

Launching Workshop of Second Karnataka Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project
(Bangalore, 11th February 2002)
Presidential Address of

Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu,
Minister for Rural Development,
Government of India

I am happy that today Shri S. M. Krishna, Chief Minister, Karnataka is launching this prestigious massive World Bank funded Drinking Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Project for Karnataka. I would like to recall about the announcement that I made in the National Workshop on Rainwater Harvesting held here on 23 – 24 December 2001 regarding this Project. I informed then that the World Bank Board had approved the Second Karnataka Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project. Now I am happy to be part of this launching programme of the Project to be implemented in 11 districts.

It is my pleasure to mention that Karnataka is one of the progressive States in the country, which has successfully implemented Rural Water Supply Schemes with community participation. The DANIDA assisted project in Karnataka and Tamilnadu besides SWAJAL Project of Uttar Pradesh have helped us in reorienting our strategies in implementing Sector Reforms. The Sector Reforms projects are also being implemented in 3 districts of Karnataka namely Bellary, Dakshin Kannada and Mysore with financial assistance from the Government of India.

The World Bank assisted project is going to be implemented in **11 districts covering 9571 habitations in 209 Gram Panchayats**. It will benefit 14.5 million rural people in the districts of **Bagalkot, Belgaum, Bidar, Bijapur, Dharwad, Gadag, Gulbarga, Haveri, Koppal, Raichur and Uttar Kannada**. The project will be implemented over 6 years period during 2002 to 2007. The project has been approved for **US\$193.44 million** out of which World Bank funding will be to the tune of **US\$151.60 million**. It is expected that Gram Panchayats and community will be able to contribute US\$ 10.11 million and US\$ 10.98 million, respectively. The project will be implemented by Karnataka Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency.

The successful implementation of the project is important not only for Karnataka but also for the whole country. If the project succeeds, it has chances for replication in other States besides scaling up this Project in the State. The approach in the project is different from the traditional approach. These projects are far different from the traditional projects. The objective of these projects are not just to implement the hardware components of a water supply scheme, like installing a handpump or a piped water supply scheme, but to implement a reforms philosophy and concept.

In this new concept the Government will primarily function as a facilitator instead of provider. The new programme will be a decentralised, demand driven, peoples' programme. In the Project districts the community would plan, implement, and manage the drinking water supply schemes so that they have a feeling of ownership of the assets

created. The schemes would be implemented through the user's committees involving Panchayati Raj Institutions. The community will also own, operate and manage (OOM) the schemes.

This concept has already been experimented in different parts of the country. One of the successful examples of community participation in rural drinking water supply is that of SWAJAL Project in Uttar Pradesh which was also funded by World Bank. There are similar other experiences available in other States also. As these are process projects, which are being implemented by the Government with peoples' participation, all of us will learn together about the various aspects of the project during the course of their implementation. We may continue to make mid-course corrections to the strategy as and when it is required.

The project would commence with awareness campaigns and training programmes where the rural people would be exposed to the concept of the reforms and would be demystified about the rural water supply technologies by educating them about various options available and their respective cost structure so as to facilitate them to choose the most optimal, cost-effective and affordable technology which would suit their requirements and also satisfy their need. Thus the users will decide about the technology to be adopted and the service level that they require. The people will themselves implement the scheme or will decide about the implementing agency. **The community itself would plan, implement, manage, operate and maintain the scheme of their choice. Villagers will have their Voice and Choice** in the implementation of rural water supply schemes.

This training workshop is expected to equip, **on the one hand**, the administrative agencies about the behavioural aspect for interaction with people, messages to be delivered, importance of traditional schemes and techniques to upscale capacity of the villagers on various aspects of reforms and, **on the other**, it will equip the villagers to themselves implement, manage, operate and maintain the schemes of their choice. Actual implementation of the physical scheme will follow. Such schemes would be on the basis of demand generated as a consequence of the awareness and training campaigns. The generation of demand will, of course, be indicated by the willingness of the people to participate in the capital cost of the scheme implementation and bearing full management, operation and maintenance cost. The proportion of capital cost share can be in the form of cash, kind or labour. I am sure that such a joint effort where the actual beneficiaries - the users, Village Panchayat, District Panchayat/ administration, State Government agencies and the Government of India work together, would ensure that the cherished objective of institutionalizing a satisfactory and sustainable rural water supply system is achieved.

Government of India has adopted these principals in its Sector Reforms project and on Pilot basis 63 districts have been identified in the country where these projects will be implemented. We have already sanctioned the projects in **62 districts** in 26 States with an **outlay of Rs.1840.00 crores**. Government of India has also released more than Rs. 510 crores to these Projects.

We firmly believe that the **problems in Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Sector can be solved through community participation and adopting an demand-driven approach**. We need to create awareness and generate demand for such services. Govt of India have also launched massive **Total Sanitation Campaign in 138 districts in the**

country with an outlay of Rs.1426.00 crores. The Total Sanitation Campaign Project also lays emphasis on community participation.

The essence of rural development lies in empowering people and allowing them to exploit their potential to the maximum and for this purpose, **it is essential that people centred decision-making is allowed.** Karnataka has a very vibrant Panchayati Raj system which has been role-model for many other States and I believe this Second Karnataka Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project will be a great success.

I would like to once again thank the Government of Karnataka for taking the initiative in launching this Project and wish you all the best in the successful implementation of the Project.

Jai Hind