

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4448
ANSWERED ON:20.12.2012
DEVELOPMENT OF DEGRADED LAND
Singh Shri Bhola

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps being taken for the development of degraded land including dry land farming areas in rainfed irrigated areas;
- (b) whether the Government has considered the Parthasarathy Committee Report;
- (c) if so, the salient features of above- said report and the action taken by the Government thereon;
- (d) whether sixty per cent of agrarian land is unirrigated and dependent on rain; and
- (e) if so, the measures being taken to irrigate agrarian land as much as possible?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI LALCHAND KATARIA)

(a) The Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development has been implementing three area development programmes viz. Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP), Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) and Desert Development Programme (DDP) since 1995-96 on watershed basis. The above three programmes have been integrated into a single modified programme called Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) w.e.f. 26.02.2009 for development of rainfed / degraded areas. The major activities undertaken under IWMP include ridge area treatment, drainage line treatment, soil and moisture conservation, rainwater harvesting, nursery raising, afforestation, horticulture and pasture development etc. Further, with a view to prevent soil erosion, land degradation and to improve productivity of degraded land including rainfed areas, Department of Agriculture & Cooperation under the Ministry of Agriculture is implementing various schemes namely National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas, Soil Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Project and Flood Prone River and Reclamation and Development of Alkali and Acid Soils across the country. Under these programmes various need based, site-specific soil and water conservation measures are implemented on watershed basis which helps in conservation of rain water and augmentation of ground water and such harvested water is utilized for providing life saving irrigation.

(b) & (c) Yes Sir. The main recommendations of the Technical Committee under the chairmanship of Shri S. Parthasarathy include - more thrust to rainfed areas through an improved watershed development programme; provision of dedicated institutions to implement the watershed programmes; raising of cost norms to Rs. 12000/- per hectare; provision of flexibility in project duration; implementation of the project in three phases i.e., Preparatory Phase, Resource Augmentation and Institution Building Phase and Sustainable Livelihoods and Productivity Enhancement Phase; separate budget provision for monitoring and capacity building; special provision for landless and dalits; provision for ensuring transparency and accountability; provision for productivity enhancement and livelihoods; etc. The report of the Parthasarathy Committee is available on website of Department of Land Resources (<http://dolr.nic.in>). Based on the suggestions of the Committee. National Rainfed Area Authority, in coordination with the Planning Commission, formulated Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects, 2008 to give an impetus to watershed development programmes. Further, the Department of Land Resources has implemented main recommendations of the Technical Committee by integrating the three area development programmes - Desert Development Programme (DDP), Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) and Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) into a single modified programme called Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) with effect from 26.02.2009. The IWMP is implemented under the Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects, 2008 (revised in 2011).

(d) As per information furnished by Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, about 78.00 million hectare area is rainfed /un-irrigated, which is 45.20% of net sown area of 140.02 million hectare.

(e) As per information furnished by Central Water Commission under Ministry of Water Resources, irrigation being a state subject, projects are investigated, planned, formulated, executed and funded by the State Governments themselves with their own resources. Ministry of Water Resources in consultation with Central Water Commission, evaluate the projects for techno-economic viability and processes the same for acceptance by the Advisory Committee on Irrigation Flood Control and Multipurpose projects for further consideration by the Planning Commission for according investment clearance. Since 2009, 143 projects have been considered and accepted by Advisory Committee of Ministry of Water Resources in the country covering an area of 1.67 crore ha approximately.