

Roles & Functions of the three levels of rural local Government in WATSAN Programme

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Introduction:

As per the 73rd Constitution Amendment Act, 1992, Water & Sanitation (WATSAN) is included in the 11th Schedule and is the responsibility of the Panchayats. At the district level, Zila Panchayat implements the project. Similarly, at the block and village levels, Panchayat Samiti and respective Gram Panchayats are involved in the implementation of WATSAN Programme. Gram Panchayats have the pivotal role in the implementation of the WATSAN Programme with VO/ NGOs/ to mobilize for the construction of toilets, sustainable operation & maintenance of water supply and also maintain the clean environment by way of safe disposal of wastes. They have the main responsibility in the O&M of the common facilities constructed. Panchayats can also contribute from their own resources for Mini water supply, School and Anganwadi Sanitation. Panchayats may also open and operate the Production Centres /Rural Sanitary Marts.

Rural Local governments can provide the following specific functions when scaling up water & sanitation Programme: Strategy and planning, advocacy and promotion, capacity building, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, regulation, and coordination.

The status of rural local government in India is

- Political decentralisation has been successful
- Essential legal framework is in place.
- Accountability is limited at local levels
- Disadvantaged groups are represented less in local elected bodies.

- Roles & functions of the three levels of rural local governments lack clarification
- Monitoring system need to be developed.

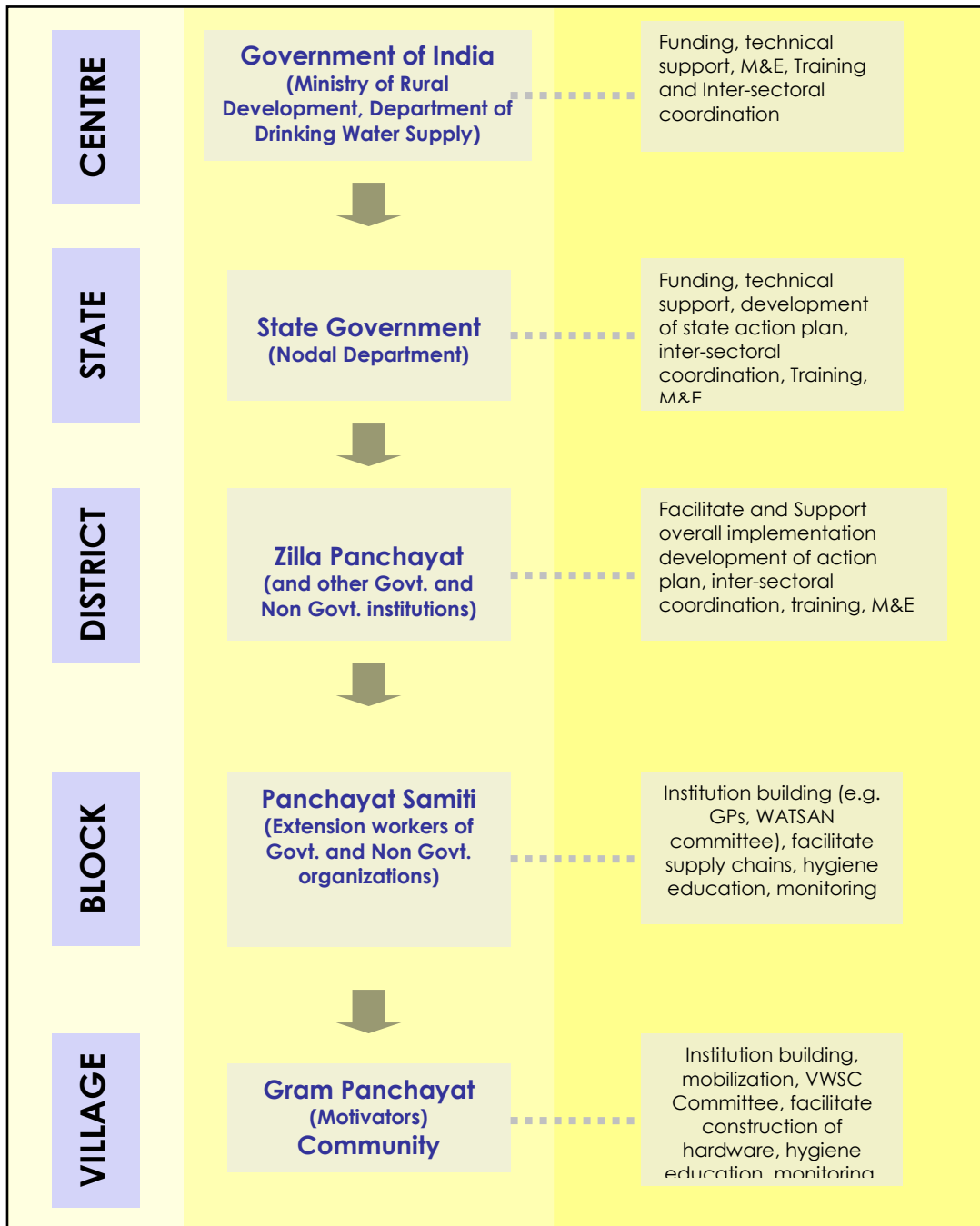


Figure: WATSAN Delivery Structure

To implement the WATSAN programme in a very effective way there is a provision of three committees on each level:

Name of the committee	Level
District Water & Sanitation Mission	District
Block water & Sanitation Committee	Block
Village Water & Sanitation Committee	Panchayat

District water & Sanitation Mission

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stitutional Setup of District Water and Sanitation Mission (DWSM)

A District Water and Sanitation Mission (DWSM) shall be constituted at the district level and should function under the supervision, control and guidance of Zilla Panchayat/ Parishad. States which do not have a proper PRI set up in place, as in case of 6th Schedule. Areas and desire to supervise the working of the DWSM through alternative mechanism may put in place a suitable body through which the District Water Security Plan will be prepared and implemented.

The entire village water security plans should be consolidated and analyzed at the district level by DWSM. It should prepare a district based water security plan under the guidance of DWSM for implementation. At the district level, convergence of all the other related programmes and funding should be ensured. Some of the major related programmes are, MNREGS, Integrated Watershed Management Programme projects of Dept. of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development, Central and State Finance Commission funds , NRHM, various Watershed and Irrigation schemes of the Ministry of Agriculture, various schemes of the Ministry of Water Resources etc.

The composition and functions of DWSM should be as follows:

- i.) DWSM shall be headed by Chairman of Zilla Parishad. In Districts where Zilla Parishads have not been constituted and there is no Chairman in place, the Chairman of the District Planning Committee or the District Collector/ Deputy Commissioner, as may be decided by the State Water and Sanitation Mission will be the Chairperson of the DWSM.
- ii.) The members would be - all MPs/ MLAs and MLCs of the District; Chairperson of the Standing Committees of the Zilla Parishad; District Collector/ Deputy Commissioner, District Officers of Education, Health, Panchayati Raj, Social Welfare, ICDS, PHED, Water Resources, Agriculture, Information and Public Relation;
- iii.) NGOs shall be identified by the District Water and Sanitation Mission and co-opted into the Mission as members.
- iv.) The Executive Engineer of PHED/ District Engineer of the ZP shall be the Member Secretary and the Drawing and Disbursing Officer. The Member Secretary shall ensure utilisation of the existing infrastructure with him for administrative support for day today functioning.
- v.) The Mission shall meet at least quarterly to review the status of and progress in implementation of rural water supply and sanitation programmes. In case of MPs/ MLAs/ MLCs of the district who are also Ministers in Central/ State Governments, they may be allowed to depute one representative each on their behalf to the District Water and Sanitation Mission.

The functions of the District Water & Sanitation Mission (DWSM) are as follows:

- i.) Formulation, management and monitoring of projects and progress on drinking water security and total sanitation in rural areas;
- ii.) Scrutiny and approval of the schemes submitted by the block Panchayat/ gram Panchayat and forwarding them to SLSSC where necessary;
- iii.) Selection of agencies and/ NGOS and enter into agreements for social mobilisation, capacity development, communication, project management and supervision,
- iv.) Sensitising the public representatives, officials and the general public;

- v.) Engaging Institutions for imparting training for capacity development of all stakeholders, and undertaking communication campaign;
- vi.) Coordination of matters relating to water and sanitation between district representatives of Health, Education, Forests, Agriculture, Rural Development, etc as well as National programmes such as SSA, NRHM, ICDS, etc; and
- vii.) Interaction with SWSM, State Government and the Government of India.

Block level

For effective implementation of the programme in blocks, the BDO will be the Nodal Officer for WATSAN & will be responsible for establishing block level convergence between different line department functionaries like the CDPO, Block Level TSC coordinator having diploma in civil engineering, JE - RWS&S, Medical Officer of PHC/CHC, Block Extension Educator (Health), S.I. of Schools (BRC) and Gram Panchayat Officer. The BDO will also monitor the physical and financial progress of the programme.

The BDO will be assisted by a Block level TSC coordinator who in turn will look after day to day activities of the programme. The TSC coordinator will be responsible for process implementation, provide guidance for development of GP plans, collection & collation of information, monitor progress of implementation and verify the construction of IHLs, Schools and AWCs. The Block level TSC coordinator will provide information to the Junior Engineer - RWSS and the BDO on the above activities.

The block level core team shall consist of the CDPO, JE - RWSS, Block level TSC coordinator, MO, SI of Schools, GPEO & one representative from among the NGO's implementing the programme in the block to assist the BDO in implementing the TSC programme.

The role of Block level core team members will be to provide advice and feedback to the BDO for corrective measures in implementation of WATSAN Programme.

Block Water & Sanitation Committee

The Block Water & Sanitation Committee may comprise of the following members:

1. Chair-person, Panchayat Samiti - Chairperson
 2. Block Development Officer - Member Secretary & CEO
 3. CDPO
 4. JE - RWS&S
 5. Block level TSC coordinator (Member Convener)
 6. Gram Panchayat Extension Officer
 7. DI of Schools
 8. BRCC - SSA
 9. Block Extension Educator - Health
 10. Social Education Organizer
 11. Welfare Extension Officer
 12. One NGO Representative to be nominated by BDO
- The Sarpanch of the best performing GP & NGP will be a special invitee

Gram Panchayat level Water Supply and Sanitation Interventions

Government of India has made a mandatory to form a Village Water Sanitation Committee (VWSC) on Panchayat level where Panchayati Raj Institutions prevails and otherwise all revenue villages has to form a VWSC to assess the need of WATSAN in the panchayats / villages and implement the same as per the need.

Methodology of formation

Ideally VWSC should have 11-15 members with due consideration of women, SC/ST candidates representation equally. It would be better to have minimum 3 members from each revenue villages which includes the following:

- PRI members / ward members
- Mahila Mandals
- Local school teachers

- Mechanics / technical skilled persons
- Youth clubs
- Individuals having much interests in WATSAN activities

Selection process

- Member's selection must be from a general meeting of the village in present of 70% of the total population of the village.
- Nomination of the members must be through common consensus.
- The whole process must be completed under supervision of Sarpanch / Mukhiya of the Panchayat without his / her biasness.

Selection of the key positions must be done in presence of all selected members with common consensus. The proposed key positions are considering equal women participation:

- ❖ Chair person - 1
- ❖ Vice Chair person - 3 (one each for Water / Sanitation / Hygiene.
- ❖ Treasurer - 1

Role and responsibility of VWSC

- Ensuring community participation and decision making in all scheme activities;
- Arranging community contributions to capital costs, in cash or kind (land, labour or materials) or both;
- Opening and managing bank accounts for depositing community cash contributions and for management of project funds that may be solely channeled through them;
- Signing on behalf of the community, various agreements with the DWSSM or any Institutions / organisation working in the Panchayat;
- Planning of water and sanitation activities;
- Procuring construction materials/goods and selection of contractors for construction activities related to RWS and Sanitation sectors;

- Supervision of construction activities related to RWS and sanitation sectors;
- Signing off on all completed works and community development activities;
- Commissioning and eventual takeover of completed water supply and sanitation works through a joint inspection with DWSM;
- Creating hygiene awareness;
- Collection of funds through a tariff system for O and M of water supply and sanitation works;
- Managing and financing of O and M of the services, on a sustainable basis;
- Empowering of women of the villages for day to day O and M of the scheme; and
- Participation in HRD and IEC activities in other villages after completion of the scheme in own village.

At the village level, the Gram Panchayat will be the planning & implementing institution.

The GP will:

- Develop Approve Gram Panchayat / Village Action Plan on WATSAN
- Promote and oversee implementation of WATSAN at village level
- Implement Village Action Plan
- Receive and manage project funds & collect community contributions

The role of the Gram Panchayat

The role of the Panchayat will include:

1. Preparation of GP micro plan with the assistance of Block level TSC coordinator and it's submission through BWSC to the DWSM for necessary action / approval.
2. Co-ordination among grass root level partners
4. Implementation of the WATSAN micro-plan - IHHL construction, solid and liquid waste management, Operation & Maintenance of School & Anganwadi

toilets, Mini water supply Scheme and use of Twelfth Finance Commission (TFC) grant on sanitation activities as per direction of Government.

5. Ensure and enable / construction of toilets by the beneficiary himself.
6. Participation in water supply, sanitation and health programmes at GP level of opinion leaders and community-based organizations like youth clubs and SHGs.
7. Decide the agency / person for imparting IEC and other related activities in the GP.
8. Preparation of GP level inventory of water supply schemes with help of JE, RWS&S.
9. Management of existing water supply schemes and effective tariff administration.
10. Mobilization of community contribution for construction of toilet & operation & maintenance of rural water supply scheme .
11. Maintenance of accounts and records as per rules and regulations laid down by P.R. Department for G.P.
12. Operate a separate bank account that will be opened for the purpose.
13. Procurement of goods, materials and services.
14. Maintenance of standards of quality in construction.
15. Ensure use and sustainability of hardware interventions.

Conclusions: Actions for success

However, the extent to which water & Sanitation Programme is enhanced by the local governments depends on the funds and functions devolved to them for carrying out these responsibilities. Clarity in the separation of powers between the elected representatives and the bureaucracy at the local government are important in this context. While the development targets include make open defecation free panchayat, block, district & cover the 100 % safe water supply, the question still remains whether the institutional interventions and resources allocated are adequate to address these problems.

Zila parishad , Panchayat Samitis & Gram Panchayats have to play an important role in ensuring proper delivery of services so we have develop the capacity of local government in the full range of roles required to implement WATSAN programme, develop local government strategic plans for scaling up & sustaining WATSAN programme, institutionalize and make routine of capacity development such as “horizontal learning” approach used in Bangladesh, make a concerted effort to develop the capacity of local government on WATSAN.