

II. Agricultural inputs

Irrigation

Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP)

8.16 As large number of river valley projects, both multipurpose and irrigation, have spilled over from plan to plan, mainly because of financial constraints being faced by the State Governments, the Government of India launched the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme during 1996-97 for accelerating implementation of ongoing irrigation/multi-purpose projects on which substantial progress has been made and which are beyond the resources capability of the State Governments and for other major and medium irrigation projects which are in advanced stage of construction and could yield irrigation benefits in next four agricultural seasons.

8.17 Funds under this programme are provided to the States in the form of Central Loan Assistance. A Fast Track Programme for completion of major and medium irrigation projects which can be completed in one year (two working seasons) with full central assistance was introduced in February, 2002. The States were categorized as reforming States if the water rates were rationalized to recover full operation and maintenance costs and such States became eligible for better ratio to avail Central Loan Assistance.

8.18 With effect from 1.04.2004, the grant component has been included in AIBP with 70% loan and 30% grant for General Category States and 10% loan and 90% grant for Special Category States for projects under Fast Track Programme. For projects not under Fast Track an incentive of conversion of loan to grant criteria as mentioned above shall be given if projects are completed on schedule. The time limit for completion of Fast Track Projects has been extended to three working seasons and for projects under normal funding to 6-8 working seasons.

8.19 So far, an amount of Rs.14670 crore has been released as CLA under this programme for 181 major/medium and 3810 Surface Minor Irrigation Schemes. After

commencement of the programme 28 major/medium projects have been completed and an irrigation potential of 2195 thousand hectares has been created under AIBP upto March 2003. The potential of 67.35 thousand hectares has been created through Surface MI Schemes under AIBP upto March 2004.

Command area development and water management programme

8.20 The Programme was taken up in the 1974-75. So far the programme has been implemented in 276 project commands with total Cultivable Command Area of 26.78 Million hectares (Mha.). Works have been completed in 15.75 Mha for which central assistance of Rs.2,601 crore was released to various States. Major constraints in the implementation of the programme were (i) unreliability of water supply at outlet, (ii) gap between available technology and its adoption, and (iii) lack of participation of farmers. To overcome these constraints and to make the programme more effective, the programme was restructured by retaining only those components, which are beneficial to the farmers, and including new components for correcting deficiencies in water supply and improving drainage systems. The restructured programme is being implemented.

8.21 Major achievements of command area development programme include the following:

- 29 per cent rise in irrigation intensity from 89 per cent to 118 per cent in Chambal Command (Rajasthan).
- 56 per cent rise in water use efficiency in Eastern Yamuna Command (UP).
- Water consumption reduced from 7.27 M3/T.ha (planned use) to 4.17 M3/T.ha in Periyar-Vaigai command (Tamil Nadu).
- 32.5 per cent increase in paddy production and 16 per cent rise in wheat production in 6 years in Sharda canal command (U.P).
- 120 per cent rise in paddy in 10 years in Periyar-Vaigai Command (Tamil Nadu).
- 76 per cent increase in farm income in 21 years in Chambal Command (Rajasthan).