

**Chapter-II**  
**Institutional Mechanism**  
**and Planning**



## CHAPTER-II

### Institutional Mechanism and Planning

An institutionalised mechanism is essential for successful implementation of a programme/ scheme and achieving the intended objectives. It envisages participation of relevant agencies at State/ District/ Village levels, for effective planning and implementation of drinking water services. Planning with adequate participation at all levels is critical for successful implementation of various activities of a programme/ scheme to provide adequate and quality drinking water supply to every household leading to improvement in living standards of communities.

#### Part-I Institutional mechanism

**Institutional mechanism in the form of SWSM, SLSSC, State Technical Agency, DWSM and VWSCs was non-functional and hence ineffective for policy guidance, technical support and monitoring.**

#### 2.1 Institutions constituted

##### (i) State Water and Sanitation Mission Society

To achieve coordination and convergence among State Departments dealing with rural drinking water supply, health, education, etc., guidelines of National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP)/ Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) stipulate for setting up of State Water and Sanitation Mission (SWSM) under aegis of *Jal Shakti Vibhag*. The SWSM was to provide operational flexibility to the States for integrated implementation and institutionalising community participation under rural water supply programmes.

The State Government constituted (July 2009 and reconstituted in May 2020) the SWSM as a registered society comprising Chief Secretary to the Government of Himachal Pradesh as Chairperson, Secretary (IPH/JS) as Member Secretary and nine members (Additional Secretary & Mission Director JJM of Department of Drinking Water Supply, Additional Chief Secretary of Health & Family Welfare Department, Principal Secretary of Finance and Education Department, Secretary of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Information & Public Relation, Engineer-in Chief of *Jal Shakti Vibhag* and State representatives of Central Ground Water Board and Central Water Commission). The SWSM provides policy guidance; convergence of water supply and sanitation activities including special projects; coordination with various State Government Departments and other partners in relevant activities; Monitoring and evaluation of physical and financial performance and management of water supply and sanitation projects; Integrating communication and capacity development programmes for both water supply and sanitation; and Maintaining the accounts of the programme funds and carrying out the required audit for the accounts.

**Monitoring by State Water and Sanitation Mission** – The State Water and Sanitation Mission (SWSM) society was mandated to meet at least twice in a year i.e. a minimum of ten meetings were to be held during the period 2016-21. The Society, however, conducted only

two meetings<sup>1</sup> (20 per cent) against the minimum required ten meetings during this period. Scrutiny of the minutes of the meetings showed that the SWSM, while reviewing the progress of schemes, issued directions in respect of JJM programme which included amongst others:

- Preparation of village action plans in consultation with VWSCs and Gram Panchayats based on baseline surveys, resource mapping and felt needs of the village community (ensuring availability of land for construction of in-village water supply infrastructure, willingness including affordability of people to contribute towards partial capital cost in cash/ kind and/ or labour and regular contribution towards O&M, etc.);
- Convergence with all stakeholder departments like Education, Integrated Child Development Services, Health and Rural Development & Panchayati Raj schemes/ programmes;
- Rural Development Department to reconstitute all VWSCs as per JJM guidelines as standing committee of the Gram Panchayat so that they have necessary powers under the Panchayati Raj Act;
- Implementation support agency (ISA) to be engaged by all DWSSM by 31 December 2020 and their work plan finalised and monitored as per JJM guidelines;
- reduction in electricity charges in water supply schemes;
- Verification of Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) actually provided to intended beneficiaries and uploading on IMIS portal; and
- Increase the number of Water quality laboratory tests.

Audit observed that the above directions were not implemented which indicated that SWSM had not fulfilled envisaged mandate.

### **(ii) State Level Scheme Sanctioning Committee**

The NRDWP/ JJM guidelines provided for setting up of a State Level Scheme Sanctioning Committee (SLSSC) for approval of schemes vetted by State Technical Agency, for monitoring of physical and financial performance and management of water supply schemes, etc.

The State Government constituted (November 2010 and reconstituted in May 2020) SLSSC comprising Principal Secretary/ Secretary (IPH/ JSV) as Chairperson, E-in-C of the Department as Member Secretary and 12 Members. The Committee was mandated to meet at least twice in a year. It approved 1717 RWS schemes (estimated cost: ₹ 5618.28 crore) in the State as a whole in eight meetings<sup>2</sup> held during 2016-21 without ensuring their technical viability by the State Technical Agency (STA) as indicated in the succeeding sub-paragraph.

### **(iii) State Technical Agency**

NRDWP guidelines provided for appointment of a State Technical Agency (STA) to assist in planning and designing sound and cost-effective major Rural Water Supply (RWS) schemes

---

<sup>1</sup> 28-04-2020 and 04-11-2020.

<sup>2</sup> 2016-17 (one), 2017-18 (one), 2018-19 (two), 2019-20 (two) and 2020-21 (two).

with emphasis on source sustainability and preparation of action plans. The STA in such cases was required to provide feedback to the SLSSC on various aspects of programme/ scheme and planning and implementation at the field level. The designated STA by SWSM at different times are given in **Table-2.1**.

**Table-2.1**  
**Details of designation of STAs for water supply schemes**

Sl. No.	Name of STA (month of designation)	Period of STA	Meetings attended
1.	Punjab Engineering College, University of Chandigarh (March 2014)	June 2014 to May 2015	Nil
2.	No STA	June 2015 to September 2015	Nil
3.	Punjab Engineering College, University of Chandigarh (October 2015)	October 2015 to September 2016	Nil
4.	No STA	October 2016 to June 2018	Nil
5.	National Institute of Technology, Hamirpur (July 2018)	July 2018 to July 2019	Nil
6.	No STA	August 2019 to December 2019	Nil
Jal Jeevan Mission guidelines (December 2019) do not provide for designation of STA.			

**Source: Information supplied by Department.**

- As per MoU with STA, the DPRs valuing ₹ 5.00 crore and above were required to be vetted and scrutinized through STA. In seven (out of 20) test-checked divisions<sup>3</sup>, nine schemes, each having an approved cost of more than ₹ 5.00 crore, were approved (between August 2016 and November 2018), of total cost of ₹ 152.18 crore. It was observed that none of these DPRs were sent to STA for vetting. Thus, the purpose of appointing the STAs was defeated.
- There was no STA designated for a period of 21 months during 2016-2018 and five months in 2019. Even where the STA was designated, their services were not availed of whereas this period saw the approval of as many as 1717 RWS schemes. This indicated that the SWSM/ SLSSC had not ensured the assistance/ feedback of the STA in planning/ designing and implementation of RWS schemes, thus defeating the purpose of their appointment.

The Department informed that a representative of the National Jal Jeevan Mission under Ministry of Drinking Water and sanitation, Government of India also took part in the SLSSC meetings held for approval of water supply schemes. Besides, the STA also participated. However, the point stands that the SLSSC sanctioned schemes without ensuring their viability and vetting by the STA, to whom the DPRs were never sent for vetting.

#### **(iv) District Water and Sanitation Mission**

The NRDWP guidelines provided for constitution of District Water and Sanitation Mission (DWSM) at district level to analyse and consolidate village water security plans (VWSPs),

<sup>3</sup> Dharamshala: two schemes (₹ 19.58 crore), Jhandutta: one scheme (₹ 5.44 crore), Kullu-1: one scheme (₹ 16.71 crore), Hamirpur: one scheme (₹ 13.54 crore), Palampur: one scheme (₹ 25.09 crore), Salooni: one scheme (₹ 34.69 crore) and Thural: two schemes (₹ 37.13 crore).

prepare district water security plans (DWSPs), convergence with other related programmes and review the status of the progress of schemes through quarterly meetings. Further, Jal Jeevan Mission guidelines provided for preparation of Village Action Plan and finalisation of District Action Plan for providing functional household tap connection (FHTC), engage third party for inspection of works before payment and review the progress through monthly meetings.

The State Government constituted (November 2010 and May 2020) the DWSMs in all 12 districts of the State. The missions are headed by Chairman of Zila Parishad/ Deputy Commissioner of concerned district, Executive Engineer (EE) of IPH divisions at District Headquarters as Member Secretary and one member each of eight departments<sup>4</sup>. It was observed that:

- Information on meetings conducted by DWSM was not maintained at the E-in-C level.
- In all nine districts involving 40 selected schemes, the DWSMs had not performed the tasks envisaged in the guidelines. As against 243 meetings<sup>5</sup> required to be held between April 2016 and March 2021, only 31 meetings<sup>6</sup> (12.76 per cent) of the different DWSM had taken place. Thus, implementation of the programmes was not reviewed by DWSMs effectively. Inadequate monitoring of schemes in test-checked divisions by the DWSM either contributed to incomplete scheme for prolonged periods or completion of schemes with delay.

**(v) Village Water and Sanitation Committees**

NRDWP guidelines provide for a village water and sanitation committee (VWSC) to be set up as a Standing Committee in each Panchayat comprising six to 12 elected members of the panchayat and **women with due representation** to Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and poorer sections of the village in each Gram Panchayat for planning, monitoring, implementation and operation and maintenance of the rural water supply schemes to ensure active participation of the villagers. Further, JJM guidelines provide that VWSC may comprise 10-15 members giving 50% representation to women members.

Audit noticed that out of 3,615 Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the State, VWSCs were set up in 3,213 Gram Panchayats as of March 2021. In all nine selected DWSMs, due representation of women was noticed in constitution of 33 VWSCs. However, in the 20 test-checked divisions, none of the VWSCs had participated in the activities including planning, monitoring, implementation and operation and maintenance of rural water supply schemes during 2016-21.

---

<sup>4</sup> Chief Executive Officer (CEO)- Zila Parishad/ District Development Officer, Divisional Forest Officer, Project Director in ITDA/ITDP, District Medical Officer, District Education Officer, Executive Engineers, District Agriculture Officer, and District Information and Public Relations Officer.

<sup>5</sup> April 2016 to March 2020: 144 meetings (quarterly meeting by each DWSM) and from May 2020 to March 2021: 99 meetings (monthly meeting by each DWSM)

<sup>6</sup> Bilaspur: 2, Chamba: 1; Hamirpur: 1; Kangra: 4; Keylong: 1; Kullu: 8; Mandi: 11; Rekong Peo: 1 and Shimla: 2.

The Department assured (December 2022), in the exit conference, for participation of communities at village level in future. The Department added VWSC would be in place after handing over the assets by the Department to PRIs/ communities.

## Part-II Planning

**Long-term comprehensive water security plans as per village water security plans to ensure bottom-up approach and community participation in planning and execution of water supply schemes were not formulated. No convergence with other programmes/schemes was provided and no water supply scheme was transferred to communities and PRIs during 2016-21 for management and augmentation.**

### 2.2 Comprehensive water security Plan

The NRDWP guidelines (2013) provided for preparation of five years comprehensive water security action plans by the Department to provide a definite direction to programmes/schemes and also to ensure regular monitoring of the progress made towards the goal of achieving drinking water security to every rural household. Also Para 8.5 of Manual for Preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Rural Piped Water Supply Schemes provides for preparation of Village Water Security Plans<sup>7</sup> detailing availability of water recharging, conservation measures, drinking water security, etc. proposed to be achieved. A copy of such plan was also required to be attached with the DPR. JJM guidelines formulated in 2019 aims for provision of 100 *per cent* FHTC by 2024.

Audit observed the following:

- The Department had not formulated any five-year comprehensive water security plan during 2016-19 for achieving drinking water security as envisaged in NRDWP guidelines. In the absence of plans, monitoring of the progress made by the State in providing safe drinking water supply was not adequate.
- Village Water Security Plans were not found annexed with the DPRs of the 55 selected schemes analysed in Audit. It was observed that the VWSPs detailing therein drinking water security, conservation measures, availability of water recharging, etc. were not prepared by the village communities. The Department had not ensured community participation in preparation of the DPRs. During survey of 1,109 beneficiaries of 40 completed schemes, it was observed that 26 *per cent* of the beneficiaries were not satisfied with water security. Besides, 167 (out of 498) schemes in 18 test-checked divisions, on which an expenditure of ₹ 160.03 crore had been incurred, were lagging behind their scheduled period of completion by one and 47 months.

Thus, the Department failed to ensure preparation of the Water Security Plans with participation at the required levels which was indicative of schemes being formulated without any assessment of actual requirements and available resources.

<sup>7</sup> A plan prepared by village community which inter alia, will include the demographic, physical features, water sources, and other details of the village as per para 13 of NRDWP guidelines.

The E-in-C of the JSV stated (July 2022) that the Department had not prepared comprehensive water security plans. The reply did not explain reasons for the same.

### **2.3 Village action plans**

As per Para 3.6 of JJM guidelines, a Village Action Plan (VAP) was required to be prepared by Gram Panchayat or its sub-committee i.e., VWSC/ *Paani Samiti*/ user group, etc. with support from Implementation Support Agency<sup>8</sup> (ISA Jal Shakti Vibhag and DWSM). The VAP based on baseline survey, resource mapping and felt needs of the village community (ensuring availability of land for construction of in-village water supply infrastructure, willingness including affordability of people to contribute towards partial capital cost in cash/ kind and/ or labour and regular contribution towards O&M, etc.) was required to be submitted to DWSM for further action.

Audit observed that during 2016-21, village action plans were not prepared by the Gram Panchayats or its sub-committees in all test-checked divisions. Therefore, as the pre-requisites could not be ensured, many schemes were held up.

### **2.4 Convergence with other programmes/schemes**

The guidelines of NRDWP/ JJM provided for convergence with other programmes/ schemes like National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), etc. Source sustainability measures such as aquifer recharge, rainwater harvesting, increased storage capacity of water bodies, reservoirs, de-silting, borewell recharge structures, watershed management, water conservation, etc. were to be undertaken through convergence.

Audit noticed that in all test-checked divisions, no convergence with other programmes/ schemes implemented by the State Government had been provided to help the Department in utilizing the services of labour for execution of the schemes under MGNREGS.

### **2.5 Transfer of drinking water system to Panchayati Raj Institutions**

NRDWP/ JJM guidelines provided for transfer of the rural drinking water supply system to communities and PRIs to enable the community to plan, implement and manage water supply schemes. In all test-checked divisions, no water supply scheme was transferred to communities and PRIs during 2016-21 for management and augmentation.

## **Conclusion**

The institutional mechanism in the form of State Water and Sanitation Mission, State Level Scheme Sanctioning Committee, State Technical Agency, District Water and Sanitation Mission and Village Water and Sanitation Committees was non-functional and hence ineffective for policy guidance, technical support and monitoring. It then follows that the envisaged community participation in decision making at the planning, implementation and management stages was not achieved. This adversely affected schemes completion and uptake. The succeeding chapters discuss how a majority of the schemes were lying

---

<sup>8</sup> ISA assists in mobilizing and engaging the communities to plan, design, implement, manage, operate & maintain in-village water supply infrastructure.



incomplete for want of land and beneficiary contribution and poor penetration of completed schemes and lack of community ownership of completed schemes.

### **Recommendations**

The Government may consider:

- (i) *Formation of Village Water and Sanitation Committees for planning and implementation of water supply schemes and ensuring planning and monitoring of the schemes by State Water and Sanitation Mission, State Level Scheme Sanctioning Committee and District Water and Sanitation Mission regularly. Ensure technical support of agencies in this process.*
- (ii) *Formulation of long-term comprehensive water security plans based on village water security plans to ensure bottom-up approach and community participation in planning and execution of water supply schemes*

