

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT
AND PANCHAYATI RAJ (2022-23)

34

SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA

MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF LAND RESOURCES)

[Action taken on the recommendations contained in the Thirtieth Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2023-24) of the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources)']

THIRTY FOURTH REPORT



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

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[Action taken on the recommendations contained in the Thirtieth Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2023-24) of the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources)']

Presented to Lok Sabha on 27.07.2023

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 27.07.2023



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND
PANCHAYATI RAJ (2022-2023)**

Smt. Kanimozhi Karunanidhi -- *Chairperson*

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3. Shri A.K.P Chinraj
4. Shri Rajveer Diler
5. Shri Vijay Kumar Dubey
6. Shri Sukhbir Singh Jaunapuria
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14. Dr. Talari Rangaiah
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18. Shri Brijbhushan Sharan Singh
19. Dr. Alok Kumar Suman
20. Shri Shyam Singh Yadav
21. Smt. Dimple Yadav

Rajya Sabha Members

22. Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla
23. Shri Dineshchandra Jemalbhai Anavadiya
24. Smt. Shanta Chhetri
25. Dr. Dharmasthala Veerendra Heggade
26. Shri Iranna Kadadi
27. Shri Ram Shakal
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31. Shri Bashistha Narain Singh

Secretariat

1. Shri D.R. Shekhar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri C. Kalyanasundaram - Director
3. Shri Vinay P. Barwa - Deputy Secretary
4. Shri Atul Singh - Assistant Executive Officer

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (2022-2023) having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present the 34th Report on the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Thirtieth Report of the Standing Committee on Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (17th Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2023-24) of the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources)'.

2. The Thirtieth Report was presented to the Lok Sabha on 14.03.2023 and was laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 15.03.2023. Replies of the Government to all the recommendations contained in the Report were received on 08.06.2023.

3. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 25.07.2023.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Thirtieth Report (17th Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given in **Appendix-II**.

NEW DELHI
25 July, 2023
03 Shrawana, 1945 (Saka)

KANIMOZHI KARUNANIDHI
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Rural
Development & Panchayati Raj

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Standing Committee on Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (2022-23) deals with the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in their Thirtieth Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2023-24) of the Ministry of Rural Development (Department of Land Resources).

1.2 The Thirtieth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 14.03.2023 and was laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 15.03.2023. The Report contained 12 Observations/Recommendations.

1.3 Action Taken Notes in respect of all the 12 Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report have been received from the Government. These have been examined and categorised as follows: -

(i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government:

Serial Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11

Total:09

Chapter II

(ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of replies of the Government:

Serial No. Nil.

Total: Nil

Chapter III

(iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee:

Serial Nos. 6, 7 and 12.

Total: 03

Chapter IV

(iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited:

Serial Nos. Nil.

Total: Nil

Chapter V

1.4 The Committee trust that utmost importance will be given to the implementation of the recommendations accepted by the Government. In case where it is not possible for any reasons to implement the recommendations in letter and spirit, the matter shall be reported to the Committee with reasons for non-implementation. The Committee desire that Action Taken Replies to the Recommendations contained in Chapter-I of this Report may be furnished to the Committee expeditiously.

1.5 The Committee will now deal with action taken by the Government on some of their Observations/Recommendations that require reiteration or merit comments.

**I. Cost Norms of WDC-PMKSY 2.0
Recommendation (Serial No. 6)**

1.6 With regard to cost norms of WDC-PMKSY 2.0, the Committee had recommended as under:-

“The committee note that the third party evaluation conducted by the NITI Aayog has also recommended that the cost norms for the scheme should be revised to reflect the current market conditions. The cost norms should be between Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 30,000 per hectare for the plains. In this regard, the committee find that in respect of WDC-PMKSY 2.0 the revised cost norm of Rs.28,000 per hectare for hilly and difficult areas, Rs. 22000/-per hectare for other areas and upto Rs. 28,000 per hectare for watershed projects in integrated Action Plan Districts. Hence, the cost norm for plain areas is less than the recommended range of cost norms in third-party evaluation. Since it is essential to link the cost norm to the current market condition, the Committee recommend that the Department should review the adequacy of the current cost norms and increase cost norm for the plains as recommended in the third-party evaluation.”

1.7 In the above recommendation of the Committee, the Department in their action taken reply have stated as follows:-

“A Revised Cost Committee with the approval of competent authority under the chairmanship of AS&FA, MoRD for revision of cost norms under WDC-PMKSY was constituted on 09.07.2021. The recommendation of the Committee is as reproduced below:

The proposed upward revision of cost norms of Rs.22,000/ha for plain areas and Rs.28,000/ha for hilly & difficult areas and upto Rs.28,000/ha for LWE / IAP districts is very conservative estimate after 12 years. This cost norms is for a programme period of five years i.e. from 2021-22 to 2025-26. Similarly, there is dire need of subject matter professionals in the DoLR for effective supervision of implementation of projects in the States/UTs by close monitoring, requisite capacity building and awareness through reputed national resource organizations. Accordingly, Committee recommends the upward revision of cost norms and establishment of CPMU in the DoLR as indicated above.

Accordingly under WDC-PMKSY 2.0, the cost norms have been revised from Rs. 12,000/ha. for plain areas, Rs. 15,000/ha. For hilly & difficult areas (desert prone areas) and upto Rs. 15,000/ha for LWE/IAP districts (base price 2008-09) to Rs. 22,000/ha. for plain areas, Rs. 28,000/ha. for hilly & difficult areas (desert prone areas) and upto Rs. 28,000/ha for LWE/IAP districts.”

Further Observations/Comments of the Committee

1.8 The Committee while stressing upon the need to link the cost norm to the current market condition, recommended to review the adequacy of the current cost norms and increase cost norm for the plains as per the third-party evaluation conducted by NITI Aayog. In this regard, the Department have submitted in their action taken reply that under WDC-PMKSY 2.0, cost norm for plain areas at Rs. 22,000/ha has been kept as per recommendations made by Revised Cost Committee constituted by the MoRD. While observing that the cost norms of Rs. 25,000 to Rs.30,000 proposed by the NITI Aayog for plain areas has been ignored by the Department, the Committee are of the view that the lower cost norm fixed will certainly compromise with the quality and timely output of the project. The rationale behind the recommendation made by NITI Aayog was to reflect the current market condition while revising the cost norm but the same was compromised by fixing the cost norm below the recommended one. Acknowledging the need for higher cost norms for effective implementation of the projects, the Committee reiterate the earlier recommendation to increase cost norm for the plains as per the NITI Aayog study.

II. Protection of the completed project by ensuring plantation on the boundaries (embankments) of the land assets

Recommendation (Serial No. 7)

1.9 With regard to protection of the completed project by ensuring plantation on the boundaries (embankments) of the land assets, the Committee had recommended as follows:-

“The Committee are also of the view that the efficacy of projects under WDC-PMKSY post-completion is completely dependent upon the maintenance and monitoring mechanism. However, while examining the facts and figures of the Department of Land Resources, the Committee observe that many of the Stop Dam projects are made of concrete where soil erosion starts after one or two years. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend DoLR to do an audit of these structures and involve local/indigenous techniques for creating a longstanding structure. The Committee also recommend to plant trees alongside the boundaries of these completed projects to save them from any damage.”

1.10 The Department in their action taken reply have stated as under:-

“In the Guidelines of WDC-PMKSY, 2011, one of the mandatory conditions for the selection of villages for watershed projects is people’s contribution towards the Watershed Development Fund (WDF). The Contribution of WDF comes through a minimum 10 % of cost of NRM works executed on private land (5% in case of SC/ST, small and marginal farmers), execution of works or monetary value of the voluntary labour, user charges, sales proceeds and other contributions, disposal amounts of intermediate usufruct rights, etc which should be deposited in the WDF

bank account. Income earned from assets created under the project on common property resources shall also be credited to WDF for maintenance of assets created during the project.

At least 50% of the WDF funds should be reserved for maintenance of assets created on community land or for common use under the project. The remaining money may be used as a revolving fund to advance loans to the villagers of the project area who have contributed to the fund.

The Gram Sabha through the Watershed Committee (WC) is authorized to utilize/manage the Watershed Development Fund (WDF). The life-span of WDC-PMKSY 1.0 got over in March, 2022 and the project assets had been handed over to the Gram Sabha. Now, the Gram Sabha through the Watershed Committee (WC) is authorized for the purpose, as the WDC-PMKSY 1.0 scheme got over on 31.03.2021 (further extended till 31.03.2022)."

Further Observations/Comments of the Committee

1.11 To enhance the efficacy of projects under WDC-PMKSY post-completion, the Committee recommended to the Department to do an audit of created assets and involve local/indigenous techniques for creating a longstanding structure. The DoLR in their reply have only stated that Watershed Committee (WC) is authorized to utilize/manage the Watershed Development Fund (WDF) for the stated purpose from the reply, the Committee are of the view that Department should not feel contended by merely by-passing the responsibility to Gram Sabha as per the scheme's guidelines but also address the crux of the recommendation made by the Committee in an effective way. Since the maintenance and upkeep of projects should be accorded utmost priority to deliver the benefits in the long term, the Committee reiterate the earlier recommendation and hope that necessary action will be taken by the Department as recommended by the Committee. The Committee are also constrained to note that no specific reply has been given to the recommendation of the Committee, that trees should be planted alongside boundaries of the completed projects to save them from any damage. Since the planting of trees prevents soil erosion and safeguards the completed projects as well as protects environment, the Committee also reiterate this recommendation and hope appropriate measures will be taken by the Department in this regard.

III.

Multilingual Land Records

Recommendation (Serial No. 12)

1.12 With regard multilingual land records, the Committee had made the following recommendation:-

"The Committee note that in order to address the problem of linguistic barriers in land governance, DoLR with the technical support of Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), has undertaken an initiative to transliterate the Records of Rights available in local language to any of the 22 languages

recognized by the Constitution of India. According to the Department, a Pilot test is underway in 8 States - Bihar, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Puducherry, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and UT of Jammu & Kashmir and is targeted to launch the aforesaid initiative on Pan-India basis shortly. Since the linguistic barriers pose serious challenges to access and understand 'Records of Rights' as they are maintained in local languages, the Committee recommend that this project of transliteration of 'Records of Rights' to any of the 22 languages recognized by the Constitution of India should be implemented in a time-bound manner on pan-India basis. Transliteration of Land Records from Indian languages to English should also be available and necessary steps should be taken by the Department in this regard. Progress made in this regard may be apprised to the Committee."

1.13 The Department in their action taken reply have stated as under:-

"Transliteration of Record of Rights from Scheduled languages to English is also included in pilot testing. Capacity building / training for State / UT officials have been undertaken by C-DAC, Pune. So far officers /officials from **25 States/UTs** (including pilot) namely; Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, J&K, Tripura, Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Bihar, Rajasthan, Goa, Odisha, Assam, Manipur, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Punjab, Sikkim, Ladakh and Chandigarh have undergone training conducted by C-DAC, Pune."

Further Observations/Comments of the Committee

1.14 The Committee are constrained to note that the action taken reply furnished by the Department has not fully addressed the recommendation made by the Committee. The note stated that transliteration of Record of Rights from scheduled languages to English included in pilot testing and capacity building/training for State/UT officials have also been undertaken by C-DAC, Pune. However, no information regarding implementation of transliteration of "Record of Rights" to any of 22 scheduled languages on Pan-India basis, in a time bound manner, has been given. The Committee therefore reiterate that the Department of Land Resources to initiate concrete steps for completing pilot testing process and capacity building of State/UT officials in a time bound manner and to implement the transliteration project on Pan India basis in a time bound manner.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Serial No. 1)

The Committee note that during the year 2023-24 there has been an increase of only Rs. 156.50 crore in the Gross Budgetary Support (GBS/Scheme component) of the Department of Land Resources (DoLR) over the BE of previous year. The BE for the year 2022-23 was Rs. 2239.25 crore and the allocation for this year i.e. 2023-24 has been increased to Rs. 2395.75 crore which is an increase of just 6.98% over the previous year's BE. The Committee also note that there has been an increase of 10% from Rs. 2000 to Rs. 2200 crore in the budgetary allocation of Watershed Development Component- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY) whereas BE for Digital India Land Records Management Programme (DILRMP) has been reduced by 18.18% (from Rs. 239.25 Crore to Rs. 195.75 crore) during 2023-24 as compared to previous year's allocation at BE stage in 2022-23. The Committee, considering the overall performance of these two schemes and their remarkable impact on the ground, feel that the reduction made in the BE component seems to be an imprudent approach as this may cause further delay in expanding the coverage of the schemes benefitting larger area and population in the country as per the need of the hour. Therefore, the Committee recommend the DoLR to take up the matter at the highest level in the Ministry of Finance seeking higher allocation of fund so that the benefits of the schemes may be provided to general masses at a much faster pace.

Reply of the Government

Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY)

WDC-PMKSY was approved by Government on 15 December 2021 as "WDC-PMKSY 2.0" with Central Share of Rs.8134 Cr for development of rainfed and degraded lands for a period from 2021-22 to 2025-26. The budget outlay of Rs. 8134 Cr has been bifurcated through Cabinet as Rs. 2,000 Cr for FY 2021-22, Rs. 2,000 Cr for FY 2022-23, Rs. 2,200 Cr for FY 2023-24, Rs. 1,500 Cr for FY 2024-25 and Rs. 434 Cr for FY 2025-26. The Department has accordingly made the demand for FY 2023-24. However, the Department would seek higher allocation in FY 2024-25 & 2025-26.

Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP)

DILRMP is a demand driven Scheme. DILRMP has been extended for a period of five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 with approved outlay of Rs.875.00 crore. DoLR has spent Rs.250.00 crore and Rs.239.25 crore during first two years of the extended period i.e. 2021-22 and 2022-23 respectively making total expenditure to the tune of Rs. 489.25 crore (55.91%). The remaining amount of Rs.385.75 is to be spent during remaining three years of extended period i.e. 2023-24 to 2025-26. Accordingly, Rs.195.75 crore has been kept as BE for 2023-24. DoLR may seek additional funds in excess of Rs.875.00 crore in case demand is received from States/UTs during coming period.

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

Recommendation (Serial No. 2)

The Committee note that budget estimate during the year 2022-23 for Watershed Development Component of Pradhan mantra Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY) 2.0 was reduced from Rs. 1697 crore to Rs. 869.084 Crore at RE stage. However, the Department could only spend Rs. 414.25 crore as on 17.01.2023. The DoLR has stated that the release under WDC-PMKSY 2.0 scheme is based on the proposals received from States/UTs. Projects in most of States/UTs are under preparatory/initial phases and they are taking time to put their requisite physical and administrative setup in place. As per practice and guidelines of WDC-PMKSY 2.0, a period of initial 6-8 months is required to prepare quality DPRs and compilation of Entry Point Activity in order to enter into work phase. Major resources are utilized in work phase (NRM). Further, as per the new guidelines of Ministry of Finance OM dated 31.03.2021, the next tranche would be claimed by the States/UTs only after utilizing 75% of the earlier release. As the Department has made release in last quarter of FY 2021-22 only, and the scheme was in its initial/preliminary stage, the States/UTs were not able to claim funds due to the low utilization of fund already released. Many States/UTs have received Central Share released in FY 2021-22 along with matching State Share in mid 2022-23 only. In this regard, the Department has assured that the remaining funds would be utilized by the end of this financial year. The Committee feel that the late release of funds in last quarter of 2021-22 has resulted in receiving of these funds by States only by mid 2022-23. As a cascading effect, the Department has to release large chunk of budgetary allocation for 2022-23 during the last quarter. In this regard, the Committee hope that the Department would be able to spend the entire fund allocated at RE stage of 2022-23 on or before 31 March, 2023 as assured by it. The Committee with a view for timely release of funds and execution of envisaged schemes recommend that the Department of Rural Development should gear up its machinery's overall budgetary exercise with prudent planning in such a way so as to avoid last quarter rush in release of funds which results in late availability of funds and delays in execution of the projects envisaged for the benefits of common masses.

Reply of the Government

Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY)

Under WDC-PMKSY2.0, the fund is released to States/UTs based on proposals received from them. Moreover, the Department has complied the recommendations of the Committee. Under WDC-PMKSY 2.0, the Department has already released 99.96% (Rs. 999.68 crore against RE figure of Rs. 1000.08 crore) of fund as per RE 2022-23.

Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP):

Quarter-wise fund release in respect of DILRMP during 2022-23 is as under:

- (i) Quarter-1=Rs.04.12 crore
- (ii) Quarter-2=Rs.126.68 crore
- (iii) Quarter-3=Rs.89.03 crore
- (iv) Quarter-4=Rs.19.42 crore

Total = Rs.239.25 crore.

There was only 8.12% fund release under DILRMP in Quarter 4.

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

Recommendation (Serial No. 3)

The Committee acknowledge the positive impacts of the WDC-PMKSY 1.0 scheme in terms of assets created, area brought under protective irrigation including enhancing ground water level and afforestation. The Committee also appreciate the effect of the scheme in checking rural urban migration by creating job opportunities in rural areas. The Committee believe that this scheme has the potential to counter rural distress by reviving rural economy and strongly recommend to increase number of projects by encouraging States to participate actively by submitting more projects for development of rainfed and degraded areas so as to cover larger rural population dependent on farm related activities. The Committee also recommend to allocate more budgetary funds for this scheme so as to identify and implement more watershed projects in the country for the benefit of masses by increasing productivity of rainfed/degraded land through the process of Integrated Watershed Management.

Reply of the Government

Based on the recommendations of SGoS(01) on Rural and Agriculture, DoLR obtained approval of Hon'ble MRD for taking up new generation WDC-PMKSY projects with a target of 20 million ha area from FY2021-22 to FY2026-27 with a total cost of Rs. 50,556.30 crore. Out of which Central share works out as Rs. 33,270.30 crore. In the light of DoE's directions vide their O.M. dated 09.02.2021, the target has been reduced from 20 million ha to 10 million ha, involving cost of Rs. 25,311.63 crore of which Central share is Rs. 16,597.30 crore.

However, in EFC meeting held on 06.08.2021 recommended the continuation of WDC-PMKSY for the period from 2021-22 to 2025-26 with the financial outlay Rs. 8,134 crore. Accordingly, physical target has been reduced to 4.95 million ha. Hence, Department of Land Resources has sanctioned 798 projects covering an area of 37.861 ha on 04.01.2022, 351 projects covering an area of 11.36 lakh ha on 13.01.2022, 11 projects covering an area of 0.21 lakh ha on 26.07.2022 and 35 projects covering an area of 1.113 lakh ha on 27.03.2023. As of now, under WDC-PMKSY 2.0, the Department has sanctioned 1145 projects covering an area of 50.54 lakh ha (5.054 million ha).

Further, under WDC-PMKSY 2.0, the fund is released to States/UTs based on proposals received from them. As of 31.03.2022, an amount of Rs. 2152.44 crore (Central Share) has been released to States/UTs under WDC-PMKSY 2.0. Further, EFC assured that the scheme performance will be reviewed after three years for mid-course evaluation of output and outcome and resultant enhancement in the financial outlay to cover more area, if required. As recommended by EFC, DoLR will approach EFC with mid-course evaluation report of output and outcome for further needful action.

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

Recommendation (Serial No. 4)

The Committee note that the continuation of WDC-PMKSY was approved by Government on 15 December 2021 as "WDC-PMKSY 2.0" with Central Share of Rs. 8134 crore for development of rainfed and degraded lands for a period from 2021-22 to 2025-26. The target area of WDC-PMKSY 2.0 (4.95 million ha; corresponding to the Central Share of Rs 8134 Crore) was allocated to States/UTs keeping in view the Composite Index of National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) published in their report titled "Prioritization of Districts for Development Planning in India" 2020, and other criteria as per Guidelines with the approval of the Minister of Rural Development. However, from the information furnished by the Department, the Committee note that only 72063.9 hectare area has been developed upto September, 2022. The Committee also note from the reply of the DoLR that the States/UTs are expected to prepare their DPRs and implement the project works in the field to develop the entire targeted area by 2025-26. Further, the Ministry impressed the Committee that in the National Review Meeting and Regional Review Meetings, States/UTs are putting all resources to achieve desired development of rainfed and degraded lands which will benefit the farmers and give boost to the agricultural production in the country by the end of 2025-26. The Committee therefore recommend that the DoLR should make all out efforts to achieve targets fixed for WDC-PMKSY 2.0 within the target year of 2025-26.

Reply of the Government

DoLR will make all out efforts for time bound completion of projects (with monthly and quarterly targets) to avoid cost overrun by ensuring close monitoring. States have been advised to adhere to timelines of the projects. With the past experience of implementation of States / UTs and close monitoring by both the State and Central officials, DoLR is hopeful of completing WDC-PMKSY 2.0 projects as per the sanctioned project period. Department will also encourage States/UTs to complete the projects in three years and follow the practice of close and regular monitoring and requisite guidance.

An Output Outcome Monitoring Framework developed in consultation by NITI Aayog, is in place for monitoring the performance of the Scheme through 11 output/outcome indicators. Further, performance and implementation of the scheme is regularly reviewed and monitored at Department level through Regional Review Meetings, National Level Meetings, Review through Video Conferences and field visit by the Senior and program officers. A separate division headed by Joint Secretary level officer has been created for Project Monitoring & Evaluation purpose.

As of 31.03.2022, an amount of Rs. 2152.44 crore (Central Share) has been released to States/UTs under WDC-PMKSY 2.0. Moreover, 0.39 lakh water harvesting structures were created / rejuvenated, an area of 0.47 lakh ha has been brought under protective irrigation, 3.48 lakh farmers benefitted under WDC-PMKSY 2.0 till FY 2022-23. In addition to this, 0.45 lakh ha area have been brought under plantation (Afforestation/ Horticulture), 1.88 lakh ha of degraded/rainfed area have been developed and 66.94 lakh man days have been generated under WDC-PMKSY 2.0.

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

Recommendation (Serial No. 5)

The Committee note that on behalf of NITI Aayog an evaluation study was conducted on WDC-PMKSY which found the scheme suitable for continuation. However, keeping in view the observations made in the study and the issues of sustainability and climate change, it employed National Rainfed Area Authority for formulation of new Guidelines for WDC-PMKSY 2.0, in conformity with environmental sustainability. The Committee therefore recommend that the DoLR should initiate suitable measures to ensure that the projects taken up under WDC-PMKSY 2.0 are environmentally sustainable and no lacuna should surface in this regard. Progress made in this regard be intimated to the Committee.

Reply of the Government

The WDC 2.0 projects are being implemented through a fundamental shift in approach towards watershed development needs reflected through programme planning, institution building, implementation, budgeting etc. In this context, new watershed programme (WDC-PMKSY 2.0) is envisaged to effect the following shifts:

- a) A clear transition from practice of mechanical/ engineering treatments to more agriculture engineering measures.
- b) Emphasis on realizing effective use of rain water by relying more on water productivity. This involves integrated measures to enhance water percolation for storage of rainfall in the soil profile for longer periods; and supplementing of moisture deficits in crops with water that is harvested by constructing small water harvesting structures like field bunds, trench cum bunds, contour trenches, continuous contour trenches, farm ponds, diversion weirs, embankments, percolation tanks, check dams etc.
- c) Diligent planning for crop systems diversification for risk management; enhancing productivity by adopting water use efficient crops (like nutri-cereals, pulses and oil seeds, besides dry land horticulture); and opting for crop alignment i.e. aligning crop growth phase with water availability, to provide a protective irrigation at critical stages of crop growth.
- d) Clear risk management plans for adaptation and mitigation of adverse impacts of climate variability and change; diversification of the watershed economy by adopting integrated farming systems, enlarging livelihood portfolios, building climate change projections into water harvesting designs, precision based use of water for managing drought spells and timely agro-met farm advisories to deal with climate induced uncertainties.
- e) Economically vibrant institutions, like Farmers Producers Organization (FPO), to promote agri-business services and impart efficiency to transactions at both input and output management stages.
- f) Setting up and nurturing of community groups that will take interventions beyond mere creation of assets and promote responsible ownership and management.
- g) Formation of User Groups based on common identities and interests around natural resources and work consciously towards integrating the principle of sharing.
- h) Focus on decentralization, flexibility, community empowerment and greater role for village-

level institutions in the planning process with a view to accommodating the local social and traditional strengths.

- i) Rejuvenation of springs by taking up appropriate watershed activities in the watershed development projects

Sustainable Techniques for enhancement of crop yields in watershed project areas:

The techniques used for receiving sustainable yield under watershed areas consists of growing of drought tolerant varieties, in-situ grafting, root stock selection, planting techniques, application of organic matter, mulching and other soil and water conservation practices. Border planting, alternate row irrigation for closely spaced vegetables, micro irrigation techniques, nursery production, kitchen garden / nutritional and medicinal garden, value addition and processing, vermi compost & compost making by using horticulture waste etc. may also play important role.

The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA), under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is an organization mandated to advise changes to agricultural policies and programs that will enable sustainable development of agriculture in rainfed areas of the country. Hence, Department of Land Resources made partner NRAA in promoting watershed development programs. NRAA is a Knowledge & Technology partner with required expertise to support the program with an aim to bring inclusive growth in rainfed areas. It can, therefore, advise watershed program on appropriate technologies, innovations & approaches; capacity building; new knowledge and best practices & learnings.

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

Recommendation (Serial No. 8)

The Committee note that though substantial progress has been made under WDC-PMKSY 1.0 in terms of creation of water harvesting, area brought under protective irrigation, increase in plantation, treatment of wastelands etc, the problem of depleting water level is posing a serious threat to life and livelihoods of millions throughout the country. The Committee are very much concerned with the problem echoed by many of its Members and therefore, recommend to include more projects in areas where the water level is depleting in order to recharge dysfunctional borewells by employing suitable water harvesting techniques in affected areas.

Reply of the Government

Government of India approved continuation of the Scheme (WDC-PMKSY) as 'WDC-PMKSY 2.0' for the period from 2021-22 to 2025-26 with physical target of 49.5 lakh ha and financial outlay of Rs. 8,134 crore, as the Central share. So far, the Department has sanctioned 1145 projects in all States and UTs of J&K and Ladakh covering an area of 50.53 lakh hectare with a total project cost of Rs. 12395.24 crore (Central share Rs. 8077.84 crore). These projects have been sanctioned on the basis of PPRs submitted by the State /UT Governments following the project area selection criteria which *inter alia* includes acute scarcity of drinking water & degree of over exploitation of ground water resources. The Department has therefore sanctioned projects for more than the allocated area under WDC 2.0 to States / UTs.

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

Recommendation (Serial No. 9)

The Committee observe that maintenance of assets under WDC-PMKSY demand cooperation from all stakeholders and beneficiaries. It is worth noting that by promoting ownership the fate of the project can be augmented manifold. In order to ensure long term maintenance, the Committee recommend to focus on creating Farm- Ponds in private farm land where the farmers will take better care of the overall functioning of assets created in their own farmland.

Reply of the Government

The interventions to be carried in a particular watershed projects for Natural Resource Management including drainage line treatments and creation of water harvesting structures are scientifically planned based on the Site and soil characteristics of the watershed like slope, erosion, drainage etc and Hydrological characteristics like runoff, evaporation, infiltration, sediment load, status of surface irrigation, groundwater etc. Accordingly, water harvesting structures like Farm Ponds may lie in public or private land. However, sufficient mechanism for maintenance of these structures is provisioned and envisaged in the programme guidelines.

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

Recommendation (Serial No. 10)

The Committee note from the reply made by DoLR that the Department aims to implement all components of DILRMP with full pace by 31.03.2026. Efforts are being made to complete 'One Nation One Registration' by 2024. The Committee are of the considered view that the project needs an all out effort by DoLR, so that it achieves its desired result in a time bound manner. The Committee acknowledge that the scheme once translated into reality will surely ease the burden associated with land revenue/record procedures. Thus, the Committee urge upon the DoLR to ensure expeditious completion of DILRMP to cover entire country as per schedule fixed.

Reply of the Government

Physical Progress: The progress under various components of the Programme at National level is given below (As per MIS as on 17.05.2023):

Sr. No.	Component	Units	Total	Completed
1	Computerization of Land Records			
a	Computerization of Record of Rights (RoRs)	No. of Villages	657409	622407(94.68%)
b	Digitization of Cadastral Maps/FMBs	No. of Maps / FMBs	17031991	12882382(75.64%)
c	Cadastral maps linked to RoR	No. of Villages	657409	426918 (64.94%)
2	Computerization of Registration			
a	Computerization of SROs	No. of SROs	5303	4924(92.85%)
b	Integration of SROs and Revenue Office	No. of SROs	5303	4035(76.09%)
3	Establishment of Modern Record Room	No. of Tehsils	6924	3306(85.94%)
			Sanctioned 3847	
4	Survey / re-Survey	No. of Villages	-	91,199 villages as against sanctioned villages

The Department aims to complete all components of DILRMP by 2025-26.

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

Recommendation (Serial No. 11)

The Committee appreciate the initiative of e-Registration alongwith progress made in implementation of all components under DILRMP. While noticing few shortcomings like non-updation of information regarding the status of court cases in column number 12 of Land Records which results in fraudulent transactions, the Committee strongly recommend the DoLR to ensure timely updation of the records with real time data pertaining to all courts including Supreme Court, High Courts, District Court and Local Tehsil level that will help in curbing multiple registration in absence of authentic information and provide title of the property to the actual owners.

Reply of the Government

National Generic Document Registration System (NGDRS)-eRegistration has so far been adopted by 17 States /UTs namely Punjab, Andaman & Nicobar, Manipur, Goa, Jharkhand, Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Dadra and Nagar Haveli& Daman and Diu, Jammu and Kashmir, Chhattisgarh, Tripura, Ladakh, Bihar, Assam, Meghalaya and Uttarakhand. Further, 12 States / UTs namely; Madhya Pradesh, NCT of Delhi, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh, Odisha, Sikkim and Puducherry have started sharing data with national portal of NGDRS through User Interface / API. NGDRS has inbuilt feature of automatic entry relating to transaction of land parcel in the RoR.

DoLR has initiated the linkage of e-Court with Land Records and Registration data. The objective of Linkage of e-Court with Land Record and Registration data base is to make authentic

firsthand information available to the Courts resulting in speedy disposal of cases and ultimately, reduction in land disputes. Pilot test for linking of eCourt with land record and registration data base has been undertaken successfully in three states namely, Haryana, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh in association with Department of Justice. So far, 26 States/UTs namely; Tripura, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Manipur, West Bengal, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Telangana, Jharkhand, Delhi, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Andhra Pradesh have received necessary clearances from the concerned High Courts for integration of e-Courts Application Software with the land records application software and registration database.

Computerization of Revenue Court and their integration with Land Records database has also been initiated under DILRMP which has been approved as a new component of DILRMP by the Government. An amount of Rs.19.39 Crore has been released to 16 States/UTs during 2022-23 viz. Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Ladakh, Madhya Pradesh, Puducherry, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra and West Bengal under this component.

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

CHAPTER III

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

NIL

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

CHAPTER IV

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

Recommendation (Serial No. 6)

The committee note that the third party evaluation conducted by the NITI Aayog has also recommended that the cost norms for the scheme should be revised to reflect the current market conditions. The cost norms should be between Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 30,000 per hectare for the plains. In this regard, the committee find that in respect of WDC-PMKSY 2.0 the revised cost norm of Rs.28,000 per hectare for hilly and difficult areas, Rs. 22000/-per hectare for other areas and upto Rs. 28,000 per hectare for watershed projects in integrated Action Plan Districts. Hence, the cost norm for plain areas is less than the recommended range of cost norms in third-party evaluation. Since it is essential to link the cost norm to the current market condition, the Committee recommend that the Department should review the adequacy of the current cost norms and increase cost norm for the plains as recommended in the third-party evaluation.

Reply of the Government

A Revised Cost Committee with the approval of competent authority under the chairmanship of AS&FA, MoRD for revision of cost norms under WDC-PMKSY was constituted on 09.07.2021. The recommendation of the Committee is as reproduced below:

The proposed upward revision of cost norms of Rs.22,000/ha for plain areas and Rs.28,000/ha for hilly & difficult areas and upto Rs.28,000/ha for LWE / IAP districts is very conservative estimate after 12 years. This cost norms is for a programme period of five years i.e. from 2021-22 to 2025-26. Similarly, there is dire need of subject matter professionals in the DoLR for effective supervision of implementation of projects in the States/UTs by close monitoring, requisite capacity building and awareness through reputed national resource organizations. Accordingly, Committee recommends the upward revision of cost norms and establishment of CPMU in the DoLR as indicated above.

Accordingly under WDC-PMKSY 2.0, the cost norms have been revised from Rs. 12,000/ha. for plain areas, Rs. 15,000/ha. For hilly & difficult areas (desert prone areas) and upto Rs. 15,000/ha for LWE/IAP districts (base price 2008-09) to Rs. 22,000/ha. for plain areas, Rs. 28,000/ha. for hilly & difficult areas (desert prone areas) and upto Rs. 28,000/ha for LWE/IAP districts.

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 1.8 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Serial No. 7)

The Committee are also of the view that the efficacy of projects under WDC-PMKSY post-completion is completely dependent upon the maintenance and monitoring mechanism. However, while examining the facts and figures of the Department of Land Resources, the Committee observe that many of the Stop Dam projects are made of concrete where soil erosion starts after one or two years. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend DoLR to do an audit of these structures and involve local/indigenous techniques for creating a longstanding structure. The Committee also recommend to plant trees alongside the boundaries of these completed projects to save them from any damage.

Reply of the Government

In the Guidelines of WDC-PMKSY, 2011, one of the mandatory conditions for the selection of villages for watershed projects is people's contribution towards the Watershed Development Fund (WDF). The Contribution of WDF comes through a minimum 10 % of cost of NRM works executed on private land (5% in case of SC/ST, small and marginal farmers), execution of works or monetary value of the voluntary labour, user charges, sales proceeds and other contributions, disposal amounts of intermediate usufruct rights, etc which should be deposited in the WDF bank account. Income earned from assets created under the project on common property resources shall also be credited to WDF for maintenance of assets created during the project.

At least 50% of the WDF funds should be reserved for maintenance of assets created on community land or for common use under the project. The remaining money may be used as a revolving fund to advance loans to the villagers of the project area who have contributed to the fund.

The Gram Sabha through the Watershed Committee (WC) is authorized to utilize/manage the Watershed Development Fund (WDF). The life-span of WDC-PMKSY 1.0 got over in March, 2022 and the project assets had been handed over to the Gram Sabha. Now, the Gram Sabha through the Watershed Committee (WC) is authorized for the purpose, as the WDC-PMKSY 1.0 scheme got over on 31.03.2021 (further extended till 31.03.2022).

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 1.11 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Serial No. 12)

The Committee note that in order to address the problem of linguistic barriers in land governance, DoLR with the technical support of Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), has undertaken an initiative to transliterate the Records of Rights available in local language to any of the 22 languages recognized by the Constitution of India. According to the Department, a Pilot test is underway in 8 States - Bihar, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Puducherry, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil

Nādu, Tripura and UT of Jammu & Kashmir and is targeted to launch the aforesaid initiative on Pan-India basis shortly. Since the linguistic barriers pose serious challenges to access and understand 'Records of Rights' as they are maintained in local languages, the Committee recommend that this project of transliteration of 'Records of Rights' to any of the 22 languages recognized by the Constitution of India should be implemented in a time-bound manner on pan-India basis. Transliteration of Land Records from Indian languages to English should also be available and necessary steps should be taken by the Department in this regard. Progress made in this regard may be apprised to the Committee.

Reply of the Government

Transliteration of Record of Right from Scheduled languages to English is also included in pilot testing. Capacity building / training for State / UT officials have been undertaken by C-DAC, Pune. So far officers /officials from **25 States/UTs** (including pilot) namely; Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, J&K, Tripura, Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Bihar, Rajasthan, Goa, Odisha, Assam, Manipur, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Punjab, Sikkim, Ladakh and Chandigarh have undergone training conducted by C-DAC, Pune.

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 1.14 of Chapter I of the Report)

CHAPTER V

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

NIL

[DoLR O.M. No. H-11011/1/2023-GC dated 08.06.2023]

NEW DELHI
25 July, 2023
03 Shravana, 1945 (Saka)

KANIMOZHI KARUNANIDHI
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Rural
Development & Panchayati Raj

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PANCHAYATI RAJ
(2022-2023)

EXTRACT OF MINUTES OF THE ELEVENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON
TUESDAY, 25th JULY, 2023

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1520 hrs. in Committee Room No. 3, Parliament House Annexe Extension, (EPHA), New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Kanimozhi Karunanidhi - *Chairperson*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri A.K.P Chinraj
3. Shri Rajveer Diler
4. Shri Vijay Kumar Dubey
5. Shri Sukhbir Singh Jaunapuria
6. Dr. Mohammad Jawed
7. Prof. Rita Bahuguna Joshi
8. Ms. S. Jothi Mani
9. Shri Janardan Mishra
10. Shri B.Y. Raghavendra
11. Dr. Talari Rangaiah
12. Smt Gitaben Vajesingbhai Rathva
13. Smt. Mala Rajya Laxmi Shah
14. Shri Vivek Narayan Shejwalkar
15. Dr. Alok Kumar Suman
16. Shri Shyam Singh Yadav

Rajya Sabha

17. Shri Dineshchandra Jemalbhai Anavadiya
18. Smt Shanta Chhetri
19. Shri Dharmasthala Veerendra Heggade
20. Shri Iranna Kadadi
21. Smt. Ranjeet Ranjan
22. Shri Naranbhai J. Rathwa

Secretariat

1. Shri D. R. Shekhar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri C. Kalyanasundaram - Director
3. Shri Vinay P. Barwa - Deputy Secretary

2. At the outset, the Hon'ble Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee convened for consideration and adoption of draft reports on XXXXXX XXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations contained in the
30th Report on Demands for Grants (2023-24) pertaining to the Department of Land Resources
(Ministry of Rural Development) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. The Committee considered
and adopted the draft reports without any amendment and authorized the Chairperson to present
the Reports to the House.

3. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

The Committee then adjourned.

[Vide para 4 of Introduction of Report]

ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE
RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE THIRTIETH REPORT (17TH LOK SABHA) OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT & PANCHAYATI RAJ

I.	Total number of recommendations	12
II.	Recommendations that have been accepted by the Government Serial Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11	
		Total: 09 Percentage: 75%
III.	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies: Serial Nos. NIL	
		Total: 00 Percentage: 00%
IV.	Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee: Serial Nos. 6, 7 and 12	
		Total: 03 Percentage: 25%
V.	Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited: Serial Nos. NIL	
		Total: 00 Percentage: 00%