

TWENTY-SEVENTH REPORT
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (2002)
(THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF DRINKING WATER SUPPLY)

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2001-2002)

[Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-First Report of the Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development (Thirteenth Lok Sabha)]

Presented to Lok Sabha on 13 March, 2002

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 14 March, 2002

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

March, 2002/Phalguna, 1923 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (2002)**

Shri Anant Gangaram Geete - Chairman

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3. Shri Ranen Barman
4. Shri Padmanava Behera
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44. Shri Prakanta Warisa
45. Vacant

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri S.C. Rastogi - Joint Secretary
2. Shri K. Chakraborty - Deputy Secretary
3. Shrimati Sudesh Luthra - Under Secretary

ABBREVIATIONS

ACA	-	Additional Central Assistance
AE	-	Actual Expenditure
ARWSP	-	Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme
BE	-	Budget Estimates
BMS	-	Basic Minimum Services
CAP	-	Comprehensive Action Plan
CRSP	-	Central Rural Sanitation Programme
CSIR	-	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
DDP	-	Desert Development Programme
DRDA	-	District Rural Development Agency
DWSC	-	District Water and Sanitation Committee
DWSM	-	District Water and Sanitation Mission
FC	-	Fully Covered
HRD	-	Human Resource Development
IEC	-	Information Education and Communication
LPCD	-	Litre Per Capita Per Day
MNP	-	Minimum Needs Programme
NAG	-	National Agenda for Governance
NC	-	Not Covered
NE	-	North Eastern
NGO	-	Non-Government Organization
O&M	-	Operation and Maintenance
PC	-	Partially Covered
PMGY	-	Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana
PRIs	-	Panchayati Raj Institutions
RCRSP	-	Restructured Central Rural Sanitation Programme
RD	-	Rural Development
RE	-	Revised Estimates
RWS	-	Rural Water Supply
SHGs	-	Self Help Groups
TSC	-	Total Sanitation Campaign
UTs	-	Union Territories
ZP	-	Zilla Parishads

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development (2002) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present the Twenty - Seventh Report on Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty - First Report of the Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development (2001) on Demands for Grants (2001-2002) of the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Drinking Water Supply).

2. The Twenty - First Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 20th April, 2001. The replies of the Government to all the recommendations contained in the Report were received on 20th August, 2001.

3. The replies of the Government were examined and the Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 27th February, 2002.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty - First Report of the Committee (2001) is given in *Appendix II*.

NEW DELHI;
11 March, 2002
20 Phalguna, 1923 (Saka)

ANANT GANGARAM GEETE
Chairman,
Standing Committee on Urban
and Rural Development.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee on Urban and Rural Development (2001) deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Twenty First Report of the Committee on Urban and Rural Development (2001) on Demands for Grants 2001-2002 of the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Drinking Water Supply) which was presented to Lok Sabha on 20th April, 2001.

2. Action taken notes have been received from the Government in respect of all the 24 recommendations which have been categorised as follows:

- | | | |
|-------|--|---|
| (i) | Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government. | 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.21, 2.28, 2.48, 2.50, 2.76, 2.78, 2.88, 2.93, 2.95 and 3.13. |
| (ii) | Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies. | NIL |
| (iii) | Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee. | 2.11, 2.18, 2.23, 2.31, 2.41, 2.47, 2.60, 2.68, 2.73, 2.77 2.87 |
| (iv) | Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited. | NIL |

3. The Committee will now deal with action taken by the Government on some of these recommendations in the succeeding paragraphs.

A. Structured Mechanism for getting the information from the State Government Recommendation (Para No. 2.11)

4. The Committee had recommended as below :

“The Committee find that not only there is reduction in the targets during 2000-2001 as compared to the previous year but the achievement of targets during 2000-2001 is far less than that of 1999-2000. The Committee are further disturbed to note the way the Government have tried to justify the reduction in targets during 2000-2001. The overall conclusion made by the Committee is that to provide allocation for a sector, the targets are reduced in the other sector and as such minor adjustments are being made. Another disturbing feature noted by the Committee is that there is lack of proper planning on the part of Government to cover the not covered and partially covered habitations. Till date, the Government have not received the targets for the year 2001 from the State Governments. They fail to understand how the allocations for a particular year are being made without having the clear picture of targets from the State Governments. The Committee strongly disapprove the way the Government have taken up one of the top most

priority programme and urge that serious attention should be paid to the implementation of the programme. There should also be some structured mechanism for getting the information from the State Governments to enable the Central Government to make a realistic assessment of the outlay required during a particular year.”

(Para No. 2.11)

5. The Ministry has stated as below:

“Allocations of ARWSP funds to the States are made as per the following allocation criteria approved by the Government:

Weightage for	Percentage (%)
(a) Rural Population	40
(b) States under DDP, DPAP, HADP and special category hill States in terms of rural areas	35
(c) NC/PC habitations (at 2:1 ration)	10
(d) Quality affected habitations (40:40:15:5)	5
(e) Overall water resource availability (un-irrigated over irrigated area)	10
Total	100

The States are required to fix the targets according to their annual allocation keeping in view the objective of the National Agenda for Governance (NAG) of the Government to provide drinking water supply facilities to all rural habitations in five years (i.e. by 2004).

6. Regarding the observation of the Committee for giving serious attention to the implementation of the programme, it is submitted that due to adequate attention paid by the Union and State Governments the country has been able to provide access to drinking water supply facilities to large number of rural habitations. Out of 1422664 habitations, as per the report up to 31-3-2001, 1235759 habitations (86.86%) are fully covered, and 166832 habitations (11.73%) are partially covered. Only 20073 (1.41%) habitations remain as not covered. The National Agenda for Governance (NAG) envisages providing drinking water supply facilities to all rural habitations by 2004. The Department of Drinking Water Supply was created with a view to providing more focussed attention towards attaining the said objective.

As regards the observation of the Committee about the lack of structured mechanism for obtaining information from the State Governments, it is submitted that there is already a mechanism for obtaining periodical reports from the State Governments regarding progress of programme implementation.”

7. The Committee are concerned to note the lackadaisical attitude of the Government while responding to their recommendation relating to one of the top most priority programme of the Government i.e. drinking water. The Committee in their recommendation had observed stressed as below:

- (i) there is reduction in the targets during 2000-2001 as compared to the previous year;
- (ii) the achievement of targets during 2000-2001 is far less than that of the previous year;
- (iii) lack of proper planning on the part of the Government to cover the not covered and partially covered habitations.
- (iv) There should be some structured mechanism for getting information from the State Governments to enable the Central Government to make a realistic assessment of the outlay required during the year.

Instead of categorically replying to each of the observation/recommendation, the Government have instead furnished the already known information before the Committee. They feel that the Government are not serious towards their recommendations and they tried to sidetrack the main issues. The Committee urge the Government to respond categorically to each of their observation/recommendation.

B. Sample survey by independent evaluators

Recommendation (Para No. 2.18)

8. The Committee had recommended as below:

“The Committee are disturbed to note the findings of Mid Term Appraisal made by the Planning Commission, according to which there is scarcity of drinking water in about half of the villages in India whereas the Government claims to have covered 95% of the habitations in rural India. It has been further observed by the said Appraisal that this gap is increasing over the years despite heavy investment. In view of the scenario presented by the Mid Term Appraisal, the Committee feel that the Government should seriously think over the issue of re-emergence of FC habitations into PC and NC habitations due to various reasons. The Committee urge that the Government should conduct a survey by independent evaluators to find out the ground reality in respect of actual coverage of habitations in the country. They also feel that there should be an in built mechanism in the programme for such a survey after a specified period of time by independent evaluators and the cost of such surveys should not be deterrent to the Government. In the absence of knowledge of ground reality, the targets chasing exercise of the Government is of no use. The Committee feel that the Government should seriously consider this issue in the light of the above mentioned observations. The Committee would also urge the Government to ponder over the deficiencies pointed out in the Mid Term Appraisal of the 9th Five Year Plan and put forward suitable proposal to weed out such deficiencies.”

9. The Ministry have stated as under:

“Government will conduct a sample survey by independent evaluators of fully covered and partially covered rural habitations to assess the present status of drinking water supply in those habitations. Such evaluation can be got conducted every five years.”

10. The Committee find that the Government have agreed to their recommendation to conduct a sample survey by independent evaluators of fully covered and partially covered rural habitations and stated that such survey could be conducted after every five years. While noting the stand taken by the Government, they would like to know whether the first such survey has been conducted/being conducted by the Government.

The Committee further note that the Government have not responded to part the later of their recommendation to ponder over the deficiencies pointed one in the Mid Term Appraisal of the 9th Five and suggest suitable proposal to weed out such deficiencies. They reiterate their said part recommendation and urge the Government to respond to the same within 3 months of the presentation of the Report.

**C. Reduction in targets and short fall in achievement of target under ARWSP
Recommendation (Para No. 2.23)**

11. The Committee had recommended:

“The Committee note that while the targets fixed for the year 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 could be achieved more than one hundred percent however, the Government not only lowered the targets fixed for 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 but also could not meet them. According to the targets fixed for the year 2000-2001 and achievement made till 31st January, 2001 it is observed that only thirty six percent target could be achieved during 10 months period. Even one-fifth of the achievement is made during the remaining two months, the annual percentage of achievement would amount to only about forty percent of the target.

Therefore, the Committee record their deep distress at the lowering of targets and the dismal performance during the year 2000-2001. They urge the Government as a whole to fix annual targets in consonance with objectives set under National Agenda for Governance and ensure that adequate financial and other resources are made available to ensure the attainment of NAG objectives. In this connection the Committee underline the over-arching importance of de-bureaucratising the delivery system and ensuring that drinking water supply programmes are administered in close association with, or preferably through, elected local bodies.

12. The Ministry has replied as below:

“79468 rural habitations were targeted to be covered with drinking water supply facilities during the year 2000-2001. The coverage figures submitted to the Committee during the oral evidence were based on the information received from the State Governments upto 31.01.2001. However, as per the latest information received from the State Governments, 64762 rural habitations have been covered with drinking water supply facilities during the year 2000-2001, which comes to 81.5% of the target. As it is expected that some States/UTs may update the coverage figures subsequently, it is anticipated that the achievement is likely to move towards the targets set.

The Department of Drinking Water Supply is completely in agreement with the Committee that the drinking water supply programmes would have to be administered in close association with, or preferably through, elected local bodies. In a vast country like India it would be difficult for the Government alone to find sufficient resources to

implement and sustain rural drinking water supply systems. In the long run sustainability of the sources and systems can be effectively maintained only through the active participation of the community. Further, in consonance with the 73rd amendment of the Constitution the following roles have been provided to the Panchayat Raj Institutions in the implementation of the Rural Water Supply Programme:-

As far as implementation of rural drinking water supply schemes with the funds provided for the normal ARWSP Programme is concerned, the Panchayati Raj Institutions are to be involved in the implementation of schemes, particularly in selecting the location of standpost, spot sources, operation and maintenance, fixing of cess/water tariff, etc., as per the guidelines issued for implementation of ARWSP.

Regarding the implementation of Sector Reform Projects, these projects are being got implemented through District Water And Sanitation Missions (DWSM) constituted at the District level as a registered society functioning under the supervision, control and guidance of the Zilla Parishad (ZP) subject to the condition that wherever PRIs are firmly in place and are ready and willing to take up the responsibility of implementation of sectors reforms projects and the PRIs are strong enough to do so, they may be allowed to implement the sector reform projects in those Districts instead of the DWSM. Even where the implementation is done through the DWSM, the Governing Body has to be invariably headed by the Chairman of the Zilla Parishad. The funds for implementation of sector reform projects are being released directly to the District implementing agencies. The DWSM/Zilla Parishad would be responsible for the overall projects implementation, IEC/HRD activities, etc. and the Village Water & Sanitation Committee (a committee of the Village Panchayat), would be responsible for the actual implementation and supervision of the drinking water supply scheme of their choice.”

13. While noting the reply furnished by the Government, the Committee find that the Government have not responded to the issue regarding lowering of targets during 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 as compared to the previous years. They would like that the Government should give detailed reasons for the same.

**D. Huge underspending of outlay earmarked for North Eastern States
Recommendation (Para No. 2.28)**

14. The Committee had recommended as below:

“The Committee are concerned to note the huge underspending of special outlay of 10% earmarked for North Eastern States during 2000-2001. They are not inclined to accept the plea extended by the Government that the underspending is due to habitations being in difficult terrain etc. Further it is noted with concern that instead of taking steps to utilise the special allocations, the Government have tried to justify the underutilisation by saying that the unspent amount will go to non-lapsable pool and would be used only by North Eastern States. In spite of Committee’s earlier recommendations to ensure cent percent utilisation of scarce resources by the North Eastern States, the Government have not thought of getting detailed annual action plans from these States. The Committee are deeply disturbed by the manner in which the Government have taken the serious problem of non-utilisation of scarce resources by North Eastern States. They strongly recommend that the stress of the Government should be on full utilisation of resources and achievement of targets in the absence of which the whole exercise of planning would be a sheer waste.”

15. The ministry has replied as below:

“The ARWSP allocation, release and expenditure for the year 2000-2001 in respect of the North Eastern States is as follows:

(Rs. In lakh)

Sl. No.	State	Opening Balance	Allocation	Release	Total availability	Expenditure reported (provisional)
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00	4365.00	2182.50	2182.50	1847.27
2.	Assam	1906.89	7372.00	5459.78	7366.67	6033.80
3.	Manipur	376.19	1475.00	0.00	376.19	17.07
4.	Meghalaya	325.78	1716.00	1644.08	1969.86	1544.67
5.	Mizoram	14.66	1226.00	1161.99	1176.65	1048.81
6.	Nagaland	501.72	1275.00	822.61	1324.33	498.04
7.	Sikkim	1026.12	650.00	325.00	1351.12	513.18
8.	Tripura	0.00	1521.00	1521.00	1521.00	1200.00

It may be seen from the above statement that barring Tripura none of the other NE States have been able to avail of the complete allocation under ARWSP. The reasons for this are mainly due to the inability of some States to provide matching State share and to fully utilise the Central funds already drawn.

In order to address specific issues faced by the North Eastern States in the implementation of rural development programmes, and Inter-Ministerial Committee of official under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary & Financial Adviser, Ministry of Rural Development has been set up in November, 2000. This Committee will make comprehensive and appropriate recommendations in this behalf to the Government of India.”

16. While noting that Inter-Ministerial Committee of officials under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary and Financial Adviser, Ministry of Rural Development has been set up in November 2001 to address the specific issues faced by the North-Eastern States in the implementation of rural development programmes, the Committee would like to be apprised about the sittings held so far and their outcome. They would also like to know whether the Report of the said Committee has been finalised; if so, the findings of the action taken by the Government on the said Report should be furnished for the information of the Committee. They hope that the main issues responsible for underutilisation of resources for rural development schemes as given by the Government in the action taken reply have been addressed being addressed by the said Committee.

**E. Slippage in targets in coverage of schools under ARWSP
Recommendations (Para Nos. 2.31 & 2.41)**

17. The Committee had recommended as below:

“The Committee are not convinced about the reasons advanced for the dismal performance in respect of coverage of schools under RWS Programme. The Committee

are dissatisfied with the implementation of coverage of schools during 2000-2001. It is really pathetic to note that more than 50% of the Schools still do not have access to the safe drinking water. While appreciating the initiative taken by the Government to indicate coverage of schools under ARWSP, the Committee feel that mere allocation of outlay would not be sufficient. The Government should stress upon the State Government the importance of providing drinking water to schools and a time bound programme should be chalked out in this regard. The Committee also recommend that to ensure regular supply of drinking water in schools, when functioning, storage, tanks should be constructed to ensure uninterrupted supply of water.”

(Para No. 2.31)

18. “The Committee find that not only the allocation under ARWSP is inadequate but the outlay allocated under the programme is not being spent meaningfully. They are disturbed to note the physical achievement made during 2000-2001 according to which the overall coverage of the habitations is 41.65% and in schools the position is further worse where the overall achievement indicated is 8.87% only. The apathy and lethargy displayed by the Government in respect of such an important programme is a deeply disturbing matter of great concern to the Committee. In spite of underspending being a regular practice in some of the States/UTs, the Government have never felt the urgency to analyse the specific reasons. Whenever asked for the reasons, a routine reply stating the not-covered habitations being in the difficult terrain is furnished. The plea of the Government that NC habitations are in a difficult terrain has become a cliché and no longer holds any ground in the twenty-first century. In these days of such a tremendous scientific advancement, no terrain is difficult. The Committee feel that it is high time that the Government should be serious about the implementation of the programme. They should not be contented only with releasing money to the State Governments but they should try to ensure that each rupee meant for the rural poor is meaningfully and timely spent. On the basis of the feed back received by the Committee during their field visits, the Committee feel that to ensure proper utilisation of funds, proposals should be invited from State Governments well before the commencement of the financial year so that the same could be examined, approved and funds released immediately on the commencement of the financial year.”

(Para No. 2.41)

19. The Ministry has stated as under:

“It is estimated that there are about 3 lakh rural primary/upper primary schools which are yet to be provided with drinking water supply facilities. Out of this, about 1.5 lakh are proposed to be covered under the ARWSP in five years, the requirement of funds for which has been included in the Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP) prepared by this Ministry.

The coverage figures submitted to the Committee during the oral evidence were based on the information received from the State Governments upto 31.01.2001. However, as per the latest information received from the State Governments, 11832 rural schools have been covered with drinking water supply facilities during the year 2000-2001. As the coverage of rural schools were taken up as an activity under the ARWSP only from the year 2000-2001 it is expected that the coverage of rural schools will pick up considerably in the coming years.”

(Reply to Recommendation at Para No.2.31)

20. “The coverage figures submitted to the Committee during the oral evidence were based on the information received from the State Governments upto 31.01.2001. However, as per the latest information received from the State Governments, 64762 rural habitations

and 11832 rural schools have been covered with drinking water supply facilities during the year 2000-2001. Hence, the percentage coverage as against the target for 2000-2001 is 81.5% for rural habitations and 26.84% in respect of rural schools. As it is expected that some States/UTs may update the coverage figures subsequently, it is anticipated that the achievement of targets is likely to move nearer to the targets. Since the coverage of rural schools were taken up as an activity under the ARWSP only from the year 2000-2001, it is expected that the coverage of rural schools will pick up considerably in the coming years.

As regards the observation of the Committee for inviting proposals from the State Governments for examination, approval and release of funds, it is submitted that the powers to plan, sanction and implement rural water supply schemes have been delegated to the State Governments. Hence, the State Governments are not required to approach the Government of India for approval of individual schemes to be implemented with ARWSP funds. However, as per the guidelines the States are required to submit their annual action plans by October. Often the States do not adhere to this and the Department is required to remind them. Even after reminding them the States are very slow in submitting their action plans. For example, for the year 2001-2002 only 8 States and 1 UT have submitted their action plans till 27.06.2001. The remaining States have been reminded again.

Regarding release of ARWSP funds to States, the first instalment of ARWSP funds is released to the States at the beginning of the financial year itself as per the approved allocation criteria. The second instalment is released after receipt of a proposal from the

State Governments subject to fulfillment of the requirements as prescribed in the Guidelines. Hence, there is no delay on the part of the Government of India for release of ARWSP funds to the States.”

(Reply to Recommendation at Para 2.41)

21. While going through the reply furnished by the Government, the Committee conclude that the State Governments are not serious about the implementation of one of the priority programmes of rural development i.e. ARWSP. The State/UT Governments are not furnishing their action plan timely, which ultimately results in accumulation of unspent balances. In view of this, they urge the Government to persuade the State Governments by the mixed tactics of persuasion and compulsion to submit their action plans timely.

The Committee are further concerned to note the status of the programme of coverage of rural schools under ARWSP. Even if the latest data as furnished by the Government in their action taken reply is taken into consideration, 26.84% coverage is not a satisfactory progress. They hope that the programme will pick up and the targets are achieved fully in the coming years.

F. Reform initiatives in the pilot projects

Recommendation (Para No. 2.47)

22. The Committee had recommended as below:

“The Committee are unable to appreciate the reform initiatives undertaken by the Government in the pilot districts in view of the dismal performance as could be gauged from the paras above. As observed earlier by them in their [11th Report (13th Lok Sabha)], the Committee feel that the criteria for allocating outlay to all the districts should be same and no district should be favoured at the cost of the other district and the reform initiatives

set by the Government should be uniform for all the States/districts. The Committee urge the Government to review the reform initiatives in the light of their earlier recommendation as well as the unsatisfactory performance of these initiatives in the pilot districts.

23. The Ministry has stated as below:

“As already submitted to the Committee in the Action Taken Note on the 11th Report (13th Lok Sabha) 20% of the ARWSP funds are earmarked for implementation of reform initiatives which, *inter-alia*, includes implementation of sector reform projects in 63 pilot districts. They are to be utilised on the basis of successful progress of implementation of projects. The unutilised amount would be pooled back into the balance 80% amount and re-allocated among the States as per the allocation criteria. Further, districts other than the 63 pilot projects would be sharing the entire balance 80% of the ARWSP funds and full provision made under the State share for rural drinking water supply. In order to try out new innovative initiatives, such incentive is required.

Further, the implementation of sector reform projects are not allocation based. These projects are demand driven and only a provisional project cost has been sanctioned. The requirement of funds for each project would become clearer only as project implementation progress. As regards slow progress of projects, it is only to be expected. The sector reform concept being rather new and complex, it would take some time for them to pick up.”

24. The Committee are not able to appreciate the rationale given by the Government in their action taken reply that the amount which could not be utilised by the pilot districts would be pooled back and utilised by the States and re-allocated among the States as per the allocation criteria. They had repeatedly been stressing that reform initiatives set by the Government should be uniform for all the States/Districts and the criteria for allocating outlay should be the same and no district should be favoured at the cost of the others. The Committee are not convinced by the arguments given by the Ministry and would like that the Government should re-consider the recommendation and apprise them accordingly.

G. Contamination of water

Recommendation (Para No.2.60)

25. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee feel that adequate attention is not being paid to the problem of contamination of water. As observed by the Planning Commission in their Mid Term Appraisal of 9th Plan, the level of contamination in respect of States/Districts is high and rising. The Committee find that although 20% of ARWSP funds could be utilised by the State Governments for solving the problem of contamination of water as per the guidelines, they have their own doubts regarding the utilisation of the said outlay for the specific purpose. In view of it, the Committee feel that the Government should monitor the position of expenditure made by the Government on the said issue. Besides, the Committee urge that a survey by some independent evaluator should be made to have an idea of the extent of contamination of drinking water in rural areas. Further, the Committee understand that the issue of contamination of water is related to various Ministries like Agriculture and Water Resources. They feel that a coordinated approach to solve this problem is required. In view of it, they urge that the Department of Drinking Water Supply should formulate a

strategy in consultation with the concerned Ministries and State Governments to find out the means to tackle this issue. The Committee understand from the replies furnished by the Government that the Government do not have information in respect of the water treatment plants going defunct. The Committee feel that the Government should monitor the position of water treatment plants in the country since the funds for that purpose are allocated by the Government.

26. The Ministry has stated as under:

“As regards monitoring of expenditure incurred for sub-Mission projects out of 20% of ARWSP funds released to the States/UTs, it is submitted that since the sub-Mission projects are taken up from the funds released for ARWSP, at present the expenditure incurred for sub-Mission projects out of 20% of the ARWSP funds is not monitored separately. However, steps would be taken to monitor the expenditure on sub-Mission projects separately in a format prescribed for the purpose.

Regarding survey of contamination of drinking water, it is submitted that in order to assess the actual scenario with regard to the quality problem in drinking water, the State Governments are presently carrying out a stratified sample survey taking block as a unit. Subsequently, 100% survey in Blocks found affected with quality problem would be carried out. The exact magnitude of the problem can be assessed only after the results of the survey are available.

As regards monitoring of the position of water treatment plants, it is stated that water treatment plants are installed as part of the sub-Mission activities for providing safe drinking water to the affected rural habitations out of the ARWSP funds released to the States. The main reasons for these plants becoming non-functional are inadequate operation and maintenance after installation and lack of trained and experienced staff for O&M work. Since this is the responsibility of the State Government, it may not be feasible to monitor directly the condition of the water treatment plants at Government of India level. However, the States have been requested to pay more attention in the matter.”

27. While noting the reply of the Government that they have initiated steps to monitor the expenditure on sub-Mission projects and the State Governments are carrying out a sample survey to assess the actual scenario with regard to the contamination of drinking water, the Committee would like to be apprised of the results of the said survey.

The Committee are not inclined to accept the reply furnished by the Government that monitoring of water treatment plants is the responsibility of the State Governments. They find that such water treatment plants are installed out of ARWSP funds released by from the Central Government. They feel that the Central Government cannot wash their hands after releasing the funds. It is their duty to monitor the implementation of the Centrally Sponsored Schemes. They therefore, urge the Government to find out ways and means to ensure proper operation and maintenance of the plants after installation and ensure that experienced staff for O & M work is provided so that these plants do not go non-functional.

H. Operation and maintenance of Water Treatment Plants

Recommendation (Para No.2.68)

28. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee find that the poor operation and maintenance of different drinking water systems is a serious problem which needs to be taken up on priority basis. As acknowledged by the Secretary during the course of his oral evidence, the operation and maintenance have not been up to the expectations. The Committee feel that the basic reason for water systems being defunct is the poor operation and maintenance. While appreciating the stand taken by the Government to decentralise the entire management, operation and maintenance to the community themselves, the Committee feel that before taking any decision in this regard, the capability of the community to bear the burden needs to be ensured. While appreciating the stand taken by the Government to recommend to the 11th Finance Commission for devolution of sufficient funds to PRIs directly, the Committee find that Rs.1600 crore has been recommended by the 11th Finance Commission to be distributed among the States as per the prescribed criteria. In view of the recommendation made by the 11th Finance Commission, the Committee would like to be apprised whether any allocation in this regard has been made during 2000-2001, and is proposed to be made during 2001-2002. They would also like to be apprised of the criteria for distribution of funds in this regard.”

29. The Ministry has replied as under:

“The Eleventh Finance Commission has been requested to furnish the information as desired by the Committee and the same would be made available to the Committee in due course.”

30. The Committee note the reply of the Government that the Ministry has requested to the Eleventh Finance Commission to furnish the details regarding the allocation made during 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 to PRIs directly. They would like to be apprised of the detailed information when made available by the Eleventh Finance Commission. The Committee further note that the Government have not responded to their recommendation to ensure the capability of the community to share the burden before taking the decision to decentralise the entire management, operation and maintenance to the community. The Committee would like the categorical reply of the Government in this regard.

I. To evaluate the extent of devolution of implementation of rural water schemes Recommendation (Para No.2.73)

31. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee are constrained to find that the Government have never felt the need to evaluate the extent of devolution in respect of implementation of the rural water schemes to Panchayats, whereas the execution and implementation of the programmes has to be handed over to the Panchayats as per the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act. They are further disturbed to note the constitution of parallel bodies to Constitutionally mandated tiers of Panchayati Raj Institution. The Committee urge that the guidelines should be suitably amended whereby the responsibility of execution and implementation of drinking water supply programme is directly entrusted to Panchayats and the money is also directly released to them. The Committee feel that State-wise evaluation of the extent of devolution of the implementation of rural water schemes to Panchayats is absolutely necessary and the Government should seriously ponder over it when the guidelines are eloquent about it and

there is a clear cut sanction of the Constitution. The Committee would like to hear from the Government in this regard expeditiously.”

32. The Ministry has replied as under:

“As per Article 243G of the Constitution, the responsibility of endowing the Panchayats with such powers, including implementation of drinking water supply schemes and maintenance of community assets rests with the State Governments. The State Governments have been requested to apprise the Government of India about the extent of devolution of the implementation of rural water supply schemes to Panchayats.”

33. The Committee find that as per article 243G of the Constitution, the State Governments have to devolve the matters listed in the Eleventh Schedule to Panchayats. They are not able to appreciate the reply furnished by the Government that the responsibility of endowing the Panchayats in this regard rests with the State Governments. They find that the responsibility of monitoring the implementation of Part IX of the Constitution rests with the Union Department of Rural Development and as such they cannot wash their hands by saying that it is the responsibility of the State Governments. In view of it, they reiterate their earlier recommendation and urge the Government to revise the guidelines suitably so that the responsibility of execution and implementation of drinking water supply programme is directly entrusted to Panchayats and the money is also directly released to them.

J. Monitoring of ARWSP Recommendation (Para No.2.78)

34. The Committee had recommended as below:

“The Committee are deeply disturbed to note that there is no effective mechanism for monitoring one of the top most priority programme meant to provide drinking water to rural masses for which huge investment is being made by the Central Government. They are further disturbed to find that the Central Government have tried to wash their hands once the releases are made for the programme. They further understand that the important part of the monitoring mechanism i.e. Area Officer Schemes which is an important part of the Department of Rural Development has found no place in the Department of Drinking Water Supply. The Committee take serious note of it and strongly recommend that a fool proof mechanism to monitor such an important programme should be evolved. Besides, the surprise checks by the officers from the Central Government should be made at the sites to ensure the proper implementation of the programme. The necessary mechanism should further be evolved to check that the schemes are actually implemented in the field and are not on papers only. The Committee urge that on the line of Department of Rural Development, Department of Drinking Water Supply should also consider to create a special cell under the charge of a senior officer to monitor the implementation of drinking water supply schemes/programmes particularly in North Eastern States and Sikkim and also in difficult States/areas. Considering the aspects as mentioned above, the Committee urge the Government to review the guidelines immediately and the Committee be apprised accordingly.”

35. The Ministry has stated as below:

“The system of monitoring the progress of implementation of the drinking water programme through Area Officers similar to the one existing in the Department of Rural Development is prevalent in the Department of Drinking Water Supply also. All the States have been divided into four regions and each region is under the direct charge of one Technical Officer. These Area Officers make periodic visits to the States under their charge and their reports together with corrective action required are presented to the higher officers in the Department, besides writing to State Government for action.”

36. The Committee note the existence of the Area Officers Scheme in the Department of Drinking Water Supply. They find that the Department has not responded to their recommendation to create a separate cell to monitor the implementation of drinking water supply schemes/programmes, particularly in the North Eastern States and Sikkim and also in difficult States/areas. They would like to be apprised of the reply of the Government in this regard.

**K. Multiplicity of Programmes for drinking water in Rural area
Recommendation (Para No.2.87)**

37. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee fail to understand launching of another programme viz. Prime Minister’s Gramodaya Yojana-Rural Drinking Water, in the presence of already established programmes i.e. ARWSP and MNP. They are not able to appreciate the logic given by the Government that this programme has essentially been introduced to replace the erstwhile additional ACA for basic minimum services. The Committee have repeatedly been recommending to bring the allocation under the different related schemes/programmes under one scheme/programme. In spite of that the Government is introducing multiple schemes for achievement of a single objective. In view of it they strongly recommend that all the allocation made for drinking water supply to rural areas should be brought under one programme.”

38. The Ministry has stated as below:

“For the rural drinking water component of the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY), the Department of Drinking Water Supply has been nominated as the nodal Department in the Government of India. The programme has been initiated to achieve sustainable human development at the village level. PMGY aims to build on the strengths of the Basic Minimum Services (BMS) and to focus efforts on certain priority areas of human development in the rural sector.

The allocation of Central assistance under ARWSP is subject to the matching provision/expenditure by the States from their own resources. In view of this, at present, it is not possible to bring all the allocation for rural drinking water under a single programme.”

39. The Committee are not inclined to accept the reply furnished by the Government for launching a separate programme under PMGY in the presence of a already established programme ARWSP and MNP. In spite of repeatedly recommending for bringing the allocation under different related

schemes/programmes for a single objective under one umbrella, the policy of the Government is to introduce more and more schemes. The Committee would like to consider this issue seriously and bring all the Centrally Sponsored Schemes related to drinking water under one programme specifically when a separate Department of Drinking Water Supply has been created in the Central Government.

**L. Priority to Central Rural Sanitation Programme
Recommendation (Para No.3.13)**

40. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee find that inspite of their recommending repeatedly for according priority to Central Rural Sanitation Programme, the Government have not given serious attention to the programme. It is really sorry to find that after more than five decades of independence, only 16 to 20% of the total rural households in the country could be covered by the sanitation programme. Further disturbing is the scenario of school sanitation where only about 14% of rural primary schools have urinal facility whereas lavatory facility is available only in 6.39% of schools. As regards rural upper primary schools, about 40.57% have urinal and lavatory facility is available to 19.97%. As regards the question of providing separate toilets for boys and girls in co-ed schools which should have been accorded a top most priority, it appears that the same has not been given adequate attention by the Government, which is clear from the fact that the Government have not bothered even to maintain the data in this regard. The Committee are further constrained to note that instead of providing adequate allocation to achieve the targets set during 9th Plan, the Planning Commission have rather reduced the targets to commensurate the allocation being made under the programme. Another noticeable feature of the programme is that not only the allocation made under the programme is inadequate, but the meagre releases made to the State Governments have not been spent fully which could be seen from the dismal performance of the programme in respective States/UTs as given in the preceding paragraphs. In view of such a disturbing scenario, the Committee strongly recommend:

- (i) The allocation under the programme should be increased during 2000-01, 2001-02 the remaining years of 9th Plan to achieve the set targets i.e. 50% during 9th Plan.
- (ii) Whatever allocation is made it should be ensured that there is full utilisation of money. The Government should not only be contented with the releases made under the programme, but it should also be ensured that the money is utilised to achieve the set objectives.
- (iii) Sanitation in schools should be given top most priority as it is rather better to inculcate the habit of sanitation in the early years of childhood. Sanitation in schools can not wait further. As such the Government should ensure that the targets of covering all the schools during 9th Plan are not spilled over. Besides, the Government should ensure that separate toilets are available to girls in co-ed schools.
- (iv) Necessary steps should be taken to educate the rural masses about the need for sanitation. To achieve this the Government should launch awareness programmes in the rural areas. Separate allocation for this should be provided in the Budget.

- (v) The sanitation aspect should not merely be confined to provide toilets but a holistic approach in this regard should be adopted and the programme should be restructured accordingly.
- (vi) While appreciating the thrust of the Government on flush latrines, the Committee feel that there are large number of areas, specifically in the hilly areas, where sewerage facility is not available. The Government should think of providing dry latrines in such area according to local conditions.

41. The Ministry has stated as below:-

- (i) 2001-2002 is the last year 9th Five Year Plan. During this financial year an amount of Rs. 150 crore has been provided as against the provision of Rs. 140 crore during 2000-2001.
- (ii) All the State/UTs are regularly requested to utilise the funds available with them. Three Regional Workshops for Southern, Western and Northern States have been organised to review the State-wise implementation of TSC.
- (iii) As per the guidelines, 10% of the project cost can be provided for school sanitation. State Government/UTs are requested to ensure separate toilets for boys and girls in co-ed schools.
- (iv) Under the TSC, main emphasis is being given to IEC and atleast 15% of the project cost has been allocated for IEC.
- (v) With the objectives to bring about an improvement in the general quality of life in the rural areas, the Rural Sanitation Programme has been restructured and has come into force with effect from 1.4.1999. The policy changes envisaged shall help achieve the objective by accelerating coverage of rural population, generating felt need through awareness generation and health education, covering schools in rural areas with sanitation facilities, encouraging suitable cost effective and appropriate technologies and consequently bring about a reduction in the incidence of water and sanitation related diseases.
- (vi) As per the restructured CRSP, there is no provision of providing dry latrines in the hilly areas.

42. While noting the point-wise reply of the Government, the Committee are not able to appreciate the reply of the Government in respect of their recommendation at (vi) above. They in their recommendation had stressed for providing dry latrines in hilly areas where sewerage facility is not available. They would like that the Government should consider their recommendation seriously and revise the guidelines to provide some sort of latrines in hilly areas so as to prevent the practice of defecating outside by the habitants there.

ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE 21st REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (13th LOK SABHA)

I.	Total number of recommendations	23
II.	Recommendations that have been accepted by the Government	13
	Para Nos. 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.21, 2.28, 2.48, 2.50, 2.76, 2.78, 2.88, 2.93, 2.95 and 3.13	
	Percentage to the Total recommendations	(56.52%)
III.	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies	NIL
	Percentage to Total recommendations	—
IV.	Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee	10
	Para Nos. 2.11, 2.18, 2.23, 2.31, 2.41, 2.47, 2.60, 2.68, 2.73 and 2.87	
	Percentage to Total recommendations	(43.48%)
V.	Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited	NIL
	Percentage to Total recommendations	—

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Para No. 2.5)

The Committee observe that the allocation needed for one of the top most priority programmes, ARWSP, is not sufficient to achieve the targets fixed during the 9th Plan as well as in the National Agenda for Governance. In spite of repeated emphasis on adequate allocations under the programme, the Committee note with dismay that the allocation earmarked is a mere one-third of what is required to achieve the targets set in the Comprehensive Action Plan made by the Government in pursuance of the National Agenda for Governance (NAG). The Committee note that the whole exercise of preparing action plans to achieve the aforesaid targets is defeated for want of adequate outlay. The Committee regret that even after passing of more than five decades after independence, the rural masses are still not assured of adequate and uninterrupted supply of drinking water. In view of the top most priority provided to the Centrally Sponsored Programme of Drinking Water, it is felt that the programme cannot wait for want of sufficient funds and in view of it, the Committee strongly recommend for enhancement of outlay as required in the Comprehensive Action Plan set by the Government by high level political co-ordination between the Centre and States.

Reply of the Government

The recommendation of the Committee has been conveyed to the Planning Commission for taking necessary action in the matter.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.6)

As far as high level coordination between the Centre and States to achieve the time bound target is concerned, the Committee were informed that Chief Ministers of the States and the Ministers concerned with the Rural Drinking Water Supply during their visits to New Delhi often visit Hon'ble Union Rural Development Minister and *inter alia* exchange their views regarding the implementation of various rural development programmes including drinking water supply, various bottlenecks faced in the implementation of the programmes and possible solution for them. Similar discussions are also held when Hon'ble Union Rural Development Minister visits various States and meet their respective Chief Ministers in-charge of Rural Water Supply. While Committee appreciate such moves, the effect of such high level contacts is not properly reflected in the results achieved. The Committee would like to be informed about the frequency of such meetings held upto now detailing about the clear cut agenda and the proposals made during such meetings with follow up action taken. Mere holdings of meetings may not be enough if the recommendations of such high level meetings are not implemented earnestly without hesitations and the results are perceived by the beneficiaries. The Committee also feel that to make the visit of Hon'ble Union Rural Development Minister to States fruitful, the local MPs should be informed well in advance of such visit to enable them to interact with the Hon'ble Union Minister and to apprise him of the ground realities. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation that a high level conference of the Planning Commission with all Central Ministers and State Ministers concerned be convened to find financial resources commensurate with the requirements of the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Drinking Water Supply) to attain the ambitious priority targets in respect of drinking water supply which have been set in the National Agenda for Governance.

Reply of the Government

There are two items in this recommendation and the replies to those items are as follows:

- (i) The visits of Ministers (RD) to the States and the State Chief Ministers to New Delhi to hold discussions with the Union Minister(RD) often take place at short notice. However, in future, whenever such meetings are planned well in advance, efforts would be made to inform the concerned MPs.

- (ii) As regards the recommendation of the Committee for convening a high level conference of the Planning Commission with all Central Ministers and State Ministers concerned, the Planning Commission has been requested to initiate necessary action in the matter.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.7)

The Committee are distressed that there is no structured scheme of high level political coordination between the Centre and States to achieve the time bound programme. The Committee fail to understand why it is so particularly concerning such a matter of vital importance where bulk of the people are involved. The Committee are of the view that the Government have not paid adequate attention to this aspect resulting in inept handling. The Committee cannot reconcile to such indifference and urge the Government to evolve a structured scheme of high level political coordination between the Centre and States to realise the time bound programme.

Reply of the Government

The Department of Drinking Water Supply is initiating a proposal to convene a meeting of all the State Ministers in-charge of rural drinking water supply under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister (RD) atleast once a year and also to convene another meeting of State Secretaries in-charge of rural drinking water supply and Chief Engineers of the concerned Department under the Chairmanship of Secretary (DWS) atleast once a year to review the progress of implementation of Rural Water Supply Programme and to find possible solutions to bottlenecks, if any. These meetings would be properly structured and records thereof would be maintained for taking appropriate follow up action.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.21)

While appreciating the objective of National Agenda for Governance to provide safe drinking water to all rural habitations by the year 2004, the Committee are sceptical about the achievement of the objective in view of the inadequate allocations made under the programme. As could be seen from the outlay earmarked for 2001-2002 less than one-third of what has been required is being allocated by the Government. The Committee strongly recommend that the adequate allocation for the programme should be made to achieve the objective set under the National Agenda for Governance.

Reply of the Government

The recommendation of the Committee has been conveyed to the Planning Commission to take necessary action in the matter.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.28)

The Committee are concerned to note the huge underspending of special outlay of 10% earmarked for North Eastern States during 2000-2001. They are not inclined to accept the plea extended by the Government that the underspending is due to habitations being in difficult terrain etc. Further it is noted with concern that instead of taking steps to utilise the special allocations, the Government have tried to justify the underutilisation by saying that the unspent amount will go to non-lapsable pool and would be used only by North Eastern States. In spite of Committee's earlier recommendations to ensure cent percent utilisation of scarce resources by the North Eastern States, the Government have not thought of getting detailed annual action plans from these States. The Committee are deeply disturbed by the manner in which the Government have taken the serious problem of non-utilisation of scarce resources by North Eastern States. They strongly recommend that the stress of the Government should be on full utilisation of resources and achievement of targets in the absence of which the whole exercise of planning would be a sheer waste.

Reply of the Government

The ARWSP allocation, release and expenditure for the year 2000-2001 in respect of the North Eastern States is as follows:

(Rs. in Lakh)

S.No.	State	Opening Balance	Allocation	Release	Total availability	Expenditure reported (provisional)
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00	4365.00	2182.50	2182.50	1847.27
2.	Assam	1906.89	7372.00	5459.78	7366.67	6033.80
3.	Manipur	376.19	1475.00	0.00	376.19	17.07
4.	Meghalaya	325.78	1716.00	1644.08	1969.86	1544.67
5.	Mizoram	14.66	1226.00	1161.99	1176.65	1048.81
6.	Nagaland	501.72	1275.00	822.61	1324.33	498.04
7.	Sikkim	1026.12	650.00	325.00	1351.12	513.18
8.	Tripura	0.00	1521.00	1521.00	1521.00	1200.00

It may be seen from the above statement that barring Tripura none of the other NE States have been able to avail of the complete allocation under ARWSP. The reasons for this are mainly due to the inability of some States to provide matching State share and to fully utilise the Central funds already drawn.

In order to address specific issues faced by the North Eastern States in the implementation of rural development programmes, an Inter-Ministerial Committee of officials under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary & Financial Adviser, Ministry of Rural Development has been set up in November, 2000. The Committee will make comprehensive and appropriate recommendations in this behalf to the Government of India.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Para No. 16 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.48)

As regards the issue of bearing 10% of the costs of the project by the community themselves in the pilot districts, the Committee note that the said criteria should not be uniform for all the districts as an individual being in a district having low density of population has to pay more as compared to an individual residing in a thickly populated district. The Committee feel that the percentage of contribution by the community should be per capita based. The Committee, therefore, urge the Government to review the guidelines.

Reply of the Government

As already stated, the main objective of the sector reform project is not just physical implementation of a water supply scheme, but to institutionalise a new concept of community participation in order to ensure long term sustainability of the sources and systems under the programme. In the sector reform project, the beneficiary has to bear at least 10% of the capital cost in order to instill a sense of ownership in the project. This can be either in cash or kind (labour, land or material). The beneficiary share of 10% for the capital cost is for the lowest service level of drinking water supply. If the beneficiaries desire to have higher service levels then their capital cost share would increase proportionately. Hence, it would not be uniform for all. Before implementing a scheme, many technological options and their cost estimates are placed before the beneficiaries. After considering the cost effectiveness and suitability of the technology, the beneficiaries opt for a rural drinking water supply scheme of their choice. As such, the service level is decided by the community themselves. Further, even after a particular scheme/service level and corresponding community share is finalised, the community has the requisite freedom to provide cross subsidy to favour the poor sections among them. Various experiences in the water supply sector, both national and international, have shown that even the poorest of the poor would be willing to share a part of the capital cost and full O&M cost if satisfactory and sustainable options are provided and if they have a sense of ownership.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.48)

As regards the issue of bearing 10% of the costs of the project by the community themselves in the pilot districts, the Committee note that the said criteria should not be uniform for all the districts as an individual being in a district having low density of population has to pay more as compared to an individual residing in a thickly populated district. The Committee feel that the percentage of contribution by the community should be per capita based. The Committee, therefore, urge the Government to review the guidelines.

Reply of the Government

As already stated, the main objective of the sector reform project is not just physical implementation of a water supply scheme, but to institutionalise a new concept of community participation in order to ensure long term sustainability of the sources and systems under the programme. In the sector reform project, the beneficiary has to bear atleast 10% of the capital cost in order to instill a sense of ownership in the project. This can be either in cash or kind (labour, land or material). The beneficiary share of 10% for the capital cost is for the lowest service level of drinking water supply. If the beneficiaries desire to have higher service levels then their capital cost share would increase proportionately. Hence, it would not be uniform for all. Before implementing a scheme, many technological options and their cost estimates are placed before the beneficiaries. After considering the cost effectiveness and suitability of the technology, the beneficiaries opt for a rural drinking water supply scheme of their choice. As such, the service level is decided by the community themselves. Further, even after a particular scheme/service level and corresponding community share is finalised, the community has the requisite freedom to provide cross subsidy to favour the poor sections among them. Various experiences in the water supply sector, both national and international, have shown that even the poorest of the poor would be willing to share a part of the capital cost and full O&M cost if satisfactory and sustainable options are provided and if they have a sense of ownership.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.50)

While appreciating the initiative taken by the Government to have a separate allocation for Human Resources Development, the Committee feel that the Government should monitor the implementation of the programme and it should be ensured that the outlay earmarked is spent for updating skills of the implementing officials in the respective States. The State Governments should be requested to arrange regular seminars/workshops and to impart proper training to make the programme successful.

Reply of the Government

The views of the Committee on monitoring of the HRD Programme is being considered for strengthening the monitoring system. The State Governments are being requested to organise Seminars/Workshops to make the programme successful. To upgrade the skills of the implementing officials in the respective States, a sum of Rs. 27.48 lakhs was sanctioned to various Institutions during 2000-2001. Sanction would be accorded for similar purpose during the current year.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.76)

While noting that all MPs/MLAs of the districts are members of the District Water and Sanitation Mission (DWSM) to be constituted for implementation of pilot projects under ARWSP and other bodies like District Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committees and Block Level Committees, etc., the Committee desire that the sittings of the said Mission Committees should be convened as far as possible, after seeking the convenience of the respective MPs/MLAs so as to ensure their effective involvement. Besides, the minimum number of sittings to be conducted by such committees during a particular year should be fixed to ensure that sufficient meetings are held. Necessary instructions in this regard should be given to State Governments.

Reply of the Government

Necessary instructions have been issued to the State Governments in this regard.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.78)

The Committee are deeply disturbed to note that there is no effective mechanism for monitoring one of the top most priority programmes meant to provide drinking water to rural masses for which huge investment is being made by the Central Government; they are further disturbed to find that the Central Government have tried to wash their hands off once the releases are made for the programme. They further understand that the important part of the monitoring mechanism i.e. Area Officer Scheme which is an important part of the Department of Rural Development has found no place in the Department of Drinking Water Supply. The Committee take serious note of it and strongly recommend that a fool proof mechanism to monitor such an important programme should be evolved. Besides, the surprise checks by the officers from the Central Government should be made at the sites to ensure the proper implementation of the programme. The necessary mechanism should further be evolved to check that the schemes are actually implemented in the field and are not on papers only. The Committee urge that on the line of Department of Rural Development, Department of Drinking Water Supply should also consider to create a special cell under the charge of a senior officer to monitor the implementation of drinking water supply schemes/programmes particularly in North Eastern States and Sikkim and also in difficult States/areas. Considering the aspects as mentioned above, the Committee urge the Government to review the guidelines immediately and the Committee be appraised accordingly.

Reply of the Government

The system of monitoring the progress of implementation of the drinking water programme through Area Officers similar to the one existing in the Department of Rural Development is prevalent in the Department of Drinking Water Supply also. All the States have been divided into four regions and each region is under the direct charge of one Technical Officer. These Area Officers make periodic visits to the States under their charge and their reports together with corrective action required are presented to the higher officers in the Department, besides writing to State Governments for action.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 36 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.88)

The Committee note with concern that certain States/UTs are yet to report about the expenditure. In 10 States/UTs , although allocation has been made, funds are yet to be released. The Committee fail to understand that inspite of allocation having been made, funds are yet to be released. The Committee also learn that expenditure position is not encouraging in certain States. The Committee hope that the Government would release the funds soon, and the States will fruitfully utilise the funds released and submit a report concerning the expenditure.

Reply of the Government

At the time of reply, most of the States/UTs had not reported expenditure in respect of first instalment of funds released by Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure during July, 2000. The information has now been updated as per Annex. In case of UTs, funds are allocated by the Planning Commission, based on allocation in their respective annual plan as approved by the Planning Commission.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.93)

In view of the fact that Stock of water is limited, the Committee recommends:-

- (i) The Government should pay more attention to sustainability of projects. While appreciating that 25% of PMGY funds are earmarked for sustainability, the Committee would like the Government to ensure that the requisite allocation should be made for the specific purpose and to achieve the results in this regard.

- (ii) The Government should give more stress to the schemes related to rain water harvesting including traditional methods of harvesting water. To achieve the desired results, the Government should think of launching some scheme to provide loans to the individuals and Self Help Groups (SHGs) who want to have their private rain water harvesting structures. Every step should be taken to conserve each and every drop of water to prevent water wastage. Since, the Ministry of Water Resources and Agriculture are mainly related to this problem, the Government should coordinate with the said Ministries to take the necessary initiative in this regard.
- (iii) While appreciating dual policy for supply of water by the Central Government, it is urged that, it should be ensured that the supply of water is made according to the said norms. Necessary instructions in this regard should be issued to the State Governments.
- (iv) Rural masses should be made aware of the importance of preventing wastage of water. Necessary publicity by media and other programmes should be done in this regard.
- (v) The Government should seriously consider the involvement of NGOs in the rural drinking water programmes.
- (vi) India has a vast coast line and profuse sea water. The scarcity of water can be resolved by purification of sea water for drinking purposes and other uses. The plea for not purifying the sea water is its exorbitant cost. The Committee, therefore, feel that the Government should give serious thought to desalination projects and conduct in depth research to make the technology cheaper in consultation with Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) particularly when the water level is going very low and the Government have to work out alternate ways of making available drinking water. Stress should also be given to launch projects where the waste-heat is available as it is cost effective as acknowledged by the Secretary during his evidence. The committee also urge the Government to think of utilising wind energy for desalination projects in coastal areas.

Reply of the Government

- (i) As per the guidelines for PMGY-Rural Drinking Water, 25% of the funds allocated for the rural water supply sector have to be utilised for schemes on sustainability only. Further, sector reforms have been introduced in the rural water supply sector with a view to ensuring long term sustainability of the sources and systems.
- (ii) Propagation of rain water harvesting is a subject matter of the Ministry of Water Resources. They have been requested to initiate necessary action in the matter. However, States are encouraged to take up rain water harvesting schemes under the Sub-Mission on sustainability under ARWSP and sustainability component of the PMGY-Rural Drinking Water. The Department has also brought out a brochure on rainwater harvesting and separate guidelines on sustainability.
- (iii) Supply of drinking water to rural habitations under the dual water policy is explicitly given in the Guidelines for implementation of Rural Water Supply Programme. The same has been reiterated to the States.
- (iv) IEC campaigns through audio/visual media and through distribution of leaflets will be carried out to create awareness among the rural masses for preventing wastage of water. Further, as the beneficiaries of the sector reform projects will feel a sense of ownership towards the water supply schemes, it is envisaged that the people would themselves also initiate measures to prevent wastage of water.
- (v) There is already a provision for co-opting NGOs (not exceeding 3 in number) by the District level implementing agency in the DWSP/DWSC for implementation of the sector reforms projects.
- (vi) As already informed to the Committee during oral evidence, the cost of setting up desalination plants on an extensive scale will not be a viable proposition due to its exorbitant capital and O&M cost. However, as a long term measure, in heat generating industries like petrochemicals, cement, thermal power, etc. located in the coastal areas, surplus heat generated may be utilized by setting up large scale plants

for distillation of saline sea water for conversion into potable drinking water. For inland brakish water, small Reserve Osmosis or Electro-Dialysis plants can be set up for providing drinking water where no alternate source exists. The Department has already written to the States of Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Mahaarashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttaranchal which were affected by drought during the previous year to explore the possibility of setting up such drinking water projects.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.95)

While appreciating the step taken by the Government to provide an additional sum of Rs. 100 crore under ARWSP to earthquake affected Gujarat, the Committee urge the Government to monitor the utilisation of money to ensure that the additional allocations is meaningfully utilised.

Reply of the Government

An additional amount of Rs. 100 crores under ARWSP was released to Gujarat in the wake of the earthquake in the State. As the powers to plan, sanction and implement rural drinking water supply schemes have been delegated to the State Governments, the State Government of Gujarat is utilising the funds in a meaningful manner by taking up rural drinking water supply schemes in the earthquake affected areas. As per the latest reports available, out of the total amount of Rs. 17485.00 lakhs released to Guajrat State under ARWSP (including ARWSP-DDP) during 2000-2001, Rs. 11576.79 lakhs has been spent by the State Government upto February, 2001.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.13)

The Committee find that inspite of their recommending repeatedly for according priority to Central Rural Sanitation Programme, the Government have not given serious attention to the programme. It is really sorry to find that after more than five decades of independence, only 16 to 20% of the total rural households in the country could be covered by the sanitation programme. Further disturbing is the scenario of school sanitation where only about 14% of the rural primary schools have urinal facility whereas lavatory facility is available only in 6.39% of schools. As regards rural upper primary schools, about 40.57% have urinal and lavatory facility is available to 19.97%. As regards the question of providing separate toilets for boys and girls in co-ed schools which should have been accorded a top most priority, it appears that the same has not been given adequate attention by the Government, which is clear from the fact that the Government have not bothered even to maintain data in this regard. The Committee are further constrained to note that instead of providing adequate allocation to achieve the targets set during 9th Plan, the Planning Commission have rather reduced the targets to commensurate the allocation being made under the programme. Another noticeable feature of the programme is that not only the allocation made under the programme inadequate, but the meagre releases made to the State Governments have not been spent fully which could be seen from the dismal performance of the programme in respective States/UTs as given in the preceding paragraphs. In view of such a disturbing scenario, the Committee strongly recommend:

- (i) The allocation under the programme should be increased during 2000-01, 2001-02 the remaining years of 9th Plan to achieve the set targets *i.e.* 50% during 9th Plan.
- (ii) Whatever allocation is made, it should be ensured that there is full utilisation of money. The Government should not only be contended with the releases made under the programme, but it should also be ensured that the money is utilised to achieve the set objectives.
- (iii) Sanitation in schools should be given top most priority as it is rather better to inculcate the habit of sanitation in the early years of childhood. Sanitation in schools can not wait further. As such the Government should ensure that targets of covering all the schools during 9th Plan are not spilled over. Besides, the Government should ensure that separate toilets are available to girls in co-ed schools.

- (iv) Necessary steps should be taken to educate the rural masses about the need for sanitation. To achieve this the Government should launch awareness programmes in the rural areas. Separate allocation for this should be provided in the Budget.
- (v) The sanitation aspect should not merely be confined to provide toilets but a holistic approach in this regard should be adopted and the programme should be restructured accordingly.
- (vi) While appreciating the thrust of the Government on flush latrines, the Committee feel that there are large number of areas, specifically in the hills areas, where sewerage facility is not available. The Government should think of providing dry latrine in such area according to local conditions.

Reply of the Government

- (i) 2001-02 is the last year of the 9th Five Year Plan. During this financial year an amount of Rs. 150 crore has been provided as against the provision of Rs. 140 crore during 2000-01.
- (ii) All the States/UTs are regularly requested to utilise the funds available with them. Three Regional Workshops for Southern, Western and Northern States have been organized to review the State-wise implementation of Total Sanitation Campaign.
- (iii) As per the Guidelines, 10% of the project cost can be provided for school sanitation. State/UTs are requested to ensure separate toilets for boys and girls in co-ed schools.
- (iv) Under the TSC, main emphasis is being given to Information Education and Communication and atleast 15% of the project cost has been allocated for Information, Education and Communication.

- (v) With the objective to bring about an improvement in the general quality of life in the rural areas, the Rural Sanitation Programme has been restructured and has come into force with effect from 1.4.1999. The policy changes envisaged shall help achieve the objective by accelerating coverage of rural population, generating felt need through awareness generation and health education, covering schools in rural areas with sanitation facilities, encouraging suitable cost effective and appropriate technologies and consequently bring about a reduction in the incidence of water and sanitation related diseases.
- (vi) As per the restructured Centrally sponsored Rural Sanitation Programme, there is no provision of providing dry latrines in the hilly areas.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 42 of Chapter I of the Report)

CHAPTER III

**RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE
TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES**

—NIL—

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation (Para No. 2.11)

The Committee find that not only there is reduction in the targets during 2000-2001 as compared to the previous year but the achievement of targets during 2000-2001 is far less than that of 1999-2000. The Committee are further disturbed to note the way the Government have tried to justify the reduction in targets during 2000-2001. The overall conclusion made by the Committee is that to provide allocation for a sector, the targets are reduced in the other sector and as such minor adjustments are being made. Another disturbing feature noted by the Committee is that there is lack of proper planning on the part of Government to cover the not covered and partially covered habitations. Till date, the Government have not received the targets for the year 2001 from the State Governments. They fail to understand how the allocations for a particular year are being made without having the clear picture of targets from the State Governments. The Committee strongly disapprove the way the Government have taken up one of the top most priority programmes and urge that serious attention should be paid to the implementation of the programme. There should also be some structured mechanism for getting the information from the State Governments to enable the Central Government to make a realistic assessment of the outlay required during a particular year.

Reply of the Government

Allocations of ARWSP funds to the States are made as per the following allocation criteria approved by the Government:

	Weightage for	Percentage (%)
(a)	Rural Population	40
(b)	States under DDP, DPAP, HADP and special category hill States in terms of rural areas	35
(c)	NC/PC habitations (at 2:1 ratio)	10
(d)	Quality affected habitations (40:40:15:5)	5
(e)	Overall water resource availability (un-irrigated over irrigated area)	10
	Total	100

The States are required to fix the targets according to their annual allocation keeping in view objective of the National Agenda for Governance (NAG) of the Government to provide drinking water supply facilities to all rural habitations in five years (*i.e.* by 2004).

Regarding the observation of the Committee for giving serious attention to the implementation of the programme, it is submitted that due to adequate attention paid by the Union and State Governments' the country has been able to provide access to drinking water supply facilities to large number of rural habitations. Out of 14,22,664 habitations, as per the report upto 31-3-2001, 12,35,759 habitations (86.86%) are fully covered, and 1,66,832 habitations (11.73%) are partially covered. Only 20,073 (1.41%) habitations remain as not covered. The National Agenda for Governance (NAG) envisages providing drinking water supply facilities to all rural habitations by 2004. The Department of Drinking Water Supply was created with a view to providing more focussed attention towards attaining the said objective.

As regards the observation of the Committee about the lack of structured mechanism for obtaining information from the State Governments, it is submitted that there is already a mechanism for obtaining periodical reports from the State Governments regarding progress of programme implementation."

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 7 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.18)

The Committee are disturbed to note the findings of Mid Term Appraisal made by Planning Commission, according to which there is scarcity of drinking water in about half of the villages in India whereas the Government claims to have covered 95% of the habitations in rural India. It has been further observed by the said Appraisal that this gap is increasing over the years despite heavy investment. In view of the scenario presented by Mid Term Appraisal, the Committee feel that the Government should seriously think over the issue of re-emergence of FC habitations into PC and NC habitations due to various reasons. The Committee urge that the Government should conduct a

survey by independent evaluators to find out the ground reality in respect of actual coverage of habitations in the country. They also feel that there should be an in built mechanism in the programme for such a survey after a specified period to time by independent evaluators and the cost of such surveys should not be deterrent to the Government. In the absence of knowledge of ground reality, the targets chasing exercise of the Government is of no use. The Committee feel that the Government should seriously consider this issue in the light of the above mentioned observations. The Committee would also urge the Government to ponder over the deficiencies pointed out in the Mid Term Appraisal of the 9th Five Year Plan and put forward suitable proposal to weed out such deficiencies.

Reply of the Government

Government will conduct a sample survey by independent evaluators of fully covered and partially covered rural habitations to assess the present status of drinking water supply in those habitations. Such evaluation can be got conducted every five years.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 10 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.23)

The Committee note that while the targets fixed for the year 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 could be achieved more than one hundred percent, however, the Government not only lowered the targets fixed for 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 but also could not meet them. According to the targets fixed for the year 2000-2001 and achievement made till 31st January, 2001, it is observed that only thirty six percent target could be achieved during 10 months period. Even if one-fifth of the achievement is made during the remaining two months, the annual percentage of achievement would amount to only about forty percent of the target.

Therefore, the Committee record their deep distress at the lowering of targets and the dismal performance during the year 2000-2001. They urge the Government as a whole to fix annual targets in consonance with objectives set under National Agenda for Governance and ensure that adequate financial and other resources are made available to ensure the attainment of NAG objectives. In this connection the Committee underline the over-arching importance of de-bureaucratising the delivery system and ensuring that drinking water supply programmes are administered in close association with, or preferably through, elected local bodies.

Reply of the Government

79468 rural habitations were targeted to be covered with drinking water supply facilities during the year 2000-2001. The coverage figures submitted to the Committee during the oral evidence were based on the information received from the State Governments upto 31.01.2001. However, as per the latest information received from the State Governments, 64762 rural habitations have been covered with drinking water supply facilities during the year 2000-2001, which comes to 81.5% of the target. As it is expected that some States/UTs may update the coverage figures subsequently, it is anticipated that the achievement is likely to move towards the targets set.

The Department of Drinking Water Supply is completely in agreement with the Committee that the drinking water supply programmes would have to be administered in close association with, or preferably through, elected local bodies. In a vast country like India it would be difficult for the Government alone to find sufficient resources to implement and sustain rural drinking water supply systems. In the long run sustainability of the sources and systems can be effectively maintained only through the active participation of the community. Further, in consonance with the 73rd amendment of the Constitution the following roles have been provided to the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the implementation of the Rural Water Supply Programme:—

As far as implementation of rural drinking water supply schemes with the funds provided for the normal ARWSP Programme is concerned, the Panchayati Raj Institutions are to be involved in the implementation of schemes, particularly in selecting the location of standpost, spot sources, operation and maintenance, fixing of cess/water tariff, etc., as per the guidelines issued for implementation of ARWSP.

Regarding the implementation of Sector Reform Projects, these projects are being implemented through District Water and Sanitation Missions (DWSM) constituted at the District level as a registered society functioning under the supervision, control and guidance of the Zilla Parishad (ZP) subject to the condition that wherever PRIs are firmly in place and are ready and willing to take up the responsibility of implementation of sector reforms projects and the PRIs are strong enough to do so, they may be allowed to implement the sector reform

projects in those Districts instead of the DWSM. Even where the implementation is done through the DWSM, the Governing Body has to be invariably headed by the Chairman of the Zilla Parishad. The funds for implementation of sector reform projects are being released directly to the District implementing agencies. The DWSM/Zilla Parishad would be responsible for the overall project implementation, IEC/HRD activities, etc. and the Village Water & Sanitation Committee (a committee of the Village Panchayat), would be responsible for the actual implementation and supervision of the drinking water supply scheme of their choice.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 13 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.31)

The Committee are not convinced about the reasons advanced for the dismal performance in respect of coverage of schools under RWS Programme. The Committee are dissatisfied with the implementation of coverage of schools during 2000-2001. It is really pathetic to note that more than 50% of the schools still do not have access to safe drinking water. While appreciating the initiative taken by the Government to indicate coverage of schools under ARWSP, the Committee feel that mere allocation of outlay would not be sufficient. The Government should stress upon the State Governments the importance of providing drinking water to schools and a time bound programme should be chalked out in this regard. The Committee also recommend that to ensure regular supply of drinking water in schools, when functioning, storage tanks should be constructed to ensure uninterrupted supply of water.

Reply of the Government

It is estimated that there are about 3 lakh rural primary/upper primary schools which are yet to be provided with drinking water supply facilities. Out of this, about 1.5 lakh are proposed to be covered under the ARWSP in five years, the requirement of funds for which has been included in the Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP) prepared by this Ministry.

The coverage figures submitted to the Committee during the oral evidence were based on the information received from the State Governments upto 31.01.2001. However, as per the latest information received from the State Governments, 11,832 rural schools have been covered with drinking water supply facilities during the year 2000-2001. As the coverage of rural schools were taken up as an activity under the ARWSP only from the year 2000-2001 it is expected that the coverage of rural schools will pick up considerably in the coming years.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 21 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.41)

The Committee find that not only the allocation under ARWSP is inadequate but the outlay allocated under the programme is not being spent meaningfully. They are disturbed to note the physical achievement made during 2000-2001 according to which the overall coverage of the habitations is 41.65% and in schools the position is further worse where the overall achievement indicated is 8.87% only. The apathy and lethargy displayed by the Government in respect of such an important programme is a deeply disturbing matter of great concern to the Committee. In spite of underspending being a regular practice in some of the States/UTs, the Government have never felt the urgency to analyse the specific reasons. Whenever asked for the reasons, a routine reply stating the not-covered habitations being in the difficult terrains is furnished. The plea of the Government that NC habitations are in a difficult terrain has become a cliché and no longer holds any ground in the twenty-first century. In these days of such tremendous scientific advancement, no terrain is difficult. The Committee feel that it is high time that the Government should be serious about the implementation of the programme. They should not be contented only with releasing money to the State Governments but they should try to ensure that each rupee meant for the rural poor is meaningfully and timely spent. On the basis of the feed back received by the Committee during their field visits, the Committee feel that to ensure proper utilisation of funds, proposals should be invited from State Governments well before the commencement of the financial year so that the same could be examined, approved and funds released immediately on the commencement of the financial year.

Reply of the Government

The coverage figures submitted to the Committee during the oral evidence were based on the information received from the State Governments upto 31.01.2001. However, as per the latest information received from the State Governments, 64,762 rural habitations and 11,832 rural schools have been covered with drinking water supply facilities during the year 2000-2001. Hence, the percentage coverage as against the target for 2000-2001 is 81.5% for rural habitations and 26.84% in respect of rural schools. As it is expected that some States/UTs may update the coverage figures subsequently, it is anticipated that the achievement of targets is likely to move nearer to the targets. Since the coverage of rural schools were taken up as an activity under the ARWSP only from the year 2000-2001, it is expected that the coverage of rural schools will pick up considerably in the coming years.

As regards the observation of the Committee for inviting proposals from the State Governments for examination, approval and release of funds, it is submitted that the powers to plan, sanction and implement rural water supply schemes have been delegated to the State Governments. Hence, the State Governments are not required to approach the Government of India for approval of individual schemes to be implemented with ARWSP funds. However, as per the guidelines the States are required to submit their annual action plans by October. Often the States do not adhere to this and the Department is required to remind them. Even after reminding them the States are very slow in submitting their action plans. For example, for the year 2001-2002 only 8 States and 1 UT have submitted their action plans till 27.06.2001. The remaining States have been reminded again.

Regarding release of ARWSP funds to States, the first instalment of ARWSP funds are released to the States at the beginning of the financial year itself as per the approved allocation criteria. The second instalment is released after receipt of a proposal from the State Governments subject to fulfilment of the requirements as prescribed in the Guidelines. Hence, there is no delay on the part of the Government of India for release of ARWSP funds to the States.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 21 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.47)

The Committee are unable to appreciate the reform initiative undertaken by the Government in the pilot districts in view of the dismal performance as could be gauged from the paras above. As observed earlier by them in their 11th Report (13th Lok Sabha), the Committee feel that criteria for allocating outlay to all the districts should be same and no district should be favoured at the cost of the other district and the reform initiatives set by the Government should be uniform for all the States/districts. The Committee urge the Government to review the reform initiatives in the light of their earlier recommendation as well as the unsatisfactory performance of these initiatives in the pilot districts.

Reply of the Government

As already submitted to the Committee in the Action Taken Note on the 11th Report (13th Lok Sabha) 20% of the ARWSP funds are earmarked for implementation of reform initiatives which, *inter-alia*, includes implementation of Sector Reform Projects in 63 pilot districts. They are to be utilised on the basis of successful progress of implementation of projects. The unutilised amount would be pooled back into the balance 80% amount and re-allocated among the States as per the allocation criteria. Further, districts other than the 63 pilot projects would be sharing the entire balance 80% of the ARWSP funds and full provision made under the State share for rural drinking water supply. In order to try out new innovative initiatives, such an incentive is required.

Further, the implementation of sector reform projects are not allocation based. These projects are demand driven and only a provisional project cost has been sanctioned. The requirement of funds for each project would become clearer only as project implementation progresses. As regards slow progress of projects, it is only to be expected. The sector reform concept being rather new and complex, it would take some time for them to pick up.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 24 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.60)

The Committee feel that adequate attention is not being paid to the problem of contamination of water. As observed by the Planning Commission in their Mid Term Appraisal of 9th Plan. The level of contamination in respect of States/Districts is high and rising. The Committee find that although 20% of ARWSP funds could be utilised by the State Governments for solving the problem of contamination of water as per the guidelines, they have their own doubts regarding the utilisation of the said outlay for the specific purpose. In view of it, the Committee feel that the Government should monitor the position of expenditure made by the Government on the said issue. Besides, the Committee urge that a survey by some independent evaluator should be made to have an idea of the extent of contamination of drinking water in rural areas. Further, the Committee understand that the issue of contamination of water is related to various Ministries like Agriculture and Water Resources. They feel that a coordinated approach to solve this problem is required. In view of it, they urge that the Department of Drinking Water Supply should formulate a strategy in consultation with the concerned Ministries and State Governments to find out the means to tackle this issue. The Committee understand from the replies furnished by the Government that the Government do not have information in respect of the water treatment plants going defunct. The Committee feel that the Government should monitor the position of water treatment plants in the country since the funds for that purpose are allocated by the Government.

Reply of the Government

As regards monitoring of expenditure incurred for sub-Mission projects out of 20% of ARWSP funds released to the States/UTs, it is submitted that since the sub-Mission projects are taken up from the funds released for ARWSP, at present the expenditure incurred for sub-Mission projects out of 20% of the ARWSP funds is not monitored separately. However, steps would be taken to monitor the expenditure on Sub-Mission projects separately in a format prescribed for the purpose.

Regarding survey of contamination of drinking water, it is submitted that in order to assess the actual scenario with regard to the quality problem in drinking water, the State Governments are presently carrying out a stratified sample survey taking Block as a unit. Subsequently, 100% survey in Blocks found affected with quality problem would be carried out. The exact magnitude of the problem can be assessed only after the results of the survey are available.

As regards monitoring of the position of water treatment plants, it is stated that water treatment plants are installed as part of the Sub-Mission activities for providing safe drinking water to the affected rural habitations out of the ARWSP funds released to the States. The main reasons for these plants becoming non-functional are inadequate operation and maintenance after installation and lack of trained and experienced staff for O&M work. Since this is the responsibility of the State Government, it may not be feasible to monitor directly the condition of the water treatment plants at Government of India level. However, the States have been requested to pay more attention in the matter.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 27 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.68)

The Committee find that the poor operation and maintenance of different drinking water systems is a serious problem which needs to be taken up on priority basis. As acknowledged by the Secretary during the course of his oral evidence, the operation and maintenance has not been up to the expectations. The Committee feel that the basic reason for water systems being defunct is the poor operation and maintenance. While appreciating the stand taken by the Government to decentralise the entire management, operation and maintenance to the community themselves, the Committee feel that before taking any decision in this regard, the capability of the community to bear the burden needs to be ensured. While appreciating the stand taken by the Government to recommend to the 11th Finance Commission for devolution of sufficient funds to PRIs directly, the Committee find that Rs. 1600 crore has been recommended by the 11th Finance Commission to be distributed among the States as per the prescribed criteria. In view of the recommendations made by the 11th Finance Commission, the Committee would like to be apprised whether any allocation in this regard has been made during 2000-2001, and is proposed to be made during 2001-2002. They would also like to be apprised of the criteria for distribution of funds in this regard.

Reply of the Government

The Eleventh Finance Commission has been requested to furnish the information as desired by the Committee and the same would be made available to the Committee in due course.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 30 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.73)

The Committee are constrained to find that the Government have never felt the need to evaluate the extent of devolution in respect of implementation of the rural water schemes to Panchayats, whereas the execution and implementation of the programmes has to be handed over to the Panchayats as per the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act. They are further disturbed to note the constitution of parallel bodies to Constitutionally mandated tiers of Panchayati Raj Institution. The Committee urge that the guidelines should be suitably amended whereby the responsibility of execution and implementation of drinking water supply programme is directly entrusted to Panchayats and the money is also directly released to them. The Committee feel that State-wise evaluation of the extent of devolution of the implementation of rural water schemes to Panchayats is absolutely necessary and the Government should seriously ponder over it when the guidelines are eloquent about it and there is a clear cut sanction of the Constitution. The Committee would like to hear from the Government in this regard expeditiously.

Reply of the Government

As per Article 243G of the Constitution, the responsibility of endowing the Panchayats with such powers, including implementation of drinking water supply schemes and maintenance of community assets rests with the State Governments. The State Governments have been requested to apprise the Government of India about the extent of devolution of the implementation of rural water supply schemes to Panchayats.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 33 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.87)

The Committee fail to understand launching of another Programme viz Prime Minister's Gramodaya Yojana Rural Drinking Water, in the presence of already established programme i.e. ARWSP and MNP. They are not able to appreciate the logic given by the Government that this programme has essentially been introduced to replace the erstwhile additional ACA for basic minimum services. The Committee have repeatedly been recommending to bring the allocation under the different related schemes/programmes under one scheme/programme. In spite of that the Government is introducing multiple schemes for achievement of a single objective. In view of this they strongly recommend that all allocation made for drinking water supply to rural areas should be brought under one programme.

Reply of the Government

For the rural drinking water component of the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY), the Department of Drinking Water Supply has been nominated as the Nodal Department in the Government of India. The programme has been initiated to achieve sustainable human development at the village level. PMGY aims to build on the strengths of the Basic Minimum Services (BMS) and to focus efforts on certain priority areas of human development in the rural sector.

The allocation of Central assistance under ARWSP is subject to the matching provision/expenditure by the States from their own resources. In view of this, at present, it is not possible to bring all the allocation for rural drinking water under a single programme.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 39 of Chapter I of the Report)

Comments of the Committee

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Reply of the Government

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The allocation of Central assistance under ARWSP is subject to the matching provision/expenditure by the States from their own resources. In view of this, at present, it is not possible to bring all the allocation for rural drinking water under a single programme.

[Ministry of Rural Development O.M. No. H-11020/4/2001-GC(P)
dated 14.8.2001 Department of Drinking Water Supply]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 39 of Chapter I of the Report)

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES
OF GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

—NIL—

NEW DELHI;
11 March, 2002

20 Phalgun, 1923 (Saka)

ANANT GANGARAM GEETE,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on Urban
and Rural Development.

APPENDIX I

COMMITTEE ON URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (2002)

EXTRACT OF MINUTES OF THE THIRD SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, THE 27TH FEBRUARY, 2002

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1720 hrs. in Committee Room 'E', Basement, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Anant Gangaram Geete — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Ranen Barman
3. Shri Haribhai Chaudhary
4. Shri Shriram Chauhan
5. Shri Shrichand Kriplani
6. Shri Bir Singh Mahato
7. Shri Savshibhai Makwana
8. Shri Chandresh Patel
9. Shri Laxmanrao Patil
10. Shri Nikhilaranda Sar
11. Shri D.C Srikantappa
12. Shri V.M. Sudheeran

Rajya Sabha

13. Shrimati Shabana Azmi
14. Ven'ble Dhammaviriyo
15. Shri H.K. Javare Gowda
16. Shri Maurice Kujur
17. Shri Faqir Chand Mullana
18. Shri Onward L. Nongtdu
19. Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy

20. Shri Devi Prasad Singh

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri S.C. Rastogi — *Joint Secretary*
2. Shri K. Chakraborty — *Deputy Secretary*
3. Shrimati Sudesh Luthra — *Under Secretary*

2. The Chairman at the outset, welcomed the members to the sitting of the Committee. The Committee then took up for consideration and adoption the following action taken reports:-

- (i) Draft report on the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 21st Report (13th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2001-2002) of the Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development).

(ii)	***	***	***	***
(iii)	***	***	***	***
(iv)	***	***	***	***
(v)	***	***	***	***

The aforesaid report was adopted by the Committee with certain modifications as indicated in *Annexure*.

3. The Committee then authorised the Chairman to finalise the said draft action taken report on the basis of factual verification from the concerned Ministry/Department and to present the same to Parliament.

4. *** *** *** ***

The Committee then adjourned.

***Relevant portions of the minutes not related to the subject has been kept separately.

ANNEXURE

[See Para 2 (i) of the Minutes dated 27.2.2002]

Sl. No.	Page No.	Para No.	Line No.	Modifications
1	2	3	4	5
1	5	7	3 from bottom	<p><i>For</i> "The Committee urge the Government to respond categorically to each of their observation/recommendation."</p> <p><i>Substitute</i> "While expressing their displeasure over the attitude of the Government, the Committee would like the Government to respond categorically to each of their observation/recommendation."</p>
2	7	10	4 from bottom	<p><i>For</i> "While noting the stand taken by the Government, they would like to know whether the first such survey has since been conducted and if not, when the same will be conducted by the Government."</p> <p><i>Substitute</i> "While noting the stand taken by the Government, the Committee would like to know whether the first such survey has since been conducted, and if not, the time frame within which the same will be conducted should be communicated expeditiously."</p>

1	2	3	4	5
3	11	13		<i>Add the following at the end of para 13:</i> <i>"The Committee find from the action taken reply furnished by the Government that 64762 rural habitations have been covered with drinking water supply facilities during the year 2000-2001, which comes to 81.5% of the target. The Committee would like to be apprised whether the said data relates to the access of the aforesaid habitations to drinking water source or the availability of drinking water as per the set norms."</i>

APPENDIX II

[Vide Para 4 of the Introduction]

ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE 21st REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (13TH LOK SABHA)

I.	Total number of recommendations	23
II.	Recommendations that have been accepted by the Government (Para Nos. 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.21, 2.28, 2.48, 2.50, 2.76, 2.78, 2.88, 2.93, 2.95 and 3.13)	13
	Percentage of the total recommendations	(56.52%)
III.	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies	NIL
	Percentage to the total recommendations	—
IV.	Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee (Para Nos. 2.11, 2.18, 2.23, 2.31, 2.41, 2.47, 2.60, 2.68, 2.73 and 2.87)	10
	Percentage to the total recommendations	(43.48%)
V.	Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited	NIL
	Percentage to the total recommendations	—