scheme 100 per cent Central assistance is provided to the NE States for the construction of AWC buildings since 2001-02.

Under the scheme, the flow of funds is from the Ministry to the State departments under two heads viz., ICDS (General) and Supplementary Nutrition (SN). MoWCD releases grants in four or more instalments in a year subject to furnishing of Statements of Expenditure (SOEs) and Utilisation Certificates (UCs).

1.3.8.2 Statements of expenditure (SOEs) and Utilisation Certificates (UCs)

MoWCD revised the existing format of SOE for submission in two parts from 2009-10. One is in the form of quarterly report indicating cumulative expenditure, upto the end of the quarter and another is Annual Report which is a summary of annual expenditure to be submitted alongwith UCs by 15th of the month following the quarter.

(i) Submission SOEs and UCs under ICDS (General)

Analysis of annual SOEs and UCs furnished by GoA during 2009-14 revealed that there was mismatch in reporting. A few examples are given below:

- In the annual SOEs and UCs submitted to MoWCD, the State Government showed utilisation of Flexi Funds³⁹ amounting to ₹556.42 lakh, ₹581.18 lakh, ₹699.66 lakh and ₹621.42 lakh respectively during the years 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 whereas Flexi Fund was not at all released to the AWCs by GoA during 2009-14.
- In the annual SOEs and UCs for the year 2013-14, an amount of ₹592.72 lakh and ₹29.72 lakh respectively was shown as utilised by the GoA on account of provision of uniform and badges respectively to the AWWs/AWHs. Scrutiny further revealed that the same were actually not utilized and no

³⁸ Short advertisement programme.

³⁹ Flexi funds are meant for AWCs to provide flexibility for operational exigencies and meeting unforeseen expenses.

uniform/badge was provided to the AWWs/AWHs by the GoA. The Department in the APIP 2014-15 also mentioned that though there was a proposal for the same in the APIP 2013-14, the uniform/badge would actually be provided during 2014-15.

Thus, the SOEs and UCs submitted did not represent the true and fair view of affairs.

(ii) Submission of SOEs and UCs under SNP

There were delays of 116 to 219 days noticed in submission of the SOEs and UCs from GoA to GoI in respect of SN component. The annual SOEs/UCs for the years 2009-10 to 2012-13 were submitted in October 2010, August 2011, November 2012 and August 2013 respectively against the stipulated date of submission of 15 April of the respective year. Further, SOEs/UCs were prepared and submitted by GoA based on releases made by the Directorate and not on the basis of the actual expenditure incurred by the respective authorities. Huge funds of the respective years were found lying unutilized both at Directorate and field level as discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

1.3.8.3 Parking of funds

(a) Parking in Civil Deposit

An amount of ₹5.85 crore under different components of ICDS scheme for the years 2010-11 and 2011-12 was withdrawn and kept in the DDO's Current Account⁴⁰ till September 2013. The amount was subsequently deposited (October 2013) into treasury under the head of a/c 08443-Civil Deposit as the DDO's Current Account needed to be closed in terms of instructions (9 September 2013) of the Finance Department. As of March 2014, the entire fund was lying unutilised in the civil deposit which amounted to misleading the Legislature on account of the expenditure being shown under the ICDS heads of accounts but not actually expended for the purpose. Component-wise details are given in Table-1.22.

Table-1.22
Position of un-utilised funds kept in Civil Deposit

Sl. No.	Name of scheme	Year of sanction/ release	Amount released (₹)	Amount utilised (₹)	Unutilised balance (₹)
1	SNP (State Share)	2010-11	8668229	-	8668229
2	SNP (State Share)	2010-11	28542795	-	28542795
3	SNP (CSS)	2010-11	344527680	340922340	3605340
4			48686700	48117080	569620
5	ICDS Training	2010-11	NA	NA	1750000
6	SABLA	2011-12	12480000	3588390	8891610
7	ICDS Construction	NA	NA	NA	6503881
Total					5,85,31,475

Source: Departmental records.

⁴⁰ DSW's current account with SBI, Bamunimaidan Branch, Guwahati.

The DSW, in reply, stated (November 2014) that the matter of release of fund from Civil Deposit has been taken up with Finance Department, GOA.

(b) Parking in current bank accounts

(i) The District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO), Nagaon received ₹2,155.84 lakh under SNP during 2007-10, of which ₹2,149.35 lakh was released to the CDPOs leaving a balance of ₹6.49 lakh in two accounts operated with Bank of Baroda (₹2.05 lakh) and Indian Overseas Bank (₹4.44 lakh) for more than four years as shown in Table-1.23.

**Table-1.23
Position of parking of funds**

Year	BD/Ch. No & date	Amount received (₹)	Amount released to CDPOs (₹)	Balance (₹)	Remarks
2007-08	133009 dt. 31.01.08	7,74,86,559	7,72,81,385	2,05,174	Balance kept in current a/c with Bank of Baroda (BOB)
2008-09	733492 dt. 29.12.08	7,51,86,795	7,49,78,594	2,08,201	Balance kept in current a/c with Indian Overseas Bank (IOB)
2009-10	013906 dt. 14.07.09	6,29,10,708	6,26,75,268	2,35,440	Balance kept in current a/c with IOB
Total		21,55,84,062	21,49,35,247	6,48,815	

Source: Departmental records.

Analysis of records further revealed that ₹1.48 lakh and ₹0.26 lakh were withdrawn (October/December 2011) from BoB and utilised for different purposes⁴¹ subject to subsequent reimbursement as directed by the DSW. Reimbursement of ₹1.74 lakh to DSWO, Nagaon was, however, not made till June 2014. This not only resulted in parking of funds of ₹6.49 lakh outside Government account but also led to diversion of fund of ₹1.74 lakh out of it on other than intended purposes.

(ii) DSWO, Kamrup prior to opening (17 May 2010) the bank account with SBI, Khanapara for receipt of SNP funds through e-transfer from the Directorate, was maintaining another bank account with BOB, Beltola Branch for the same purpose. The account with the BOB was neither transferred to the SBI account nor closed in terms of Government order (September 2013). After 12 November 2011, no transaction was made through the BoB account. As of August 2014, the balance amount of ₹2,09,586 was lying unutilised for more than two and a half years.

(iii) The year-wise position of fund received by DSWO, Sonitpur from State Government under Supplementary Nutrition and released to ICDS Projects/ Anganwadi Centre Management Committees (AWCMCs) during 2009-14 were given in Table-1.24.

⁴¹ Laying of foundation stone for Harijan Committee Hall/Awareness meeting at Neherubali and for purchase of a desktop Computer.

Table-1.24
Receipt and release of SN funds to Projects/AWCMCs under Sonitpur district

Year	Fund received (₹)	Fund released (₹)	Balance (₹)
2009-10	15,57,51,490	15,57,48,687	2,803
2010-11	8,91,43,848	4,94,54,416	3,96,89,432
2011-12	22,27,58,106	14,95,74,504	7,31,83,602
2012-13	12,77,60,019	17,88,46,506	(-),5,10,86,487
2013-14	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total	59,54,13,463	53,36,24,113	6,17,89,350

Source: Departmental records.

The table above shows that of the receipt of ₹3,119.02 lakh⁴² during 2010-11 and 2011-12, DSWO released ₹1,990.29 lakh⁴³ as of March 2014 leaving an unutilized balance of ₹1,128.73 lakh⁴⁴. However, during 2012-13, an excess release of ₹510.86 lakh was made out of the unutilized balance of 2010-12. This indicated that though ₹617.87 lakh (₹1,128.73 lakh - ₹510.86 lakh) was withdrawn from Government account during 2010-11 and 2011-12 and shown as expenditure against ICDS heads of accounts, the amount remained unutilised as of March 2014 and moreover did not form part of the reported cash balances of the Government. This was not only a case of financial impropriety but also amounted to misreporting to GoI.

(c) Unauthorised utilisation of fund released for construction of AWCs

During 2009-14, total 12,697 AWCs @ ₹1.75 lakh each were constructed in the State on the basis of a model estimate prepared and approved by the Social Welfare Department. The estimate included a provision of ₹2,500 for Establishment/Administrative charge to be expended on account of construction of AWCs.

Audit of records revealed that out of the total administrative charge of ₹289.28 lakh deducted/recovered from the Contractor's bill during 2009-14, ₹138.66 lakh was unauthorisedly utilised towards purposes not covered under the Scheme such as meeting entertainment and miscellaneous protocol expenses of the Director and Commissioner as detailed in *Appendix-1.10*.

(d) Non-utilisation of flexi fund

MoWCD issued (May 2009) instruction for providing ₹1,000 per AWC annually as flexi fund effective from 2009-10 to widen the scope of the scheme by providing flexibility for operational exigencies and meeting unforeseen expenses.

Audit of records revealed that during 2009-10, GoI released flexi fund of ₹5.56 crore for 55,642 operational AWCs. The fund was, however, not released to the

⁴² (₹891.44 lakh + ₹2,227.58 lakh).

⁴³ (₹494.54 lakh + ₹1,495.75 lakh).

⁴⁴ (₹396.89 lakh + ₹731.84 lakh).

AWCs concerned by GoA. The matter was pointed out vide Paragraph - 4.6 of C&AG's Audit Report No. 22 of 2012-13 - Union Government - Performance Audit of ICDS Scheme. The GoA as a measure of action proposed in APIP 2013-14 for releasing the flexi funds directly to the AWCs, but the same was, however, not released as of March 2014. Scrutiny further revealed that the GoA also did not release the due flexi fund of ₹23.90 crore⁴⁵ to the AWCs in the subsequent years (2010-14).

On this being pointed out, the DSW stated (November 2014) that proposal for release of flexi fund has been taken up with the Government.

(e) Blocking up of GoI fund

Anganwadi Karyakartri Bima Yojana (AKBY), welfare measure extended to AWWs & AWHs, was introduced (1 April 2004) by GoI under LIC's Social Security Scheme. The premium under the scheme was ₹280 per annum per member payable by LIC (₹100), GoI (₹100) and the insured member (₹80) respectively. The premium of ₹80 payable by the insured member was, however, waived *w.e.f.* 1 April 2007 under the scheme. The premium of ₹100 payable by GoI was also waived for two years from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2013.

Scrutiny revealed that based on the sanction accorded by GoA, DSW withdrew (March 2011) ₹100 lakh being GoI's contribution and kept in DDO's current bank account. Out of the ₹100 lakh, ₹38.80 lakh was released (January 2011) to LIC as GoI's contribution but the same was refunded (September 2012) by LIC as the GoI's contribution was waived for two years. The amount received back was deposited again into DDO's current bank account instead of making refund to GoA/GoI. DSW sought GoA's approval for refund of ₹99 lakh keeping ₹one lakh for administrative expenses. GoA though allowed (January 2014) DSW to spend ₹one lakh towards administrative expenses but remained silent regarding refund of ₹99 lakh. As a result, GoI's fund amounting to ₹99 lakh was lying idle in DDO's bank account out of Government accounts.

On this being pointed out, the DSW stated (November 2014) that efforts were being taken to refund the fund to the Government.

(f) Maintenance of cash book

(i) MoWCD categorically instructed while according sanction and release of funds that separate cash book for ICDS (General) and SNP should be maintained. DSW, Assam, however, maintained only one cash book for all Central and State sector schemes in contravention of the direction of MoWCD. Further, receipts and payments particulars were not found recorded clearly in the cash book. As a result,

⁴⁵ ₹5.67 crore for 56,681 AWCs in 2010-11 + ₹5.81 crore for 58,118 AWCs in 2011-12 + ₹6.21 crore for 62,153 AWCs in 2012-13 + ₹6.21 crore for 62,153 AWCs in 2013-14.

it was difficult in audit to ascertain component-wise expenditure incurred under ICDS.

(ii) In the test checked Cachar district, the then DSWO did not maintain cash book for the period 2009-10 to 2013-14. Scrutiny revealed that the present DSWO on assuming (7 April 2014) charge constructed a cash book *w.e.f.* 27 February 2013 based on the available records and bank statements with the opening balance of ₹6,18,18,683.77 (based on bank statements). The position of funds received and disbursed prior to 27 February 2013, however, could not be ascertained.

(iii) Similarly, in the test checked Lakhimpur district, it was noticed that the DSWO did not maintain cash book for the period 2009-13. Further, the DSW while releasing the funds neither sent any of the sanction orders nor intimated the DSWO about the release of funds directly to DDO's bank account. Bank statements for the entire period (2009-13) were also not available in the office of the DSWO. As a result, actual position of receipt and disbursement of funds by DSWO, Lakhimpur could not be ascertained. An attempt made by the present DSWO to trace out the actual position of receipt and disbursement of funds revealed the discrepancies of ₹4.47 crore. The matter was reported to the DSW, Assam in June 2014. Reconciliation of the same was, however, awaited (November 2014).

On this being pointed out, the DSW in November 2014 stated that the practice of maintenance of subsidiary cash book will be brought into force.

(g) Maintenance of multiple bank accounts

As per the standing instructions of Finance Department, GoA, maintenance of multiple bank accounts is not permissible without prior approval.

In the test checked Cachar district, DSWO, Cachar opened (25 May 2010) a current account with SBI for receipt of funds from Directorate through e-transfer. Audit observed that prior to opening the account with SBI, Silchar branch, two more current accounts with United Bank of India (UBI), Meherpur Branch, Silchar and Assam Gramin Vikash Bank (AGVB), Silchar were being maintained for implementation of SNP in the district. The funds amounting to ₹12.44 lakh⁴⁶ lying unutilized in those accounts since March 2012 and November 2013 respectively were not transferred to the SBI account and instead, the accounts continued to be in operation. As a result, three current accounts were being kept open simultaneously in contravention of the relevant instruction of the Finance Department.

(h) Non-accountal of refunds

DSW, Assam transferred (May 2010) ₹16,24,44,880 to the bank account of DSWO, Cachar operated with SBI, Silchar for implementation of SNP during 2009-10. The DSWO with the approval of DC, Cachar advised (July 2010) the

⁴⁶ UBI, Silchar: ₹12,30,042.11 and AGVB, Silchar: ₹13,789.15.

bank to release ₹13,43,88,280 to the accounts of 2,371 AWCMCs @ ₹56,680 each. Scrutiny revealed that the bank released the entire amount to the accounts of the AWCMCs. But the AWCMCs in 38 cases returned (April to May 2011) ₹21,53,840 to the bank for the reason of double credit in their accounts. The amount was returned (March 2014) to the DSWO by the bank in the form of a Bankers Cheque after a delay of nearly two years and nine months. The amount so received back, was not accounted for in the cash book of the DSWO resulting in short account of closing balance to that extent for the year 2013-14.

Scrutiny revealed that out of the amount of ₹21.54 lakh, the DSWO spent ₹4.03 lakh in May 2014 for SNP purposes retaining the balance amount of ₹17.51 lakh with them without account in the cash book.

1.3.9 Implementation of ICDS (General)

The position of fund received from GoI and GoA under ICDS (General) and utilized by DSW during 2009-14 (upto December 2013) is given in Table-1.25.

Table-1.25
Position of fund received and utilized under ICDS (General) (₹ in crore)

Year	Opening Balance	Fund received from GoI	Fund received from GoA	Total funds available	Expenditure	Closing Balance
2009-10	-	235.52	35.00	270.52	235.52	35.00
2010-11	35.00	213.25	29.70	277.95	277.95	-
2011-12	-	383.46	30.00	413.46	413.46	-
2012-13	-	470.02	38.00	508.02	508.02	-
2013-14	-	569.11	41.60	610.71	424.12	186.59
Total	35.00	1,871.36	174.30	2,080.66	1,859.07	

Source: Information furnished by the Directorate.

1.3.9.1 Short release of State share

As per the funding pattern, the State matching share for the years 2009-14 was ₹207.92 crore (10 per cent) against the Central release of ₹1,871.36 crore (90 per cent). GoA, however, released only ₹174.30 crore resulting in short release of ₹33.62 crore as shown in Table-1.26.

Table-1.26
Short release of State Share (₹ in crore)

Year	Central share released	State share due	State share released	Short (-)/Excess (+) release of State share
2009-10	235.52	26.17	35.00	(+) 8.83
2010-11	213.25	23.69	29.70	(+) 6.01
2011-12	383.46	42.61	30.00	(-) 12.61
2012-13	470.02	52.22	38.00	(-) 14.22
2013-14	569.11	63.23	41.60	(-) 21.63
Total	1,871.36	207.92	174.30	(-) 33.62

Source: Departmental records.

Therefore, short release of State matching share was in contravention of Scheme guidelines.

1.3.9.2 Avoidable/ excess expenditures and excess payments

(i) Avoidable expenditures on procurement of ICDS material

(a) Mention was made in Paragraph-1.2.7 of C&AG's Audit Report on Social, General and Economic (Non-PSUs) Sectors (Report No.7 of 2013) for the year ended 31 March 2013 that during 2010-11 and 2011-12, the Directorate had incurred an extra expenditure of ₹5.73 crore towards procurement of 14,22,980 Note Books at a much higher rate than the available maximum retail price (MRP) in violation of the relevant provision of Finance Department Office Memorandum dated 11 August 2010.

Audit of records further revealed that the Directorate had incurred another extra expenditure of ₹1.17 crore towards procurement (January 2012) of a fresh quantity of 2,91,020 Note Books of the same specification and rate disregarding the relevant provision of the Office Memorandum dated 11 August 2010. Details are shown in *Appendix-1.11*.

(b) DSW, Assam submitted a proposal (October 2012) to GoA for the approval and financial sanction of ₹2,37,58,600 for purchase and supply of 42,200 plastic chairs to 10,550 AWCs (four to each AWC) under 38 ICDS Projects in five districts (General Areas) @ ₹475 each (Brand-Supreme/Neelkamal) plus 13.5 per cent VAT and five per cent as commission based on the rates submitted (June 2011) by ASIDC⁴⁷, a State PSU. State Level Purchase Committee (SLPC) of Social Welfare Department (SWD) headed by the Deputy Secretary to the GoA however, approved (November 2012) AGMC, a State PSU to supply plastic chairs @ ₹629 each plus 13.5 per cent VAT and two per cent agency commission, the same rate at which the same PSU had supplied plastic chairs at an earlier occasion disregarding the proposal of the DSW. Accordingly, DSW purchased (December 2012 to January 2013) 30,000 plastic chairs (unbranded) from AGMC⁴⁸, a State PSU, at the rate of ₹629 each (plus 13.5 per cent VAT and two per cent agency commission). This resulted in an avoidable extra expenditure of ₹49.09 lakh⁴⁹ due to non-availing of lower rate of ASIDC.

In order to accommodate the extra cost involved due to procurement at higher rate, the department had to procure less number of chairs of an unspecified brand than actually proposed. Had the procurement been made at the available lower rate, 8,720 more chairs⁵⁰ could have been purchased for distribution among the AWCs.

⁴⁷ Assam Small Industries Development Corporation.

⁴⁸ Assam Government Marketing Corporation.

⁴⁹ {₹726.50 (₹629 + 13.5 per cent VAT and 2 per cent agency commission) - ₹562.88 (₹475 + 13.5 per cent VAT and 5 per cent agency commission)} X 30,000.

⁵⁰ ₹49,08,600/₹562.88.

(c) During 2012-13, the DSW procured 2,13,525 colour pencil boxes at the rate of ₹69 each approved (19 December 2012) by the SLPC and supplied to 8,541 AWCs (@ 25 boxes per AWC). During Joint Physical verification, it was found that the MRP of each Colour pencil box procured by the DSW was ₹45 only. This indicated that the SLPC did not assess the market price as required under the extant executive order before approving the rate or even undertaken the very basic precaution of reading the price label. This led to an extra expenditure of ₹51.25 lakh⁵¹ which was avoidable.

(d) Similarly, examination revealed that the DSW procured medicated hand washing soap in two spells during the period December 2012 to March 2013 (12,33,100 pieces at ₹18 worth ₹2,21,95,800) and December 2013 (2,62,995 pieces at ₹21 worth ₹55,22,895) and supplied to 49,324 and 19,971 AWCs respectively. In both the cases, the rates were approved by the SLPC before going ahead with the procurement. During joint physical verification of the AWCs, it was found that the DSW procured Jasmine brand soap on both the occasions and MRP of each soap was ₹15 only. This resulted in an extra expenditure of ₹52.77 lakh, which could have been avoided had the SLPC obtained the sample and verified the MRP before placing the orders as per prescribed procedure. The details of extra expenditure are shown in *Appendix-1.12*.

(ii) Excess payment on procurement

(a) During 2011-12, DSW procured 20,400 Aluminium Saucepan (22 inch diameter, 8.00 Kg wt) @ ₹2,008 per piece from M/s ASIDC Ltd., Guwahati for supply to 20,400 AWCs under 132 Projects in 15 plain districts. Scrutiny, however, disclosed that ASIDC Ltd. supplied Aluminium Saucepan weighing seven Kg instead of eight Kg to all the 20,400 AWCs resulting in an excess payment to the tune of ₹51.20 lakh⁵².

(b) As per order (13 February 2014) of DSW, Assam, a Guwahati based supplier supplied 46,200 colour pencil boxes @ ₹89 each to 13 CDPOs under Kamrup (30,350 boxes) and 7 CDPOs under Nalbari (15,850 boxes) districts and was paid (March 2014) ₹41,11,800. As per terms of the supply order, colour pencil boxes of any of the four specified brands viz; (a) Nataraj, (b) Millennium, (c) KKleeo and (d) Manglam was to be supplied. The supplier, however, did not mention the brand name of the pencil boxes supplied either in the delivery challans or in the bills.

During physical verification of the concerned Projects/AWCs, it was, however, noticed that the supplier instead of the approved brand, supplied 'Rabbit' brand of colour pencil box (containing 12 colour pencils-half size) having the MRP of ₹10 only whereas the supplier was paid ₹89 for each pencil box. This resulted in an

⁵¹(₹69 -₹45) X 2,13,525.

⁵² [2008 - {(2008 ÷ 8) X 7}] X 20,400.

excess payment of ₹36.50 lakh (as detailed in *Appendix-1.13*) which could have been avoided had the DSW exercised necessary check before releasing the payments. Thus, extra payment made to the supplier on this count needs to be recovered by the DSW.

On this being pointed out, the GoA stated (November 2014) that the matters will be investigated and appropriate action would be taken.

(iii) Excess expenditure on PSE Kits

As per scheme guidelines and instruction (11 May 2009) of MoWCD, PSE kits are to be provided each year to each functional AWC @ ₹1,000 and to each Mini AWC @ ₹500. Scrutiny, however, revealed that the DSW supplied (March 2013) the Kits to 35,000 AWCs under 154 ICDS Projects in 21 Districts at the rates of ₹1,993.45 (19 districts) and ₹1,997.02 (two districts) per AWC. This led to an excess expenditure of ₹3.48 crore as shown in *Appendix-1.14*.

On this being pointed out, the DSW stated (November 2014) that PSE kits were supplied at revised approved cost (₹3,000 for AWC and ₹1,500 for Mini-AWC) in terms of Circular No.1-8/2012-CD-I, dated 26 December 2012 of MoWCD, GoI. The reply was however, not tenable as the revised cost was applicable only for 3 high burden (Golaghat, Karimganj and Nagaon) districts⁵³ with effect from 2012-13 and for the rest of districts; it was applicable from 2013-14 as per the circular *ibid*. The excess expenditure worked out in audit was excluding the high burden districts.

1.3.9.3 Irregular utilisation of ICDS (General) fund

(i) In the test checked Karbi Anglong district, on the basis of proposal submitted (January 2010) by Programme Officer, ICDS Cell, Diphu and administrative approval accorded (January 2010) by the Secretary, Department of Social Welfare, Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), a Community Hall was constructed at Howraghat ICDS Project at a cost of ₹21 lakh.

Providing of funds out of the ICDS (General) Programme for the construction of Community Hall was beyond the scope of ICDS Scheme and thus, the expenditure incurred on this count was unauthorised and irregular.

(ii) Procurement of vehicles under ICDS scheme requires prior approval of MoWCD. Scrutiny, however, revealed that during 2009-10, the Programme Officer, ICDS Cell, Karbi Anglong, Diphu procured one Mahendra Bolero SLX-2WD vehicle at a cost of ₹6 lakh for office use on the basis of sanction accorded (March 2010) by the Secretary, SWD, KAAC out of the funds available

⁵³ The districts selected by MoWCD, GoI on the count of under nutrition and anemia using DLHS-II data from non-EAG States.

under ICDS (General). This was done without obtaining the necessary approval of MoWCD. Thus, the purchase of the vehicle was unauthorised and irregular.

This not only resulted in unauthorized utilisation of ICDS (General) funds amounting to ₹27 lakh but also deprived the beneficiaries from getting intended benefits under the scheme.

1.3.9.4 Receipt and issue of ICDS material not accounted for

(i) As per order of DSW, a Guwahati based supplier supplied (March to August 2013) 1,485 Plastic Mat involving ₹12,02,850 and 1,350 Water Flask worth ₹2,43,000 to Barhampur ICDS Project under Nagaon district. Although the CDPO showed receipt of the items in the delivery challans, the same were neither found recorded in the Stock Register nor any evidence produced in support of their distribution to the AWCs.

Thus, the possibilities of misappropriation amounting to ₹14.46 lakh (₹12,02,850 + ₹2,43,000) could not be ruled out. The details are shown in *Appendix-1.15*.

(ii) In test checked Kokrajhar district, M/s JK Enterprise, Gossaigaon supplied (February 2014) 341 Plastic Container with cover (50 kg capacity @ ₹1,890 each) and 341 Plastic Container with cover (40 kg capacity @ ₹1,750 each) to the Project Officer, Kachugaon ICDS Project, Kachugaon as per the supply order of Joint Director, Social Welfare, BTC, Kokrajhar. The entire quantity was shown issued (20 February 2014) to 341 AWCs.

During Joint Physical verification of 10 AWCs, it was however noticed that none of the 10 AWCs received the said plastic containers. Thus, there is a strong possibility of misappropriation of the entire amount (of ₹12.41 lakh) expended in supply of 682 plastic containers.

1.3.9.5 Delayed accountal and non-distribution of ICDS material

Audit of records of CDPO, Dhakuakhana under Lakhimpur district disclosed that ICDS materials worth ₹30.30 lakh were received in the project office in December 2013 and accounted for in the Stock Register in March 2014 *i.e.*, after a delay of three months. It was however noticed in audit that the said material was found not issued to the AWCs as of June 2014 depriving the intended benefits to the beneficiaries and raising doubts about fictitious receipt or diversion of the material. The matter needs to be investigated. Details are shown in Table to 1.27.

Table-1.27
Position of materials received in Dhakuakhana Project but not issued

Supply order No.	Name of supplier; Challan No. & date	Items (No. of AWCs x Quantity per AWC)	Quantity (Nos.)	Rate (₹)	Amount (₹)
DSW(ICDS)G/156/2013/Pt. II/38 dt.24.12.13	MD Associates; Challan No.3673 dt.27.12.13	Medicated Washing soap (522 nos. AWCs x 15 nos.)	7830	21	164430
DSW(ICDS)G/156/2013/Pt. II/36 dt.24.12.13	SB Enterprise; Challan No. 3272 dt.27.12.13	Tenicot Ring with net (522 nos. AWCs x 10 nos.)	5220	159	829980
		Wax Crayon (522 nos. AWCs x 15 nos.)	7830	51	399330
		Plate Stainless Steel (522 nos. AWCs x 15 nos.)	7830	110	861300
		Painting Box (522 nos. AWCs x 15 nos.)	7830	99	775170
Total					30,30,210

Source: Project records.

1.3.9.6 Short deposit of VAT

In the test checked Kokrajhar district, Jt. Director, Social Welfare, BTC procured (January 2013) 1,79,192 small mats and 34,460 big size towels involving expenditure of ₹2,99,98,980 including 13.5 per cent VAT amounting to ₹35,68,160. Scrutiny revealed that the VAT of ₹13,21,540 only (calculated at 5 per cent) was deposited. This resulted in short deposit of VAT of ₹22,46,620 (₹35,68,160 - ₹13,21,540) by the Jt. Director into the Government account.

1.3.10 Implementation of Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP)

ICDS Scheme was formulated for eradication of child malnutrition by providing supplementary feeding and to bridge the protein-energy gap between the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) and average dietary intake (ADI) of children and pregnant and lactating women. Every beneficiary under SNP is to be provided nutrition for 300 days a year.

As per Clause-7 of the SNP guidelines, the State is to make adequate budget provision in their Annual Budget based on the number and the category of SN vis-à-vis financial norms for each category of beneficiaries so that SN for 300 days can be provided without any interruption.

1.3.10.1 Financial Position

The position of fund received from GoI and GoA under SNP and utilized by the Department during 2009-14 is given in Table-1.28.

Table-1.28
Position of fund received and utilized under SNP (₹ in crore)

Year	Opening Balance	Fund received from GoI	Fund received from GoA	Total funds available	Expenditure	Closing Balance	Percentage of utilisation of available funds
2009-10	85.53	176.61	6.22	268.36	215.14	53.22	80.17
2010-11	53.22	215.80	45.00	314.02	191.35	122.67	60.94
2011-12	122.67	300.83	44.50	468.00	376.35	91.64	80.41
2012-13	91.64	339.97	48.95	480.56	272.51	208.05	56.71
2013-14	208.05	305.98	50.49	564.52	432.57	131.95	76.63
Total		1339.19	195.16		1487.92		

Source: Information furnished by the Directorate.

Audit observed that the expenditure figure shown above were the fund withdrawn from treasury based on the Fixation of Ceiling (FOC) received and released to the district and do not depict the figures of the actual expenditure incurred on the purpose of SNP provision to children as the balances lying in the District were not taken into account. Information furnished to audit, however, revealed that during 2009-14, utilisation of available fund under SNP ranged between 56.71 and 80.41 *per cent* of the drawals against SNP. This lower utilisation indicates that many children were deprived of the benefits under Supplementary Nutrition Programme. Non utilisation of crucial funds meant for welfare of malnourished children was irregular and would have long term impact on health and longevity in future.

1.3.10.2 SN as Take Home Ration (THR) and Hot Cooked Meal

As per guidelines, AWCMCs are authorized to procure, distribute and manage food stuff under SNP. Again, as per the interim order dated 7 October 2004 of the Honøble Supreme Court, the contractors shall not be used for supply of SN foodstuff in AWCs and preferably ICDS funds shall be spent by making use of village committees, self help groups (SHGs) and Mahila Mandals for buying grains and preparation of meals. The MoWCD, GoI while communicating (December 2004) the direction of the Supreme Court asked all the States to file affidavit on compliance made. The MoWCD further directed (December 2005) to ensure that Panchayati Raj Institutions, SHGs and Mahila Mandals should be used for buying grains, other condiments etc., for preparation of meals at AWCs and supervision/monitoring of SN.

It could not, however, be ascertained as to whether the State Government had filed any affidavit to the Supreme Court as directed by MoWCD in December 2004. The State Government, however, in response to Supreme Court's direction against the Writ Petition (Civil) No.196/2001 belatedly (February 2013) filed an affidavit stating that 30 to 35 *per cent* of the funds available will be utilized through NGOs for procuring and supplying foodstuff to the beneficiaries in the riverine and difficult areas as the performance of the NGOs was found to be satisfactory.

Analysis of records revealed that the Directorate apart from releasing funds to AWCMCs for providing Hot Cooked Meal to the children in the age group of 3-6 years, was also procuring and supplying food stuff to the AWCs through NGOs for providing SN to the beneficiaries in the age group of six months to three years as Take Home Ration (THR). The NGOs were supplying the food stuff upto the project level and paying cash to the CDPOs being the cost of fuel, banana, condiments and transportation cost for delivery of foodstuffs to the AWCs. Further, they were not involved in the supervision and monitoring of distribution of food stuff, preparation of meal and actual consumption of the same by the beneficiaries. As a result, it was difficult to ascertain as to whether the SN food stuff provided as THR by the State was used only by the targeted beneficiaries. The State Government/Directorate had also not evolved any mechanism to monitor utilisation

of THR by the actual beneficiaries frustrating the system of providing SN as THR. Thus, there were chances of diversion of cash and other items of foodstuff.

Non-delivery of the foodstuff by the NGOs directly to AWCs and by making payment of the cost of fuel, oil etc., in cash to CDPOs instead to AWCs was another deficiency in the system as the cash amount did not reach to the actual beneficiaries as would be evident from the succeeding paragraphs:

(a) During 2009-13, different SNP foodstuffs were supplied to CDPO, Barhampur ICDS Project through different NGOs as per order of DSW for distribution to beneficiaries as THR through AWCs. The NGOs delivered the foodstuff upto the point of Project office and paid (in cash) the cost of transportation of the same to AWCs along with the cost of fuel, banana and condiments etc., amounting to ₹5.69 lakh to the CDPO for distribution to the AWCs.

Scrutiny revealed that as recorded in delivery challans, cash amount of ₹5.69 lakh was received by the CDPO but the same was neither accounted for in the cash book nor in the Stock Register. Disbursement of the due amounts to AWCs was also not made. Non-receipt of any amount by the AWCs during the period was also corroborated by the statement made by the AWWs during physical verification/field visits by the audit. Thus, the possibilities of misappropriation of funds amounting to ₹5.69 lakh could not be ruled out. Details of the foodstuff supplied and cash handed over are shown in *Appendix-1.16*.

(b) Scrutiny revealed that Project Officer, Karunabari ICDS Project, Karunabari under Lakhimpur district received (30 September) 15278617.20 gm Common Rice and 5745008.50 gm Matar (Yellow) along with the cash of ₹1,02,478.53 payable to AWCs from a Dhubri based NGO against the supply order (10 August 2010) of DSW, Assam. Though cash of ₹1,02,478.53 was accounted for in the SNP Stock Register, the distribution of the amount to the AWCs was not recorded in the said register (as done in other cases). Actual Payee Receipts (APRs) obtained, if any, in support of the payment of the amounts to the AWCs was also not produced. In absence of any authentic document of actual payment to the AWCs, possibilities of misappropriation of the amount of ₹1,02,478.53 could not be ruled out. Non-receipt of any amount in this case by 10 AWCs was also corroborated during joint physical verification done in June 2014.

(c) During 2010-11, as per supply order (August 2010) of the DSW, a Guwahati based NGO supplied SNP foodstuff namely common rice (3649569.00 gm) and matar (1324215.20 gm) along with cash amount of ₹53,846.10 to CDPO, Biswanath ICDS Project for distribution to the beneficiaries as THR through AWCs.

Audit of records revealed that though receipt of the foodstuffs was accounted for, receipt and payment of the cash amount of ₹53,846.10 was neither accounted for nor its whereabouts could be ascertained from the available records.

Similarly, another Guwahati based NGO, as per order (8 August 2010) of the DSW supplied common rice (3,15,58,800 gm) and matar (1,19,34,000 gm) along with cash amount of ₹1,13,081 to the CDPO, Biswanath ICDS Project. Though the food stuffs were accounted for and distributed, the cash amount was neither accounted for nor distributed.

Non-receipt of any amount by the AWCs in this regard was also corroborated during physical verification of the AWCs. Thus, the possibilities of misappropriation of funds could not be ruled out in this case also.

1.3.10.3 Disruption in delivery of services

The Scheme provides that every beneficiary under Supplementary Nutrition (SN) should be provided nutrition for 300 days in a year (*i.e.* 25 days in a month).

GoA/DSW did not maintain database regarding providing SN to the beneficiaries for the years 2009-11 and in the subsequent years of 2011-14 (as per the information furnished), the goal of providing 300 feeding days was never achieved in the State. The achievement of feeding days during 2011-14 in the plain districts ranged between 75.5 and 294 days. District-wise position of feeding days achieved in providing SN during 2011-14 is given in **Appendix-1.17**.

Performance of five districts⁵⁴ (under Plains and BTAD areas) with regard to providing of SN was appreciable as the services delivered indicated an increasing trend year after year. The scenario in the two Hill districts (Dima Hasao and Karbi Anglong) was worse as no SN was provided there during 2011-13 due to GoA/Programme Officer not releasing funds to the grass root level functionaries. Only 70 days SN was provided in Karbi Anglong district during 2013-14 and no SN was provided in Dima Hasao district during 2011-14.

1.3.10.4 Non-release of SNP fund to Hill districts/BTAD areas

(a) Based on the proposal received from the DSW, GoA sanctioned ₹5.73 crore for providing SN to the beneficiaries of Dima Hasao and Karbi Anglong districts during 2010-11 as detailed in Table-1.29.

⁵⁴

Sl. No.	Name of the districts	No. of feeding days		
		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
1	Barpeta	218	232	290
2	Nalbari	166	206	230
3	Sivasagar	244	268	274
4	Dibrugarh	256	283	294
5	Kokrajhar	119.6	172	262

Source: Departmental records.

Table-1.29
Position of non-release of SNP fund to Hill districts

District	Sanction order No. & date	Amount sanctioned (₹)	No. of AWCs/ beneficiaries @ 43 per AWC	No. of Mini AWCs/ beneficiaries @ 20 per AWC	No. of days for which SN to be provided
Dima Hasao	SWD.389/2010/12 Dt.21.02.11	35,80,250 (State share)	349 (15,007)	264 (5,280)	88.24 days
	SWD.99/2011/4 dt.10.03.11	50,87,979 (Central share)	349 (15,007)	264 (5,280)	62.7 days
Karbi Anglong	SWD.389/2010/4 Dt.26.11.10	2,00,84,659 (State share)	2,449 (1,05,307)	425 (8,500)	88.24 days
	SWD.99/2011/5 dt.10.03.11	2,85,42,795 (Central Share)	2,449 (1,05,307)	425 (8,500)	62.7 days
Total		5,72,95,683			

Source: Departmental records.

The entire sanctioned amount ₹572.96 lakh was withdrawn (February and March 2011) by DSW and of which ₹200.85 lakh released (February 2011) to KAAC as State share. The remaining amounts of ₹86.68 lakh and ₹285.43 lakh due for release to North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council (NCHAC) and KAAC respectively were, however, not released as the same were stopped (May 2011) by GoA in view of Hill Areas Department's (HAD) observation to send all moneys to NCHAC and KAAC through HAD. As of March 2014, the amounts were lying in 8443 Civil Deposit.

Lack of coordination between two Government departments (SW and HAD) resulted in failure to release funds to the hill districts, thus, depriving 1,34,094 children of NCHAC (20,287) and KAAC (1,13,807) from the intended benefits under SNP during 2010-11.

(b) Based on the proposal submitted (July 2013) by DSW, GoA sanctioned (October 2013) ₹243.76 lakh being the State share of 2013-14 for providing morning snacks to 1,20,314 and 17,700 beneficiaries under 2,798 AWCs and 885 Mini AWCs of KAAC and NCHAC respectively.

The amount was, however, not released to KAAC and NCHAC due to non-furnishing of information regarding constitution of AWCMCs in the districts by the PO, Social Welfare, KAAC and Deputy Director, Social Welfare, NCHAC. Non-release of the fund thus, deprived morning snacks to 1,38,014 beneficiaries (1,20,314 in Karbi Anglong and 17,700 in Dima Hasao district) under 16 ICDS Projects (Karbi Anglong -11 and Dima Hasao-5).

(c) An amount of ₹39.48 lakh was released to the DSWO, Kokrajhar for implementation of SNP in Hatidhura ICDS Project (General Areas) during 2010-11 as shown in Table-1.30.

**Table-1.30
Position of SNP fund released to Hatidhura Project during 2010-11**

Sl. No.	Sanction order No. & date	Amount sanctioned (₹)	Amount released (₹)	No. of AWCs involved	No. of beneficiaries involved
1	SWD.388/2010/10 dt.23.09.10 (State)	41,72,95,784	10,47,232	138	5,934
2	SWD.330/2007/Pt. II/34 dt 08.12.10 (Central)	7,87,58,7948	13,54,579	81	7,695
3	SWD.137/2009/126 dt.03.02.10 (Central)	34,45,27,680	5,92,920	57	5,416
4	SWD.393/2008/Pt.I/71 dt.25.02.11(Central)	3,80,95,450	9,53,222	57	4,212
Total			39,47,953	333	23,257

Source: Departmental records.

As 70 AWCs (General Areas) under Hatidhura ICDS Project lie under the jurisdiction of Dhubri district, the DSWO, Kokrajhar refunded ₹16.99 lakh to the Directorate. The Directorate instead of releasing the fund to DSWO, Dhubri deposited (16 July 2011) the same into DDO's (DSW) Current bank account thereby depriving 3,010 (70 x 43) beneficiaries in Dhubri district from the intended benefits under SN.

Further, SNP fund of ₹6.05 lakh for 2009-10 was deposited (27 February 2013) into the Joint account of DC and DSWO, Kokrajhar through e-transfer without indicating the purpose of release. Assuming the amount related to Hatidhura ICDS, DSWO, Kokrajhar refunded the same alongwith another amount of ₹5.29 lakh to the Directorate. This amount was however, not transferred to the account of the DSWO, Dhubri till March 2014.

The above position indicated that lack of coordination between different Government functionaries and failure to observe basic procedural formalities severely hampered the proper implementation of SNP in the State.

1.3.10.5 Excess/short release of SNP foodstuff/fund

During 2012-13, GoA sanctioned (February 2013) ₹1,619.11 lakh for providing SN to 2,39,770 beneficiaries under 2,746 AWCs/Mini-AWCs of Karbi Anglong district for 155 days. KAAC on the basis of a proposal submitted by the PO, ICDS Cell, sanctioned and released (December 2013) ₹835.67 lakh for providing SN for 80 feeding days. For the balance amount of ₹783.44 lakh no proposal was submitted by the PO for release as of May 2014 and the amount was lying with the Council. As a result, 2,39,770 beneficiaries were deprived of SN for 75 days despite availability of the funds for the purpose.

Audit of records further revealed that foodstuff for 80 feeding days were supplied to AWCs without assessing actual number of beneficiaries available in the centres under each project. This resulted in excess/short supply of foodstuff to different ICDS Projects as shown in Table-1.31.

Table-1.31
Excess/short supply of SNP food stuff

Sl. No.	Name of the ICDS Project	No. of centres		No. of Beneficiaries to which SNP supplied		Actual no of beneficiaries as per MPR		No. of beneficiaries against which excess (+)/short (-) supply made	
		AWCs	Mini AWC	Children	LM/PW	Children	LM/PW	Children	LM/PW
1	Lumbajong	149	28	12155	3204	13266	1939	-1111	1265
2	Rongkhang	302	17	23245	6176	22419	3817	826	2359
3	Howraghat	468	186	41610	10848	27211	4265	14399	6583
4	Bokajan	329	86	27685	7268	22016	3629	5669	3639
5	Nilip	182	0	13650	3640	18685	3785	-5035	-145
6	Socheng	78	29	6865	1792	8597	1208	-1732	584
7	Chinthong	168	0	12600	3360	15353	3602	-2753	-242
8	Amri	144	0	10800	2880	12528	2890	-1728	-10
9	Rongmongwe samelangso	274	0	20550	5480	22016	3398	-1466	2082
10	Longsomepi	227	79	19790	5172	17629	2937	2161	2235

Source: Departmental records.

Analysis further revealed that the PO sanctioned funds for supply of SN foodstuff based on the sanction accorded by DSW without ascertaining the actual status of beneficiaries available in the centres. This indicated that centre-wise database of beneficiaries was not available both at the Directorate and PO level.

1.3.10.6 Utilisation of SNP fund for relief purposes

(a) Non-recoupment of SNP fund

GoA/DSW instructed (July 2012) the DC and DPO, Kokrajhar to provide foodstuff to the children between 6 months and 6 years, PW/LM and adolescent girls, who were affected during ethnic violence occurred during July 2012 and staying in the relief camps, out of the available funds under SNP. As per the instruction, the concerned CDPOs were to identify the beneficiaries.

Scrutiny of records of the BTC and the Joint Director, SWD, Kokrajhar revealed that the Principal Secretary, BTC sanctioned (out of the available funds of ₹30.72 crore under SNP for the year 2011-12) and released ₹9.81 crore in three instalments (₹3.67 crore, ₹2.85 crore and ₹3.29 crore) to the Joint Director for payment to the NGOs for supply of SNP foodstuff (Mother Horlicks, Baby Milk, Biscuit, Chira and Jaggery) to the relief camps at eight⁵⁵ places.

The Principal Secretary, BTC intimated the matter of utilisation of the entire amount of ₹9.81 crore to the Social Welfare Department (SWD), GoA and sought reimbursement (November 2012 and January 2013) of the amount. The same however, could not be reimbursed due to non-availability of funds under Relief heads in the Revenue and Disaster Management Department (RDMD) and as such, the SNP fund amounting to ₹9.81 crore remained unrecouped.

GoA through the SWD, however, reimbursed (March 2014) only ₹3.29 crore to BTC out of available SNP funds for the year 2013-14 instead from Relief - heads of RDMD which was again irregular.

⁵⁵ Kokrajhar, Dotma, Sidli, Borobazar, Gossaigaon, Debitoala, Hatidhura, Kachugaon.

On this being pointed out, GoA while admitting the irregularity stated (November 2014) that reimbursement of ₹3.29 crore was made to Principal Secretary, BTC out of available SNP fund for the year 2013-14 as funds were not readily available with RDMD under Relief heads for recoupment.

The fact however, remained that even if SNP funds were released for relief at short notice, these should have been made good subsequently so as not to deprive the regular SNP beneficiaries.

(b) Excess expenditure

GoA sanctioned (February 2014) ₹1,18,50,939 out of Central Share for implementation of SNP in the relief camps for the riot affected children and PW/LW of Dhubri district as reimbursement for the year 2013-14 on the basis of claims preferred by the DSWO, Dhubri.

Examination of the records of DSW revealed that the DSWO incurred the expenditure (on the instruction of the Government) for providing items like Chira/Gur/Lactogen/Amul Milk/Horlicks etc., to the inmates of the relief camps in Dhubri district affected during ethnic violence. The claim submitted by DSW disclosed that there were 21,550 children in the age group of 6 month to 6 years and 2,820 PW/LW beneficiaries who were provided with the items for 28 days.

As such, the expenditure should have been restricted to ₹28,08,400⁵⁶ in terms of rates fixed by GoI and therefore, there was excess expenditure of ₹90,42,539 (₹1,18,50,939 - ₹28,08,400) incurred by the DSWO, Dhubri.

GoA while accepting the audit observation, stated (November 2014) that in the relief camps apart from the targeted beneficiaries of the ICDS scheme, other categories of the people taking shelter were also provided food on humanitarian ground and therefore, it was not possible to comply the schematic norms under such circumstances.

The fact however, remained that the excess expenditure amounting to ₹90.43 lakh incurred from SNP fund for relief purposes was thus irregular and unauthorized.

(c) Failure to prefer claim for reimbursement

(i) DSW, Assam on the basis of reports received from DSWO, North Lakhimpur and the instruction received from the GoA (September 2012), placed order (October 2012) with a Kokrajhar based NGO for the supply of 4,19,68,500 gm branded biscuits, 83,93,700 gm milk powder, 50,22,500 gm Horlicks and 83,93,700 gm Cerelac for distribution to 59,955 beneficiaries in the age group of 6 months to 6 years and 10,045 PW/LM in flood affected areas under 7 ICDS Project.

The NGO accordingly supplied foodstuff and was paid (25 January 2013) ₹2,53,27,460 (₹2,04,79,663 + ₹48,47,797) and ₹31,889 on account of

⁵⁶ $(21,550 \times ₹4 \times 28) + (2,820 \times ₹5 \times 28) = ₹24,13,600 + ₹3,94,800 = ₹28,08,400.$

Transportation out of the funds available for the year 2012-13 as directed. GoA also instructed (September 2012) to submit the claim for reimbursement of the amount spent with proper records. The DSWO, however, did not submit the claim as of July 2014. As a result, the amount of ₹2,53,59,349 remained unrecouped from the Revenue Department.

(ii) Similarly, DSWO, Sonitpur, Tezpur incurred an expenditure of ₹1,13,19,436 towards payment to a Nagaon based NGO for the supply of 1,79,68,300 gm branded biscuits, 35,93,660 gm milk powder, 26,56,500 gm Horlicks and 35,93,660 gm Cerelac for distribution to 25,669 beneficiaries in the age group of 6 months to 6 years and 5,313 PW/LM to flood affected areas under nine ICDS Projects. The claim for reimbursement of the amount was not submitted by the DSWO as of July 2014 and the amount remained unrecouped and affected the distribution under SNP.

1.3.10.7 Supply of SNP foodstuff - excess payment to NGO

For utilisation of the unspent balance of SNP fund of ₹4.86 crore received for implementation during 2009-10 in Cachar district, DSWO and DC, Cachar, as per direction conveyed (May 2010) by DSW, Assam, decided to procure and supply SNP foodstuff to ICDS Projects/AWCs through a Guwahati based NGO at the rates approved (11 August 2010) by the District Level Committee (DLC) on SNP. Details are shown in Table-1.32.

Table-1.32
Rate of foodstuff approved by DLC (Cachar) for SNP

Sl. No.	Items	Approved rate
1	Rice (Best quality)	₹2,250 per quintal
2	Masoor dal (Small)	₹5,100 per quintal
3	Mustard oil (General Brand)	₹930 per tin

Source: Records of DSWO, Cachar.

Accordingly, the DSWO placed (August 2010) order with the NGO for supply of 3,55,517.736 Kg rice, 89,504.52 Kg masoor dal and for the disbursement of cash amounting to ₹26,27,881.76 (cost of transportation, oil etc.) to the nine ICDS Projects as indicated in Table-1.33.

Table-1.33
Position of foodstuff and cash amount to be supplied/paid to the Projects

Sl. No.	Name of the project	Rice (Kg)	Masoor dal (Kg)	Cash amount (₹)
1	Tapang	15151.116	3814.740	111992.56
2	Kalain	31796.004	8004.876	235026.64
3	Katigorah	62311.632	15687.408	460589.12
4	Narsingpur	54842.772	13807.068	405381.52
5	Sonai	46947.120	11819.280	347019.20
6	Borjalenga	23900.352	6017.088	176664.32
7	Palonghat	20912.808	5264.952	154581.28
8	Udharbond	48014.100	12087.900	354906.00
9	Salchapra	51641.832	13001.208	381721.12
Total		3,55,517.736	89,504.520	26,27,881.76

Source: Records of DSWO, Cachar.

On completion of supply, the NGO submitted claim for ₹2,82,49,728 against the due amount of ₹1,51,91,761.34⁵⁷. The amount so claimed was found to have been paid to the NGO between October 2010 and January 2011 resulting in an excess payment of ₹1,30,57,966.66 to the NGO. Details of quantities ordered for, supplied by the NGO and excess payment made have been shown in **Appendix-1.18**.

Audit observed that though the NGO supplied the food items as per the quantity ordered for, but preferred claim on the formula $\text{Number of Centres} \times \text{Number of beneficiaries} \times \text{Rate} \times \text{Number of feeding days}$ considering the rate of ₹four (cost of SN for children) and ₹five (cost of SN for PW/LM) fixed by GoI instead at DLC's fixed rate for the quantity supplied to the nine projects mentioned above, thereby resulting in excess payment.

Further, the Director while approving the utilisation of the funds, instructed (December 2010) the DSWO to maintain approved norm of providing calorific value to each beneficiary. However, the same was not done as would be evident from details in Table-1.34.

**Table-1.34
Position of supply of SN foodstuff without maintaining Calorie content**

Sl. No.	Approved norm			Actually provided		Less content (Calorie)
	Item of foodstuff	Quantity (in gm)	Calorie	Quantity (in gm)	Calorie	
For malnourished children (6 months to 3 Years) @ ₹4.00						
1	Rice	75	259	49.44	170.73	88.27
2	Dal/Matar	25	86	12.49	42.97	43.03
For PG and LM @ ₹5.00						
1	Rice	100	345	64.99	224.22	120.78
2	Dal/Matar	40	138	16.25	54.44	83.56

Source: Departmental records.

It was thus revealed that while supplying SN food stuffs, DSWO could not ensure supplying the required quantity of food stuffs to the respective categories of beneficiaries (6 months to 6 years), meeting the calorific requirement prescribed under the scheme.

1.3.10.8 Non-accountal and non-release of SNP fund

In Sonitpur district, as per the Bank Statement, SNP fund amounting to ₹8,52,94,906 was credited to the bank account of DSWO, Sonitpur, Tezpur on 2 May 2012 (₹12,86,824), 16 September 2013 (₹31,46,210 and ₹8,08,61,872). But the same were neither accounted for in the cash book of the DSWO nor released to AWCMCs as of July 2014, thus depriving the beneficiaries from getting timely SN.

1.3.10.9 Delay in release of SNP fund to AWCMCs

As per order of the Honorable Supreme Court/GoI, SN to beneficiaries should be provided without any disruption. For this, the funds should be released to grass root level workers in time.

Check on relevant records revealed that the DSWOs of four selected districts namely Sonitpur, Cachar, Kamrup and Nalbari released funds to the Project

⁵⁷ (3,55,517.736 Kg x ₹22.50) + (89,504.52 Kg x ₹51) + ₹26,27,881.76.

Officers/AWCMCs for providing Hot Cooked Meal and Morning Snacks to the beneficiaries with a delay ranging from 15 to 822 days.

This indicated that the order of the Supreme Court with regard to providing of SN was not strictly adhered to, in these test checked cases.

1.3.10.10 Suspected misappropriation of SNP fund/foodstuff

(a) On the basis of newspaper clippings and public complaint of embezzlement of SNP funds, Hon'ble Minister, SWD, GoA recommended (January 2009) initiation of vigilance enquiry against five CDPOs of Hailakandi district. Accordingly, GoA conducted an enquiry into the matter through DC, Hailakandi and framed (August 2009) draft charges against the five CDPOs. All the CDPOs were placed (March 2010) under suspension for withdrawal of SNP fund totalling ₹42.37 lakh (Table-1.35) in cash instead of transferring into the accounts of the respective AWCMCs in violation of the scheme guidelines.

Table-1.35
Position of amount withdrawn from bank in cash by the CDPOs

Sl. No.	Name of the CDPOs	Place of posting	Amount withdrawn (₹)	Remarks
1	Smti. Pranamika Phukan	CDPO, South Hailakandi ICDS Project	690000	The CDPOs did not maintain cashbook to show receipt and disbursement/ utilisation of the amounts.
2	Smt. Monika Kakoti Bharali	CDPO, Lala ICDS Project	473691	
3	Sri Paragdhara Konwar	CDPO, Katlichera ICDS Project	1284905	
4	Smt. Jyotilekha Dutta	CDPO, Hailakandi ICDS Project	704930	
5	Sri Asrof Hussain Laskar	CDPO, Hailakandi ICDS Project	1083606	
Total			42,37,132	

Source: Records of GoA, Social Welfare Department.

GoA referred the above cases to the State Enquiry Officer for departmental proceedings (DP). Suspension orders of the CDPOs were revoked (March 2011) without prejudice to DP. Case against Shri Asrof Hussain Laskar, CDPO, Hailakandi ICDS Project was dropped on the basis of the evidence gathered, while the cases against four others were not settled as of November 2014. Thus, the possibilities of misappropriation of funds amounting to ₹31.54 lakh⁵⁸ cannot be ruled out.

(b) Audit revealed that DSWO, Karimganj placed (December 2010) order with a Guwahati based NGO for supply of 1,87,688.50 Kg rice and 46,710.90 Kg masoor dal. The NGO supplied (December 2010) the entire quantity and stored the foodstuff in Assam State Ware Housing Corporation at Karimganj. Subsequently, the DSWO instead of engaging the NGO for delivery of the same to the ICDS Projects, authorized a carrying agent for delivery of 1,22,350 Kg rice and 30,300 Kg masoor dal to the projects concerned. As per the report of the ADC, Karimganj, the agent had taken delivery of the items during 29 January 2011 to 2 February 2011 but did not deliver the same to the projects and instead sold the same in the black market. Accordingly, FIR was lodged against the DSWO, Head Assistant (HA) of DSWO's office and the agent in April 2011. The HA and the agent were

⁵⁸ ₹42.37 lakh - ₹10.83 lakh (Shri A. H. Laskar).

arrested by Police while DSWO was absconding. The matter was brought (May 2011) to the notice of GoA by DC, Karimganj proposing disciplinary action against the DSWO and the HA. To an audit enquiry in this regard, GoA stated (November 2014) that departmental proceedings were in process.

(c) During February 2011, SNP foodstuff namely common rice (2,01,04,660 gm) and matar (76,19,190 gm) were supplied to the CDPO, Biswanath ICDS Project through an NGO for distribution to the beneficiaries. The NGO delivered the foodstuff upto the Project Office and paid the transportation cost for delivery of the same to the AWCs along with the cost of fuel, banana and condiments etc., amounting to ₹72,043 in cash. But the same were not accounted for in the Stock Register/cash book. Issue/disbursement details of the foodstuff and the cash amounts to the AWCs were neither shown to audit nor their whereabouts were ascertainable from the available records. Non-receipt of foodstuff and cash amount by the AWCs was also corroborated by the statement made by the AWWs during physical verification of AWCs. Thus, the possibilities of misappropriation of the foodstuff as well as the cash amounting to ₹72,043 could not be ruled out.

1.3.10.11 Distribution of SN foodstuff

(a) Short accountal/distribution of SN foodstuff

As per order (2 May 2012) of DSW, Assam, a Guwahati based NGO supplied (May 2012) 14,47,200 gm masoor dal to CDPO, Barhampur ICDS Project under Nagaon district. The Stock Register maintained by the CDPO, however, showed receipt of 1,47,200 gm masoor dal only. The CDPO also distributed 1,47,200 gm masoor dal to 134 AWCs along with 19,29,600 gm received (25 July 2012) from another NGO. Thus, there was both short accountal and distribution of masoor dal of 13,00,000 gm to the beneficiaries.

(b) Short distribution of SN foodstuff

(A) SN foodstuff as THR was delivered to CDPO, Binnakandi ICDS Project under Nagaon district by five NGOs during 2009-13 for onward distribution to beneficiaries. Scrutiny, however, revealed that there were short distributions of the foodstuff to AWCs as shown in Table-1.36.

**Table-1.36
Short distribution of SN foodstuff**

Sl. No.	Item of SN foodstuff	Quantity received at project level (Kg)	Quantity distributed to AWCs (Kg)	Quantity short distributed (Kg)
1	Common Rice	188030.620	186929.000	1101.620
2	Matar	57692.400	57619.000	73.400
3	Skimmed Milk Powder	3454.698	3354.000	100.698

Source: Records of Binnakandi ICDS Project.

(B) In the test checked Sootea and Chaiduar ICDS Projects under Sonitpur district, the CDPOs concerned as against receipt of 11,27,40,600 gm rice and 4,26,33,000 gm matar (Yellow), distributed 10,83,30,200 gm rice and 4,11,38,000 gm matar to

AWCs leading to short distribution of rice of 44,10,400 gm and quantity of matar of 14,95,000 gm as shown in Table-1.37.

Table-1.37
Position of short distribution of SN foodstuff made by ICDS Projects (Quantity in grams)

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	Month of receipt	Quantity Received		Quantity distributed		Short distribution	
			Rice	Matar	Rice	Matar	Rice	Matar
1	Sootea	February 2011	27274800	10314000	25561200	9666000	1713600	648000
2	Sootea	October 2012	31059000	11745000	30371000	11546000	688000	199000
3	Chaiduar	January 2011	54406800	20574000	52398000	19926000	2008800	648000
Total			112740600	42633000	108330200	41138000	4410400	1495000

Source: Records of Sootea and Chaiduar ICDS Project.

(NB: In respect of Sl. No. 2 and 3, quantities received against 191 and 381 AWCs but distributed to 179 and 369 AWCs respectively)

(c) Non/Short accountal of SN foodstuff at AWC level

In the 20 test checked AWCs under two Projects of Lakhimpur district, 10 test checked AWCs under Sootea ICDS of Sonitpur district and 10 test checked AWCs under Madhupur Project of Nalbari district, the AWWs recorded receipt and distribution of 55,52,800 gm common rice and 18,34,480 gm Matar (Yellow) to the beneficiaries as THR against issue of 30,50,000 gm common rice and 11,50,000 gm matar (Yellow) by the concerned CDPOs. This led to short-accountal/distribution of common rice 25,02,800 gm and matar (Yellow) 6,84,480 gm as detailed in Table-1.38.

Table-1.38
Non/Short accountal/distribution of SNP food stuff at AWC level

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	Month of receipt	Quantity received by CDPO (gm)	Quantity shown distributed to 10 AWCs (gm)	Quantity received at 10 AWCs (gm)	Short receipt/accountal
Common Rice						
1	Karunabari	November 2012	36628200 (for 109 AWCs)	1285200 (@128.520 Kg to 10 AWCs)	1200000 (@120 Kg per AWC)	85200
2	Dhakuakhana	October 2012	50694000 (for 426 AWCs)	1190000 (@ 119 Kg to 10 AWCs)	850000 (@ 85 Kg per AWC)	340000
3	Sootea	October 2012	31059000 (for 251 AWCs)	1210000 (@ 121 Kg to 10 AWCs)	1000000(@ 100 kg per AWC)	210000
4	Madhupur	February 2014	13259960 (for 71 AWCs)	1867600(@ 186.760 Kg to 10 AWCs)	Not accounted/not distributed	1867600
Total			857	55,52,800	30,50,000	25,02,800
Matar (Yellow)						
1	Karunabari	November 2012	13851000 (for 109 AWCs)	486000 (@ 48.60 Kg to 10 AWCs)	450000(@ 45 Kg per AWC)	36000
2	Dhakuakhana	October 2012	19170000 (for 426 AWCs)	450000(@ 45 Kg to 10 AWCs)	300000(@ 30 Kg per AWC)	150000
3	Sootea	October 2012	11745000 (for 251 AWCs)	460000 (@ 46 Kg to 10 AWCs)	400000 (@ 30 Kg per AWC)	60000
4	Madhupur	February 2014	3113208 (for 71 AWCs)	438480 (@ 43.848 Kg to 10 AWCs)	Not accounted/not distributed	438480
Total			857	18,34,480	11,50,000	6,84,480

Source: Project level records.

The issue of non and or short accountal/distribution was corroborated from the information obtained during the joint physical verification of the 40 AWCs on test check basis. Looking at the trend of delivery and distribution in these cases, the possibilities of non/short accountal and distribution of SNP foodstuff in the remaining 817 (857 minus 40) AWCs could not be ruled out.

1.3.11 Quality check of SN foodstuff

The Scheme envisages mandatory laboratory checks of food material being used for providing SN in order to ensure that the food material contain the required nutrition component. Test check of quality of SN was to be done by Food and Nutrition Board (FNB) through its network of Quality Control Laboratories (QCLs) and Community Food and Nutrition Extension Units (CFNEUs). Samples for this purpose were to be collected by field units of FNB during the course of regular inspection of AWCs. Alternatively, the ICDS functionaries were also required to send samples to QCLs.

The Department did not furnish the information on adoption of the system in the State regarding quality control of SN foodstuff during 2009-14. Records of CDPOs of 21 selected ICDS projects also did not show sending of sample of SN material to the laboratories for quality check before issue of the same to the centres. The CDPO, Dhakuakhana and Karunabari ICDS Projects under Lakhimpur district only in a complaint case of supply of Skimmed Milk, sent the sample for the laboratory test.

GoA while accepting the audit observation stated (November 2014) that all the ICDS Projects will be instructed to send samples of food stuffs to the laboratories for necessary quality checks.

1.3.12 Growth Monitoring and Nutritional status of children

The scheme provides maintenance of Growth Chart for every child at AWCs for assessing their growth using weight for-age as an indicator. Children upto the age of three years are to be weighed monthly and children in the age group of 3-6 years are to be weighed quarterly. The Growth Charts are to be analysed by the CDPOs/health personnel to identify malnourished/severely malnourished children for taking remedial measures.

As per information furnished by the Department, there was huge shortfall in growth monitoring as only 43 to 63 *per cent* child beneficiaries in the State were weighed during 2009-13⁵⁹. Further, out of the children weighed, 64 to 78 *per cent* was stated to be normal. Position of year-wise children weighed and nutritional status of the children weighed as furnished by the department have been shown in Table-1.39 and Chart 4.

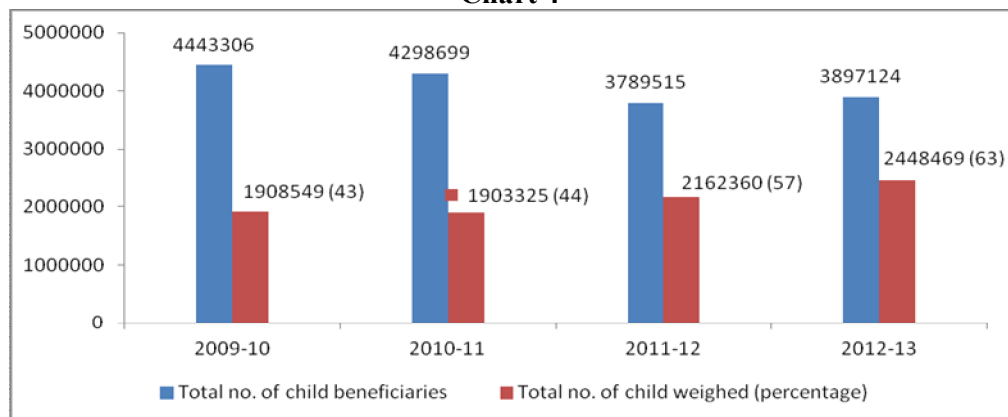
**Table-1.39
Nutritional Status of Children**

Year	Total no. of child beneficiaries	Total no. of child weighed (percentage)	Normal (percentage)	Malnourished	Severely malnourished
2009-10	4443306	1908549 (43)	1224892 (64)	667104	10961
2010-11	4298699	1903325 (44)	1383643 (73)	513316	5390
2011-12	3789515	2162360 (57)	1615610 (75)	536259	10500
2012-13	3897124	2448469 (63)	1905772 (78)	519852	22840
Total	1,64,28,644	84,22,703 (51)			

Source: Information furnished by DSW.

⁵⁹ Information for the year 2013-14 not furnished.

Chart 4



Source: Information furnished by DSW.

Audit observed that failure of the department in providing of Weighing Machine to all AWCs and non-replacement of defective supply thereof was the main reason attributable to the shortfall (as discussed in paragraph 1.3.4.2) in weighing/growth monitoring. Further, the field visit to 210 AWCs under 21 Projects of eight selected districts disclosed that there were deficiencies⁶⁰ in maintenance of Growth Charts in the AWCs and no check on the growth charts as required under the guidelines was exercised by the Supervisors and CDPOs.

This indicated that the intervention to mitigate the incidence of malnourishment among the children was not only inadequate but also the information furnished by the department was doubtful and therefore, the tracking of the benefits of SNP was extremely poor.

1.3.13 Pre-School Education (PSE)

The scheme envisaged providing of the benefit of non-formal pre-school education in the age group of 3-6 years through AWCs. In each AWC, the strength of such children was to be 40. The AWCs were to establish links with elementary schools so that the children could move to schools with full mental preparation.

During 2009-14, the State Government spent ₹41.93 crore (upto 3rd quarter of 2013-14) for providing PSE to the children. Year-wise expenditure incurred is shown in Table-1.40.

Table-1.40
Year wise expenditure on PSE for the years from 2009-10 to 2013-14

Year	Expenditure incurred (₹ in lakh)
2009-10	368.49
2010-11	597.00
2011-12	577.67
2012-13	869.95
2013-14 (upto 3 rd Quarter)	1,779.49
Total	4,192.60

Source: Statement of Expenditure (SOE) furnished to Government.

⁶⁰ (i) non-recording of growth every month; (ii) non-recording of date of birth; (iii) recording of less height of children in subsequent month; and (iv) use of wooden pencil for recording.

AWWs were required to maintain attendance register and other necessary records of all the children attending AWCs for PSE. It was, however, seen that no record except an attendance register of PSE beneficiaries was maintained in 210 test checked AWCs under eight selected districts. No information as regards making any correspondences with the elementary schools for admission of the PSE beneficiaries to school and number of children actually moved to schools was available with the centres. The State Government only recently (November 2013) provided 11 Registers for MIS and of which in Register No. 4, a provision has been made (last column) to record the number of child beneficiary moved to schools for formal education. In all the test checked centres, the column was however found left blank.

On this being pointed out, the GoA stated (November 2014) that steps were being taken to maintain records properly.

1.3.14 Convergence of ICDS Services with other departments

The Scheme envisages an integrated delivery of a multiplicity of services which are handled by different Departments. Three of the six services of the Scheme namely -Immunization, -Health check up and -Referral services are delivered through Public Health Infrastructure under Health and Family Welfare Department. The convergence among various Departments and programmes for the delivery of ICDS required constitution of Co-ordination Committees at State, District, Block and Village level to review the progress of ICDS Scheme.

As per norm, 20 meetings (4 in a year) of Co-ordination Committee was required to be held at each level during 2009-14. The DSW had not furnished the position of meeting held at State level. No such meetings in eight selected district were held. In Lakhimpur district, even the Committee was not formed at all. Out of 21 Projects, meetings were stated to be held in Lakhimpur (16), Chaiduar (five) and Chandrapur-Karara (two) under Cachar, Sonitpur and Kamrup district respectively during 2009-14. Minutes of the meeting were, however, not furnished to audit in a single instance.

Thus, the inter-departmental convergence required for coordinated policy of integrated services under the Scheme was ineffective.

1.3.15 Immunisation

Under the Scheme, immunization to the children and pregnant women/lactating mothers is required to be provided against the diseases viz., Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Tetanus, Polio and Tuberculosis. For this, advance planning with health department for its implementation and joint monitoring was needed to be done as per annual target.

No records relating to preparation of immunization plan was made available by the SWD, GoA. Audit, however, noted that there was no formal mechanism of sharing/gathering information for preparation of the action plan right from the

block to state level. There was also no specific plan of joint monitoring of immunization activities. In the APIP-2013-14 and 2014-15, the Government/ Department mentioned that as per routine schedule of the Directorate of Family Welfare, GoA, 5,17,523 children who had completed 12 months were fully immunized upto February 2013 against the target of 6,96,236 beneficiaries for the year 2012-13. For the year 2013-14, the target for coverage of beneficiaries was 7,04,823. The Department, however, had no information available with them regarding achievement made during 2013-14 in this regard.

In all the test checked AWCs, it was, however, noticed that a Health Day was observed at least a day every month during 2009-14. While observing the Health Day, need based immunization to the beneficiaries either in the AWCs or in the nearby Sub-centres was being provided by the Health department.

1.3.16 Health Check up and Referral Services

In addition to immunization, the package of services under the Scheme includes Health Check up and Referral Services consisting (i) ante-natal care of expectant mothers, (ii) post-natal care of nursing mothers and new born babies; and (iii) care of children under six years of age. Routine health checkups of the pregnant women are to be carried out by Lady Health Visitor (LHV) and Auxiliary Nurse-cum-Midwife (ANM) and the findings thereof are to be recorded in the Ante-natal Cards. LHVs and ANMs are also required to make at least two visits to their houses within 10 days after delivery to check the general health of both the mother and the baby and record the services delivered in the Post-natal Cards for watching the post natal care.

The AWCs are to identify the expectant mothers and malnourished children with problems requiring special treatment and are required to refer them to PHC or Town/City hospitals. A record of these cases is required to be maintained in AWCs along with referral slips.

In the test checked AWCs under all the eight selected districts, no records in the AWCs relating to visits made by the LHV and ANM to the houses of PW/LM were maintained. Audit also noted that no referral slips or separate registers were provided to the AWCs for documentation of the referral cases. This indicated that performance of the department was far from being satisfactory on this front. In the APIP-2014-15, the Department itself had admitted that the status of referral service in the State was not up to the desired level.

1.3.17 Implementation of other schemes using ICDS infrastructure

1.3.17.1 Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY)

MoWCD in the year 2000 came up with a scheme called Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) by using the infrastructure of ICDS. The objective of the Scheme was to improve the nutritional and health status of adolescent girls (AGs) in the age group of 11-18 years as well as to equip them to improve and upgrade their home based

and vocational skills and to promote their overall development including awareness about health, personal hygiene, nutrition, family welfare and management. The Scheme provided for ₹1.10 lakh per project per annum. The implementation of the Scheme started in the State from 2005-06.

The position of receipt and utilisation of fund in the State under KSY during 2005-14 is given in Table-1.41.

Table-1.41
Position of fund released by GoI and utilized by the State

Year	Fund released by GoI	Fund utilised	Unutilised Balance
2005-06	68.20	34.10	34.10
2006-07	147.40	34.10	113.30
2007-08	120.45	-	120.45
2008-09	120.45	-	120.45
2009-10	-	160.05	(-) 160.05
2010-11	120.45	-	120.45
2011-12	84.15	70.70	13.45
2012-13	-	-	0
2013-14	-	-	0
Total	661.10	298.95 (45 per cent)	362.15

Source: Departmental records.

It is evident from the above that during 2005-14, only 45 per cent of the total release made by GoI could be utilized. The GoI had neither released any fund during 2012-14 nor did the State Government utilise any fund out of the available unutilised funds. This indicated that the Scheme was not given the due importance in the State depriving the AGs of 19 KSY districts from the benefits of improving the nutritional and health status apart from skill development under the scheme.

On this being pointed out, the GoA stated (November 2014) that efforts will be made to utilize the balance funds amounting to ₹362.15 lakh subject to its revalidation by GOI.

(a) Distribution of Cotton Yarn

MoWCD sanctioned and released ₹84.15 lakh for implementation of KSY during 2011-12 in 153 ICDS Projects. GoA on the basis of a proposal submitted by the DSW, sanctioned ₹70,70,050 for supply of 9,490 bundles Cotton Yarn (40 count) to 130 Projects in 14 Plain Districts under KSY during 2011-12 without identifying the projects to which supplies to be made. The amount was withdrawn from treasury and utilized for supply of 9,490 bundles of Cotton Yarn to the DSWOs of 14 districts through a Guwahati based supplier instead of sending the same to the CDPOs of the respective ICDS Projects. It was not on record as to whether the yarns were delivered to the AGs. There was also no record available with the Directorate regarding any vocational training given to the AGs for use of the cotton yarns supplied. Test check of records of the DSWOs/CDPOs revealed the following short comings:

(i) In the test checked Sonitpur district, the supplier delivered 1,095 Bundles White Cotton Yarn (2.27 Kg per bundle) @ ₹745 per bundle to the DSWO, Sonitpur. As

per Stock and issue register of the DSWO, the said quantity was received (February 2012), of which 584 bundles were issued to CDPOs of eight⁶¹ ICDS Projects (73 bundles per project) during April and May 2012. The balance 511 bundles valued at ₹3.81 lakh were not issued to the remaining seven⁶² ICDS Projects as of July 2014. Again, though the CDPO, Biswanath received 73 bundles cotton yarn from DSWO, Tezpur, he had not accounted for the receipt and distribution of the same to AGs.

(ii) In the test checked Salchapra ICDS Project under Cachar district, though the CDPO received 73 bundles cotton yarn from DSWO, Cachar, the same was neither accounted for nor distributed to the AGs.

(iii) In the test checked Nagaon district, out of 1,460 bundles received from DSW, 1,400 bundles were issued to 20 projects leaving 60 bundles worth ₹0.45 lakh in store.

The above position indicated that the funds were utilized for the sake of mere utilisation only without any target of achieving the goal of the Scheme.

1.3.17.2 Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (SABLA)

After introduction of KSY, GoI initiated Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG) in the year 2002-03 as a pilot project in 51 identified districts across the country to address the problem of under nutrition among AGs. But both the Schemes (KSY & NPAG) could not show the desired impact because of limited coverage and financial assistance. Therefore, GoI with a view to address the multi-dimensional problem of AGs with richer content, initiated implementation of another scheme called Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG)-SABLA on a pilot basis in 200 districts across the country from 2010-11 using the platform of ICDS. The scheme aims at empowering AGs of 11-18 years by improving their nutritional and health status, upgradation of home skills, life skills and vocational skills generating consciousness about health and family welfare, hygiene and guidance of existing public services. SABLA replaced both NPAG and KSY in all the selected 200 districts.

In Assam, SABLA is in implementation in eight⁶³ districts and implementation of KSY continued in rest of the districts.

(a) Financial Position

Fund received from GoI/GoA both under Nutrition and Non-nutrition components of SABLA during the years from 2010-2014 were given in Table-1.42 and 1.43.

⁶¹ Gabharu, Balipara, Behali, Tezpur (U), Barchala, Dhekiajuli, Biswanath and Baghmara

⁶² Chaiduar, Na-duar, Pub-Chaiduar, Sakomatha, Sootea, Bihaguri and Rangapara

⁶³ (i) Dhubri, (ii) Darrang, (iii) Dibrugarh, (iv) Hailakandi, (v) Jorhat, (vi) Kokrajhar, (vii) Karbi Anglong and (viii) Kamrup.

Table-1.42

Position of fund received and utilized under Nutrition Component

(₹ in lakh)

Year	O.B.	Amount released		Total	Expenditure incurred	Closing balance
		GoI	GoA			
2010-11	Nil	722.39	Nil	722.39	Nil	722.39
2011-12	722.39	1,444.78	Nil	2,167.17	2,166.96	0.21
2012-13	0.21	1,847.22	1,940.00	3,787.43	3,736.39	51.04
2013-14	51.04	1,401.76	1,940.00	3,392.80	3,341.76 (upto December 2013)	51.04
Total	773.64	5,416.15	3,880.00	10,069.79	9,245.11	

Source: Quarterly Reports submitted by the DSW.

Table-1.43

Position of fund received and utilized under Non-nutrition component

(₹ in lakh)

Year	GoI's Sanction Order No. & date	O.B.	Amount released by GoI	Total available funds	Expenditure incurred	Closing balance
2010-11	NA	-	296.40	296.40	Nil	296.40
2011-12	F.No.6-25/2011-RGSEAG dt.13.05.2011	296.40	148.20	444.60	286.77	157.83
2012-13	F.No.6-44/2012-RGSEAG dt.26.06.2012	132.40	148.20	280.60	Nil	280.60
2013-14	F.No.6-13/2013-RESEAG dt.10.06.2013 (1 st instt.)	280.60	148.20	483.40	Nil	483.40
	F.No.6-13/2013-RESEAG dt.28.03.2013 (1 st instt.)		54.60			
Total			795.60		286.77 (36%)	

Source: Information on receipts furnished by the Department and expenditure as found in audit.

From the above, it could be seen that the utilisation of fund under Non-nutrition component was very poor. Only 36 per cent of the funds made available by GoI were utilized by the State that too in one year (2011-12) only.

(b) Nutrition Component

(i) Short release of State share

SABLA is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with 100 per cent financial assistance from Central Government for all inputs except Nutrition component which is to be shared between the Centre and the State on 50:50 basis.

As mentioned above, GoI during 2010-11 and 2011-12 released ₹722.39 lakh and ₹1,444.78 lakh respectively under Nutrition component but the Directorate neither proposed for any fund from State matching share for utilisation to provide nutrition to the AGs nor GoA released any fund in this regard leading to short release of matching share of ₹2,167.17 lakh. However, during 2012-13 and 2013-14, ₹92.78 lakh (₹1,940 lakh minus ₹1,847.22 lakh) and ₹538.40 lakh (₹1,940 lakh minus ₹1,401.76 lakh) was recouped by way of excess release.

(ii) Shortfall in feeding days

Under the Scheme, the adolescent girls must be given nutrition for 300 days a year continuously without any disruption.

Audit of records of the DSW disclosed that the beneficiaries/adolescent girls of all the eight districts brought under SABLA were provided nutrition for 194 days during 2011-12. During 2012-13 and 2013-14, the feeding days ranged between 101 to 255; and 148 to 211 days, respectively. Thus, the target of providing nutrition for 300 days was not fully achieved during these three years. District wise position is given in Table-1.44.

Table-1.44
Position of nutrition provided to AGs during 2011-14

Sl. No.	Name of the district	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
		Beneficiaries	Feeding days	Beneficiaries	Feeding days	Beneficiaries	Feeding days
1	Dibrugarh	50918	194	50918	255	48634	211
2	Darrang	32594	194	32594	202	39492	148
3	Dhubri	69298	194	69298	202	69395	148
4	Hailakandi	36353	194	36353	176	31643	211
5	Jorhat	37827	194	-	-	38899	211
6	Kamrup	78770	194	78770	189	93497	148
7	Karbi Anglong	49497	194	49497	101	41646	148
8	Kokrajhar	30019	194	30019	202	36749	148

Source: Departmental records.

(iii) Non-lifting of allotted quota of rice

Examination of records revealed that GoA had not made any request to the Food Corporation of India (FCI) to make provision for foodstuff under SNP, but under SABLA, GoI had allocated rice for lifting from FCI for distribution as THR to AGs in 78 projects across eight districts. The year/quarter-wise allocation of Common Rice made by GoI and allocation made by the GoA to eight districts during 2012-14 were as given in Table-1.45.

Table-1.45
Position of allocation of rice under SABLA (figures in quintal)

Year	Quarter	Quantity allocated by GoI	Quantity allocated by State to eight districts
2011-12	2 nd	37364.05	37364.05
	3 rd	37364.05	37364.05
	4 th	-	-
2012-13	1 st	37564.40	37559.87
	2 nd	37564.40	37559.87
	3 rd	37564.40	37559.87
	4 th	-	-
2013-14	1 st	39000.00	39000.00
	2 nd	39000.00	39000.00
	3 rd	39000.00	39000.00
	4 th	39000.00	-

Source: Departmental and Project level records.

Records relating to allocation made by GoI, if any, for the 4th quarter of 2011-12 and 2012-13 were not made available to Audit. But, the allocation of 39,000 quintal rice made by GoI for the 4th quarter of 2013-14 was not allocated to the

districts by the State. The position of lifting of rice by three test checked districts⁶⁴ against allocation made by the State were as below:

(a) In the test checked Karbi Anglong district, the CDPOs of all the 11 ICDS Projects did not lift 7,486.87 quintal Common Rice from FCI allotted by the GoI/State Government for the 1st quarter of 2012-13 (3,425.87 quintal) and 3rd quarter of 2013-14 (4,061.00 quintal).

Again, it was observed that GoA based on GoI's allocation, allocated 397.71 quintal rice per quarter to Diphu (Urban) ICDS Project for lifting from FCI for the 2nd and 3rd quarter of 2011-12 respectively. The said quantities were, however, re-allocated (February and March 2012) by the PO, ICDS Cell, Diphu to Howraghat (318.67 quintal and 318.67 quintal), Longsomepi (79.04 quintal) and Bokajan (79.04 quintal) ICDS Project due to non-functioning of the AWCs under Diphu (Urban) Project.

This indicated that the Directorate had allocated rice without having the information on the functioning of the AWCs under Diphu (Urban) ICDS Project and as a result 795.42 quintal rice had to be lifted in excess and distributed to three other ICDS Projects.

(b) All the 19 ICDS projects, under the test checked Kokrajhar (five) and Kamrup (14) district, had not lifted the entire allotted quantity of 3,022.91 quintal (for 1st quarter of 2012-13) and 12,807.37 quintal (for 1st quarter of 2012-13 and 3rd quarter of 2013-14) rice. Apart from this, Kamalpur-Rangia, Hajo and Sualkuchi CDPOs under Kamrup district had also failed to lift allotted quota of 934 quintal (2nd quarter of 2013-14), 816.47 quintal (3rd quarter of 2011-12) and 121.61 quintal (3rd quarter of 2011-12) of rice respectively.

Non-allotment by the Directorate and non-lifting of allotted quota of rice by the projects concerned, thus, resulted in denial of providing SN to 1,42,757⁶⁵ AGs under SABLE.

(iv) Non-utilisation of fund

In the test checked Kokrajhar district, apart from allocation made by GoI/DSW for lifting of rice from FCI, GoA sanctioned ₹480.88 lakh and released ₹453.47 lakh for the period 2011-14 to BTC, Kokrajhar for providing SN as THR to the AGs of

⁶⁴ Karbi Anglong, Kamrup & Kokrajhar.

⁶⁵

Name of District	Name of project	Allotment of rice (qtr/year)	Number of adolescent girls	Quantity of rice allotted
Kokrajhar	All five projects	1 st quarter of 2012-13	30,019	3022.91
Kamrup	All 19 projects	3 rd quarter 2013-14	93,497	12807.37
Kamrup	Kamlpur-Rangia	2 nd quarter of 2013-14	9,568	934.00
Kamrup	Hajo	3 rd quarter of 2011-12	8,419	816.47
Kamrup	Sualkuchi	3 rd quarter of 2011-12	1,254	121.61
Total			1,42,757	

Source: Departmental records.

the district. Of this, as of July 2014, only ₹253.30 lakh was utilized leaving a balance of ₹200.17 lakh. Year-wise position in this regard is given in Table-1.46.

Table-1.46
Sanction, release and utilisation of fund under SABLA in Kokrajhar district

Year	Government sanctions order No. and date	Amount sanctioned (₹)	Amount released (₹)	Amount utilized (₹)	Balance (₹)
2011-12	SWD.400/2012/4 dt.08.06.2012	15114567	15114567	15084549	30018
2012-13	SWD.758/2012/4 dt.04.01.13	15144586	15144586	10245104	4899482
2013-14	SWD.284/2013/Pt-VI/4 dt.19.05.13	17828777	15088241	NIL	15088241
Total		4,80,87,930	4,53,47,394	2,53,29,653	2,00,17,741

Source: Departmental records.

1.3.17.3 Non-nutrition component

(a) Blocking of funds

MoWCD made a provision for providing training kits, vocational training, life skill education and registers/health cards/utensils etc., under non-nutrition component of SABLA.

It was noticed that the Directorate during 2011-12 drew an amount of ₹397.80 lakh against Government sanction and utilized ₹286.77 lakh. The balance amount of ₹111.03 lakh was kept in the Civil Deposit (₹88.92 lakh) and DDO's bank A/c (₹22.11 lakh) as of March 2014. Item wise withdrawal of fund and expenditure incurred were as given in Table-1.47.

Table-1.47
Position of item-wise funds withdrawn and expenditure incurred (₹ in lakh)

Sl. No.	Item	Government's sanction order No. and date	Amount withdrawn	Bill No. and date	Amount utilised	Amount kept in Civil deposit/ DDO's A/c
1	Training Kit	SWD.370/2011/4 dt.26.09.11	234.00	317 dt.08.12.11	170.56	63.44
2	Life skill education including IEC	SWD.371/2011/5 dt.21.10.11	78.00	401	35.88	42.12
3	Training for Sakhi and Saheli			dt.24.01.12		
4	Misc. expenditure (Kishori Divas)	SWD.375/2011/5 dt.21.10.11	28.53	400 dt.24.01.12	28.23	0.30
5	Others (Printing of health cards/registers/utensils)	SWD.446/2011/4 dt.27.12.11	10.47	402 dt.24.01.12	5.91	4.56
		SWD.376/2011/5 dt.21.10.11	46.80	399 dt.24.01.12	46.19	0.61
Total			397.80		286.77	111.03

Source: Departmental records.

Apart from the above, the Directorate drew another amount of ₹39.00 lakh at the fag end of 2013-14 against Government sanction accorded (February 2014) for implementation of Life Skill Education including IEC. The amount was withdrawn (March 2014) and kept in the form of Bankers cheque without utilisation.

(b) Vocational Training

The Scheme envisages providing of Vocational Training to the AGs so that they can develop their skill in local trades and seek appropriate livelihood option. For this, MoWCD advised (March 2011) the State Government to take up the matter with the State Training Directorates or the nearest Vocational Training Providers (VTPs) which are registered under Modular Employable Skills (MES) and released ₹93.60 lakh (@ ₹23.40 lakh per year) during 2010-14.

GoA, Social Welfare Department sanctioned (October 2011) ₹46.80 lakh for release to 78 ICDS Projects under eight districts (@ ₹30,000 per project) for 2010-11 and 2011-12. The amount was neither withdrawn nor released to the projects for the purpose. The Directorate, however, completed the mapping of the VTPs during 2012-13 and identified 44 VTPs for providing Vocational Training to 16,827 AGs. The matter of providing Vocational Training was found to have been taken up with Director of Employment and Craftsman, Assam in June 2012 but no response was received as of May 2014. Further action initiated, if any, was not found on records.

The effort made by the Directorate was therefore ineffective and the funds of ₹93.60 lakh released by GoI remained unutilized with the State exchequer thus, depriving the AGs of the opportunity to become self sufficient.

(c) Training on Life skill education/NHE

Audit of records revealed that out of the total expenditure of ₹170.56 lakh incurred on supply of Training Kits (comprising of 15 items) to 71 projects under eight districts during 2011-12, an amount of ₹51.47 lakh was spent towards providing kits to 5,152 AWCs under 23 ICDS Projects of five⁶⁶ districts but no training mainly related to weaving was provided to the beneficiaries as of May 2014. The details of the ICDS project-wise distribution of kits are shown in *Appendix-1.19*.

Again, training to the beneficiaries of 2,224 AWCs under 7 projects in two districts (Jorhat and Kokrajhar) were shown to have been provided during 2011-12 but no supply of training kits was made. District-wise position is given in Table-1.48.

**Table-1.48
Position of AWCs where training programme organized without training kit**

Sl. No.	Name of the district	Name of the ICDS Projects	No. of AWCs
1	Jorhat	Jorhat	333
2		Ujan Majuli	277
3	Kokrajhar	Kokrajhar	448
4		Dotma	499
5		Kachugaon	305
6		Gossaigaon	224
7		Hatidhura	138
Total			2,224

Source: Departmental records.

⁶⁶ Kamrup (10), Darrang (4), Jorhat (1), Dibrugarh (3) and Karbi Anglong (5).

The above position indicated that the kits were provided without foreseeing/assessing the feasibility of providing training which not only led to idle investment of GoI's fund of ₹51.47 lakh but also defeated the objective of the Scheme. Again, providing of training without the training kits was beyond the scope of the norm and hence imparting proper training to the beneficiaries was doubtful.

(d) Distribution of Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) tablets

GoA, Social Welfare Department sanctioned (March 2012) ₹31.20 lakh for procurement of 99,58,635 Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) tablets for supply to 4,39,255 beneficiaries in 78 Projects under eight test checked districts. It was however found that the amount was not drawn by the DSW. It was also not on record as to whether the matter was taken up by the department with NRHM for the supply of the tablets.

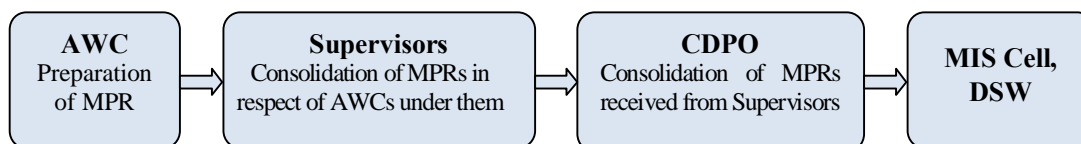
1.3.18 Monitoring and Evaluation

1.3.18.1 Monitoring

The ICDS Scheme envisages a system of monitoring through regular reports and returns flowing upwards from AWC level to the State level.

(a) State level

The monitoring of the implementation of the Scheme was found to have been done basically through Monthly Progress Report (MPR) prepared by AWW/Supervisors, consolidated at the Project levels for onward transmission to the DSW.



The State Level Management Information System (MIS) Cell, stationed at the Directorate of Social Welfare, Assam had been functioning as a major Monitoring & Supervision unit in the State. The MIS Cell has been reviewing and updating the data of the CDPOs from the MPR received from all the 230 ICDS projects of the State. The personnel of the Cell also visit the Projects/AWCs for supervision and monitoring purposes. Though monitoring is one of the core activities of the Cell, State Government had not prescribed any mandatory provision of number of visits to be made by them in a month or a year.

Again, with the introduction of revised MIS in ICDS, the MIS Cell is also involved in the roll out process with the supply of revised registers and MPRs. The roll out process however, could not be completed as of July 2014 in all the districts causing

problem of getting uniform information and preparing correct database at State level. Thus, monitoring from State level had not attained its desired level.

(b) District level

As mentioned above, there were only seven Divisional Programme Officers (DPOs) and one Deputy Director in the State and it was not feasible on their part to monitor the implementation of ICDS Scheme in all the 27 districts keeping in view the distance from the place of posting of DPOs to the district headquarters in their jurisdiction as per details in the Table-1.49.

**Table-1.49
Distance between district headquarters and place of posting of DPOs**

Sl. No.	Place of posting of the DPO	Name of districts under their jurisdiction	Distance from DPO to District Headquarters
1	Guwahati	Kamrup Metro	0 km
		Kamrup Rural	23 km
		Nalbari	70 km
		Baksa	92 km
		Barpeta	98 km
		Goalpara	151 km
2	Nagaon	Nagaon	0 km
		Morigaon	58 km
3	Tezpur	Sonitpur	0 km
		Udalguri	58 km
		Darrang	97 km
		Lakhimpur	214 km
		Dhemaji	273 km
4	Kokrajhar	Kokrajhar	0 km
		Bongaigaon	39 km
		Chirang	65 km
		Dhubri	66 km
5	Diphu	Karbi Anglong	0 km
6	Silchar	Cachar	0 km
		Hailakandi	28 km
		Karimganj	51 km
7	Jorhat	Jorhat	0 km
		Sivasagar	56 km
		Golaghat	103 km
		Dibrugarh	136 km
		Tinsukia	207 km
8	Dy. Director, Halflong	Dima Hasao	0 km

Source: Information obtained from internet.

Looking at the constraints, the State Government vide its Notification dated 6 July 2010 made all the DSWOs as in-charge DPOs but had not prescribed number of visits to be made by them to the Projects/AWCs for effective monitoring of the scheme.

(c) Block level

At the block level, the CDPOs and the Supervisors are responsible for supervision and monitoring of ICDS Scheme in the AWCs under their control. The CDPOs are

required to make 15 numbers of visit to the AWCs in a month whereas supervisors are also required to undertake field visit of all the AWCs at least once in a month.

Test check of records of 10 Project⁶⁷ under eight selected districts disclosed that the concerned CDPOs as against the required 8,640 visits, made only 3,976 visits (46 *per cent*) during 2009-14. Again, the Supervisors of 10 Projects⁶⁸ of seven selected districts (except Nalbari) made 68,346 visits (42 *per cent*) against the required 1,63,632 visits. GoA while analyzing short fall in the visits of supervisors mentioned in the APIPs-2013-15 that the supervisors neither stays in block headquarters nor prioritises their visits to AWCs.

(d) AWC level

AWCMC consisting of local PRI members, social workers, local school headmasters etc; are required to monitor the functioning of the AWCs, utilisation of funds, selection of AGs and checking and countersigning of the MPRs prepared by the supervisors.

In the test checked 210 AWCs under 21 Projects of eight selected districts, audit noted that the members of the Committee met only at the time of utilisation of funds. The MPRs prepared, were neither submitted to them nor were countersigned by them leaving the scope of manipulation in the reports.

1.3.18.2 Meetings of different committees

GoA formed different committees for smooth implementation of ICDS Scheme in the State. The position of meetings of the committees held in the selected blocks, projects and districts during 2009-14 is discussed below.

(a) District and Block level Monitoring, Vigilance & Review Committee

GoA with a view to ensure better vigilance, monitoring and review of functioning of the Scheme vide Notifications dated 08 March 2007 and 10 June 2007 respectively constituted a District Level Monitoring, Vigilance and Review Committee under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) for all the districts (including Council area) and Block level Monitoring and Vigilance Committee under the Chairmanship of Local MLA. As per norm, the Committees were to meet once in every quarter and review the position of implementation of the programmes with intimation to the Government.

Audit of records revealed that in all the eight selected districts, no meeting at district level was held during 2009-14. During 2009-14, as against the norm of 420

⁶⁷ (i) Chandrapur-Karara, (ii) Madhupur, (iii) Salchapra, (iv) Tapang, (v) Biswanath, (vi) Kachugaon, (vii) Dhakuakhana, (viii) Binnakandi, (ix) Diphu (U) and (x) Lumbajong.

⁶⁸ (i) Chandrapur-Karara (ii) Chaiduar (iii) Salchapra (iv) Tapang (v) Biswanath (vi) Kachugaon (vii) Dhakuakhana (viii) Kaliabor (ix) Barhampur and (x) Diphu (U).

meetings to be held in 21 selected blocks/projects, only 29 meetings were held in seven projects⁶⁹.

(b) District level SNP Committee

For streamlining the implementation of the SNP and to ensure proper distribution of the food items to the beneficiary, GoA vide Notification dated 6 September 2006 constituted a District Level Committee for SNP under the Chairmanship of DC. The Committee was required to meet as frequently as necessary but at least once every month to take stock of the implementation of SNP.

During 2009-14, in the eight selected districts, no meeting was held against 480 targeted meetings.

The above position indicated the lack of proper monitoring and vigilance at all important level of authorities and functionaries.

1.3.18.3 Evaluation

GoA had neither framed any guidelines for the evaluation system of the scheme nor conducted any evaluation studies by engaging any third party. As a result, GoA was neither aware of the shortfalls/bottlenecks in the implementation nor was in a position to assess the impact of the implementation of the Scheme.

(a) Grievance Redressal

(i) Non-redressal of grievances/complaints

(A) In pursuance to GoI's instruction (February 2009), GoA in the Social Welfare Department sanctioned (July 2009) engagement of 195 AWWs and 195 AWHs for 195 Additional AWCs in Barkhetri ICDS Project under Nalbari district. The CDPO accordingly selected 195 AWWs and 195 AWHs during November 2009 for their engagement. GoA on receipt of complaints from the Members of the Selection Committee regarding irregularities committed by CDPO, Barkhetri ICDS Project, placed the CDPO under suspension (November 2009) and directed (April 2010) the DSW, Assam to cause a detailed enquiry on the matter. As per the Enquiry Report submitted (December 2009) by PO, Divisional ICDS Cell and DSWO, Nalbari, the CDPO had committed various irregularities in finalization of the list of selected candidates. On the basis of the same, DSW forwarded (October 2010) the Draft Charge Sheet to GoA for further action. The Government instituted a DP and issued a show cause notice (January 2011) to the CDPO, the reply to which was submitted in January 2011. Further action initiated, if any, in this regard was not found on record.

It appears from the Note (May 2011) of Minister (Revenue & DM) that the Hon'ble Gauhati High Court cancelled appointment of all the selected AWWs and AWHs and asked for fresh interview and selection of candidates. Scrutiny of

⁶⁹ (i) Madhupur-1, (ii) Salchakra-2, (iii) Lakhimpur-16, (iv) Tapang-1, (v) Chaiduar-5, (vi) Biswanath-3 and (vii) Dhakuakhana-1.

records of DSWO, Nalbari showed that the engagement of AWWs and AWHs had not been made as of August 2014.

(B) DSWO, Kokrajhar intimated (April 2012) DSW that CDPO, Dotma ICDS Project, as per allotment order (February 2012), lifted 775.06 quintal rice from FCI under SABLA on 1 April 2012 and kept the same outside the premises of the ICDS Project and of this, 563.75 quintal was brought to the office campus on 9 April 2012 leaving the balance quantity of 211.31 quintal unaccounted for. DSWO while forwarding the complaint mentioned that the enquiry into the matter had been made and urged DSW to take immediate necessary action. But no action against the CDPO was initiated as of March 2014.

(b) Irregular Redressal of Grievances

It was noticed that on 27 February 2013 local media reported short supply and supply of low quality foodstuff (Biscuit, Milk Powder, Horlicks and Cerelac) by a Kokrajhar district based NGO to the beneficiaries under flood hit seven ICDS Projects of Lakhimpur district in connivance with the DSWO. On the basis of the media report, the PO, Tezpur asked (1 April 2013) the DSWO to conduct an enquiry into the matter and submit a detailed report. The DSWO submitted (4 May 2013) the report to the PO stating that the allegation published in the newspaper was totally false. No person can be appointed as Enquiry Officer in the case where he himself is the alleged party. In the instant case, audit noted that the PO appointed the concerned DSWO as Enquiry Officer who himself was the alleged party and disposed off the case without taking any further action.

Thus, the enquiry held in the case was irregular and unauthorised.

1.3.19 Welfare measures for grass root level workers

1.3.19.1 State's additional contribution for honoraria to AWWs/AWHs

GoA, SWD vide notification dated 27 November 2008 and 8 November 2010 respectively granted additional amount of honorarium @ ₹300 to AWWs and @ ₹200 to AWH per month from the State exchequer with effect from the financial year 2008-09. The matter of payment of this additional honoraria was brought out in all the AIPs from 2011-15 as an achievement.

This was definitely a good move from the State Government to encourage the low paid AWWs and AWHs to carry out the assigned work sincerely. In the Karbi Anglong district such honorarium was, however, paid to the AWWs and AWHs only for a total period of nine months in 2012-13 (April to June) and 2013-14 (April to September) against dues of 72 months. In Cachar and Nagaon district, honoraria to AWWs and AWHs was paid for 33 months and 45 months against dues of 72 months from 2008-09 to 2013-14. This indicated that regularity in

payment of Honorarium to AWWs/AWHs was not watched/ monitored at State level.

Non-payment of the honoraria in regular manner would have definitely discouraged the AWWs/AWHs, the grass root level workers.

GoA during exit conference assured that the matter would be looked into and result thereof intimated to audit.

1.3.19.2 Distribution of Bi-cycles

GoA also provided Lady's Bicycle to the AWWs under all the plain districts of the State as a welfare measure under ICDS Scheme during 2011-12.

In the test checked Lakhimpur district, M/s Avon cycles Ltd., Guwahati as per order issued (28 February 2011) by the DSW, Assam, supplied (May 2012) 1,325 numbers of bi-cycles to the DSWO, Lakhimpur for delivery to the CDPOs of the district for onward distribution to the AWWs. Of this, the DSWO delivered 160 bi-cycles to the test checked Karunabari ICDS Project. The CDPO of the project distributed only 139 bi-cycles to the AWWs leading to short distribution of 21 bi-cycles. The whereabouts of the bi-cycles not available in the store could not be known. Thus, the possibilities of misappropriation/utilisation of the said 21 cycles worth ₹0.54 lakh (@ ₹2,550 each) could not be ruled out.

Similarly, the firm supplied (May 2012) 981 bicycles to DSWO, Cachar of which 901 were shown to have been issued in two phases in May 2012 (745) and April 2014 (156) leaving a balance of 80 bi-cycles dumped in store as of July 2014. The physical condition of the bi-cycles was deteriorated due to prolonged storage and the expenditure of ₹2.04 lakh (80 x ₹2,550 each) incurred against the same could be proved as wasteful. Further, the DSWO did not maintain AWW wise distribution register but produced APRs collected from 311 AWWs. However, actual distribution of the remaining 590 bicycles could not be ascertained in Audit.

1.3.19.3 Uniforms and badges

In pursuance of the provision of the guidelines, the State Government proposed for providing sarees/chadar with colour code to AWWs and AWHs as uniform only in the budget for the year 2013-14. But the same was not provided till the end of March 2014 though an amount of ₹592.72 lakh shown to have been utilized in the UC and SOE for the 3rd quarter of 2013-14 submitted to GoI. The UC and SOE also reflected utilisation of fund of ₹29.72 lakh for providing badges but scrutiny revealed that badges were not at all supplied and as such no fund was utilised for the purpose and the UC was false.

1.3.19.4 Awards

Pursuant to the provision of the guidelines, GoA decided to present annual awards to selected Anganwadi Workers on the basis of their exemplary performance to appreciate the good work done by them.

Examination of records and information furnished by the department revealed that no such awards were presented to any of the Anganwadi workers during 2009-14. Only two workers, one from Hepsapara AWC under Dudhnoi ICDS Project of Goalpara district and another from Lukhurarakhon AWC under Sapekhati Project of Sivasagar district were given such State level Award during 2007-08 and 2008-09 respectively.

This indicated lack of initiatives at the Government/Department level for the selection of the workers.

1.3.20 Beneficiary Survey

During the course of Performance Audit of ICDS Scheme, the audit team along with the Supervisors and the AWWs of 21 ICDS Projects under eight selected districts interacted with 2100 (1,752 in the age group of 3-6 years and 348 in the age group of six months to three years) beneficiaries/guardians selected randomly to know about the various services rendered to them/their wards by the AWCs under ICDS Scheme and recorded their responses. It needs to be mentioned that in most of the cases, the mothers/guardians made the statements on behalf of the beneficiaries. The idea of interviewing the adolescent girls, PW and LM had to be dropped as they did not agree (except in few cases) to come out of their houses. Beneficiary survey revealed that the total number of beneficiaries covered under the scheme in 20 AWCs of the eight Projects of five selected districts were too meagre/less and ranged between three and 20 beneficiaries per AWC.

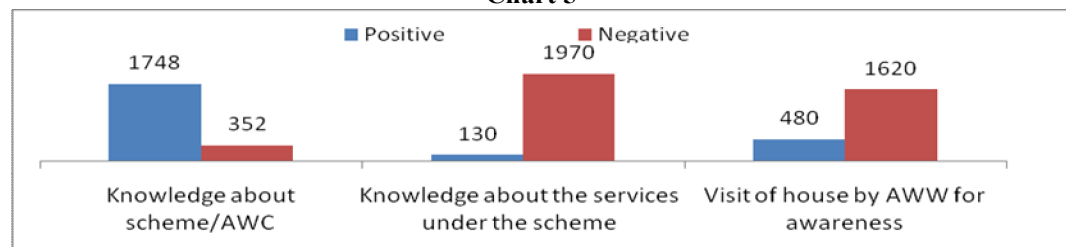
1.3.20.1 Awareness level about the scheme/AWC

The awareness of the beneficiaries about the scheme/AWC was very poor as would be evident from Table-1.50 and Chart 5.

Table-1.50
Awareness of the surveyed beneficiaries about the scheme/AWCs

Parameters	Positive	Negative	Awareness level (in %)
Knowledge about scheme/AWC	1748	352	83
Knowledge about the services under the scheme	130	1970	6
Visit of house by AWW for awareness	480	1620	23

Chart 5



Source: Information collected through beneficiary survey.

1.3.20.2 Satisfaction level of the beneficiaries

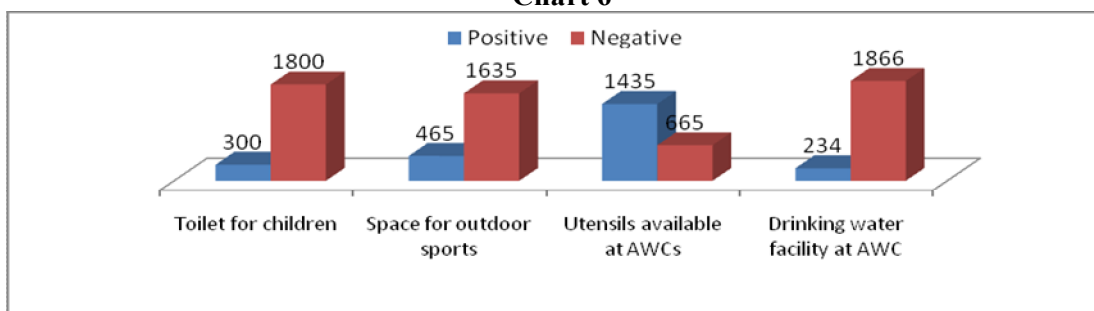
(a) Basic amenities in AWCs

68 per cent of the beneficiaries surveyed were satisfied with the availability of the utensils while a large section dissatisfied with other amenities under the scheme as shown in Table-1.51 and Chart 6.

Table-1.51
Satisfaction level of surveyed beneficiaries on availability of amenities in AWCs

Parameters	Positive	Negative	Satisfaction level (in %)
Toilet for children	300	1800	14
Space for outdoor sports	465	1635	22
Utensils available at AWCs	1435	665	68
Drinking water facility at AWC	234	1866	11

Chart 6



Source: Information collected through beneficiary survey.

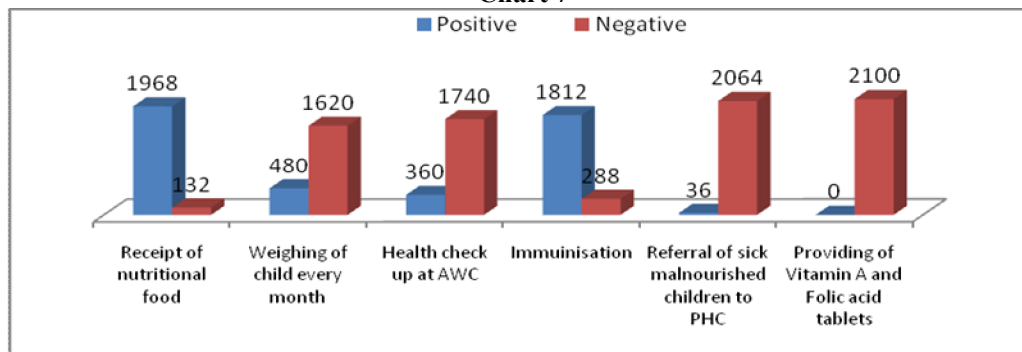
(b) Services under the scheme

While positive response on SNP was received from 94 per cent of the beneficiaries surveyed, a large section expressed negative response about other services as would be evident from Table-1.52 and Chart 7.

Table-1.52
Satisfaction level of surveyed beneficiaries on services by AWCs

Parameters	Positive	Negative	Satisfaction level (in %)
Receipt of nutritional food	1968	132	94
Weighing of child every month	480	1620	23
Health check up at AWC	360	1740	17
Immunisation	1812	288	86
Referral of sick malnourished children to PHC	36	2064	2
Providing of Vitamin A and Folic acid tablets	0	2100	0

Chart 7



Source: Information collected through beneficiary survey.

The responses of the surveyed beneficiaries indicated awareness about the Scheme/AWC but poor satisfaction level about the availability of the amenities in the AWCs and services rendered under the Scheme.

1.3.21 Conclusion

The ICDS Scheme is India's flagship scheme for the nutritional and developmental needs of children below six years and pregnant and lactating mothers. The implementation of the scheme in the State was marked by various shortcomings and lapses. GoA had neither framed any guidelines for evaluation system nor conducted any evaluation studies on implementation of the scheme by engaging any third party. As a result, GoA was neither aware of the shortfalls/bottlenecks in the implementation nor was in a position to assess the impact of the implementation of the scheme in the State.

The Performance Audit of the Scheme revealed that there was failure to plan for providing of services under the scheme which were to cover all the habitations including the population of SC/ST, Minority background and Tea garden areas. The construction of AWC buildings was very slow. As against, sanction and release of funds of ₹271.22 crore by GoI during 2011-14 for the construction of 15,000 AWC buildings, only 1,770 buildings were constructed after incurring an expenditure of ₹29.91 crore. Basic amenities like safe drinking water facilities and child friendly toilet were absent in 1,584 and 1,303 AWCs respectively and not a single AWC had a Kitchen. The AWWs arranged cooking of food in the store room causing health hazards to the child beneficiaries due to lack of ventilation, poor evacuations of kitchen generated heat and gases. Providing of Medicine Kits and PSE Kits regularly under the scheme was not ensured. Proper implementation of immunization programme and health check up and referral services was also not ensured. The shortage in all key posts like DPOs, CDPOs, AWWs and AWHs remained unfilled leading to deficient implementation of the Scheme.

Operational deficiencies at Directorate and District level not only led to delay in release and non utilisation of SNP funds optimally but also led to non-achievement of targeted feeding days. Non-adherence of the provision of the guidelines and financial norms led to incurring of excess expenditure of ₹3.48 crore on PSE kits and non-recoupment of SNP funds amounting to ₹13.48 crore.

Examination revealed that non-compliance with the provisions of the financial rules not only resulted in blocking of funds of ₹39.77 crore in Civil Deposit/Bank accounts/Bankers Cheque and avoidable expenditure of ₹8.43 crore on procurement of ICDS materials but also resulted in excess payment of ₹ 2.19 crore due to non-exercising proper check. Poor monitoring at all levels only helped in suspected misappropriation of funds and misutilisation of SNP foodstuffs to the tune of ₹0.67 crore at project level as well as funds meant for purchase of bicycles, uniforms and badges.

Though State Government started a good practice of awarding AWWs/AWHs, the grass root level workers as a token of appreciation of their participation in implementation of the scheme, but not continuing the scheme by making payment of award/honorarium on a regular basis on such activities, definitely would have discouraged them. Further, observance of 'Health Day' at least a day every month in the AWCs was noted as a positive move to bring awareness about the scheme among the beneficiaries in the State.

In sum, there was lack of concerted planning and operational deficiencies in implementation of the ICDS Scheme in the State.

1.3.22 Recommendations

- *The Government should conduct a survey to have an assurance of more inclusive coverage of the population/habitation especially relating to SC/ST/OBC/Minority community under the Scheme.*
- *The Government should closely monitor the progress of construction of AWC buildings so as to ensure availability of good quality buildings for the AWCs, fulfilling the prescribed standards for infrastructure.*
- *The Government should ensure availability of essential workforce duly trained for the efficient administration and supervision of AWCs.*
- *The Government should assess the requirement of funds accurately so as to ensure minimum unspent balance and that submission of utilisation certificates are based on actual expenditure.*
- *Distribution of materials under the various schemes have to be properly documented and carried out in transparent fashion so as to avoid cases of misappropriation.*

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Elementary Education Department

1.4.1 Excess payment and loss due to non-levy of interest

Non-deduction of Assam General Sales Tax (AGST) by the Education (Elementary) Department from the estimated unit cost resulted in extra expenditure of ₹4.39 crore which was avoidable. In addition, there was loss due to non-levy of interest on payment of Mobilization Advance.

During 2010-12, Government of Assam (GoA), Education (Elementary) Department sanctioned ₹53.06 crore⁷⁰ for the construction of 3,113⁷¹ Kitchen-cum-Stores in the premises of lower and upper primary schools of Assam under Mid-Day-Meal Scheme. Estimates for the Kitchen-cum-Store was prepared (January 2010) by the Chief Engineer, Assam State Housing Board (ASHB) on the basis of Assam Public Works Department (APWD) Schedule of Rates (SOR) 2004-05. As per the estimates, unit costs (including VAT) of Kitchen-cum-Store with plinth area of 20 m² and 28 m² were ₹1,41,500 and ₹1,98,100 respectively.

The work was awarded (July and September 2010) to ASHB with the stipulation to complete the work within three months. As of November 2013, construction of 1,474 out of 1,521 (20 m²) and 1,464 out of 1,592 (28 m²) Kitchen-cum-Stores was completed and total payment of ₹49.08 crore was made (March 2011 to June 2012) to ASHB. According to the terms of the agreement, penalty at the rate of one *per cent* of the administrative charge was to be imposed on the contractor on account of delay in completion of work. Reasons for delay and imposition of penalty, if any, were neither on record nor stated to audit, though called (June 2014) for.

(A) According to APWD SOR 2004-05, rates of the item of works were inclusive of Sales tax and any other taxes levied by the Government. As such, while preparing the estimate as per the APWD SOR, element of tax component was required to be deducted.

Scrutiny (October and November 2013) of records of the Director of Elementary Education (DEE), Assam, however, revealed that while preparing the estimates, Chief Engineer, ASHB added VAT @ five *per cent* (applicable *w.e.f.* 1 May 2005) alongwith agency charges (@ three *per cent*) on the estimated unit cost, but did not deduct AGST @ 8.8 *per cent*, which was already included in the SOR 2004-05. Thus, non-deduction of AGST @ 8.8 *per cent* from the unit cost

⁷⁰ Central share: ₹47.75 crore (90 *per cent*); State share: ₹5.31 crore (10 *per cent*).

⁷¹ 1,521 units with plinth area of 20 m² and 1,592 units with plinth area of 28 m².

had inflated the same to that extent and led to an extra expenditure of ₹4.39 crore⁷², which was avoidable.

(B) Scrutiny further revealed that GoA agreed (July 2010) to pay lump sum interest free Mobilization Advance (MA) to ASHB to the extent of 25 per cent of the total cost of the Housing. Accordingly, ASHB was paid (September 2010) interest free MA totaling ₹11.93 crore⁷³, being 25 per cent of the Central Share of ₹47.75 crore. This was in violation of the extant manual provision⁷⁴, which provides for payment of MA in respect of certain specialized and capital intensive works valuing not less than ₹two crore limited to a maximum of 10 per cent of the estimated cost put to tender at 10 per cent simple interest against production of bank guarantee for the advance. Thus, ASHB was paid excess MA of ₹6.62 crore over the actual permissible limit of ₹5.31 crore (10 per cent of total value of work ₹53.06 crore). As of November 2013, ₹10.54 crore was recovered from ASHB without levying any interest and balance MA of ₹1.39 crore remained unadjusted. Thus, failure of DEE to restrict the MA to the extent of ₹5.31 crore as admissible and recover interest @10 per cent per annum on the MA paid to ASHB resulted in extension of undue financial benefit of ₹6.62 crore and loss of interest amounting to ₹90.28 lakh (*Appendix-1.20*) to the State exchequer.

The matter was reported to Government in April 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

1.4.2 Extra expenditure on procurement

Injudicious decision of the Education (Elementary) Department in procuring different items⁷⁵ at higher rates, resulted in excess expenditure of ₹2.26 crore.

Government of Assam (GoA), Finance Department's order (August 2010) stipulates that open tenders are to be invited by the Government Departments for purchase of any item or stores involving public funds of ₹50,000 and above where agencies⁷⁶ of GoA may also participate. However, the order also envisages that the practice of issuing supply orders based on a single quotation offered by such agencies violates the

⁷²

For 1,521 (20 m ²) kitchen cum store	Approved unit cost including AGST(₹)	Unit cost payable after deduction of AGST @ 8.8 per cent (₹)
Total estimated value of the work	1,31,024	1,31,024
Deduct AGST @ 8.8 per cent	Nil	11,530
Total	1,31,024	1,19,494
Add VAT @ 5 per cent	6,551	5,975
Add Agency charge @ 3 per cent	3,931	3,585
Grand total	1,41,506	1,29,054
(A) Excess payment	(₹1,41,506 – 1,29,054) * 1.474 = ₹1,83,54,248	
For 1,592 (28 m ²) kitchen cum store	Approved unit cost (₹)	Unit cost after deduction of AGST @ 8.8 per cent (₹)
Total estimated value of the work	1,83,407.46	1,83,407.46
Deduct AGST @ 8.8 per cent	Nil	16,139.86
Total	1,83,407.46	1,67,267.60
Add VAT @ 5 per cent	9,170.37	8,363.38
Add Agency charge @ 3 per cent	5,502.22	5,018.03
Grand total	1,98,080.05	1,80,649.27
(B) Excess payment	(₹1,98,080 - ₹1,80,649) * 1.464 = ₹2,55,18,984	
Total Excess payment (A + B)	₹1,83,54,248 + ₹2,55,18,984 = ₹4,38,73,232	

Source: Departmental records.

⁷³ 25 per cent of ₹47.75 crore comes to ₹11.94 crore. However, as per KD, MA paid was ₹11.93 crore.

⁷⁴ Para 31.5 of CPWD Manual, 2007.

⁷⁵ Desks and benches and aluminium saucepans.

⁷⁶ Assam Government Marketing Corporation (AGMC)/Assam Electronics Development Corporation (AMTRON) /Assam Apex Weavers and Artisans Co-operative Federation Limited (ARTFED).

statutory provisions contained in section 7(2) of the Assam Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act 2005 and is not in conformity with the established financial rules. Further, in case any doubt arises about the reasonableness of the rates of such items, the purchasing authority may confirm the actual market price of the respective items from the Commissioner of Taxes or from the local Superintendent of Taxes.

Audit (October 2013) of the records of the Director, Elementary Education (DEE), Assam revealed the following:

(A) Government of Assam, Education (Planning) Department sanctioned and released (November 2009 and February 2010) ₹30.57 crore⁷⁷ for procurement of 53,170 desks and benches @ ₹5,750 each for 4,090 schools⁷⁸ (under the award of Twelfth Finance Commission 2009-10). Initial allocation of 13 desks and benches per school was subsequently revised (February 2011) to six by the Education (Planning) Department, GoA to cover 8,861 Lower Primary (LP) schools due to inclusion of class - V in LP school discarding 1,360 Upper Primary (UP) schools, which were selected initially for distribution of 17,680 desks and benches. The DEE placed (February 2011) an order on the Assam Small Industries Development Corporation (ASIDC) Limited for delivering the desks and benches to the schools within 90 days from the date of issue of supply order. The dates of actual supply of desks/benches were neither available on record nor stated to audit, though called for (September 2014). Between January 2012 and September 2013, ₹30.57 crore was paid to the ASIDC for supply of 53,166 desks and benches.

The rate of each set of one desk and one bench allowed to the ASIDC was ₹5,750⁷⁹ as fixed (6 November 2009) by High Level Committee (HLC) based on the proposal made by the Department as per the specification and rate furnished by the ASIDC. The Director, however, did not initiate any action to assess competitiveness of the rate through open tendering in violation of the laid down provisions. Further examination of records revealed that the same ASIDC issued (June 2011) order to a firm for supply of the desks and benches to schools at the unit rate of ₹5,510 (including 13.5 per cent VAT), which was lesser by ₹240 than the rate (₹5,750) actually allowed to ASIDC. As a result, the department had to incur an excess expenditure of ₹1,27,59,840 (₹240 x 53,166) on procurement of the desks and benches, which could have been avoided had the reasonableness of the rate been assessed through open tendering before fixing the rate. Further, another 2,315 desks and benches⁸⁰ could have been procured with the amount of excess expenditure of ₹1.28 crore for providing the same to UP schools.

(B) Similarly, during the years 2007-08 and 2008-09, the Education (Planning) Department, GoA sanctioned ₹20.43 crore for providing various kitchen items⁸¹ to

⁷⁷ ₹10.17 crore in November 2009 and ₹20.41 crore in February 2010.

⁷⁸ 2,730 Lower Primary Schools and 1,360 Upper Primary Schools.

⁷⁹ The rate was inclusive of taxes, commission charge and transportation cost.

⁸⁰ ₹1,27,59,840/₹5,510.

⁸¹ Kerahi, Aluminium Saucepan, GI Bucket, Khanti, etc.

schools for implementation of Mid-Day-Meal scheme. The DEE placed (between January and September 2011) order with the ASIDC for supply of 46,098 Aluminium Saucepans (7 Kg each) and paid ₹9.18 crore to the ASIDC between February 2012 to May 2013 for supply of 45,727 Aluminium Saucepans at the rate of ₹2,008⁸² each fixed (9 December 2010) by the purchase committee.

Audit (October 2013) of records revealed that the purchase committee fixed (9 December 2010) the rates of various items like Kerahi, Khanti, Service Spoon and Mug by adding 20 per cent price escalation, 10 per cent transportation cost and two per cent AGMC commission with the rates furnished (27 November 2009) by the Deputy Commissioner of Taxes, Guwahati. This method was, however, not adopted while fixing the rate of Aluminium Saucepan instead, the same was procured at a higher rate of ₹2,008 each (₹286.86 per Kg), which led to an excess expenditure of ₹98.52 lakh⁸³.

Thus, injudicious decision of the Education (Elementary) Department of procuring desks and benches and aluminium saucepans at higher rates without assessing their competitiveness resulted in excess expenditure of ₹2.26 crore (₹1.28 crore + ₹0.98 crore).

The matter was reported to Government in June 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

1.4.3 Extra expenditure

Failure of the Mission Director, Sarba Siksha Abhiyan, Assam in availing the benefit of subsidy in procuring aids and appliances resulted in avoidable expenditure of ₹1.30 crore.

Para 35.3 (d) of Manual on Financial Management and Procurement of Sarba Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) *inter-alia* provides that aids and appliances for children requiring assistive devices are to be obtained through convergence with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJ&E), Government of India (GoI), State Social Welfare Department, National Institutions or Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The MoSJ&E provides 60 per cent subsidy under Assistance to Disabled Persons (ADIP) Scheme, an inclusive Education component of SSA. The scheme provides for procurement of aids and appliances from the ALIMCO⁸⁴, (a GoI undertaking) licensee for the use of ISI mark on 17 categories of rehabilitation aids and appliances. However, procurement from open market could be made when the ALIMCO devices were not available. The Project Approval Board (PAB), chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MoHRD), also emphasized

⁸² ₹286.86 X 7 Kg.

⁸³ {₹286.86 - ₹256.08 (₹194 + 20 per cent price escalation + 10 per cent transportation cost + 2 per cent commission)} X 7 X 45,727 = ₹98,52,339.

⁸⁴ Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India Limited.

(23 April 2012) the need of procurement of aids and appliances for Children with Special Needs (CWSN) from the ALIMCO at subsidized rates.

Audit (December 2013) of records of the Mission Director (MD), SSA, Assam disclosed that during 2012-13, the MD procured aids and appliances worth ₹2.47 crore. Out of ₹2.47 crore, the items worth ₹0.31 crore was only procured from the ALIMCO and the balance items worth ₹2.16 crore (₹2.47 crore - ₹0.31 crore) was procured from three outside agencies (*Appendix-1.21*). There was nothing on record to show that the aids and appliances were not available with the ALIMCO thereby necessitating procurement from outside agencies. As a result of procurement from outside agencies, SSA, Assam not only lost the benefit of subsidy amounting to ₹1.30 crore (60 *per cent* of ₹2.16 crore) available under the ADIP scheme but also failed to avail the expertise of the ALIMCO towards the fitting and supply of appliances.

On this being pointed out, MD, SSA, Assam in reply stated (January 2014) that procurement of aids and appliances were made from outside agencies through open tendering as SSA, Assam had faced problems in the past while procuring the same from the ALIMCO such as:

- Delay in delivery of items by the ALIMCO.
- Requirement of 100 *per cent* of advance payment.
- Dispatch of unassembled materials without coordination with SSA.
- Lack of professional manpower for attending medical assessment camps, distribution camps and non-existence of storage facility in North East.
- Quality of materials was not satisfactory and there was no after sales service.

The reply was not acceptable as the SSA had earlier cited (January 2012) similar reasons to the MoHRD while justifying its proposed procurement through open tendering. The MoHRD, however, did not endorse the argument presented by SSA, instead, emphasised (23 April 2012) that aids and appliances should only be procured from the ALIMCO to avail the subsidy. The SSA, disregarding the directives of MoHRD, however, procured the material from outside agencies, which resulted in an extra expenditure of ₹1.30 crore, which was avoidable.

The matter was reported to Government in June 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

1.4.4 Irregular expenditure

The Mission Director, Sarba Siksha Abhiyan, Assam incurred an irregular expenditure of ₹5.13 crore on activities not permissible under SSA frame work.

Para 111.2 of Financial Management and Procurement Manual (FMPM) envisages that SSA funds are to be used only for purposes for which they are granted with due

attention to considerations of economy and efficiency and without regard to political or other non-economic influences or considerations.

With the objective of recruiting meritorious and qualified teachers, Sarba Siksha Abhiyan (SSA), Assam in collaboration with Government of Assam (GoA), Education (Elementary) Department conducted (January 2012) Teachersø Eligibility Test (TET) for Lower Primary (LP) and Upper Primary (UP) level. 52,725 out of 3,30,927 candidates who appeared passed TET. Finally, after due evaluation as per NCTE⁸⁵ norms, 40,756⁸⁶ eligible TET passed candidates were appointed as Assistant Teacher on contractual basis by holding ceremony on 20 May 2012 and 12 August 2012 respectively at Guwahati.

Audit (December 2013) of records of the Mission Director (MD), SSA, Assam disclosed that a total expenditure of ₹5.13 crore (***Appendix-1.22***) was incurred during 2012-13 for the ceremonial distribution of appointment letters to the selected TET passed candidates. The items of expenditure included installation, erection, fitting and fixing of steel tubular structure (Hanger), steel barricade for VIPs, hiring of chair, carpet, sound system, providing breakfast, lunch, dinner, etc. The work/supply orders for above works were placed on different contractors/suppliers by inviting Short Tender Notices.

Examination of records further revealed that the ceremonial distribution of appointment letters was projected as òone day orientation programmeö and the entire expenditure was unauthorisedly booked under òteacher training activityö. The empowered Project Approval Board (PAB), however, had not provided any provision for one day orientation programme during 2012-13. Thus, SSA incurred the expenditure without the required budget allocation by PAB and also without obtaining any approval from the Executive Committee of SSA.

On this being pointed out, the MD in reply stated (August 2014) that the arrangement was mainly for imparting motivational training to the newly recruited teachers and the expenditure was booked under the PAB activity head òTeachers Trainingö and hence, there was no issue relating to diversion of fund or irregular expenditure. The reply was not tenable as PAB neither provided any provision for one day orientation programme during 2012-13 nor was there any budget allocation for such activity. Further, the items of expenditure amply illustrated that the expenditure of ₹5.13 crore was incurred purely for the distribution of engagement letters, which was extravagant and irregular.

Thus, the expenditure of ₹5.13 crore, incurred on programmes organized purely for distribution of engagement letters to TET passed candidates, was irregular and violated the relevant provision of FMPPM.

The matter was reported to Government in July 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

⁸⁵ National Council for Teacher Education.

⁸⁶ 26,110 candidates in Phase 6I and 14,646 candidates in Phase-II.

1.4.5 Loss to Government

Deputy Inspectors of Schools⁸⁷ and the District Elementary Education Officer, Tinsukia incurred inadmissible expenditure of ₹170.81 lakh towards payment of leave encashment exceeding the permissible limit, which included fraudulent drawal of ₹16.17 lakh.

As per provision of Office Memorandum (February 2000) of Finance Department, Government of Assam (GoA), Government servants in vacation Departments are entitled to encash Earned Leave (EL) for a maximum 80 days at credit on the date of retirement. The benefit was applicable to Government servants of vacation Departments retiring on superannuation on or after 29 February 2000. The Office Memorandum (OM) was superseded by OM of July 2010, wherein the limit of both accumulation and encashment of EL was enhanced from 80 to 150 days effective from 1 January 2010. The limit was further enhanced in February 2011 from 150 to 300 days with effect from 1 January 2011. The provision of annual credit of EL of 10 days for the employees of vacation Departments, however, remained unchanged. Thus, employees of vacation Departments were entitled for accumulation and encashment of EL for maximum 80 days up to 31 December 2009 and thereafter subsequent accumulation of 10 days for each completed year of service from 1 January 2010. As such, possibility of accumulation of EL in respect of employees retired between 1 January 2010 and 30 November 2014 (date of audit) would be 80 to 120 days at the maximum.

Audit (between September 2013 and November 2014) of records of seven Deputy Inspectors of Schools (DISs) and the District Elementary Education Officer, Tinsukia revealed that contrary to the specific instructions of the Finance Department, GoA, 449 employees of vacation Department were allowed encashment of EL exceeding their entitlement of the encashment of EL (as on November 2014) as shown in the Table 1.53 (Details in *Appendices–1.23 to 1.30*):

Table 1.53

Sl. No.	Name of the DDO	No. of employees involved	Amount of excess payment made (₹ in lakh)
1.	DIS, Sivasagar	107	51.02
2.	DIS, Sarupathar	19	10.70
3.	DIS, Haflong	22	28.85
4.	DIS, Udalguri	73	38.78
5.	DIS, Tinsukia	172	27.76
6.	DIS, Bilasipara	22	8.55
7.	DIS, Dibrugarh	22	1.97
8.	DEEO, Tinsukia	12	3.18
Total		449	170.81

Source: Departmental records.

⁸⁷ DISs, Sivasagar, Sarupathar, Haflong, Udalguri, Tinsukia, Bilashipara and Dibrugarh.

This resulted in irregular sanction and payment of ₹170.81 lakh⁸⁸ towards encashment of leave.

Scrutiny further revealed that in respect of 33 out of 107 cases under the DIS, Sivasagar, encashment was allowed for 150 to 155 days whereas the number of unutilized EL as per sanction orders was 90 days in each case. This had led to fraudulent drawal totaling ₹16.17 lakh (***Appendix-1.31***).

Thus, failure of the DISs/DEEO in settlement of leave encashment in accordance with the limits fixed by Finance Department, GoA resulted in a loss to Government totaling ₹170.81 lakh, which included ₹16.17 lakh drawn fraudulently by inflating the credit balance of EL.

On this being pointed out, DISs, Sivasagar, Udalguri and Sarupathar in reply stated (May/July 2014) that recovery on account of excess encashed earned leave would be made from the teachers concerned after due verification under intimation to audit.

The matter was reported to Government in April 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

1.4.6 Payment on fraudulent LTC claims

Failure of the Education (Elementary) Department /Drawing and Disbursing Officers⁸⁹ (DDOs) in exercising necessary checks before releasing payment towards LTC claims led to fraudulent payment of ₹3.59 crore.

As per Government of Assam (GOA), Finance (Audit and Fund) Department Office Memorandum (OM) of April 2010, State Government employees after completion of 10 years of continuous service are entitled to avail Leave Travel Concession (LTC) for one time during the entire period of service.

(A) Test check (August 2013) of records of the Deputy Inspector of Schools (DIS), Kokrajhar disclosed that the DIS disbursed ₹56.18 lakh in two installments (₹34.01 lakh between December 2011 and March 2012 and ₹22.17 lakh in March 2013) towards LTC claims (in respect of five family members including claimant in each case) preferred by 170 teachers. The DIS, however, did not produce any of the records in support of the claims *viz.*, railway tickets, dependency declarations by the Government servant, postal receipt⁹⁰ from the declared destination etc. Instead, the DIS stated (July 2014) that the related records could not be produced to audit as the same were submitted to Treasury without retaining the photocopies of the documents.

Subsequently, bills, vouchers, photo copies of railway tickets etc., accompanying the concerned Treasury Accounts were collected (September-October 2014) by audit

⁸⁸ Due to non-production of leave accounts of the employees concerned, the quantum of excess encashment of leave was calculated by allowing maximum possible credit of EL on the date of retirement for each employee.

⁸⁹ Deputy Inspector of Schools (DIS), Kokrajhar; District Elementary Education Officer, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri; Inspector of Schools, Chirang and Kokrajhar.

⁹⁰ For availing LTC, the Government servant has to obtain Annexure Aø from the controlling officer and to send the same from the place of visit by registered post after signing the document by the family members.

from the office of the Principal Accountant General (A&E), Assam. Examination of these records revealed that:

- In 102 cases of LTC claims (in respect of 510⁹¹ persons), journeys were claimed to have performed by four different trains (between 3 July 2012 and 18 July 2012).
- In two cases⁹² of claims, the train (Train No. 12516 and 15906) did not run on the dates (13-07-2012/Friday and 18-07-2012/Wednesday) on which journeys were claimed to have been performed.
- The declared destination in all the 170 cases of LTC was Kanyakumari.

A detailed analysis of the records further revealed that:

- ❖ None of the tickets were found marked/verified by the Travelling Ticket Examiner (TTE) as a token of check.
- ❖ The PNR Number marked on these tickets was showing 9 digits instead of 10 digits as per Railway standard.
- ❖ Normally railway tickets purchased from the railway counters all over the country are printed by Dot Matrix Printer whereas in the instant cases tickets were printed by Laser Printer although perforations on the sides of the tickets had been made as if the same had been printed on a Dot Matrix printers.
- ❖ The font in the tickets submitted with LTC bills appeared to be different from the standard font used by the Railway authority for the printing of tickets.
- ❖ The station and train names appearing in the LTC tickets were not found matching as per the standard being followed by the Railway authority.

All these anomalies raised serious doubts about the veracity of the LTC claims. Therefore, in order to ascertain the genuineness of the tickets, photo copies of all the 510 railway tickets as attached with the treasury vouchers were forwarded (30 October 2014) to Chief Commercial Manager (CCM), Northeast Frontier Railway,

⁹¹

Train No./Name/Runs between stations	Date	Number of passengers travelled
12510 (Guwahati SBC Express) Guwahati to Bangalore (Via N. Bongaigaon)	3.7.12	55
	8.7.12	45
	15.7.12	45
	16.7.12	45
	17.7.12	45
12508 (Guwahati TVC Express) Guwahati to Trivandrum (Via N. Bongaigaon)	6.7.12	100
	13.7.12	50
15630 (Guwahati MS Express) Guwahati to Chennai Egmore (Via N. Bongaigaon)	13.7.12	45
12516 (Guwahati-TVC Express) Guwahati to Trivandrum (Via N. Bongaigaon)	18.7.12	80
Total		510

Source: Departmental records.

⁹² Sri Prafulla Kr. Roy and Sri Pradip Kr. Basumatary.

Maligaon for verification. In reply, the Vigilance Officer (Traffic), N.F Railway Maligaon intimated (22 November 2014) that these tickets were fake as the same had not been generated through Passenger Reservation System (PRS) of Railway. It was also stated in this regard that an FIR had already been lodged (21 November 2014) with Superintendent of Police, Government Railway Police, Pandu by the Railway Authority.

(B) Similar cases were also noticed on scrutiny (September to November 2014) of treasury vouchers of the Deputy Inspector of Schools, Gossaigaon; District Elementary Education Officer, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri; Inspector of Schools, Chirang and Kokrajhar, wherein a total expenditure of ₹3.03 crore⁹³ was shown as incurred towards payment of fictitious LTC claims.

The above instances indicated failure of the Education department/DDOs concerned in exercising necessary checks before admitting the LTC bills for payments. Thus, failure on the part of DDOs led to fraudulent payment amounting to ₹3.59 crore (₹3.03 crore + ₹0.56 crore) against the forged LTC bills.

The matter was reported to Government in November 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

Secondary Education Department

1.4.7 Extra expenditure

Injudicious decision of procurement of exercise books by the Director of Madrassa Education, Assam at rates higher than the prevailing market rates led to an extra expenditure of ₹1.82 crore.

Office Memorandum (OM) of Government of Assam (GoA), Finance Department (11 August 2010) *inter-alia* envisaged that in order to ensure reasonableness of the rates of items procured out of public fund, the purchasing authority should obtain the actual market price from the Commissioner/Superintendent of Taxes.

Audit (July 2013) of the records of the Director of Madrassa Education (DME), Assam revealed that based on the proposal submitted (March 2011) by the DME, Education (Secondary) Department, GoA sanctioned and released (March 2011) ₹8.69 crore for printing and supply of free booklets to the students of Madrassa Educational Institutions during 2010-11. The purchase committee headed by the DME, on evaluation of the technical bids submitted by six bidders in response to the tender notification published (April 2011) in local daily, rejected the bids of five bidders for want of some information/documents⁹⁴. Of the five rejected bidders, three had fulfilled

⁹³ District Elementary Education Officer, Chirang (₹104.52 lakh), Baksa (₹5.94 lakh) and Udalguri (₹3.36 lakh); Inspector of Schools, Chirang (₹66.65 lakh) and Kokrajhar (₹122.75 lakh).

⁹⁴ Permanent Registration Certificate, VAT Registration/Clearance Certificate, PAN Card etc.

all requirements except submitting certificate of work experience of single Government printing work worth ₹one crore and above during the financial year 2009-10 and 2010-11. The technical bid of the only remaining bidder⁹⁵ was found to be in order and was selected for the job. In accordance with Government instruction (September 2011), the financial bid submitted by the successful bidder only was to be considered and the rates quoted by him was to be accepted. Accordingly, order was placed (September 2011) for supply of (i) 1,40,000 Plain Exercise Books @ ₹90 each, (ii) 1,55,336 Roll Exercise Books @ ₹95 each and (iii) 7,00,000 Booklets @ ₹85 each within 60 days from the date of issue of the supply order. The printing was completed in June 2012 and a total amount of ₹8.69 crore was paid (April to July 2012) to the supplier for the supply of exercise books and booklets to concerned Madrassa Institutions. Records in support of distribution of the exercise books and booklets to beneficiaries were, however, not made available to audit. The material, however, could not be distributed to the beneficiaries during 2010-11 due to delay in completion of the whole process of printing; instead the same were stated (September 2014) to be distributed during June 2012.

A comparative study of the prevailing Maximum Retail Price (MRP) *vis-a-vis* rates actually allowed in respect of exercise books (both plain and roll) of same specifications indicated that the rates allowed by DME were higher by 137 to 280 *per cent* over the respective MRP prevalent during the period. This resulted in an extra expenditure of ₹1.82 crore as detailed in Table 1.54.

Table 1.54

Sl. No.	Name and specification of items procured	Quantity procured	Rate allowed (including tax) (₹)	MRP (₹)	Rate allowed in excess of MRP (4 – 5) (₹) (Percentage)	Excess expenditure (3 X 6) (₹)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Exercise book (plain) A4 size, Text 120 pages, plain, 60 GSM paper, cover multicolour, one side printing, 170 GSM art paper	1,40,000	90	38	52 (137)	72,80,000
2.	Exercise book (Roll) A4 size, Text 120 pages, roll, 60 GSM paper, cover multicolour, one side printing, 170 GSM art paper	1,55,336	95	25	70 (280)	1,08,73,520
Total						1,81,53,520

Source: Departmental records.

⁹⁵ Purbashree Printers, Guwahati.

There was nothing on record to indicate that the DME had judged the reasonableness of the rates in order to safeguard the Government interest. The prevailing market prices were taken into consideration before finalising the rates of the items procured.

On this being pointed out in audit, the DME in reply stated (November 2013) that the procurement was made in conformity with Finance Department's Office Memorandum (OM) dated 11 August 2010. The reply of the DME was not tenable as the said OM *inter-alia* envisaged that in order to ensure reasonableness of the rates of items to be procured, the purchasing authority had to obtain the actual market price from the Commissioner/Superintendent of Taxes, which was not done in the instant case.

Thus, procurement of items at rates excessively higher than the prevailing market rates led to an extra expenditure of ₹1.82 crore, which was avoidable.

The matter was reported to Government in May 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

Higher Education Department

1.4.8 Excess payment

The Registrar, Dibrugarh University made excess payment of ₹1.01 crore to the contractor for the construction of Core Building by allowing item-wise rate outside the scope of contract agreement.

The work of Construction of Core Building of the Dibrugarh University Institute of Engineering and Technology (Civil, Sanitary and Water Supply) was approved (May 2009) by the Planning and Construction Board (PCB) at a cost of ₹4.27 crore (total cost of civil works including services). A preliminary estimate (₹4.27 crore) based on plinth area was prepared through a private architect and was approved by PCB in May 2009. The estimated rates were worked out on the basis of APWD Schedule of Rates 2004-05.

According to the laid down procedure, no work should be commenced until administrative approval is accorded and the detailed estimates are prepared. In violation of the laid down procedures, the University authority invited (April 2009) tenders on the basis of the preliminary estimates prior to obtaining approval of the PCB and preparing detailed estimate. Subsequent to the approval of the work by PCB in May 2009, an agreement was entered (July 2009) into with the lowest tenderer based on the preliminary estimates. Detailed estimates of the work was, however, prepared in September 2009 at a cost of ₹4.13 crore.

Scrutiny (June to July 2013) of records of Registrar, Dibrugarh University revealed that though the agreement was signed based on plinth area rate, the contractor was paid on the basis of item-wise rate. According to the estimates, based on which the work was

awarded and agreement signed, the contractor was to execute total 4,285⁹⁶ m² of work on plinth area basis. It was, however, noticed that the contractor executed only 3,258⁹⁷ m² as provided in the detailed estimate, for which an amount of ₹3.67 crore was payable as per contractual provisions. The contractor was, however, paid ₹4.68 crore as per item-wise rate based on detailed estimates prepared subsequent to signing the agreement, which led to an excess payment of ₹1.01 crore (₹4.68 crore ó ₹3.67 crore) as detailed in *Appendix-1.32*.

Thus, the Registrar, Dibrugarh University made the excess payment of ₹1.01 crore to the contractor towards construction of Core Building by allowing item-wise rate violating provisions envisaged in the contract agreement.

The matter was reported to Government in February 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

Health and Family Welfare Department

1.4.9 Doubtful expenditure

Expenditure of ₹2.04 crore, shown to have been incurred on procurement of surgical items, equipment, furniture, deodorant cum cleaner etc., by the Joint Director of Health Services and Senior Medical and Health Officer, Diphu was doubtful for want of receipts and details of utilisation of the material.

As per provision of Rule 191 of Assam Financial Rules (AFR), the Departmental officers entrusted with the care, use or consumption of stores, are responsible both for maintaining correct records and preparing returns in respect of the stores entrusted to them. Further, Rule 195 of AFR provides that stock balance should be verified half-yearly by higher official other than the store keeper of the same or different department to see whether there is any discrepancy between the stock balance with that of book balance. Any discrepancy discovered should be fully explained and the book balance set right under orders of the competent authority.

(A) Scrutiny (February 2013) of records of the Joint Director of Health Services (Jt. DHS), Diphu revealed that based on administrative approval accorded (May 2009) by Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), the Jt. DHS procured surgical items/equipment worth ₹4.46 crore from two suppliers during July and August 2009 for smooth functioning and upgradation of Diphu Civil Hospital and other hospitals in Karbi Anglong District. However, there was nothing on record to show that the actual requirement of items/equipment was assessed prior to going ahead with the procurement. Suppliers were selected by KAAC without inviting tender in violation of the prescribed Rules and procedure. Till February 2013, the Jt. DHS, Diphu paid (October 2011 and October 2012) ₹1.10 crore against bills worth ₹1.40 crore preferred by the suppliers.

⁹⁶ 1,735 m² (Ground Floor), 1,735 m² (First Floor) and 815 m² (Second Floor).

⁹⁷ 1,050 m² (Ground Floor), 1,050 m² (First Floor) and 1,158 m² (Second Floor).

Receipts of the articles were duly acknowledged by the Senior Medical and Health Officer (M&HO), District Medical Store (DMS), Diphu by certifying on the body of the supplier's bills. Status of supply of balance items/equipment worth ₹3.06 crore (₹4.46 crore ó ₹1.40 crore), however, could not be ascertained as the relevant bills were not furnished to audit. Further, vital records viz., delivery challans, specification, brand name, warranty period of equipment supplied, terms and condition of supply etc., in support of supply of the equipments were not found available during audit which raised doubts about the actual supply and receipt of the equipment. In order to ascertain the genuineness of equipment having been supplied and payment made there against, audit selected 47 equipment (worth ₹88.89 lakh which were shown as lying in stock) for joint physical verification. In response, the Senior M&HO instead of agreeing to the request of joint physical verification made by audit, stated (February 2013) that the equipment were not available in store as the same were directly supplied to the Diphu Civil Hospital by the supplier. The reply was not acceptable as these articles were certified as received by the Senior M&HO, DMS, Diphu and entered in the stock register of the DMS. Moreover, cross verification of stock register of Diphu Civil Hospital including stock register of operation theatre (OT) wing revealed that no such equipment were received in the Civil Hospital, Diphu. Further, on enquiry, Superintendent, Civil Hospital, Diphu also stated (March 2013) that no such surgical items/equipment were received from the supplier. Thus, payment of ₹88.89 lakh shown to have been made towards purchase of the surgical items/equipment were fictitious as the veracity of the expenditure could not be confirmed.

(B) Similarly, the Jt. DHS, Diphu procured different furniture (Steel Almirah, Table, Revolving Steel Chair etc.) worth ₹76.60 lakh during November 2010 to December 2012. As per certificate appended on the body of the bills, furniture was received by the Senior M&HO, DMS, Diphu. Of these, furniture worth ₹23.69 lakh were shown to have been issued during January 2011 to February 2013 while balance furniture worth ₹52.91 lakh were shown as kept in stock. Physical verification conducted (26 February 2013) by the Senior M&HO, DMS, Diphu at the instance of audit, however, revealed that furniture worth ₹1.87 lakh only were physically available in the stock. Whereabouts of the balance furniture worth ₹51.04 lakh⁹⁸ (₹52.91 lakh ó ₹1.87 lakh) were, however, not available on records produced to audit.

⁹⁸ Details of store materials found short during physical verification

(Amount in ₹)

Name of material	Period of procurement	Quantity	Rate	Total value	Issued up to	Quantity issued	Balance	Physically available in store	Shortage in store	Value of shortage item
Steel Almirah	11/10 to 2/12	327	9500	3106500	26-02-2013	98	229	15	214	2033000
3 seater jali chair with frame	1/11 to 12/12	247	4800	1185600	26-02-2013	121	126	5	121	580800
Executive table with two side drawer	11/10 to 11/11	266	7000	1862000	26-02-2013	80	186	0	186	1302000
Steel visitor chair	Jan./11	87	2500	217500	26-02-2013	50	37	0	37	92500
Revolving steel chair armless	12/10 to 11/11	322	4000	1288000	26-02-2013	43	279	5	274	1096000
Total		1249		7659600		392	857	25	832	5104300

Source: Departmental records.

On this being pointed out in audit, the Jt. DHS, Diphu stated (March 2013) that the furniture in question was actually issued but not accounted for in the stock register as acknowledgements of receipt were not collected. However, no evidence in support of issue of these furnitures was available on record.

(C) Scrutiny of stock register for the period June 2008 to August 2012 of the District Medical Store, Diphu disclosed that 5,753 litre of Klinky Citrus (KC)⁹⁹ was lying in stock as on 1 February 2010. The Jt. DHS, Diphu subsequently procured 8,000 litre of KC between 3 March 2010 and 23 February 2012 from a Kolkata based supplier at a cost of ₹57 lakh and added it to the stock balance. However, another 2,000 litres of KC worth ₹13 lakh procured on 19 October 2010 was not added to the stock balance though the same was entered in the stock register. As a result, there was short accountal of stock amounting to ₹13 lakh. The position of receipt of KC during 1 February 2010 to 26 February 2013 was shown in Table 1.55.

Table 1.55

Balance as on	Date of new purchase	Quantity (litre)	Rate per litre (₹)	Total value (₹)
1/02/2010	-	5753	600	3451800
-	03/03/2010	800	650	520000
-	03/03/2010	2200	650	1430000
-	19/10/2010	2000	650	1300000
-	20/04/2011	2000	750	1500000
-	23/02/2012	3000	750	2250000
Total		15,753		1,04,51,800

Source: Departmental records.

Scrutiny further revealed that during 1 February 2010 to 26 February 2013, 4,550 litres of KC were shown to have been issued. As such, as on 26 February 2013, unutilised stock of KC should have been 11,203 litres (15,753 litres- 4,550 litres). However, joint physical verification of stock conducted on 26 February 2013 along with the Senior M&HO, DMS, Diphu disclosed that only 2,050 litres (82 drums of 25 litres each) of KC worth ₹12.72 lakh (1,203 litres X ₹600+ 847 litres X ₹650) were physically available in the stock. Thus, there was a shortage of 9,153 litre (11,203 litres - 2,050 litres) of KC worth ₹64.49 lakh¹⁰⁰.

On this being pointed out, Senior Medical & Health Officer, in charge of the District Medical Store, Diphu in reply stated (February 2013) that the Stock Register was not regularized and some quantity relating to the issue of KC could not be entered in the Register due to non-receipt of acknowledgement of receipt from the peripheral hospitals/Health Centres. However, the same would be collected and the Stock Register would be regularized. The reply was not acceptable being as per procedure, the stock can not be issued without obtaining acknowledgement from the recipient.

⁹⁹ A concentrate deodorant cum cleaner used in hospitals and dispensaries.

¹⁰⁰ ₹1,04,51,800- {(4,550 litre X 600) + ₹12,72,350}.

Had the periodic physical verification of stock been done as was required under the provision of AFR, the possibilities of irregularities noticed on account of stock/store could have been avoided.

Thus, expenditure amounting to ₹2.04 crore (₹88.89 lakh + ₹51.04 lakh + ₹64.49 lakh) remained doubtful as the department failed to produce details of receipts and utilisations of the material shown to have been purchased with the same.

The matter was reported to Government in February 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

1.4.10 Idle stock

Excess procurement of hospital items worth ₹2.35 crore by the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council and the Joint Director of Health Services, Diphu without assessing the actual requirement led to idling of stock of hospital items to that extent.

Based on the administrative approval accorded (March 2012) by the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), the Joint Director of Health Services (Jt. DHS), Diphu issued (March 2012) orders to four local suppliers for the supply of eight hospital items valued ₹87.56 lakh (including taxes). The items, meant for distribution to 12 health institutions of Karbi Anglong District with total bed capacity of 492, were procured as per the rates approved by the KAAC. The items were received by the Jt. DHS on 22 and 23 March 2012.

Scrutiny (February 2013) of the records of the Jt. DHS, Diphu revealed that the hospital items were procured without assessing the actual requirement and taking into consideration the available stock. The average annual requirements of seven out of the eight items, worked out in audit, ranged from 272 to 1,667. The Jt. DHS and KAAC, however, procured the hospital items far in excess of the actual requirement. As a result, stock balance of the unused hospital items continued to pile up. The detailed position of purchase, issue and balance in stock of the hospital items *vis-a-vis* the approximate annual requirement as on the date of audit (February 2013) is shown in Table 1.56.

Table 1.56

Sl. No.	Name of item	Previous stock as of February 2012 (In number)	New purchase during March 2012	Average annual requirement	Closing balance as on February 2013
1.	Bed Sheet	7,790	8,000	825	15,790
2.	Bed Cover	4,690	5,670	570	10,360
3.	Blanket	15,456	5,000	1,457	20,456
4.	Towel	6,354	2,000	916	8,354
5.	Mattress	341	300	197	641
6.	Cotton Pillow	488	150	NA	638
7.	Pillow Cover	4,140	1,000	645	5,140
8.	Mosquito Net	8,500	5,069	1,459	13,569

Source: Departmental records.

Thus, procurement of hospital items without assessing their actual requirement led to idling of stores amounting to ₹2.35 crore (**Appendix-1.33**) without issue. Further, there is every possibility of deterioration of these materials due to prolonged storage.

Despite irregular purchases of similar nature being pointed out in the Audit Report on Social, General and Economic (Non-PSUs) Sectors for the year ended 31 March 2012 (paragraph 1.5.3), such practice of procuring hospital items far in excess of the requirement by the Jt. DHS and KAAC persisted, which resulted in accumulation of stock balance of unused hospital items.

The matter was reported to Government in March 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

1.4.11 Suspected misappropriation

Basic records relating to receipt and utilisation of funds of ₹18.72 lakh were not available, indicating possibility of misappropriation.

Rule 95 of Assam Financial Rules provides that Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO) is personally responsible for accounting of all money received and disbursed and for the safe custody of cash. Further, according to the procedure followed in Government Departments on receipt of cheques/drafts/banker's cheque etc., details are to be recorded in Register of Valuables before making entries in departmental cash book as soon as any transaction is made.

(A) Audit (October 2013) of records of the Member Secretary (MS), District Health Society (DHS), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Morigaon revealed that the MS released (November 2006) ₹10 lakh to Block Development Officer (BDO), Kopili Development Block for repairing and renovation of PHC, CHC and SHC¹⁰¹. The amount was shown to have been disbursed through a cheque¹⁰², which was encashed in November 2006 as per the bank pass book operated with the SBI, Morigaon by the MS. The BDO of the Block concerned, however, denied receipt of any such fund. Despite specific requests made (April 2014) by Audit, the Block also failed to furnish the related records viz., bank statement/pass book, cash book, cheque receipt register etc., Thus, the amount of ₹10 lakh was suspected to be misappropriated as the same remained untraceable even after 66 months of its withdrawal and no action was taken against the Cashier primarily responsible for safe custody of cash and encashment of cheques.

(B) Examination of the bank statement¹⁰³ for the period 1 August 2007 to 31 March 2011 relating to the bank account operated with State Bank of India, Morigaon by the

¹⁰¹ Primary Health Centre (PHC), Community Health Centre (CHC) and Sub Health Centre (SHC).

¹⁰² Cheque No. 00495432 dated 9 November 2006.

¹⁰³ A/c No. 30226171716.

Superintendent, Civil Hospital, Morigaon disclosed that a total amount of ₹1.98 lakh was withdrawn from the bank through 10 self-cheques between 24 April 2009 and 1 October 2010. The amount so withdrawn was neither accounted for in the cash book of the Morigaon Civil Hospital nor traceable (April 2014) even after five years of withdrawal. Thus, there was possibility of misutilisation/misappropriation of funds amounting to ₹1.98 lakh. No action was initiated against DDO/Cashier in this matter despite this having been pointed out by Audit (November 2013).

(C) Similarly, Audit of the records (January and February 2013) of the Member Secretary, NRHM, Chirang revealed that during the period between 1 October 2008 and 8 October 2009, a total sum of ₹6.74 lakh was withdrawn from the bank account¹⁰⁴ of NRHM, Chirang through 13 self-cheques.

The withdrawal of ₹6.74 lakh was neither entered in the cash book nor any documents in support of their utilisation could be made available (April 2014) to audit even after elapse of about five years since withdrawal of funds. This pointed towards suspected misappropriation of ₹6.74 lakh. No action was, however, initiated against the DDO/Cashier in this regard despite this having been brought to the notice of the Member Secretary in November/December 2013.

Thus, non-accountal of funds to the extent of ₹18.72 lakh (₹10 lakh + ₹1.98 lakh + ₹6.74 lakh) in the respective cash books by the DDOs and non-availability of basic records in support of their receipt and utilisation pointed towards suspected misappropriation of Government money to that extent.

The matter was reported to Government in May 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

1.4.12 Suspected misappropriation

Failure of the Member Secretary, District Health Society, National Rural Health Mission, Sonitpur in furnishing the record of utilisation and whereabouts of the funds amounting to ₹37.10 lakh after their withdrawal, pointed towards suspected misappropriation of the fund. In addition, there was an advance of ₹34.24 lakh which also remaining unadjusted.

Rule 95 of Assam Financial Rules (AFR) provides that Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO) is personally responsible for accounting of all money received and disbursed and for the safe custody of cash. Besides, Rule 78 and 79 of AFR provide that every payment must be supported by a claim and supporting voucher/acknowledgement.

¹⁰⁴ A/c No. 30308192247.

(A) (i) Audit (January - February 2013) of bank pass book of the District Health Society (DHS), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Sonitpur revealed that an amount of ₹14.60 lakh was withdrawn (16 November 2007) from the bank account¹⁰⁵ of the DHS through cheque. The withdrawal so made was, however, not reflected in the cash book and the cheque issue register maintained by the DHS. The details of the fund of ₹14.60 lakh was also not traceable on record. In reply to an audit query (May 2014), the Joint Director of Health Services cum Member Secretary (MS), DHS admitted that the entire transaction remained out of records.

(ii) Further examination of the bank statement for the prior period, December 2008 to March 2009 further revealed that in January 2009, ₹9.73 lakh was withdrawn from the bank account of the DHS through cheque. The drawal was, however, not accounted for both in the cash book and the cheque issue register maintained by the DHS. Whereabouts of the fund was also not traceable on record. Analysis of records also revealed that the primary auditor of the DHS in its report indicated (3 September 2009) that out of ₹9.73 lakh, ₹8.28 lakh was refunded by the Ex District Accounts Manager (DAM)¹⁰⁶ and the balance amount of ₹1.45 lakh was misappropriated by the DAM. The refund of ₹8.28 lakh as reported by the CA was, however, also not found traceable on record.

On this being pointed out (January 2013), the MS in reply stated (February 2013) that the refund was reflected neither in the cash book nor in the bank statement/pass book. Even no money receipt was issued against the said refund.

(B) Further, it was noticed during audit that some records maintained by the Jamuguri Primary Health Centre (PHC) were seized by police in connection with financial irregularities that took place in the PHC. Examination of the seizure lists revealed that the police seized only nine cheques and the cheque issue register of 2010-11 maintained by the PHC. Other vital records viz., cash book, bank statement/bank pass book, vouchers, ledgers etc., were, however, not produced to audit by the PHC. The audit in this regard collected the bank statement¹⁰⁷ which indicated that during the period from April 2010 to March 2011, a total amount of ₹12.77 lakh was withdrawn from the bank through cheques. Neither the records of utilisation of the fund so drawn were furnished nor the details thereof were made available to audit, though called for (February 2013).

Thus, details of ₹12.77 lakh drawn from bank accounts could not be traced out in audit as the MS also failed to produce records in support of utilisation of fund after their withdrawal. Therefore possibility of misappropriation of funds could not be ruled out in the case.

¹⁰⁵ A/c No. 10501586625 operated with State Bank of India, Tezpur.

¹⁰⁶ Sri Bipul Sarmah.

¹⁰⁷ A/c No. 11872630165 of SBI, Rangachakua.

(C) During 2006-08, the MS, DHS, Sonitpur disbursed ₹31.70 lakh as advance to different firms/personnel for different purposes¹⁰⁸. Although no records of utilisation viz., measurement book, site account, estimate, stock and distribution register, vouchers etc., were found available with the MS, the advances so made were treated as expenditure in the annual accounts without any adjustment.

Similarly, during 2005-08, a total amount of ₹10.69 lakh was paid to three personnel as innovative Information Education Communication (IEC) advance. Out of ₹10.69 lakh, ₹5.23 lakh was adjusted and ₹2.92 lakh was shown as outstanding in the annual accounts of 2007-08. The balance ₹2.54 lakh was, however, treated as expenditure without any supporting vouchers, money receipt etc. In response to an audit query (May 2014), the MS stated that no adjustment vouchers were received and that the persons who disbursed and received the advances had already retired or left the job. Thus, advance of ₹37.16 lakh¹⁰⁹ disbursed during 2005-08 remained unadjusted (May 2014) despite elapse of more than six years of their release which pointed to suspected misappropriation of the fund.

Thus, in the absence of details of utilisation of funds amounting to ₹37.10 lakh¹¹⁰ and also non-adjustment of advance to the tune of ₹37.16 lakh, the veracity of expenditure could not be ascertained in audit and therefore, the possibilities of misappropriation of aforesaid funds could not be ruled out.

The matter was reported to Government in June 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

Labour and Employment Department

1.4.13 Doubtful expenditure

Failure of the Director, Employment and Craftsmen Training, Assam to furnish the details of the tools and equipment, rendered the expenditure of ₹60.15 lakh shown as incurred towards procurement of the material, doubtful.

For upgradation of Government Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in Assam, Government of India (GoI) sanctioned (March 2010) ₹1.74 crore under "Establishment of new ITIs in the North Eastern States etc.", a centrally sponsored scheme. Government of Assam (GoA), Labour and Employment Department released (December 2010) the entire fund of ₹1.74 crore to the Director, Employment and Craftsmen Training (E&CT), Assam for procurement of tools and equipment for ITI, Kajolgaon.

¹⁰⁸ Construction of room of DPMU, hiring of vehicle, routine immunization, medicine distribution etc.

¹⁰⁹ ₹31.70 lakh + ₹2.54 lakh + ₹2.92 lakh.

¹¹⁰ ₹14.60 lakh + ₹9.73 lakh + ₹12.77 lakh.

Scrutiny (October 2013) of records of the Director, E&CT, Assam revealed that the Director issued (March 2011) order to the lowest bidder¹¹¹ for supply of tools and equipment valued ₹1.74 crore. According to the terms of the supply order, the material were to be delivered to the Principal, ITI, Bongaigaon who, on behalf of ITI, Kajolgaon, would receive the material after necessary verification and submit bills duly supported by delivery challans and certificate of receipt of material for making payment. The responsibility of commissioning of tools and equipment was however, vested upon the supplier.

The material were shown as supplied on 28 March 2011 to ITI, Kajolgaon and on the basis of certificate of receipt embodied in the bills by the Superintendent, ITI, Kajolgaon, payment of ₹1.58 crore (including VAT) was made to the supplier in February 2012. However, balance amount of ₹0.16 crore was not paid (October 2013) to the supplier due to non-commissioning of tools and equipment.

Joint physical verification conducted (October 2013) by audit and the Superintendent, ITI, Kajolgaon disclosed that tools and equipment worth ₹60.15 lakh (**Appendix-1.34**) were not physically available in the stock. Besides, brand of the available items supplied worth ₹1.14 crore (₹1.74 crore - ₹0.60 crore) were found to be different than that specified in the supply orders and bills. The Principal of ITI, Bongaigaon, where the material were initially stored, also confirmed (October 2013) that the material were not lying in ITI, Bongaigaon. Basic records *viz.*, stock register, delivery challans etc., could also not be produced to audit, though called for. This raised doubts about the receipt of the material worth ₹60.15 lakh.

Further, physical verification of stock as was required to be done on half-yearly basis as per Rule 195 of Assam Financial Rule to cross-check the stock balance with the book balance, was not done. This indicated that the internal control system existed in the department was ineffective and prone to irregularities.

Scrutiny further revealed that the ITI, Kajolgaon was yet to start functioning due to non-completion of civil and electrical works and non-deployment of staff. As a result, the tools and equipment, which were physically available in stock, were not installed and remained idle for more than two years, thus, these items were susceptible to damage due to wear and tear with the passage of time.

Thus, failure of the Director to confirm whereabouts of the tools and equipment, rendered the expenditure of ₹60.15 lakh shown as incurred towards procurement of the material, doubtful. Further, non-commissioning of tools and equipment led to idling of material worth ₹1.14 crore (₹1.74 crore - ₹0.60 crore) for more than two years.

The matter was reported to Government in March 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

¹¹¹ B.S. Enterprise, Guwahati.

1.4.14 Loss of interest and inadmissible expenditure

The Member Secretary, Assam Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board sustained a loss on account of interest of ₹3.75 crore and incurred inadmissible expenditure of ₹99.90 lakh.

(A) Rule 294 of Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Assam Rules (BOCWAR), 2007 provides that all moneys belonging to the Cess fund should be invested in the Nationalized Banks, Scheduled Banks or in the Securities. The Honorable Supreme Court of India while disposing off the writ petition (civil) No. 318 of 2006 had also directed that the funds available with the Board which had not been disbursed or were not likely to be disbursed within a short period should be properly invested with a Nationalized Bank only.

Audit (April ó May 2014) of records of the Member Secretary (MS), Assam Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (the Board) revealed that during 2011-13, the Board collected a total of ₹135.69 crore (₹58.94 crore in 2011-12 and ₹76.75 crore in 2012-13) through cheques/bank drafts/bank transfer from different authorities/bodies as Cess. The amount of Cess so collected was deposited into two bank accounts (₹25.68 crore and ₹110.01 crore) operated with SBI, West Guwahati Branch.

Examination of records further revealed that though unutilized Cess fund was invested in fixed deposits from time to time, a substantial amount was kept in bank accounts (savings and current account) without investing the same in Fixed Deposit with Nationalized Banks or Scheduled Banks. This had not only violated the relevant provision of BOCWAR and the directives of the Honorable Supreme Court, but also entailed a loss of interest to the extent of ₹3.75 crore (up to 2012-13) (*Appendix-1.35*).

In reply to the audit observation, the department stated (September 2014) that the fund could not be invested in fixed deposit as the MS was out of station in connection with election duties/other works. The reply was not tenable in view of the fact that a substantial amount was lying in the Bank accounts for the last two years (2011-13) without investment, whereas the MS might be away on election duty etc., for a short span during this period. The fact, however, remained that due to failure of the Board in investing cess fund in fixed deposit in accordance with the relevant provision of BOCWAR and the directives of the Honorable Supreme Court, a substantial loss on account of differential rates of interest to the extent of ₹3.75 crore occurred to the Board. Such irregularities persisted despite these being pointed out in the Audit Report on Social, General and Economic (Non-PSUs) Sectors 2011-12 (para 1.5.6 refers).

(B) Further, Section 24 (3) of the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996 (the Act) provides

that in any financial year, the Board should not incur expenses towards salaries, allowances and other remuneration to its members, officers and other employees and for meeting other administrative expenses exceeding five *per cent* of its total expenses during that financial year.

Audit of records also revealed that during 2011-12 and 2012-13, the Board incurred the total expenditure of ₹49.27 lakh and ₹112.94 lakh respectively. In terms of the relevant provision of the Act, the Board could incur expenditure up to ₹2.46 lakh¹¹² and ₹5.65 lakh¹¹³ respectively towards administrative expenses for the years 2011-12 and 2012-13. It was however, noticed that during these two years, the Board incurred expenditure towards administrative expenses to the tune of ₹38.46 lakh and ₹69.55 lakh respectively which resulted in an excess expenditure of ₹99.90 lakh¹¹⁴ beyond the permissible limit.

On this being pointed out, the MS, ABOCWVB, in reply stated (September 2014) that all Administrative expenditures were incurred from the interest earned on investment of Cess fund as per instructions received from the State Government and not from the Cess fund. The reply was not acceptable as interest earned from the Cess fund was also to be credited to the Cess fund and as such, the Board incurred excess expenditure in violation of the relevant provision of the Act.

The matter was reported to Government in July 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

Panchayat and Rural Development Department

1.4.15 Doubtful expenditure

The District Rural Development Agency, Udalguri incurred expenditure of ₹1.27 crore towards procurement of construction material which was doubtful as the agency failed to produce the proof of receipt and utilisation of the material.

The work 'Construction of Marasuti Bundh FISö was technically sanctioned (November 2008) at the estimated cost of ₹2.30 crore by Director of Water Resources, BTC, Kokrajhar under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) 2008-2009. The estimated cost of the work comprised of wage component of ₹1.37 crore (62.2 *per cent*) and material component of ₹0.85 crore (37.43 *per cent*). The work was scheduled to be completed by December 2010 but remained incomplete as of May 2013. Till May 2013, an expenditure of ₹2.27 crore (wages: ₹0.25 crore and material: ₹2.02 crore) was incurred.

¹¹² 5 *per cent* of ₹49.27 lakh.

¹¹³ 5 *per cent* of ₹112.94 lakh.

¹¹⁴ (₹38.46 lakh - ₹2.46 lakh) + (₹69.55 lakh - ₹5.65 lakh).

Scrutiny (May and June 2013) of the records of the Project Director, District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Udalguri revealed that construction material¹¹⁵ worth ₹1.43 crore was procured between November 2008 and June 2009 by the then Junior Engineer¹¹⁶ though as per the estimated provision, material worth ₹0.85 crore only was required for the work. Excess material worth ₹0.58 crore (₹1.43 crore - ₹0.85 crore) were procured by unauthorisedly diverting the funds allotted for the wages component. Further, the material were procured from local suppliers without inviting tender quotations and bills were submitted by the JE to the BDO concerned. Instead of releasing payments directly to the suppliers by cheques, the BDO made payments to the JE in cash for making payment to the suppliers. Thus, there was violation of the relevant rules and procedures in procuring material and releasing payments to the suppliers leaving ample scope for financial mismanagement.

The material so procured were recorded in the Measurement Book (No. 314) and shown to have been utilized in the work. Scrutiny, however, disclosed that only two items of cement concrete works¹¹⁷ valued ₹0.26 crore {(163.26 cum X ₹4,453.53) + (372.84 cum X ₹4,923.34)} requiring these material were executed by the JE. According to the Schedule of Requirement of Labour and Material under MGNREGS, 6.30 bags of cement, 0.43 cum of sand and 0.86 cum of chips per cum worth ₹16.55 lakh¹¹⁸ were required for the execution of the two items of cement concrete works. There was nothing on record regarding utilisation of the balance material worth ₹1.26 crore (₹1.43 crore - ₹0.17 crore).

Joint physical verification of the site carried out (June 2013) by audit and officials of the concerned BDO office also indicated non-existence of these material in work site. On this being pointed out, the present JE¹¹⁹ stated that unused material were not utilised by him. The BDO also certified the statement made by the JE. It was further added that for executing the work, material were procured separately by him. This indicated that funds meant for wage component were unauthorisedly diverted for the procurement of material thereby, depriving the targeted beneficiaries from the intended benefits of the scheme.

¹¹⁵ Boulder, Chips, Gravel, Sand, Cement, Reinforcement, shuttering etc.

¹¹⁶ G. Barmah.

¹¹⁷ (i) cement concrete work in proportion 1:2:4 in foundation, abutment, piers, wing walls with river shingles necessary timber shuttering, scaffolding where necessary complete as directed and (ii) cement concrete work in proportion 1:2:4 in foundation, abutment, piers, wing walls with river shingles of size 13 mm to 38 mm including curing, dewatering with necessary timber shuttering, scaffolding where necessary complete as directed (shuttering, scaffolding cost to be paid separately).

¹¹⁸

Total work done (in cum)	Cement required @ 6.30 bag per cum of work	Sand required @ 0.43 cum per cum of work	Chips required @ 0.86 cum per cum of work	Rate (In ₹)			Value of material utilized (In ₹)			
				Cement per bag	Sand per cum	Chips per cum	Cement	Sand	Chips	Total
536.10 cum (163.26 cum +372.84 cum)	3377.43 bag (536.10 cum x 6.30 bag)	230.523 cum (536.10 cum x 0.43 cum)	461.046 cum (536.10 cum x 0.86 cum)	340	700	750	11,48,326	1,61,366	3,45,784	16,55,476

Source: Departmental records.

¹¹⁹ Shri Ramesh Boro.

Verification of the bills/vouchers also revealed that out of total material procured by the previous JE, genuineness of bills valued ₹0.48 crore was prima-facie doubtful as forms used for these bills were different from the original bill-forms and these bills did not contain any bill numbers. Further, signatures on these bills also differ from those in the original bills.

Therefore, purported purchase of material worth ₹1.26 crore by DRDA, Udalguri was doubtful and the possibilities of misappropriation of funds could not be ruled out.

The matter was reported to Government in March 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

1.4.16 Suspected misappropriation

Failure of the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Haflong and Blocks concerned to furnish the details of utilisation of the funds amounting to ₹66.35 lakh disbursed through cheque by Project Director, DRDA even after six years of its release, pointed towards misappropriation of the fund.

Rule 95 of Assam Financial Rules provides that Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO) is personally responsible for accounting of all money received and disbursed and for the safe custody of cash. Further, according to the procedure followed in Government Departments, on receipt of cheques/drafts/banker's cheque etc., details are to be recorded in Register of Valuables before making entries in departmental cash book as soon as any transaction is made.

(A) Scrutiny (November 2012 to February 2013) of records of the Project Director (PD), District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Haflong revealed that between May 2005 and March 2007, the PD released total ₹65.25 lakh to Block Development Officers (BDOs) of Harangajao Development Block, Harangajao and Diyung Valley Development Block, Maibang for implementation of Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY). The entire fund was shown to have been disbursed through cheques. Details of cheques and funds released by the PD are given in Table 1.57.

Table 1.57

Sl. No.	Cheque No. and date	Amount (₹)	To whom released
1.	00063997 dated 16.5.2005	11,71,500	BDO, Harangajao Development Block, Harangajao
2.	00699416 dated 9.11.2006	21,63,500	BDO, Diyung Valley Development Block, Maibang
3.	025053 dated 29.3.2007	31,90,000	BDO, Diyung Valley Development Block, Maibang
Total		65,25,000	

Source: Departmental records.

The bank pass book of the PD, DRDA, Haflong operated with State Bank of India, Haflong also indicated that the cheques were encashed between December 2006 and

March 2007. On an enquiry about receipt of the fund, BDOs of the concerned blocks, however, denied (January 2013) receipt of such funds. In addition, the present BDO of Diyung Valley Development Block further added (January 2013) that receipt of the fund was not recorded in the main cash book or any subsidiary cash book and no disbursement vouchers were also found on record. However, blocks concerned also failed to furnish basic records viz., bank pass book/bank statement, fund receipt register, ledger etc., despite specific requisition made (January 2013) by audit. Thus, in the absence of basic information, the possibilities of misappropriation of Government money amounting to ₹65.25 lakh could not be ruled out.

(B) Similarly, the PD released (31 March 2009) ₹1.10 lakh in cash to Diyung Valley Development Block, Maibang for conducting training of self help groups (SHGs) at Maibong under Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY). Receipt of the fund of ₹1.10 lakh was, however, denied (January 2013) by the present BDO stating that receipt of the above fund was neither recorded in the main cash book nor in any subsidiary cash book. Further, no documents in support of the expenditure were found on record. As such, fund amounting to ₹1.10 lakh was also suspected to be misappropriated.

Thus, ₹66.35 lakh (₹65.25 lakh + ₹1.10 lakh) was suspected to be misappropriated as details of the fund remained untraceable even after six years of its release.

On this being pointed out, the PD during the discussion stated (January 2013) that detailed reply to the observation would be furnished on receipt of replies from the respective BDOs. However, the detailed reply from the PD was still awaited.

The matter was reported to Government in March 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

1.4.17 Suspected misappropriation

₹36 lakh was suspected to be misappropriated as related receipt and utilisation records were not produced to audit both by the Project Director, District Rural Development Agency, Baksa and the Blocks concerned.

Rule 95 of Assam Financial Rules provides that Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO) is personally responsible for accounting of all money received and disbursed and for the safe custody of cash.

Audit (December 2013 to January 2014) of records of the Project Director (PD), District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Baksa revealed the following major irregularities:

(A) In March 2009, the PD¹²⁰ withdrew ₹26 lakh by issuing a self cheque¹²¹ on State bank of India and disbursed ₹16 lakh to eight development blocks @ ₹two lakh each

¹²⁰ Shri Amarendra Baruah.

¹²¹ Cheque No. 286303.

for conducting training under Swarnajayanti Gram Swarajgar Yojana (SGSY). The bank pass book¹²² of PD, DRDA, Baksa indicated that the cheque was encashed from the bank on 31 March 2009. BDOs of seven out of the eight blocks (except Jalahghat development block) denied (January 2014) receipt of any such fund.

As regard the balance ₹10 lakh (₹26 lakh - ₹16 lakh), though the fund was shown to have been paid (28 March 2009) to the Construction Committee for the construction of Community-cum-Meeting Hall at Nikashi under SGSY, the same was actually handed over in cash to the Member Council Legislative Assembly (MCLA), No. 23 Dihira (Open) Constituency, BTC, Kokrajhar in two installments¹²³. However, no records of utilisation *viz.*, estimate, administrative approval, technical sanction, measurement book, stock register of material procured etc., were made available to audit, though called for (December 2013).

(B) Test-check of cash book of SGSY maintained by the PD, DRDA, Baksa revealed that ₹10 lakh was shown as released (July 2009) to BDO, Tamulpur Development Block through a cheque¹²⁴ for the construction of a Community Hall at Kumarikata under Tamulpur Development Block. The Block Development Officer (BDO) concerned in reply to an audit query, however, denied receipt of the said amount and stated that the matter of construction of Community Hall was not known to him. In fact, no such scheme had actually been taken up during the year 2009-10 under SGSY and the amount was actually withdrawn (2 July 2009) by the then PD by issuing a self cheque. Thus, ₹10 lakh was suspected to be misappropriated. In reply to a query in this regard, the PD stated (January 2014) that an FIR had already been lodged with Musholpur Police Station.

(C) Similarly, the PD drew (March 2009) one cheque¹²⁵ amounting to ₹3.20 lakh in his favour. The entire amount was shown as having been disbursed (March 2009) to BDO, Govardhana Development Block (₹2 lakh) and Non-Government Organisation (NGO), Bharosa (₹1.20 lakh) respectively for conducting SGSY training. The bank pass book¹²⁶ of the PD also indicated withdrawal (March 2009) of ₹3.20 lakh from the Bank. To an audit query, BDO, Govardhana Development Block denied (7 January 2014) the receipt of the ₹two lakh. The fact however remains that the details of the fund was not traceable on record.

Thus, in the absence of receipt and utilisation of funds amounting to ₹36 lakh (₹24 lakh + ₹10 lakh + ₹2 lakh), the possibilities of the misappropriation of the entire fund by the PD, DRDA, Baksa could not be ruled out.

¹²² A/c No. 30145005002 of State Bank of India, Nalbari.

¹²³ ₹six lakh in 8 May 2009 and ₹four lakh, date: Not available.

¹²⁴ Cheque No. 286321.

¹²⁵ Cheque No. 287468.

¹²⁶ A/c No. 30145005002 of State Bank of India, Nalbari.

The matter was reported to Government in June 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

1.4.18 Unfruitful expenditure

The Project Director, District Rural Development Agency, Baksa incurred expenditure of ₹0.99 crore which proved unfruitful due to faulty execution of concrete spillway work without assessing technical viability.

Project Director (PD), District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Baksa accorded (November 2008) financial sanction of ₹1.50 crore for the construction of a concrete spillway across the stream Kamarnadi of Jalah Development Block in Baksa District under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) 2007-08. The main objective of the project was to provide irrigation facility to the paddy fields of the villages under Jalah Development Block.

Estimate for the work was prepared by the Assistant Engineer, Borolia Irrigation Division, Tamulpur and the main components of the work were - (i) Construction of CC Spillway (₹47.86 lakh), (ii) Construction of Afflux bund with permanent protection (₹54.64 lakh); and (iii) Construction of canal system (₹47.50 lakh). Technical sanction (TS) to the work was, however, not accorded though the sanction order clearly stipulated that work should be started only after receiving TS from the competent authority. Between November 2008 and September 2009, the PD released ₹one crore in five installments and an expenditure of ₹0.99 crore (Wage: ₹0.25 crore and Material: ₹0.74 crore) was incurred on the work during the period from January 2009 to March 2010.

Audit (December 2013 to January 2014) of records of the PD, DRDA, Baksa revealed that the work was commenced in January 2009. After achieving 75 per cent physical progress, the work was abandoned (5 April 2012) as the newly constructed afflux bund was unable to hold the water due to leakages. As of January 2014, the work remained abandoned and no further fund was received from DRDA.

Thus, commencement of the work without technical sanction from the competent authority resulted in faulty execution and abandonment of the work. Besides, rendering the expenditure of ₹0.99 crore incurred on the work unfruitful, the objective of providing irrigation facility to farmers remained unachieved.

The matter was reported to Government in June 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

1.4.19 Unproductive expenditure

The Project Director, District Rural Development Agency, Baksa incurred unproductive expenditure of ₹1.27 crore towards an abandoned drainage work.

The main objective of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) was to provide at least 100 days guaranteed wage employment in a year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Further, guideline of MGNREGS also provides that the ratio of wage costs to material costs should be no less than the minimum norm of 60:40.

Audit (December 2013 to January 2014) of records of the Project Director (PD), District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Baksa revealed that the work - Extension of flood protection with drainage system at Ambari (Part I to IV) from chainage 0 to 1,263.68 m was sanctioned (January - February 2010) at a cost of ₹1.99 crore by the PD under MGNREGS 2009-10. The work was taken up to provide drainage facilities to the vicinity of Ambari and to mitigate the problem of water logging during rainy season. Between January 2010 and February 2011, the PD released ₹1.25 crore to BDO, Baksa Development Block for the implementation of the project.

Audit examination further revealed that the work was commenced in June 2010 and after executing 750 meters out of the total sanctioned length of 1,263.68 meters, the work was abandoned (February 2011) due to non-release of fund by the DRDA. As of January 2014, total expenditure of ₹1.27 crore (including ₹2.29 lakh spent out of accumulated interest of MGNREGS fund) was incurred on the work. It was also noticed that the BDO requested (January 2013) the PD for closure of the scheme as the scheme was mainly material oriented and was difficult to maintain the wage material ratio 60:40, which indicated lapses on the part of the PD in selection of schemes under the programme.

On this being pointed out, PD, DRDA in reply stated (January 2014) that the scheme was abandoned as it was not labour intensive. The remaining portion of the work would be completed through other schemes. The reply of the PD corroborates the audit contention of faulty selection of work as only labour incentive schemes were to be taken up under MGNREGS.

Thus, injudicious decision by the PD for taking up the work under MGNREGS in violation of the scheme guidelines and subsequent abandoning the work midway, rendered the expenditure of ₹1.27 crore unproductive.

The matter was reported to Government in June 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

Sports and Youth Welfare Department

1.4.20 Undue financial benefit

The Secretary General, National Games Secretariat extended undue financial benefit of ₹70.44 lakh to the supplier by effecting short deductions from the bills disregarding the order issued by the empowered committee.

The State Government constituted (June 2006) Accommodation Committee (AC), under the chairmanship of Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Assam (GoA) for effective management and finalization of purchases for the 33rd National Games held in Guwahati during February 2007. Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup (Metro) was the convenor of the committee.

Audit (January to April 2013) of records of the Secretary General (SG), National Games Secretariat¹²⁷ (NGS), Guwahati revealed that the Convenor invited (December 2006) Expression of Interest (EOI) from experienced firms for the supply of different items¹²⁸ on hire basis for the National Games. The terms of Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) inter-alia provided that the firm was to deposit ₹20 lakh as security deposit and in the event of default in supply, security deposit would be forfeited. In response to the tender notice, three suppliers quoted rates and the lowest rates offered by one M/s Assam Tent Agencies, Guwahati was approved by the AC. Accordingly, orders were issued (December 2006 and February 2007) on the supplier for the supply of tendered items as per approved sample. The items were supplied in February 2007 and a total payment of ₹2.23 crore (including taxes) was made to the firm.

Audit further revealed that the daily hire charges of the items were slashed¹²⁹ by the Convenor where the hired items of inferior quality were supplied by the Contractor. It was, however, noticed in audit that of the total payment of ₹2.23 crore, only an amount of ₹0.29 crore was paid on the basis of reduced rates and the balance amount of ₹1.94 crore was paid to the firm after deducting a lump sum amount from the bills without following the order issued by the Convenor, which resulted in extension of undue financial benefit to the extent of ₹70.44 lakh (*Appendix-1.36*) to the supplier. Further, security deposit of ₹20 lakh was also not forfeited from the defaulting supplier in accordance with the terms of tender for providing the hired items of inferior quality.

¹²⁷ The accounts for the years 2003-04 to 2008-09 were delayed and produced to Audit only in October 2012.

¹²⁸ Wooden beds, mattresses, bed sheets, pillow covers, blankets etc.

¹²⁹

Sl. No.	Name of items	Approved hire charges per day	Reduced hire charges per day
1.	Mattress	₹80	₹30
2.	Bed Sheet	₹45	₹20
3.	Pillows	₹10	₹9
4.	Pillow Cover	₹5	₹4.50
5.	Blanket	₹17	₹15.30
6.	Wooden Bed	₹63	₹56.70

Source: Departmental records.

Thus, the Secretary General, NGS extended undue financial benefit amounting to ₹70.44 lakh to the supplier by effecting short deductions from the bills disregarding the order issued by the convenor of the committee.

The matter was reported to Government in June 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).

Welfare of Minorities and Development Department

1.4.21 Wasteful expenditure

Director, Assam Minorities Development Board incurred an expenditure of ₹63.22 lakh, towards payment to an unrecognized institute disregarding the relevant executive order, which proved wasteful.

Government of Assam, Welfare of Minorities and Development Department accorded sanction for an amount of ₹63.30 lakh (₹13.80 lakh in March 2008 and ₹49.50 lakh in February 2010) for imparting training under Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) and Health Worker training schemes free of cost to aspirant girl candidates of Minority Communities¹³⁰ living below the poverty line. According to terms of the sanction orders, the training was to be imparted through any institution duly recognised by Indian Nursing Council (INC) preferably by Medical Colleges and Civil Hospitals having requisite facilities as per norms covering syllabus prescribed by INC.

Scrutiny (August and September 2013) of records of the Director, Assam Minorities Development Board (AMDB), Guwahati revealed that the Director selected (July 2010) 82 candidates (30 for 2007-08 and 52 for 2009-10) after inviting (March 2010) applications through advertisement in news papers for undergoing the training programme for a period of 18 months at Regional Institute of Paramedical Technology (RIPT), Guwahati. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for an amount of ₹63.22 lakh (@ ₹77,100 per student) was signed (July 2010) by the AMDB with RIPT and the training programme commenced on 1 August 2010.

Scrutiny of the records further revealed that RIPT was unrecognized institution. While selecting RIPT for implementing the training programme, the Director did not ensure about due recognition of the institute from INC. On receipt (January 2011) of complaints from the trainees, it came (March 2011) to the notice of the Director that RIPT was neither recognised by the INC nor by the State Government. This prompted the State Government to institute (July 2011) an enquiry to investigate into the matter. The report of the enquiry, if any, was however not furnished to audit, though called for (April 2014). Between August 2010 and February 2012, AMDB paid ₹63.22 lakh to RIPT as admission fee, monthly tuition fee, hostel fee etc.

Meanwhile, to address the grievances of the trainees, Director, AMDB submitted (December 2011) a proposal to Joint Director, Health Service (Nursing), Assam for

¹³⁰ Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs and Persis.

arranging a fresh training programme in Amiya Bhorali School of Nursing, Kamrup (M). The proposal was approved (January 2012) and the 82 trainees were permitted to take admission in ANM training course under Assam Nurse Midwives and Health Visitors Council at Amiya Bhorali School of Nursing, Kamrup (M) with effect from January 2012. Accordingly, MoU was signed (January 2012) with Amiya Bhorali School of Nursing for a total cost of ₹54.98 lakh (@ ₹69,600 per student). Out of the 82 trainees, 79 took part in the training programme and a total of ₹54.94 lakh was paid to the institute between May 2012 and March 2013 out of the budget allocation of 2010-11. This was in addition to the payment made to RIPT, which could have been avoided had the Director, AMDB ensured the adherence of the terms of the sanction order while selecting the training institute.

On this being pointed out, the Director, AMDB admitted (April 2014) that appropriate procedure was not adopted by the Board in selecting RIPT for imparting the training.

Thus, failure of the Director, AMDB to abide by the terms of the sanction order in selecting the training institute for imparting ANM training resulted in expenditure of ₹63.22 lakh paid to the unrecognised training institute wasteful.

The matter was reported to Government in April 2014; their reply had not been received (December 2014).