

Tour report of Shri T.M. Vijay Bhaskar, Joint Secretary, DDWS

8th October, 2009 in Bihar

- (1) Visited Badera village along with the concerned engineers in Arrah district. Piped water supply scheme constructed 4 years ago at a cost of Rs. 90.87 Lakh under ARWSP covering about 1,500 households. No household connections have been given. 49 standposts installed of which about 4 are not functional. However, on the day of my visit, there was no electricity since the last 3 days because the wire had been stolen. The Mukhiya of the Gram Panchayat informed me that these wires are stolen once every 6 months or so. The scheme has been handed-over to the panchayat in 2006 with a lump sum grant of Rs. 71,500. This was used for repairing pipe leaks, major repairs and for diesel charges. The panchayat is to collect Rs. 20 per month per household but this is not collected. Generator has been provided. **I was informed that the 12th Finance Commission money can only be used for hand-pump maintenance and cannot be used for maintenance of piped water supply scheme.** Hand-pump maintenance has been handed-over to GP about 5 years ago. According to the Mukhiya only 18 handpumps out of 300 in the GP are non-functional. VWSC has been formed but no training has been given. Chlorination pump is fixed but not working. **There is no information about the water quality testing kits at the village level.** I visited the SC colony of the village. There were 2 stand posts here. **On inquiry, it was found that water was only supplied a few days in a month. Nearly every house has its own tube well. Strangely enough, tube well water is used for drinking water purposes while the tap water is used for other purposes because supply is irregular.**

- (2) I also visited Mouzampur village covered by a Multi-village piped water scheme covering 39 arsenic affected villages in Badera block. Project cost is Rs. 54 crore to

benefit 75 000 population. Source is the river Ganga. It consists of a raw water extraction unit, treatment plant, master reservoir, distribution of treated water and 12 water towers for distribution at a total per capita cost of Rs. 4493. The scheme is likely to be completed in 2010. After interaction, **I felt that more effort was needed for capacity building of GP and VWSC, consultations with the households themselves and the members of the Gram Panchayat.**

(3) Visit Balua village to see sanitized well with solar powered 1HP pump. 20 such units have been set up in arsenic affected villages at a cost of Rs. 11 lakhs each (for well and solar pump). The system has been working since 7 months without any problems. The well is 35 feet deep. The village has 1,500 households but most of them are depending on individual hand-pumps. **I was informed that most of the community hand-pumps are not working.** Only about 25 houses were said to be using the safe arsenic free water from the sanitised well. **Awareness has to be created among the other villagers to use this water for drinking water purposes.** More water tanks have to be put up in other mohallas also.

(4) Visited District lab in Arrah town. The PHED has outsourced water quality testing of atleast one drinking water source from each habitation as a one-time exercise to an agency. The agency has tested 3955 sources in the district and have given a report within 6 months at an average cost of Rs. 246 per source. This appears to be a good practice for baseline testing to identify water quality problems.

Issues and observations of 8.10.2009

1. Main Issue:- To expedite utilization of NRDWP and Jalmani. Only 6% utilization up to September, 2009. Have to utilize 60% for becoming eligible for 2nd installment. Rs 320 crore has to be utilized to reach 60% (OB Rs 414 crores + releases Rs 186 crore. Available fund Rs 600 Crore Exp (September) Rs 40 crore.
2. Online reporting of physical and financial progress- has to be done. So far no report of habitations covered, utilization under NRDWP or Jalmani.
3. G.P's involved in hand pump maintenance VWSC's do not appear to be active. Need for training of GP & VWSC members on technical, managerial, financial, social aspects of managing water supply schemes.
4. A number of bulk water multi-village schemes have been taken up to cover arsenic affected villages. Progress on these appears to be good.

However, greater emphasis on involvement of GP, VWSC, and their capacity building is required.

5. In Balua village most community hand pumps are not working.

There seem to be some issues regarding regular flow and utilization of 12th Finance Commission funds for O & M of the handpumps. GP's are apparently unable to use 12th FC funds for O&M of piped water schemes because instructions are to use them only for hand pump maintenance.

6. Outsourcing of water quality testing done- In Arrah district 3955 sources tested @ average about 3 sources per habitation. This has helped to identify quality affected sources in 6 months. Good practice for replication. (District labs capacity is only about 100 tests a month).
7. TSC - Many Toilets constructed in last few months. But some are incomplete-half built walls & no roof. Beneficiaries need to be persuaded to complete the toilets. Demand for toilets is evident.

8. Could not see water quality testing kits supplied or meet persons trained in the villages visited.

Tour Note of Visit to Bihar on 9/10/2009 by Secretary, Drinking Water Supply :-

Secretary DWS met Shri Naveen Kumar, Development Commissioner, Bihar. Secretary (DWS) brought to his notice the need to utilize about Rs. 600 crore available funds expeditiously, the need to involve PRIs in rural water supply and sanitation and efforts required to improve sanitation coverage from the existing level that was the lowest in the country.

Secretary, DWS then visited the Production and Research Centre of the PHED in Patna where we saw extremely sturdy low cost bamboo toilet models built within the unit cost of Rs. 2500/-. These are worthy of replication in areas with bamboo availability.

She later addressed a meeting in which Principal Secretary, PHED, Secretary, Panchayati Raj and engineers from district level and other senior officers of PHED were present. Principal Secretary, PHED made a presentation on the rural drinking water supply scenario in Bihar (Copy placed below).

Principal Secretary, PHED said that the recent rains had eased the drinking water situation in the State. 12 habitations were being supplied with tankers. A contingency plan had been prepared. Secretary, DWS said that calamity relief funds would be released on receipt of decisions of the Inter Ministerial Group.

In her address and in the subsequent interaction Secretary (DWS) made the following observations:

- (i) The State had Rs.600 cr. funds available of which only Rs. 40 cr. was spent till Sept. end. Pace of utilization has to be stepped up if 2nd instalment was to be availed.
- (ii) PR Dept & PHED need to work out a concrete plan for coordinated approach to involve PRIs in RWS & TSC looking at the experience of neighboring States. This plan should also ensure training for and actual management of RWS by panchayats. She said that funds available under BRGF for capacity building could be utilized for this purpose.
- (iii) Low sanitation coverage has to be addressed by stressing the message of need for toilet, of pride in own toilet, privacy & dignity of women & girls, impact on health etc. and not by just talking of targets or construction cost in the villages.
- (iv) Principal Secretary, PHED thanked Secretary, DWS for releasing the TSC funds. Secretary, DWS referred to the bamboo toilet models she saw and complimented the Principal Secretary, Bihar for his initiative and hoped that this model would be taken up by setting up production centers at district and lower levels for increasing coverage.
- (v) It would be useful to send a team to Gujarat to study the WASMO model so as to strengthen WSSO and CCDU.
- (iii) When the issue of replenishing water quality test material in village level water quality testing kits was raised it was pointed out this could be met from the 10% O&M component, the 2% Support component or NRHM untied funds to VWSH Committees.
- (v) Secretary emphasized the need to ensure adequate water for school toilet cleaning, handwashing, utensil washing. She suggested that forcelif pumps, overhead tanks and rainwater harvesting could be taken up with NRDWP funds for schools. To ensure sustainability, these projects should be taken up only after

awareness creation among the teachers, pupils, VEC and Panchayat and fully involving them.

(vi) All districts should prepare their District Water Security plans & State WSP. This year this could be prepared from district level itself instead of from village level upwards because of lack of sufficient time.

(viii) Online data entry to be completed by 31st October.

In the discussions Principal Secretary, PHED pointed out that the cost allowed under Jalmani scheme was low and they could not tackle arsenic affected villages within Rs. 20,000 per unit. Secretary, DWS clarified that the cost of treatment of iron affected villages was quite low and therefore the average cost of Rs. 20,000 was reasonable. If the cost of arsenic and fluoride removal was higher than the maximum (Rs. 40,000 per unit) the State Govt could bear the additional cost.

A doubt was raised as to how water supply was to be given to Anganwadi toilets. Secretary, DWS said that water requirement in Anganwadis would be very low and a couple of buckets of water could suffice.

In the afternoon Secretary (DDWS) and JS (VB) met the Chief Secretary, Bihar and raised the issue of low utilization of funds and need for involvement of PRIs in RWS and TSC. The Chief Secretary, Bihar agreed on the need to involve PRIs for local involvement and better monitoring of drinking water supply works and said that the Government of Bihar would utilize the funds available for capacity building of Panchayat representatives. He also stated that he was taking regular reviews of performance and utilization of funds by PHED.



TOILET
MODEL - I





A photograph of a wooden toilet structure, identified as 'TOILET MODEL-III'. The structure is built from vertical wooden planks and has a corrugated metal roof. It is situated outdoors on a concrete platform. To the left is a window with a metal grille, and to the right is another similar structure. A grey pipe is visible on the wall behind the toilet.

TOILET
MODEL-III

A photograph of a wooden toilet structure. The structure is built from vertical wooden planks. A white sign with blue text is hanging from the top. The sign reads "TOILET MODEL-III". To the left of the structure, there is a large pile of sand or dirt. In the background, there is a stone wall and some green foliage. The structure has a wooden handle and a horizontal wooden bar near the bottom.

TOILET
MODEL-III