

6. AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

The approach to area development may be broadly divided into (i) Command Area Development and (ii) Watershed Area Development. While Command Area Development approach is adopted for the comprehensive development of irrigated areas, Watershed Area Development approach is followed for the development of rainfed areas. Irrespective of the approach and the type of area required to be developed, Area Development programmes have mostly remained within the domain of the Central Government, which has sponsored several programmes for the development of hilly regions and rainfed areas in the country. The important Area Development programmes that are being implemented in the State are:

1. Western Ghats Development Programme (WGDP)
2. Hill Area Development Programme (HADP)
3. Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP)
4. Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP)
5. National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA)
6. Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (RSVY)

Besides the above centrally sponsored programmes, a programme for the development of wastelands viz., Comprehensive Wasteland Programme (CWP) is also being implemented in the State.

The National level area development programmes have been following different set of guidelines issued by the implementing Departments. However, with the introduction of NWDPRA, a common set of watershed guidelines were issued. The programmes which were introduced prior to NWDPRA like WGDP, HADP, DPAP and IWDP are now adopting the watershed guidelines. However, from 1.4.2003 the projects sanctioned under DPAP are governed by the Hariyali Guidelines. Separate guidelines were issued for the implementation of Centrally sponsored RSVY and for the State's Comprehensive Wasteland Programme.

A snapshot of the above seven important area development programmes implemented in the State is presented in the succeeding paragraphs.

Western Ghats Development Programme:

The Western Ghats Development Programme which aims at ecological preservation, restoration and overall socio-economic development of the Western Ghats region is a multi-sectoral centrally sponsored programme introduced at the National level in 1974-75 to cover an extent of 160 lakh hectares in the Western Ghats region spread over the States of Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The programme which is being implemented in the State since 1975-76 covers an extent of 25.70 lakh hectares spread over 33 taluks in the districts of Coimbatore (7), Erode (2), Dindigul (4), Madurai (1), Theni (5), Virudhunagar (3), Tirunelveli (7) and Kanyakumari (4). The area covered by the programme works out to 62 per cent of the total area of the eight districts and about 20 per cent of the total geographical area of the State.

Since (1992-93) the implementing agencies of three core-sectors viz., Agricultural Engineering, Forestry and Horticulture were directed to execute the scheme works in selected priority watersheds indicated in the Annual Plan G.Os. Accordingly, the watersheds in the region were delineated on the basis of soil erosion index. Of the 5197 watersheds thus delineated in the region, 2366 watersheds (45.5%) were identified as very high and high priority watersheds and are being taken up for treatment.

The programme is funded by Special Central Assistance, of which 90 per cent is provided as grant and the remaining 10 per cent as loan. The allocation for each State is determined on the basis of the area under Western Ghats and its population with a weightage of 75 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. So far, the State has received a total of Rs.207.60 crores under WGDP. Plan-wise details of outlay provided are furnished below.

Table - 1 Plan-wise Outlay on WGDP - Tamil Nadu

(Rs in lakhs)

Sl. No.	Plan	Period	Total Outlay	Average Annual Outlay
1.	V Plan	1975-76 to 1979-80	395.00	79.00
2.	VI Plan	1980-81 to 1984-85	1446.69	289.34
3.	VII Plan	1985.86 to 1989-90	2600.03	520.01
4.	Annual Plans	1990-91 to 1991-92	1313.58	656.79
5.	VIII Plan	1992-93 to 1996-97	3759.50	751.90
6.	IX Plan	1997-98 to 2001-02	5145.20	1029.04
7.	X Plan	2002-03 to 2006-07	6100.00	1220.00
	Total		20760.00	

The average annual outlay provided to the State under WGDP had steadily increased from Rs.79.00 lakhs during the V Plan period to Rs.1029 lakhs during the IX Plan period. The annual outlay for the programme which stood at Rs.1099 lakhs during the first four years of the X Plan was enhanced to Rs.1704 lakhs for the year 2006-07.

The programme enables the implementation of a wide range of activities / works executed by about 15 line departments. However, the schemes implemented under Forest (34.8%), Agricultural Engineering (31.4%), Horticulture (12.3%), Animal Husbandry (4.6%) and Roads (4.6%) sectors together accounted for 87.7 per cent of the total outlay provided during the first four years of the Tenth Plan. The activities carried out under the programme involve planting of miscellaneous / medical plants and execution of soil conservation works by the Forest Department, Construction of civil works for Soil and Moisture Conservation and Water Harvesting by the Agricultural Engineering Department and rejuvenation of old orchards and production and distribution of planting materials and vegetable seeds by the Horticulture Department.

Evaluation studies carried out in recent years have indicated the need for enhancing the outlay to quicken the pace of coverage and development of the priority watersheds in the project area, strengthen the project formulation, encourage participation by the beneficiaries and better coordination amongst the various project implementation agencies.

Hill Area Development Programme:

The Centrally sponsored, multi-sectoral Hill Area Development Programme which aims at socio-economic development of the hill stations in the country besides the protection and maintenance of the fragile eco-system was introduced at the National level in 1974-75 along with WGDP to cover hill areas requiring special attention. Since 1975-76 this programme is being implemented in the Nilgiris (Udhagamandalam district) having a total geographical area of 2.74 lakh hectares.

The area is vulnerable and prone to soil erosion and land slides calling for huge investments on protective agricultural engineering works and their periodical maintenance. Hence, the outlay for this programme which covers less than one-tenth of the WGDP area is almost double that of WGDP. From the inception of the programme, the State has so far received a total outlay of Rs.415.03 crores under HADP as detailed below.

Table -2 Plan-wise Outlay on HADP - Tamil Nadu

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl. No.	Plan	Period	Total Outlay	Average Annual Outlay
1.	V plan	1975-76 to 1979-80	994.65	198.93
2.	VI plan	1980-81 to 1984-85	2479.09	495.82
3.	VII plan	1985-86 to 1989-90	4082.47	816.49
4.	Annual Plans	1990-91 to 1991-92	2218.00	1109.00
5.	VIII plan	1992-93 to 1996-97	8595.00	1719.00
6.	IX plan	1997-98 to 2001-02	10744.00	2148.80
7.	X plan	2002-03 to 2006-07	12390.00	2478.00
	Total		41503.21	

The average annual outlay for this programme, provided as Special Central Assistance, has gradually increased from Rs.198.93 lakhs during the V Plan period to Rs.2148.80 lakhs during the IX Plan period. The annual outlay which stood at Rs.2210.00 lakhs during the first four years of the X plan has been enhanced to Rs.3550 lakhs for the year 2006-07. Though the activities taken up under the programme are executed by about 20 line departments, Forest, Soil conservation and Horticulture sectors were initially identified as core sectors. From 1996-97 onwards four more sectors viz., Tribal welfare, Development of Municipal area, Water supply and Improvement of Roads have also been included under the core sectors. In the total outlay provided during the first four years of the X Plan period Soil Conservation (16.7%), Forestry (16.4%), Horticulture (13.6%), Development of local bodies (11.5%), Roads (9.7%), Welfare of SC / ST (5.2%) and Human Resources Development (5.1%) together accounted for about 78 per cent. Sectors like Tourism, Medical and Health and Training component accounted for about 3 per cent each.

The activities under of the HADP, though somewhat similar to WGDP have special features such as: The altitude of the hills and the plateau regions covered, the quantity and spread of precipitation, the source of water supply and the prevailing land

use and cropping patterns, vulnerability of the area to soil erosion, frequency of land slides and the extent of encroachment, denudation and degradation of forest areas basically determine the type of works executed under different sectors in this unique hilly region and their cost. Construction of retaining walls in areas prone to land slides, provision of facial revetments along road sides and terrace support walls in lands put to agricultural uses, construction of check dams across the gullies, provision of ground level reservoirs and chain link fencing of forest areas are some of the protective works executed under this programme. The schemes implemented by the Horticulture Department relate mostly to cultivation of tea and vegetables, raising of fruit tree crops and floriculture. Unlike the plains, the unit cost of works especially those relating to civil and earthen works would be normally high in this region in view of the difficult terrain and the need to transport the materials from the plains. Similarly, the life span of works tends to be relatively short necessitating frequent maintenance. Hence, the investment required on reconstruction and protective works in this hilly region tends to be significant.

Anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that the programme has helped in provision of infrastructure.

Drought Prone Areas Programme:

The Drought Prone Areas Programme is a centrally shared programme launched in 1973-74 to tackle the special problems faced by those fragile areas which are prone to and are constantly affected by severe drought conditions. These areas are characterised by poor natural resource base for producing food, fodder and fuel and a large human and cattle population which exert heavy pressure on the available resources and lead to depletion of vegetative cover and reduction in ground water level due to continuous exploitation and inadequate efforts for recharging the aquifers.

The objectives of the programme are (i) to minimise the adverse effects of drought on the production of crops and livestock and productivity of land, water and human resources thereby ultimately leading to '*drought proofing*' of the affected areas, (ii) to promote overall economic development and improve the socio-economic condition of the poor and disadvantaged sections inhabiting the programme areas and (iii) to take up development works through the watershed approach for land development, water resource development and afforestation / pasture development.

At the National level, the programme covers 746 lakh hectares in 972 blocks spread over 182 districts in 16 States. In Tamil Nadu, the programme covers 29.42 lakh hectares in 80 notified blocks spread over 17 districts viz., Coimbatore, Dharmapuri, Dindigul, Karur, Krishnagiri, Namakkal, Perambalur, Pudukkottai, Ramanathapuram, Salem, Sivagangai, Tiruvannamalai, Thoothukudi, Tiruchirapalli, Tirunelveli, Vellore and Virudhunagar.

Over the years, the objectives, strategy, mode of implementation and sharing of cost between Centre and States have been modified. The focus of the programme which was initially on employment generation and creation of infrastructure facilities has been shifted to rain water harvesting and overall economic development. Since 1995-96, the programme is being implemented as per the Watershed Development Guidelines of Government of India on watershed basis with people's participation. Each watershed covers approximately an area of 500 hectares. The implementation of programme has

been shifted from line departments to village Watershed Association and Watershed Committees. Previously, the works were identified mostly by officials of the line departments and occasionally by the local leaders and elected representatives. Now the User Groups/Self Help Groups identify and execute the works. The cost of the programme was shared by the Government of India and the State on 50 : 50 basis upto 31.3.1999. From 1.4.1999 onwards, the funding pattern has been revised and shared between Central and State Governments in the ratio of 75 : 25. The unit cost for developing a watershed has been fixed at Rs.6000 per ha., with effect from 1.4.2000 and the project period is fixed at 5 years.

The watershed projects under DPAP are sanctioned by Government of India in batches. In the first batch, 297 watershed projects were sanctioned and completed during the period 1995-2000 at a total cost of Rs.5920.25 lakhs. No project has been sanctioned to the State in the II, III and VI batches. In the IV batch (1998-99 to 2002-03), 103 watershed projects were sanctioned for the State and the total project cost of Rs.2060 lakhs was equally shared by the Central and State Governments.

Between 1999-2000 and 2005-06, a total of 1014 Watershed projects were sanctioned for the State under successive batches at a total cost of Rs.274.30 crores, of which the share of Government of India was Rs.205.725 crores (75%) and that of Government of Tamil Nadu was of the order of Rs.68.575 crores (25%) as detailed below.

Table :3 DPAP Watershed Projects Sanctioned from 1999-2000 to 2005-07

Batch	Duration	No. of Watersheds	Total Allocation (Rs. in Lakhs)		
			GOI-Share	GOTN Share	Total
V	1999-2000 to 2003-04	299	4485.00	1495.00	5980.00
VII	2001-02 to 2005-06	61	1372.50	457.50	1830.00
VIII	2002-03 to 2006-07	144	3240.00	1080.00	4320.00
IX	2003-04 to 2007-08	160	3600.00	1200.00	4800.00
X	2004-05 to 2008-09	160	3600.00	1200.00	4800.00
XI	2005-06 to 2009-2010	190	4275.00	1425.00	5700.00
	Total	1014	20572.50	6857.50	27430.00

Besides Entry Point Activities and Community Participation, the major activities / works currently taken up under DPAP are given below:

Land Development : Land Levelling, Contour Bunding, Silt Application, Stone Bunding, Retaining Wall, Summer Ploughing, Vegetative Bunding and Continuous Trenching.

Water Resources Development : Cattle Pond, Farm Pond, Formation of Oorani, Desilting of Tanks, Formation of Supply Channel and Desilting, Check Dams, Percolation Pond and Development of Drinking Water Resources

Plantation Activities : Agro Forestry, Horticulture Plantation, Fodder Development, Crop Demonstration, Community Nursery, Social Forestry and Homestead Garden

The results of various evaluation studies suggest that in the watersheds covered, the programme has enabled significant changes in improving wastelands and in stabilising the cropped area besides evoking interest on community participation and Grass root level planning.

Integrated Watersheds Development Programme:

The Integrated Watersheds Development Programme is a centrally sponsored programme introduced at the National level in 1989-90 for an integrated development of wastelands and degraded lands based on village / micro watershed plans.

The objectives of the programme are:

- i) Develop wastelands / degraded lands on watershed basis keeping in view the capability of land, site conditions and local needs.
- ii) Promote the overall economic development and improving the socio-economic condition of the rural poor and disadvantaged sections inhabiting the programme areas.
- iii) Restore ecological balance by harnessing, conserving and developing natural resource i.e., land, water, vegetative cover.
- iv) Encourage village community for sustained community action for the operation and maintenance of assets created and for making use of local technical knowledge and available materials; and
- v) Employment generation, poverty alleviation, community empowerment and development of human and other economic resources of the village.

The projects under IWDP are generally sanctioned and implemented in the Blocks not covered by DPAP and DDP. The basic approach in implementation of this programme has been modified from 1.4.1995 when the guidelines for Watershed Development through watershed approach came into force. Since then the projects for development of watersheds on micro-watershed basis are being sanctioned. From 1999-2000 new IWDP projects are prioritised for sanction in consultation with the State Governments. The projects have to be implemented over a period of five years at an overall cost of Rs.4000/- per ha., for projects sanctioned upto 31.3.2000 and at an overall cost of Rs.6000 per ha., for projects sanctioned after 1.4.2000.

The projects under the programme were implemented with cent per cent grant from Government of India upto 31.3.2000. Thereafter the expenditure on the programme is being shared between the Central and State Governments in the ratio of 11 : 1 (Central share is Rs.5500 and State share is Rs.500 per ha.)

The programme is being implemented in 28 States. Between 1995-96 and 2004-05 (31.1.2005) 829 projects covering a total area of 59.11 lakh hectares were sanctioned under the programme. This programme is being implemented in Tamil Nadu since 1993-94 in the Non-DPAP blocks. At present, the programme covers 89 blocks in 24 districts in the State.

Since the introduction of the programme in the State, 75 projects have been sanctioned upto 2005-06 at a cost of Rs.24262.90 lakhs for tackling 4.25 lakh hectares of degraded lands. Of these, 5 projects have been completed and the remaining are under various stages of progress.

The works taken up under this programme are similar to those taken up under DPAP covering the broad categories of Land Development, Water Resource Development and Plantation Activities.

National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas:

The National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPR) was launched in 1990-91 as a Centrally sponsored programme for increasing agricultural productivity and production in rainfed areas through sustainable use of natural resources by adopting watershed approach. With the introduction of this programme, '*watershed*' has become an accepted unit of planning. Watershed approach was given the status of a National strategy for the development of rainfed areas and this approach was subsequently introduced in most of the Centrally sponsored programmes which were launched earlier and governed by separate guidelines.

This programme which was implemented in the State since its inception in 1990-91 covered 84 blocks spread over 19 districts and an extent of 2.27 lakh hectares was treated at a cost of Rs.73.29 crores.

The programme has been restructured as Watershed Areas Agricultural Systems Approach (WARASA) and the restructured NWDPR has been taken up for implementation during the X Plan period as a five year project from 2002-03 to 2006-07.

The broad objectives of the restructured programme are:

- * Conservation, development and sustainable management of natural resources including their usage;
- * Stepping up of agricultural productivity and production in a sustainable manner;
- * Restoration of ecological balance in the degraded and fragile rainfed eco-systems by greening these areas by appropriate mix of trees, shrubs and grass and
- * Creation of sustained employment opportunities for the rural communities including landless labourers.

The restructured NWDPR is being implemented in 23 districts in the State except Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur, Chennai, Udhamandalam and Kanyakumari. The approved pattern of assistance for the programme is in the ratio of 90 : 10 for the Centre and State respectively. The central assistance of 90 per cent will be in the ratio of 80 per cent grant and 20 per cent loan. The scheme is being implemented in 765 watershed areas having less than 30 per cent of assured means of irrigation in arable lands and a slope of less than 8 per cent. The minimum area for a watershed is 500 ha. The unit cost of scheme has been fixed at Rs.4500 per ha.

As per the revised guidelines, planning, implementation, monitoring and maintenance of watersheds by the Village Watershed Committees themselves have been made mandatory. The activities under the management component of the programme like formation of District Watershed Committee headed by the District Collector as Chairman, formation of four types of groups viz., SHG, UG, WA and WC, registration of Watershed

Association, Selection of PIAs and Watershed Development Team members, organising orientation training, PRA training, technology upgradation training etc., at State / District Watershed levels were completed in respect of the districts covered under the restructured NWDPRA during the X plan.

The implementation of NWDPRA, both at the State and District levels has been brought under the fold of Tamil Nadu Watershed Development Agency (TAWDEVA) with effect from 30.9.2004.

Between 2002-03 and 2005-06 (as on 30.6.2006) an extent of 1.21 lakh hectares has been treated as against a target of 1.56 lakh hectares. The total financial achievement under the programme for the same period was Rs.54.47 crores as against the target of Rs.71.11 crores.

Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (RSVY):

This is a centrally sponsored programme launched in 2003-04 for the focused development of backward districts in the country. For this purpose, the Government of India has identified 100 backward districts in the country on the basis of an index of backwardness comprising three parameters having equal weight viz., value of output per agricultural worker, agricultural wage rate and proportion of SC/ST population. Besides, 32 districts affected by left wing extremism have also been selected for coverage under the programme. The number of districts in each State has been worked out on the basis of incidence of poverty. The prime objective of the scheme is to address the problems of high poverty, slow growth, low agricultural productivity, unemployment and poor governance by putting in place the programme and policies of the Centre and the State so as to remove barriers to growth, accelerate the development process and improve the quality of life of the people.

This programme provides an amount of Rs.45 crores to the identified districts over a period of 3 years at the rate of Rs.15 crores per year for implementing programmes relating to drought proofing (Soil conservation, afforestation, social forestry, wasteland development and minor irrigation), agriculture and horticulture development, basic infrastructure facilities (roads and power), social sector (health and education) and livelihood support (income generating activities such as handlooms, agricultural processing etc.). The programme strategy focuses on infrastructure development and income generation for the under privileged.

For this purpose, the district administration / Panchayat Raj Institutions prepare a Three year Master Plan and Annual Action Plan so as to fill in the critical gaps in physical and social infrastructure, remove bottlenecks to growth / development, reduce poverty and ensure optimum utilisation of additional funds made available to the district.

The districts of Tiruvannamalai, Dindigul, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam and Sivagangai in the State were identified and covered under the Backward districts initiative of RSVY. While Tiruvannamalai district was covered between 2003-04 and 2005-06, the remaining districts are being covered between 2004-05 and 2006-07.

The creation of Backward Regions Grants Fund (BRGF) in 2005-06 has subsumed in it the ongoing RSVY programme which was to end in 2006-07.

Box
Backward Regions Grant Fund

- Intension to set up a Grant Fund for backward districts announced in Union Budget 2004-05 and an Inter Ministerial Group (IMG) was established to identify districts and to make other recommendations.
- Creation of Backward Regions Grant Fund with an allocation of Rs.5000 crores announced by the Finance Minister in Budget speech 2005-06.
- Ministry of Panchayat Raj has been entrusted the responsibility of implementing the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF).
- BRGF designed to redress regional imbalances in development by providing financial resources for supplementing and converging existing development inflows into the identified districts.
- BRGF aims at (i) bridging critical gaps in local infrastructure and other development requirement; (ii) Strengthening Panchayat and Municipality level governance to facilitate Participatory planning, decision making, implementation and monitoring; (iii) Providing technical support to local bodies for planning, implementation and monitoring their plans and (iv) Improving the performance and delivery of critical functions assigned to the Panchayats.
- Necessitates formulation of a well conceived participatory district development perspective plan by the identified districts for 2006-07 and for the Eleventh Five Year Plan by consolidating the Participatory plans prepared by Panchayats and Municipalities and by integrating the multiple programmes that are in operation in the districts and through a combination of resources that flow into the district.
- Suitable transition arrangements to be made to ensure that the districts covered under RSVY are funded to the extent of plans sanctioned based on submission of Utilisation Certificates for the funds released earlier.

*Source: Revised Guidelines for BRGF issued by Ministry of Panchayati Raj,
Government of India.*

Comprehensive Wasteland Programme:

The Comprehensive Wasteland Programme was formally announced in August 2001 and implemented from 2002-03 onwards. The programme which aimed at reclaiming 20 lakh hectares of wastelands over a period of five years has two components viz., (i) Participatory Wasteland Development and (ii) Development of Government Wastelands by Corporate Houses, Small companies, Co-operatives, Federation of Women SHG's etc.

Participatory Watershed Development:

Under this scheme planting of horticulture / Agro forestry seedlings is taken up in farmers' wastelands on micro watershed basis. For this purpose, the scheme envisaged provision of a maximum subsidy of Rs.8500 per hectare. The programme aimed at covering 55000 hectares under planting during 2002-03 in the 10 pilot districts of Vellore, Tiruvannamalai, Salem, Namakkal, Dindigul, Theni, Tiruchirapalli, Pudukkottai,

Ramanathapuram and Tirunelveli and earmarked an outlay of Rs.30 crores for the purpose.

During 2003-04, the programme was extended to 13 districts viz., Thoothukudi, Virudhunagar, Sivagangai, Madurai, Coimbatore, Erode, Karur, Perambalur, Villupuram, Cuddalore, Tiruvallur, Dharmapuri and Kancheepuram and a target of 50,000 hectares was fixed with a financial allocation of Rs.25 crores. However, in these new districts only preliminary activities have been completed during 2003-04 and no planting activity was carried out. Whereas in the pilot districts an extent of 21771 hectares was covered under planting during 2002-03 and an area of 23600 hectares was covered during 2003-04. An area of 45,371 hectares was covered under planting in the ten pilot districts during 2002-03 and 2003-04.

During 2004-05 it was programmed to cover 60,000 ha., under planting (54,000 ha. under tree seedlings and 6000 ha., under fodder crops) in 23 districts at an estimated cost of Rs.50 crores. As against this, the overall physical achievement during the year worked out to 85.6 per cent with a coverage of 51386 ha., under planting which comprised 25971 ha., under Horticulture crops (50.5%), 22431 ha., under Agro Forestry (43.6%) and 2984 ha., under fodder crops (5.9%).

During 2005-06 the programme covered 24 districts including the new Krishnagiri district. As against the target of 60,000 hectares, the actual coverage of area under planting during the year was 73,889 hectares, recording an achievement of 123.15 per cent. Here again, the coverage was high under Horticulture (57.7%) followed by Agro-Forestry (32.2%) and Fodder crops (10.1%).