

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:711
ANSWERED ON:26.07.2001
BOOST TO RAIN FED AGRICULTURE
BIJOY KRISHNA HANDIQUE

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken to promote agriculture in un-irrigated/semi-irrigated regions;
- (b) whether the Government contemplate to boost rain-fed agriculture with effective extension service; and
- (c) if so, the details of the scheme drawn up for this purpose?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD Y. NAIK)

(a): Agriculture in the unirrigated/semi-irrigated regions in the country depends heavily on rainfall and is thus synonymous with rainfed agriculture. It is characterized by low levels of productivity and low input usage. Being dependent on rainfall, crop production is subjected to considerable instability from year to year. To promote agriculture in the rainfed regions, Central Government has accorded very high priority to the holistic and sustainable development of these areas through watershed approach. A large number of schemes are being implemented in rainfed areas. These include National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPR), Soil Conservation in the catchments of River Valley Projects (RVP) and Flood-prone Rivers (FPR), Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA) and Externally Aided Projects on watershed development. These schemes were being implemented as independent centrally sponsored schemes till November, 2000, after which they have been subsumed under the macro-management mode of operation. They however, continue to be implemented as components of macro-management.

(b)&(c): Yes, Sir. Adequate training infrastructure is available both at the Central and State level for capacity building of farmers/watershed community and implementers of the watershed programmes. Regular training on technological and managerial aspects of watershed development are being organized at National Institute for Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE) and ICAR Institutions, such as, Central Soil and Water Conservation Research and Training Institute (CSWCRTI), Central Research Institute for Dryland Areas (CRIDA), State level training institutions and State Agricultural Universities.

Provisions have also been made in the watershed guidelines to ensure that there is convergence between the on-going productivity enhancement schemes and watershed development programmes.