

Chapter-3: An overview of the Scheme Performance

Social Security and old age pension features as a subject under the Concurrent List in the Seventh Schedule to the constitution of India empowering both the union and States to make laws etc. NSAP is one of the schemes which ensures social security through joint efforts of the Centre and States/UTs. Hence, the success of NSAP is dependent on the ability of the implementation machineries of the Central Government and State/UT Governments to reach the beneficiaries at the ground level.

This Chapter covers a broad overview of the Scheme Performance in terms of achievement of the intended objectives of NSAP.

3.1 Coverage of beneficiaries through Central funds

Ministry of Rural Development released NSAP funds based on the estimated number of beneficiaries under the NSAP sub-schemes to the Consolidated Fund of State/UT. State/UT may utilise three *per cent* of the funds allotted for administrative expenses while remaining funds were to be utilised for pension disbursement and family benefit payment.

The number of beneficiaries which can be covered under each sub-scheme through Central Funds in each State/UT has been fixed by MoRD based on the population figures of Census, 2001 and poverty ratio determined by the planning commission in 2004-05. In case, the State/UT has more deserving beneficiaries exceeding the cap on number of beneficiaries, the State/UT has the option to give them pension from its own resources.

The year-wise release of funds and beneficiaries covered at the Central level during 2017-18 to 2020-21 is detailed in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1: Release of funds and beneficiaries covered through Central funds

Beneficiaries (in lakh), Releases (₹ in crore)

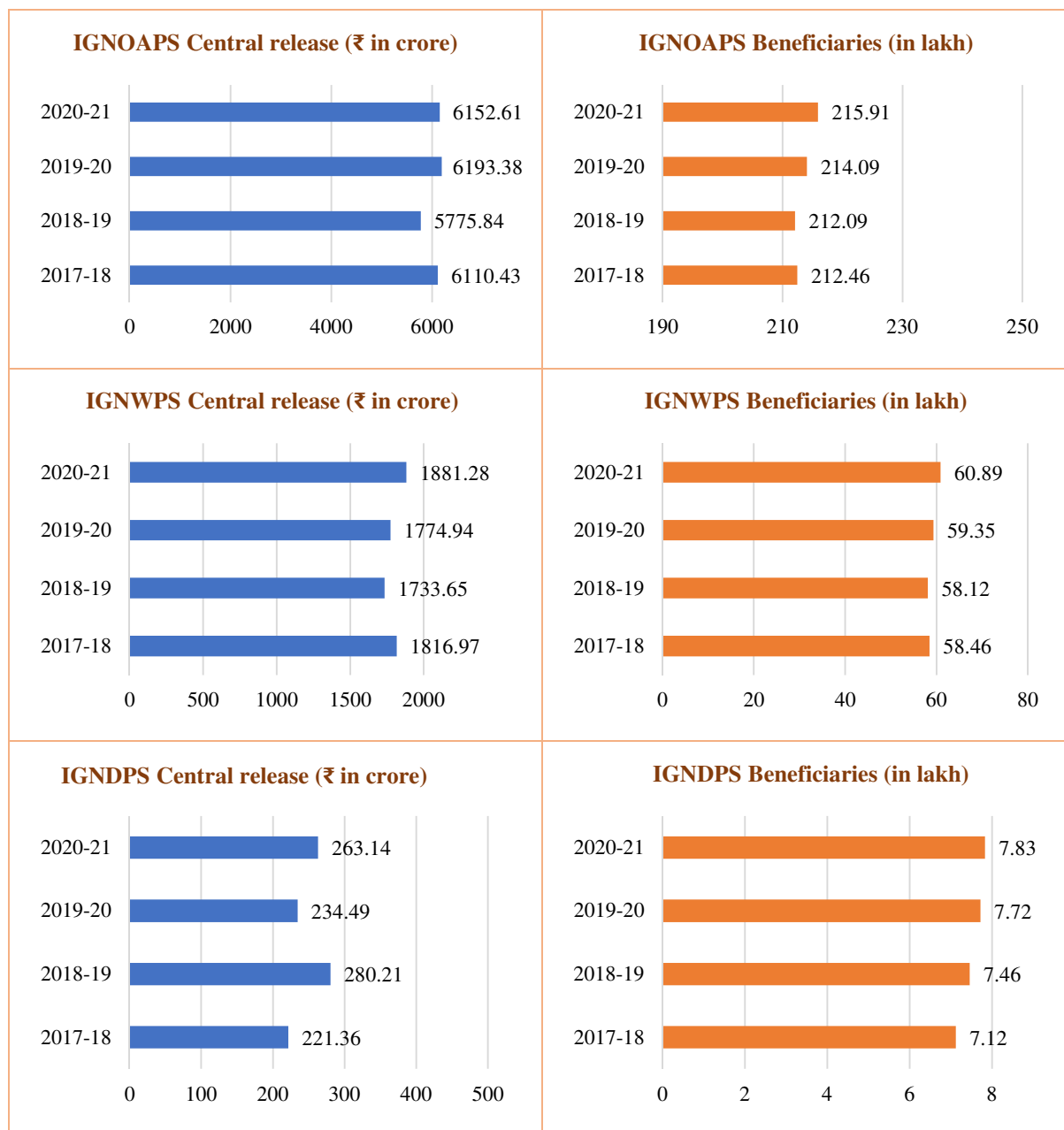
Sub-schemes of NSAP	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	Beneficiaries	Releases	Beneficiaries	Releases	Beneficiaries	Releases	Beneficiaries	Releases
IGNOAPS	212.46	6110.43	212.09	5775.84	214.09	6193.38	215.91	6152.61
IGNWPS	58.46	1816.97	58.12	1733.65	59.35	1774.94	60.89	1881.28
IGNDPS	7.12	221.36	7.46	280.21	7.72	234.49	7.83	263.14
NFBS	2.57	530.4	2.95	607.27	2.34	481.39	1.82	374.57
Total	280.61	8679.16	280.62	8396.97	283.5	8684.2	286.45	8671.6

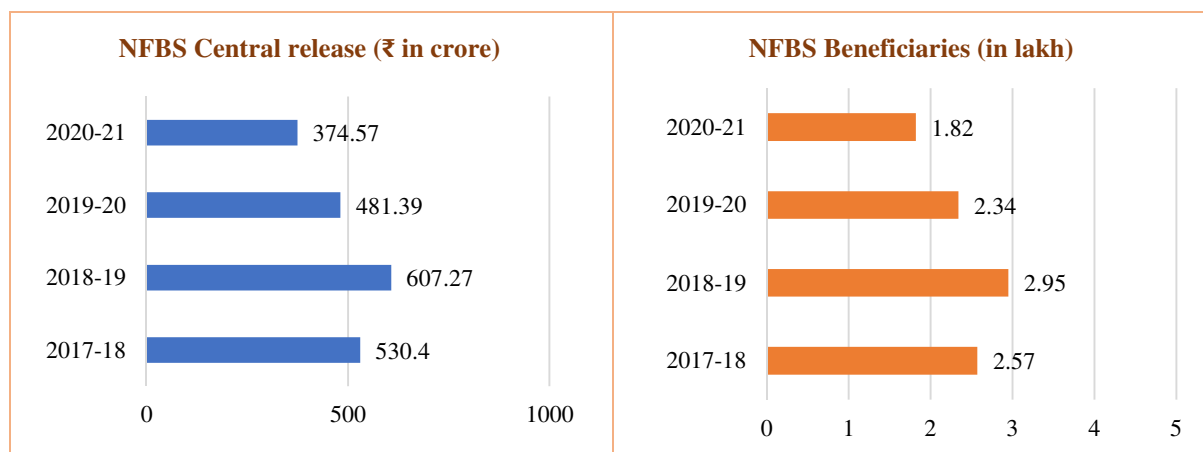
Source: Ministry of Rural Development

Scheme-wise and State-wise release of funds and beneficiaries covered through Central funds during 2017-18 to 2020-21 is given in the **Annexure 3.1**.

The year-wise release of funds by MoRD under the four sub-schemes of NSAP and beneficiaries covered through these funds is depicted in **Chart 3.1**.

Chart 3.1: Release from Central funds and beneficiaries covered under NSAP sub-schemes





3.2 Non-revision of beneficiary database

According to para 2.4.1 of NSAP guidelines, the States/UTs were strongly urged to provide an additional amount, at least an equivalent amount to the assistance provided by the Central Government so that the beneficiaries can get a decent level of assistance.

Accordingly, while some States/UTs were covering lesser number of beneficiaries than the cap, many States/UTs were covering beneficiaries beyond the said cap as discussed in subsequent paragraph. The Funds received from the Centre and beneficiaries covered through Central funds as well as additional funds provided by the State/UT and beneficiaries covered over and above the cap fixed is detailed in **Table 3.2**.

Table 3.2: Expenditure and number of beneficiaries at Central and State/UT levels

Sub-schemes	Particulars	Number of beneficiaries as per cap fixed and Funds provided by Centre				Additional number of beneficiaries covered by the State/UT and additional funds provided by the State/UT			
		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
IGNOAPS	Beneficiaries (in lakh)	208.62	213.65	218.12	217.75	69.39	83.51	92.69	104.33
	Expenditure (₹ in crore)	5909.35	5937.07	6605.91	5342.37	10633.69	11797.79	18173.05	12956.95
IGNWPS	Beneficiaries (in lakh)	57.90	57.73	57.90	52.00	61.48	66.44	66.49	79.45
	Expenditure (₹ in crore)	1739.26	1821.80	2000.38	1648.79	6943.82	8585.05	12723.57	9144.39
IGNDPS	Beneficiaries (in lakh)	8.23	8.25	8.27	8.34	24.27	26.10	25.18	25.90
	Expenditure (₹ in crore)	263.55	309.93	278.88	204.19	3326.4	4042.21	5910.86	4313.95
NFBS	Beneficiaries (in lakh)	3.35	2.76	2.78	2.77	0.88	0.87	0.87	0.93
	Expenditure (₹ in crore)	687.34	596.12	472.98	362.52	187.50	191.86	319.87	322.38
Total	Beneficiaries (in lakh)	278.1	282.39	287.07	280.86	156.02	176.92	185.23	210.61
	Expenditure (₹ in crore)	8599.5	8664.92	9358.15	7557.87	21091.41	24616.91	37127.35	26737.67

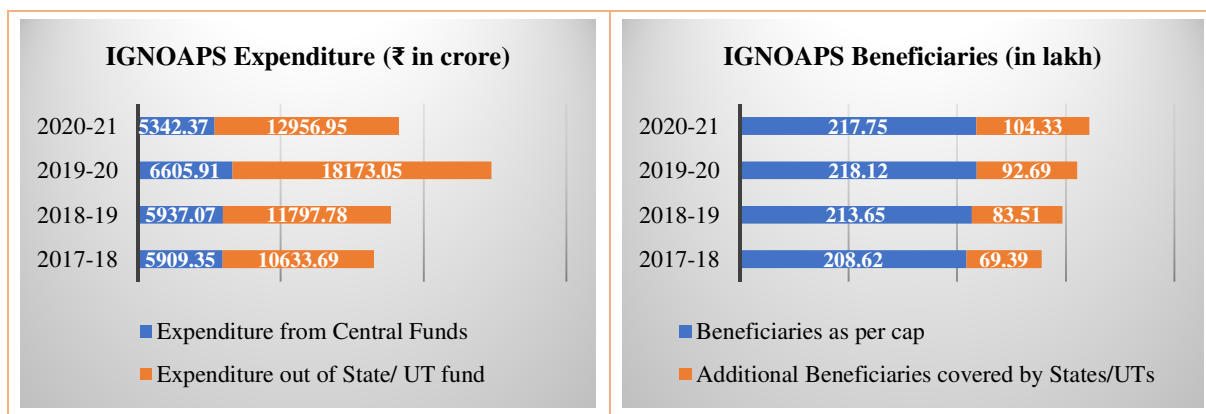
Source: Information of State/UT implementing departments

The expenditure and number of beneficiaries given in **Table 3.1** earlier are the figures furnished by MoRD whereas the figures in **Table 3.2** are as per the information reported by all the States and UTs. The difference in these figures is due to the fact that the actual

expenditure made by the States/UTs is different from the release made by the Ministry due to presence of unspent balances of previous year, failed transactions, change in number of beneficiaries over the years etc.

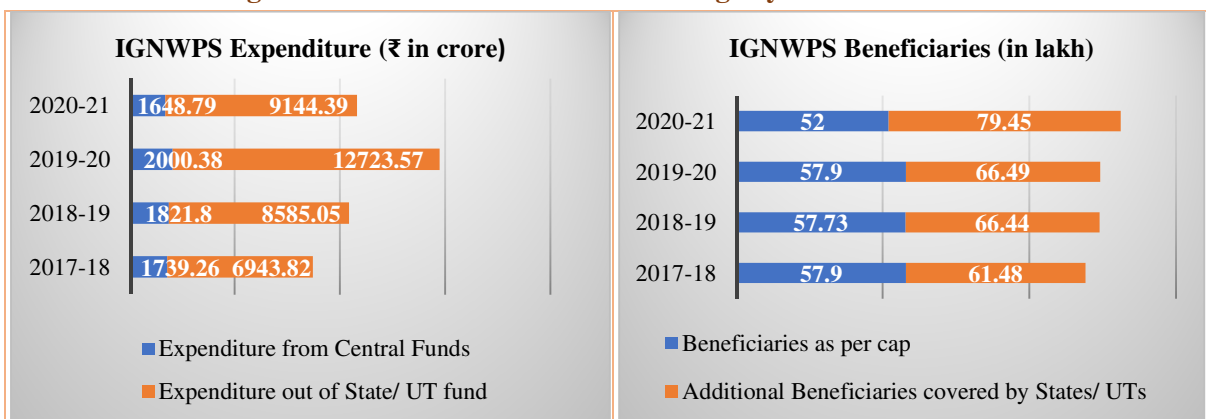
A comparative study of additional expenditure incurred by the States over and above the funds provided by the Government of India and number of beneficiaries from the funds provided by Government of India *vis-à-vis* number of additional beneficiaries covered by the State is depicted in **Charts 3.2 to 3.5**:

Chart 3.2: Comparison of expenditure out of Central funds & States/UTs funds, coverage of beneficiaries through Central funds & additional coverage by State/UT funds under IGNOAPS



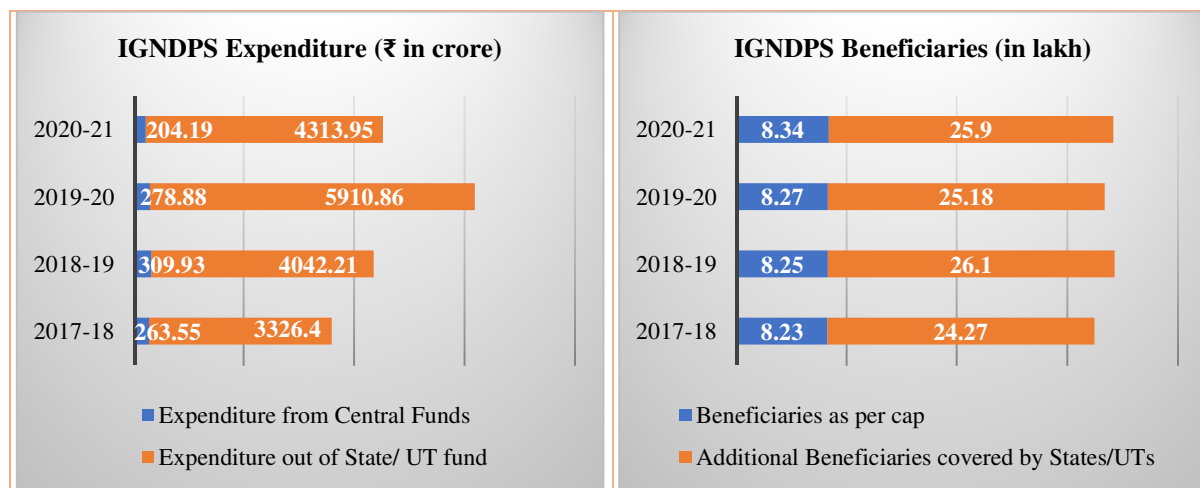
- Against the cap of 221.17 lakh beneficiaries to be covered through Central funds in respect of IGNOAPS the number of beneficiaries covered ranged from 208.62 lakh to 218.12 lakh.
- The additional beneficiaries covered by States and UTs ranged from 69.39 lakh to 104.33 lakh.
- The Central expenditure for IGNOAPS ranged from ₹ 5,342 crore to ₹ 6,606 crore whereas the States/UTs incurred expenditure ranging from ₹ 10,634 crore to ₹ 18,173 crore.

Chart 3.3: Comparison of expenditure out of Central funds & States/UTs funds, coverage of beneficiaries through Central funds & additional coverage by State/UT funds under IGNWPS



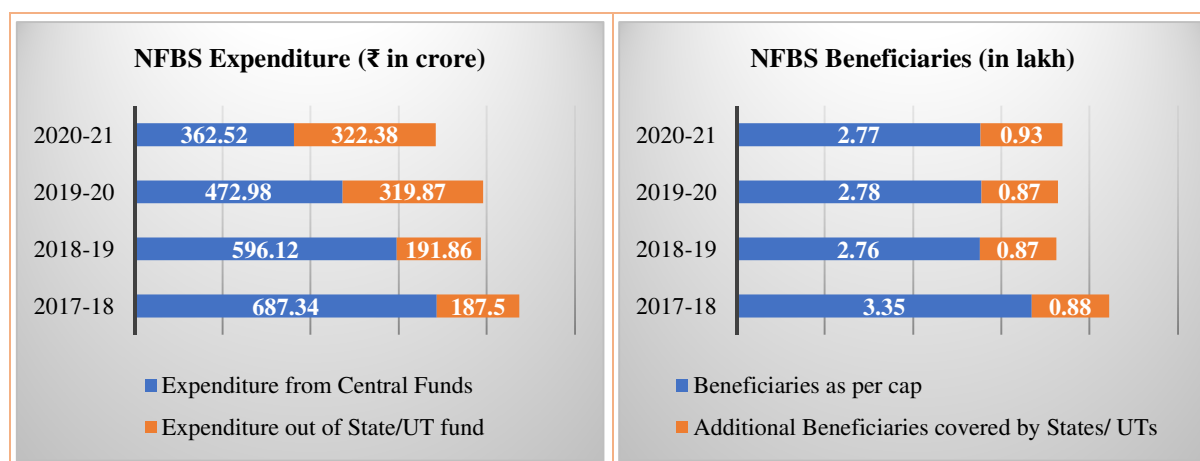
- In respect of **IGNWPS**, against the cap of 65.73 lakh beneficiaries, the beneficiaries covered through Central funds ranged from 52.00 lakh to 57.9 lakh.
- The additional beneficiaries covered by States and UTs ranged from 61.48 lakh to 79.45 lakh.
- The Central expenditure ranged between ₹ 1,649 crore and ₹ 2,000 crore while the States and UTs expenditure ranged between ₹ 6,944 crore and ₹ 12,724 crore.

Chart 3.4: Comparison of expenditure out of Central funds & States/UTs funds, coverage of beneficiaries by Central funds & additional coverage by State/UT funds under IGNDPS



- Against the cap of 10.59 lakh beneficiaries to be covered through Central funds in respect of IGNDPS the number of beneficiaries covered ranged from 8.23 lakh to 8.34 lakh.
- The additional beneficiaries covered by States and UTs ranged from. 24.27 lakh to 26.1 lakh.
- The Central expenditure for IGNDPS ranged from ₹ 204 crore to ₹ 310 crore whereas the States/UTs incurred expenditure ranging from ₹ 3,326 crore to ₹ 5,911 crore.

Chart 3.5: Comparison of expenditure out of Central funds & States/UTs funds, coverage of beneficiaries through Central funds & additional coverage by State/UT funds under NFBS

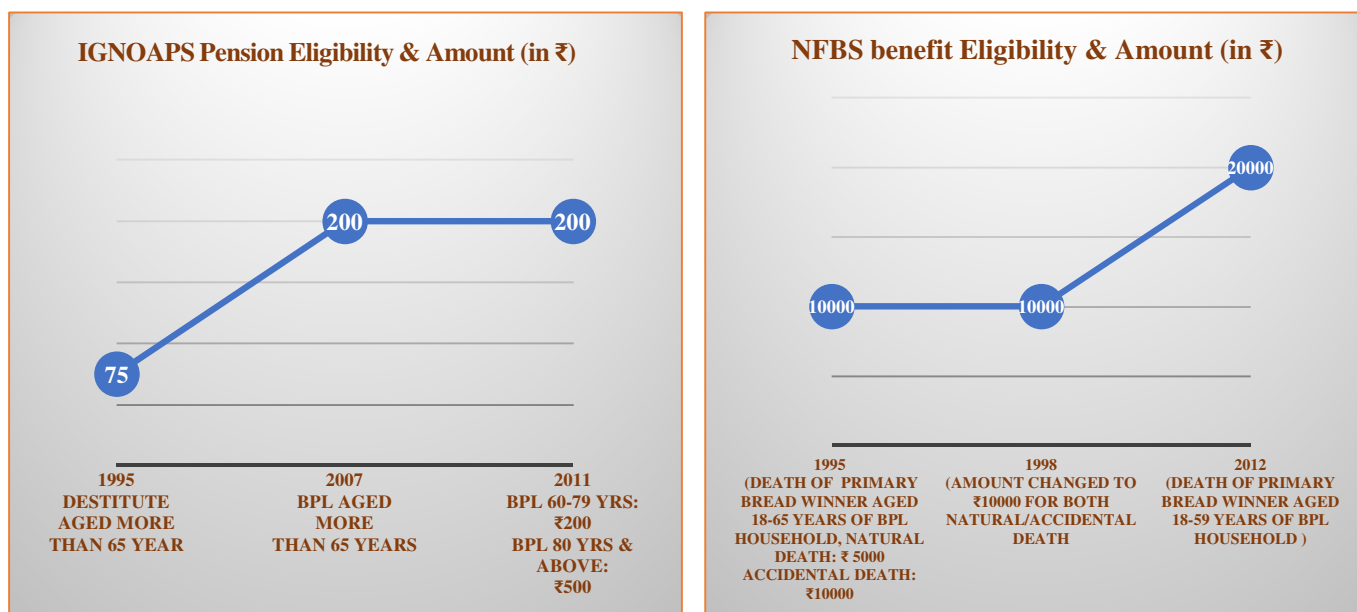


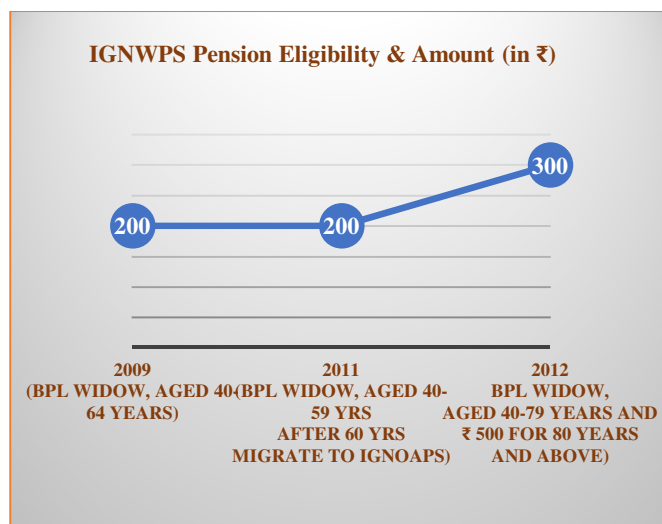
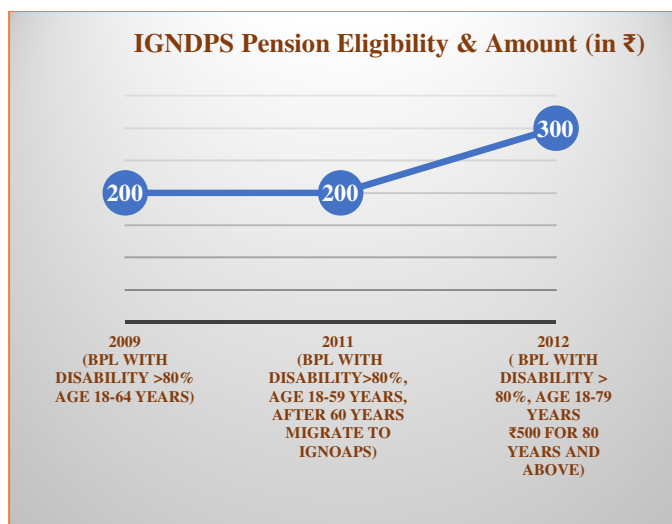
In case of NFBS, unlike other sub-schemes, major expenditure was incurred from Central funds and as most beneficiaries were covered through Central funds, the States did not have to incur higher expenditure. However, the NFBS was not being uniformly implemented in all States/UTs as detailed in Para 3.7 subsequently.

3.3 Non-revision of pension amount

National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS) and National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) were being implemented since inception of NSAP in 1995. NOAPS was renamed as Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme in 2007 and made applicable to aged persons belonging to families living below the poverty line, instead of earlier eligibility criterion of destitute aged persons. Further, in 2009, two more pension schemes for widows and the disabled persons were introduced. NSAP at present includes three pension disbursing schemes viz. IGNOAPS, IGNWPS and IGNDPS as well as a lumpsum assistance scheme i.e., NFBS. The Central assistance for pension and family benefit was last revised in 2012. The Ministry has amended the eligibility criteria and amount of assistance over the years since 1995 as shown in **Chart 3.6:**

Chart 3.6: Revision in pension amount or benefit and eligibility in various sub-schemes of NSAP during 1995-2022





The Standing Committee on Rural Development had recommended upward revision of Central assistance for pension under NSAP through Recommendation Nos. 16 and 19 in their First and Fourth Reports on Demands for Grants (2019-20 & 2020-21) respectively. The Committee in its 17th Report (August 2021) expressed concern on the meagre amount of assistance under NSAP and strongly recommended to increase the amount of assistance under NSAP. Department of Rural Development (DoRD) of MoRD in their Action Taken Reply to the Committee had stated that the Department was working actively on early completion of the third party evaluation study of NSAP and after examination of the Report, the Department might initiate further action with regard to increase in amount of pension on the final outcome of the study. The Committee further in its 26th Report (August 2022) called upon the DoRD to once again explore the feasibility of revision of assistance amount for pension under NSAP. DoRD vide its reply to the Committee informed its inability in carrying out revision in the Scheme in the wake of decision taken at the highest levels in Government to continue with the existing system.

At present, as per the rates last revised in 2012, the Central assistance for pension under IGNOAPS for beneficiaries aged 60-79 years is ₹ 200 per month, while beneficiaries under the IGNWPS as well as IGNDPS receive Central assistance of ₹ 300 per month. The Central assistance for pension to beneficiaries aged 80 years and above in all three sub-schemes is ₹ 500 per month. In cases where the State/UT is either not providing additional pension contribution (**Goa, Nagaland, Manipur & Punjab**) or is only making a meagre contribution (**Assam**), the IGNOAPS pensioners aged 60-79 years are getting pension of ₹ 200-250 per month only. With additional contribution by States/UTs, beneficiaries received pension of less than ₹ 600 per month in 11 States/UTs, while pensioners in another 12 States/UTs received pension of ₹ 600-1000 per month. In the remaining 12 State/UTs the pensioners received pension ranging from ₹ 1,500 to ₹ 2,500 per month in case of IGNOAPS (60 years to 79 years).

The National Social Assistance Advisory Committee (NSAAC) under MoRD and Evaluation Study Report also recommended for upward revision of Central assistance amount for pension.

Hence, Government may consider reviewing the Central assistance for pension in view of the recommendations by various committees and evaluation study.

3.4 Less coverage of Disabled beneficiaries under IGNDPS

IGNDPS was launched in February 2009 to provide Central assistance for payment of pension to differently abled persons with severe or multiple disabilities as defined in the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 and the National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999.

Like in the other sub-schemes, the Ministry has fixed a cap on the number of beneficiaries which can be covered through Central assistance in this sub-scheme in the year 2012 based on the census figures of 2001 and poverty ratio of 27.5 *per cent* as declared by the Planning Commission in 2004-05.

Further, as mentioned above, the coverage of IGNDPS was based on Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995. This Act was revised in the year 2016 as 'The Right of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016' and the types of disabilities were increased from 7 to 21, where Speech and Language disability and Specific Learning Disability were included for the first time under the definition of disability.

A review needs to be conducted to re-examine the criterion in view of definition of disability as per 'The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016'.

3.5 Additional assistance by States/UTs

The eligibility criteria and Central assistance under various sub-schemes of NSAP is detailed in **Table 3.3**.

Table 3.3: Amount of financial assistance by Centre under NSAP sub schemes

Sub-scheme	Eligibility criteria	Amount of Pension/benefit
IGNOAPS	BPL and 60 years and above	₹ 200/month (60-79 years) ₹ 500/month (80 years and above)
IGNWPS	BPL, widow and 40 years and above	₹ 300/month (40-79 years) ₹ 500/month (80 years and above)
IGNDPS	BPL, disability 80 <i>per cent</i> and above, 18 years and above	₹ 300/month (18-79 years) ₹ 500/month (80 years and above)
NFBS	BPL, Death of bread-winner at the age between 18 to 60 years	₹ 20000 lumpsum

The States/UTs were strongly urged to provide an additional amount, at least an amount equivalent to the assistance provided by the Central Government so that the beneficiaries could get a decent level of assistance. The amount of additional assistance contributed by various States and UTs is detailed in **Table 3.4**.

Table 3.4: Scheme-wise top-up by States/ UTs

(Amount in ₹)

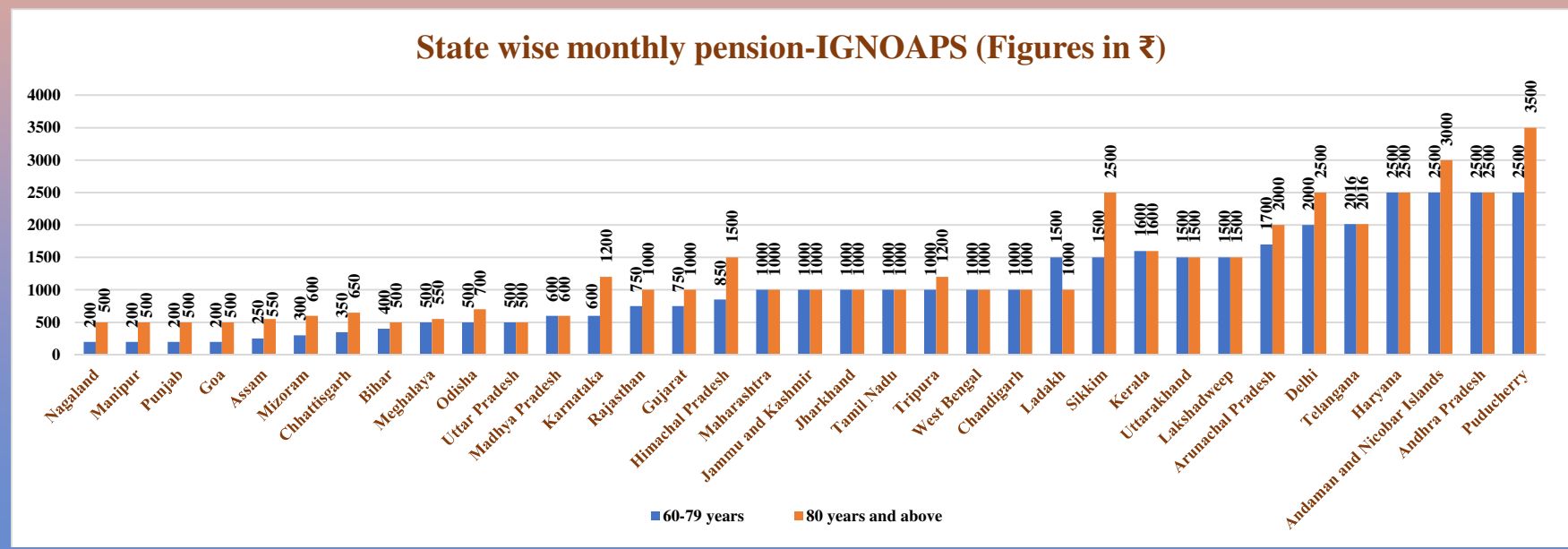
Sl. No.	State /UT	IGNOAPS		IGNWPS		IGNDPS	
		60-79 years	80 years and above	40-79 years	80 years and above	18-79 years	80 years and above
1.	Goa	0	0	0	0	0	0
2.	Manipur	0	0	0	0	0	0
3.	Nagaland	0	0	0	0	0	0
4.	Punjab	0	0	0	0	0	0
5.	Assam	50	50	0	0	0	0
6.	Mizoram	100	100	100	100	100	100
7.	Chhattisgarh	150	150	50	150	200	150
8.	Bihar	200	0	100	0	100	0
9.	Meghalaya	300	50	200	0	200	0
10.	Odisha	300	200	200	200	400	400
11.	Uttar Pradesh	300	0	200	0	200	0
12.	Madhya Pradesh	400	100	300	100	300	100
13.	Rajasthan	550 (60-74 years) 800 (75-79 years)	500	200 (40-54 years) 450 (55-59 years) 700 (60-74 years) 1200 (75-79 years)	1000	450 (18-54 years Male) 950 (18-57 years Female) 700 (55-74 years Male) 700 (58-74 years Female) 950 (75-79 years Male/Female)	750
14.	Gujarat	550	500	950	750	300	300
15.	Himachal Pradesh	650 (60-69 years) 1300 (70-79 years)	1000	700 (40-79 years)	500	1200	1000
16.	Maharashtra	800	500	700	500	700	500
17.	Jammu and Kashmir	800	500	700	500	700	500
18.	Jharkhand	800	500	700	500	700	500
19.	Tamil Nadu	800	500	700	500	700	500
20.	Tripura	800	700	700	700	700	700

Sl. No.	State /UT	IGNOAPS		IGNWPS		IGNDPS	
		60-79 years	80 years and above	40-79 years	80 years and above	18-79 years	80 years and above
21.	West Bengal	800	500	700	500	700	500
22.	Ladakh	800	500	700	500	700	500
23.	Karnataka	400 (60-64 years)	700	500	700	1100	700
		1000 (65-69 years)					
24.	Sikkim	1300	2000	1700	No beneficiary	1700	No beneficiary
25.	Uttarakhand	1300	1000	1200	1000	1200	1000
26.	Arunachal Pradesh	1500	1500	1700	1500	1700	1500
27.	Kerala	1400	1100	1300	1100	1300	1100
28.	Delhi	1800	2000	2200	2000	2200	2000
29.	Telangana	1816	1516	1716	1516	2716	2516
30.	Haryana	2300	2000	2200	2000	2200	2000
31.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	2500	3000	0	0	0	0
32.	Andhra Pradesh	2300	2000	2200	2000	2700	2500
33.	Puducherry	2300	3000	1700	3000	2700	2800
34.	Chandigarh	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000
35.	Lakshadweep	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500

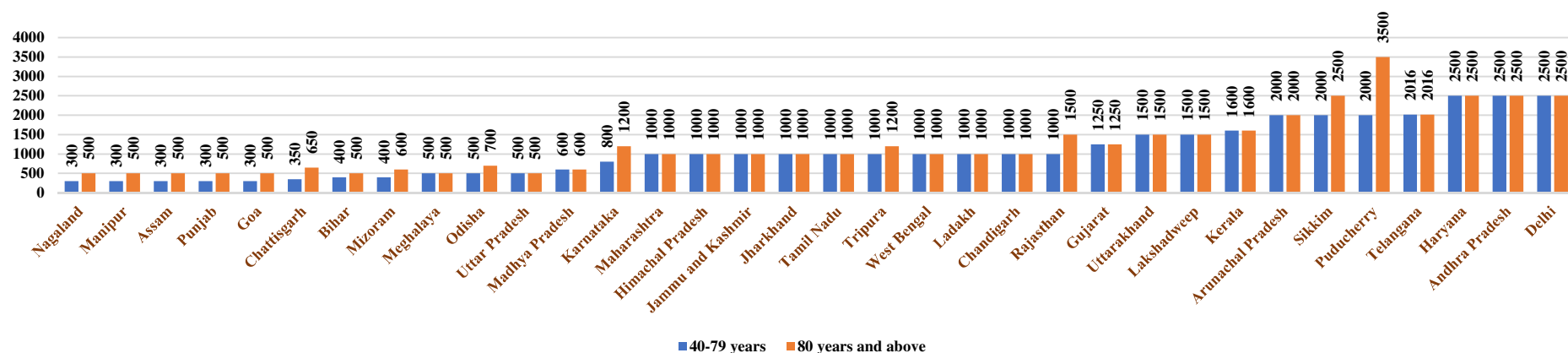
A comparative picture of pension (including additional assistance by States) received per month by beneficiaries in different States/UTs in IGNOAPS, IGNWPS and IGNDPS is depicted in the **Chart 3.7**:

Chart 3.7: State/UT-wise pension received by pensioners under IGNOAPS, IGNWPS and IGNDPS

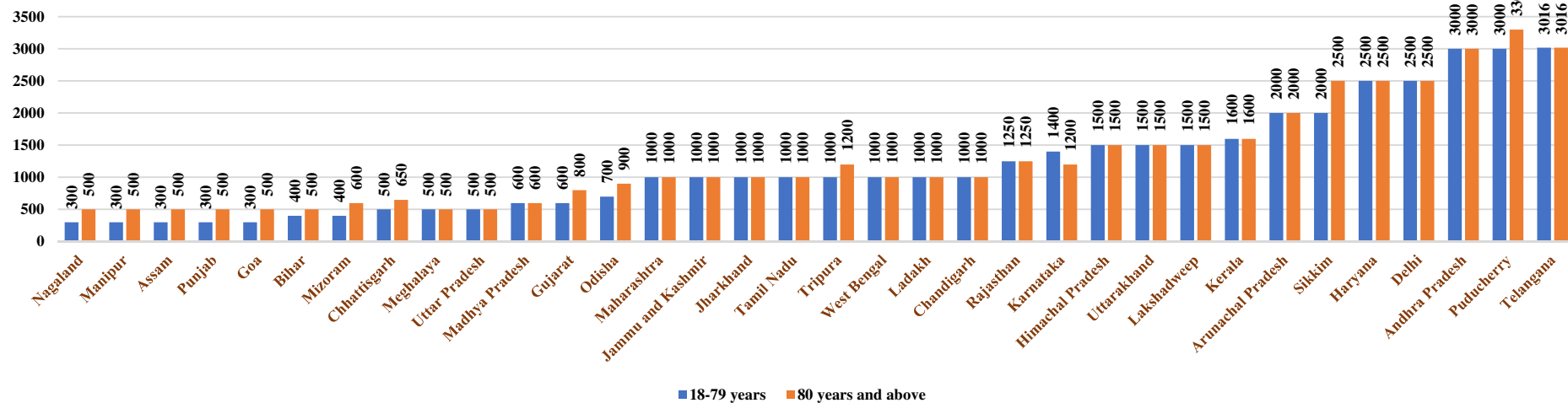
Pension benefits for NSAP pensioners depend on the efforts of States as some States/UTs were paying assistance at higher rate. States like Goa, Nagaland, Manipur and Punjab were not paying any additional assistance over the Central assistance in case of IGNOAPS, IGNWPS and IGNDPS. Hence, if the beneficiary happened to live in these States/UTs, he/she received only the Central assistance, i.e. only ₹ 200 in case of IGNOAPS and ₹ 300 in case of IGNWPS and IGNDPS as monthly pension. However, if the beneficiary was residing in States/UTs such as Maharashtra, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu etc., they received ₹ 1000 as monthly pension in NSAP sub-schemes. Further, if a beneficiary was residing in States/UTs viz. Haryana, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi etc. he/she received ₹ 2000 or more as monthly pension under these NSAP sub-schemes as detailed in charts below.



State wise monthly pension-IGNWPS (Figures in ₹)



State wise monthly pension-IGNDPS (Figures in ₹)



3.6 Uneven implementation of the Scheme

One of the key principles of NSAP is universal coverage of eligible beneficiaries. According to NSAP guidelines, the beneficiaries should be proactively identified by reaching out to their households. The benefit of the Scheme should percolate to all eligible beneficiaries throughout the geographical regions of a State/UT. However, the following instances of uneven implementation of NSAP were observed in selected States/UTs.

3.6.1 Non-implementation of NSAP in Chandigarh

In UT of Chandigarh, NSAP was being implemented by covering eligible persons Below Poverty Line (BPL). However, after the implementation of National Food Security Act, 2013, the BPL category was abolished in UT of Chandigarh w.e.f. February 2014 and the beneficiaries under National Food Security Act were classified into two new categories viz. Priority Households and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY). UT of Chandigarh requested the MoRD, in July 2014, March 2017, June 2017, January 2018, October 2019 and October 2021, to waive off the criteria regarding BPL Category in the NSAP Scheme and to allow to extend the benefits to the beneficiaries belonging to priority household under National Food Security Act whose income did not exceed ₹ 1.50 lakh *per annum*.

UT of Chandigarh demanded ₹ 1.50 crore (September 2017) for 2017-18 and ₹ 1.80 crore (July 2020) for 2020-21. However, no demand was made for 2018-19 and 2019-20.

No separate survey/exercise was conducted for the NSAP for further identification of beneficiaries under NSAP, hence, no new addition/deletion were made under the NSAP. MoRD did not release funds to Chandigarh for 2017-2021. The UT Administration also did not provide any pension from its own funds. Hence, NSAP was not implemented in UT of Chandigarh during 2017-2021.

The Ministry in its reply (December 2022) stated that the UT of Chandigarh was allowed to identify the NSAP beneficiaries from the priority Household and Antyodaya Anna Yojana beneficiaries for IGNOAPS, IGNWPS and IGNDPS subject to ceiling prescribed for the UT of Chandigarh vide letter dated 23.11.2021.

Audit noted that due to non-clarity with respect to eligibility of the beneficiaries, NSAP was not implemented in UT of Chandigarh during 2017-2021 and 4,964 beneficiaries (to whom pension was paid under NSAP through the last disbursements in December 2016) and other potential beneficiaries were deprived of pension and family benefit under NSAP.

3.6.2 Non-implementation of NSAP in other UTs

i. Andaman & Nicobar Islands

The Andaman & Nicobar Islands UT Administration wrote to MoRD (July 2020) that there were no BPL beneficiary in the UT due to which the UT Administration could not avail the Central assistance under NSAP. It further proposed to avail the grants under the NSAP to the extent of capping fixed by MoRD to the existing beneficiaries of UT. Keeping in view the non-availability of BPL beneficiaries, the Ministry (October 2020) allowed the UT to identify the NSAP beneficiaries from the AAY/Priority Households.

No funds were released under NSAP to the UT Administration during 2017-20. Ministry released the first instalment of ₹ 119.90 lakh for financial year 2020-21 in January 2021, which remained unutilised (June 2022).

The IGNOAPS was implemented in Andaman & Nicobar during 2017-21, however, IGNWPS, IGNDPS and NFBS were not implemented during the said period. Hence, the eligible beneficiaries were deprived of benefits of IGNDPS, IGNWPS and NFBS in UT of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

The Ministry in its reply (December 2022) had stated that an amount of ₹ 119.90 lakh was released to UT for all four schemes of NSAP excluding Annapurna during FY 2020-21.

Audit noted that due to non-clarity with respect to eligibility of the beneficiaries, IGNDPS, IGNWPS and NFBS were not implemented in the UT during 2017-2021.

ii. Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

UT of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu did not implement NFBS and even though pension for old age, widow, disabled beneficiaries was disbursed, the Central funds were not availed. No Central funds were released under NSAP to UT of Dadra & Nagar Haveli since 2010. Hence, the eligible NFBS beneficiaries were deprived of family benefit and NSAP pensioners did not receive Central contribution of pension under NSAP.

The Ministry in its reply (December 2022) stated that the NSAP funds were last released in 2012-13 and the UT had not submitted the fund proposal since 2013-14.

3.6.3 Non-implementation/deficiencies in implementation of NFBS

A lumpsum assistance is provided under NFBS to the family of the bereaved household in the event of death of the sole bread-winner whilst he/she was more than 18 years and less than 60 years of age. NFBS is a one-time assistance scheme unlike other NSAP sub-schemes

providing monthly pension. NFBS was not implemented in all States/UTs and in States/UTs where it was implemented, the funds received from centre were not fully disbursed.

- ❖ NFBS was not at all implemented in **Lakshadweep** and **Puducherry**.
- ❖ In **Rajasthan**, ‘*Pannadhay Jeewan Amrut Yojana*’ (Janshri Insurance Scheme)” was implemented in lieu of NFBS since August 2013 with the help of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India.
- ❖ In **Arunachal Pradesh**, the Scheme has not been implemented since 2019-20.
- ❖ In **Manipur**, the expenditure was not incurred during 2017-18 even after the receipt of funds from the Ministry. The payment of family benefits under NFBS started only since 2018-19.

In **Telangana**, NFBS benefit was paid at ₹ 5,000 per beneficiary to 377 beneficiaries and at ₹ 10,000 per beneficiary to 4,267 beneficiaries instead of ₹ 20,000 each as contemplated in the GoI guidelines. Due to non-provision of assistance at ₹ 20,000 per household as stipulated in the NSAP guidelines, there was short payment of ₹ 4.83 crore (₹ 0.56 crore + ₹ 4.27 crore) to 4,644 (377+4,267) beneficiaries during April 2017 to March 2020.

The Ministry in its reply (December 2022) stated that the observations have been referred to the concerned States/UTs.

3.6.4 Lopsided implementation of NSAP in terms of geographical coverage

Test check of records in States revealed the uneven implementation of scheme in terms of geographical area/across NSAP schemes as detailed in **Table 3.5**.

Table 3.5: Status of implementation of schemes in case of some States

State	Nature of Discrepancy
1. Goa	The beneficiaries were confined to rural areas only in case of IGNOAPS, IGNWPS and IGNDPS
2. Arunachal Pradesh	Out of 25 Districts in the State, NFBS was implemented only in 12 Districts, that too for only two years (2017-18 and 2018-19).

Hence, the concerned States were not making necessary efforts to cover all the eligible beneficiaries within their geographical boundaries under NSAP.

The Ministry in its reply (December 2022) stated that the observations have been referred to the concerned States/UTs.

3.6.5 No uniformity in eligibility criteria across States/UTs

The eligibility criteria under sub-schemes of NSAP is as follows:

Sub-scheme	Eligibility criteria for assistance
1. IGNOAPS	Below Poverty Line (BPL), 60 years and above
2. IGNWPS	BPL, widow and 40 years and above
3. IGNDPS	BPL, 18 years and above, disability 80 <i>per cent</i> and above
4. NFBS	BPL, Death of bread-winner at the age between 18 to 60 years

The States were required to at least contribute equally to provide a decent level of assistance for the beneficiaries. NSAP also provides the option to the States to cover more deserving beneficiaries by giving pension from their own resources.

The States could also adopt variations in the methods and processes for implementation based on local situations without deviating from the key principles and requirements of NSAP. The States and UTs followed different criteria for assessment for estimation of eligible beneficiaries as detailed below:

- **Delhi & Kerala** fixed annual income criterion of ₹ 1,00,000/- instead of BPL.
- **Uttar Pradesh** adopted income-based criteria that annual family income shall be lesser than ₹ 46,080 and ₹ 56,460 for rural areas and for urban areas respectively, instead of BPL.
- In **Rajasthan** and **Andhra Pradesh**, the disability level eligibility criterion for IGNDPS, was 40 *per cent* and above instead of disability percentage of 80 *per cent* and above.

NSAP implementation Guidelines acknowledges the variations in methods in implementation of NSAP across States/UT due to local variations and harmonization and adoption of uniform procedure would take time. Therefore, the States were permitted to come up with variations within the framework of key principles and frame their guidelines with one time approval of National Social Assistance Advisory Committee constituted in the MoRD. The State guidelines were required to be submitted to the National Committee within three months of date of issue of NSAP Guidelines (October 2014).

Some States *viz.*, Odisha, Uttarakhand, Kerala, Nagaland, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Punjab had submitted state specific guidelines for approval by the MoRD. However, in three meetings of NSAAC which were conducted by the department, the approval of State specific guidelines was not taken up.

The Ministry replied that the national criteria for the NSAP is same, however, States/UT provided pension to beneficiaries with different criteria from their own funds.

Audit noted that different eligibility criteria were being adopted by the States/UTs for NSAP beneficiaries without obtaining approval of the NSAAC for such deviations.

As seen in the above sub-paras, NSAP was either not fully implemented or partially implemented in some of the States/UTs. In particular, NFBS was not being implemented in many States/UTs. This resulted in denial of NSAP benefits to eligible beneficiaries in those areas.

3.7 Non-segregation of beneficiaries of State/UT level schemes

According to NSAP guidelines, the data of the beneficiaries should be uploaded on NSAP-Management Information System. The States/UTs having their own pension schemes and own software must ensure/enable porting of data on the Ministry's NSAP MIS. There should be segregation of beneficiaries drawing pension from NSAP and State scheme for ensuring clarity in terms of Central assistance for NSAP and State contribution for its own pension scheme. MoRD has got developed a NSAP-PPS (NSAP-Pension Payment System), which provides details of old age, widow and disabled beneficiaries as well as facilitates end to end transaction from originating point to disbursement point.

At present, 15 States/UTs were using NSAP-PPS for end-to-end disbursement and 14 other States were reporting the transactional data on NSAP-PPS through web-service (Out of these 14, Bihar and Uttarakhand are using NSAP-PPS for NFBS only and their own MIS for rest of the sub-schemes). Seven States/UTs are not using any MIS system. The details of States are given in **Annexure 3.2**.

Many States and UTs were running their own Pension schemes concurrently with NSAP. Out of the 26 States and seven UTs that were running their own pension schemes, 12 States/UTs¹ did not have separate databases for NSAP and respective State/UT scheme.

In the absence of separate databases of beneficiaries for NSAP and State/UT schemes, the possibility of same beneficiary availing benefit from both NSAP and pension scheme of State/UT cannot be ruled out. Further, non-segregation of finances of NSAP and State/UT scheme hinders the separate accounting of NSAP and desired transparency under both set of schemes. Interest earned on grant-in-aid received for NSAP, unspent balance at the end of the year could also not be ascertained due to consolidated maintenance of funds.

The Ministry in its reply (December 2022) stated that instructions have been issued to States/UTs to flag NSAP beneficiaries in their database.

In the subsequent Chapters, audit findings relating to planning, financial management, implementation as well as monitoring & evaluation of NSAP are discussed.

¹ Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha, Telangana, Delhi (separate database from January 2021), Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh and Puducherry.