

# Executive Summary

To ensure efficiency and effectiveness on delivery of key services like education, health, employment etc., Government of India (GoI) has increasingly been entrusting the responsibility for delivery at local level especially at PRIs and funds are being provided directly to districts by GoI. A Performance Audit on the Socio-economic development of Sonitpur district was carried out to assess the status and impact of implementation of various socio-economic development activities in the District during 2007-12 and to evaluate whether the quality of life of the people has improved. This audit covered the developmental activities and associated expenditure in the District in respect of Social, Economic as well as General Sector schemes, provision of basic civic amenities, use of Information Technology to provide better public services and focused on the role and responsibilities of district level officials, especially the Deputy Commissioner (DC) in providing the essential public services and improving the quality of life of the people.

Audit scrutiny of social sector schemes revealed that there was comparative improvement in providing basic infrastructure in Health, Education and in coverage of supply of drinking water during 2007-12. However, there are a few areas where the district administration needs to focus its attention as discussed below:

## Planning

An adequate planning process as envisaged was absent in the District. Perspective plans and integrated district plans for holistic and comprehensive development were not prepared. Community participation in the planning process through inputs from grass root level was not ensured, thereby needs of the weaker sections of the society remained un-assessed. As a result, gaps in various developmental activities remained unidentified.

**(Paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3)**

## Recommendations

- DC should ensure preparation of shelf of schemes through community participation in the planning process by working out an action plan well in time.
- Prioritisation from shelf of schemes for implementation should be done after analysing gaps in infrastructure and by integrating the same with the perspective plan.

## Financial Management

Lack of internal checks and control in receipt, accounting and utilisation of funds as well as implementation of works led to under utilisation and parking of funds in banks. Besides, lack of financial control resulted in non accountal of funds, loss due to cut imposed by GoI for inability to utilise funds in time, excess payment and inadmissible expenditure.

**(Paragraphs 4.1 to 4.13)**

### **Recommendations**

- DC should ensure proper receipt, utilization and accountal of funds by all concerned in accordance with the prescribed financial rules and orders through a rigorous monitoring strategy.
- Accumulation of funds at successive tiers of disbursement should be checked through efficient planning and implementation of scheme to avoid instances of mis-utilisation, diversion and probable misappropriation of funds.

### **Social Services**

Health, Education, Drinking Water, Sanitation etc., are some of the basic requirements to maintain and sustain basic standard of living. Implementation of flagship programmes in the District like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Mid Day Meal (MDM), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) were reviewed. Although there were improvements in creation of infrastructure both in Health and Education Sectors, availability of adequate skilled manpower and specialists to deliver the facilities in Health sector was not ensured.

### **Health**

The National Rural Health Mission was launched to provide accessible, affordable and reliable health care facilities to rural population. Requirement of health care infrastructure, stipulated facilities and skilled manpower etc., were not assessed to make proper planning followed by implementation. Thus, the aim of providing accessible and affordable health care facilities to the people was yet to be fully achieved in the District. However, improvements were noticed in the areas of institutional deliveries of child, immunisation of child population and eradication of leprosy.

**(Paragraphs 5.1.1 to 5.1.11)**

### **Recommendations**

- The District Health Society (DHS) should ensure identification of gaps in health care facilities through household survey based on which Annual Action Plan should be prepared after consolidating Village Health Action Plans (VHAPs) and Block Health Action Plans (BHAPs).
- DHS should ensure the quality of health service by providing adequate manpower, health care facilities and infrastructure in the existing health centres by effectively pursuing with GoA through DC.

## Education

Many schools in the District were not yet provided with basic infrastructure/facilities. There was shortfall in inspection of schools to be carried out by the Inspector of Schools. There was also irrational deployment of teachers in lower primary and upper primary schools in rural and urban areas. Targeted group of SC/ST beneficiaries were deprived of scholarships and implementation of Mid Day Meal scheme failed to achieve its objective since it could not provide the children with meals for required number of days. Decrease in drop out level of students and increase in attendance was also noticed during 2007-12.

(Paragraphs 5.2.1 to 5.2.3 and 5.3)

### Recommendations

- Basic infrastructure/facilities should be provided on priority through an exclusive action plan in all the schools to ensure creation of an appropriate environment both for teaching and learning.
- Deployment of teachers in rural and urban schools should be rationalized by instituting a regular review mechanism.
- Coverage of eligible SC/ST students under scholarship schemes should be ensured through advance planning and creating a data base.

## Water Supply and Sanitation

Though there was improvement in coverage of habitations in supply of drinking water during 2007-12, supply of safe drinking water to people of the District was not ensured due to inadequate water testing facilities. Occurrence of water born diseases in the District was a cause of concern.

The coverage of TSC Scheme in the District in so far as toilets for schools and Anganwadi Centres were concerned was partial. Further, the four towns in the District had no sewerage facilities and there was no plan to construct the same, which indicated that the objective of the scheme to improve the quality of life of people by providing hygienic sanitation facilities remained unachieved.

(Paragraphs 5.4.1 to 5.4.5 & 5.5.1 to 5.5.2)

### Recommendations

- Water quality testing facility followed by remedial measures should be improved/ upgraded to ensure supply of safe drinking water to people.
- DC should ensure timely completion of planned works through close monitoring of PHE Division so that intended benefits could reach to the people without delay.

## Integrated Child Development Scheme

Implementation of the scheme was partial in the District as only 33 to 133 feeding days per year during 2007-12 could be covered against the norm of 300 days per year. As a result improvement of nutritional status of beneficiaries remained a cause of concern. Besides, AWCs were lacking in toilet and drinking water facilities.

(Paragraphs 5.6.1 to 5.6.4)

### Recommendation

- GOA should ensure coverage of 300 feeding days per year as per the scheme guidelines for the children and lactating mothers by providing adequate funds.

## Economic Services

### Infrastructure-Transportation and Road connectivity

Sonitpur District is well connected with different parts of the State by road links. The National Highways No. 37 and 52 provide easy access to important places of the District. Rangapara, Tezpur and Biswanath Chariali are three important railway stations which are connected with all important centres in the District. The railway services, however, remained suspended due to gauge conversion. Coverage of habitations under PMGSY was deficient in the Districts as large number of works remained incomplete due to slow progress of works by the contractors, scarcity of material, limited working period and paucity of funds.

(Paragraph 6.1.1)

### Recommendations

- Road connectivity of habitations/villages should be completed in a time bound manner by formulating long term/medium term plans by DRDA.
- Financial control including monitoring through regular supervision of work sites should be strengthened and codal formalities observed to avoid instances of loss, cost overrun and undue financial benefit etc.

## Irrigation

Many irrigation schemes remained inoperative/defunct/incomplete due to paucity of funds. Besides, schemes were taken up without ascertaining demand of water and as a result, the created potential was not utilised optimally.

(Paragraph 6.1.2)

### Recommendation

- Adequate funds should be provided to ensure completion of the schemes in time to create irrigation potential in the District.

## Other Developmental Schemes

Many works under DDP, Untied funds, MPLADS, MLALADS etc., remained incomplete due to lack of concerted planning and inadequate supervision. As a result, funds remained unutilised and people were deprived of the intended benefits. The assets created were not accounted for, as asset register was not maintained and future maintenance of the same was also not ensured.

**(Paragraph 6.1.3)**

### Recommendation

- DC needs to strengthen the coordination mechanism, by specifying responsibility centres for implementation of various projects/schemes so that the works are completed in time.
- An asset register indicating the details of assets created in the District may be maintained by DC by drawing up an action plan to incorporate assets already created.

## Employment Generation

### Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)

The District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) failed to provide guaranteed 100 days employment to job card holders thereby defeating the objective of providing security of livelihood to the needy and weaker section of the society. Adequate employment was not ensured for women workers also. Besides, instances of inadmissible and wasteful expenditure out of MGNREGS fund were noticed.

**(Paragraphs 6.2.1 and 6.2.2)**

### Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)

In the absence of effective monitoring mechanism to evaluate economic viability of the projects undertaken by SHGs/Individuals, the economic upliftment of the beneficiaries in the district was not adequately ensured. Constant monitoring of release of funds to SHGs and to individual beneficiaries by the banks as envisaged in the scheme guidelines was deficient and selection of beneficiaries was also not based on prescribed selection process.

**(Paragraph 6.2.3)**

### Recommendations

- The objective of providing security of livelihood to the needy and weaker sections by generating employment effectively should be ensured by the District

Administration by reducing administrative expenses and by avoiding excess expenditure on material components and diversion of funds for unauthorised purposes.

- Monitoring mechanism should be made effective through timely submission of reports/returns and regular physical verification so as to evaluate the outcomes and ensure economic viability of projects undertaken by SHGs.

## Housing Scheme

### Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)

Targeted number of houses could not be constructed due to short/delayed release of funds and delay in selection of beneficiaries. Beneficiaries were selected from outside the list of BPL families. Funds were also utilised for other than intended purposes. Further, IAY beneficiaries were deprived of getting hygienic latrines under TSC scheme.

(Paragraphs 6.3.1 to 6.3.3)

### Recommendation

- DRDA should ensure selection of beneficiaries only from authorized BPL lists and timely completion of the targeted houses, through regular monitoring of progress.

## Energy

### Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY)

During 2007-12, 77 per cent of targeted villages were electrified and 57 per cent of BPL families were covered. Delay in completion of scheme resulted in denial in providing electricity to the rest of the population even after seven years of launching of the scheme.

(Paragraph 6.4.1)

### Recommendation

- The district administration should ensure completion of work by coordination among different agencies so that targeted villages can be electrified within specified period.

## General Services

### E-Governance

The implementation of e-Governance in the District could not achieve the milestone to provide all mandated services as well as additional services due to lack of initiatives at District level to facilitate digitalisation of all records, better net connectivity and training to CSC operators.

(Paragraph 7.1)

## Waste management

The Municipal Boards (MBs) in the District failed to discharge their responsibilities in disposing municipal waste due to deficient infrastructure and thereby, people of the District were exposed to the threat of pollution hazards due to untreated waste.

(Paragraphs 7.2.1 and 7.2.2)

### Recommendation

➤ Waste management should be strengthened to ensure disposal of solid waste properly.

## Other Civic Amenities

The District is deficient in drainage system and has inadequate number of bank branches and fire stations. Increase in the number of criminal cases was also noticed. The District Administration had not initiated any action to improve the quality of life by minimising these deficiencies.

(Paragraphs 7.3.1 to 7.3.3)

### Recommendation

➤ DC should chalk out a well coordinated plan with all line departments/agencies to ensure availability of basic civic amenities to uplift quality of life of the general people in the District.

## Satisfaction level of the beneficiaries in the District

The responses to personal interviews and information furnished by the GPs indicated poor satisfaction level in respect of road conditions, drinking water supply, electricity supply, medical facilities etc., in the District.

(Chapter 8)

### Recommendation

➤ DC should take concrete and tangible efforts to improve the quality of life in the District by implementation of the development programmes relating to road, water supply, and health sectors efficiently.

## Monitoring Mechanism and Impact Evaluation

Monitoring and Supervision at various levels was deficient as a result of which huge number of works under different schemes remained incomplete. Consequently, people of the District were deprived of the intended benefits of these developmental schemes. Documentation of receipts and disposal of complaints received were not done. Thus,

complaints/grievances received from the people of the District, whether attended and disposed off timely remained unascertainable.

**(Paragraphs 9.1 to 9.4)**

**Recommendation**

➤ DC should strengthen monitoring, inspection and supervision mechanism through mandatory and properly documented review meetings, submission of periodical reports and returns, physical verification etc., in all the tiers of local administration to ensure that the programmes are executed in time and corrective action is taken timely in cases of slippages.