

**Meeting of the Stakeholders in the process of Nirmal Gram Puraskar  
for discussions on preparing and planning for NGP 2010  
to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2010**

**Nirmal Gram Puraskar**

To encourage the Panchayati Raj Institutions to take up sanitation promotion, the Government of India launched Nirmal Gram Puraskar (NGP) in October 2003. The NGP seeks to recognize the efforts made by PRIs and institutions who have contributed significantly towards ensuring full sanitation coverage in their areas of operation. The award is given to those PRIs which attain 100% open defecation free environment. Nirmal Gram Puraskar has been acclaimed internationally as a unique tool of social engineering and community mobilization and has helped a difficult programme like rural sanitation to pick up. Each Gram Panchayat getting the NGP has a ripple effect in the surrounding villages. NGP aimed at augmenting the IEC efforts under TSC has been the prime mover behind the amazing progress achieved in rural sanitation coverage since 2005 in India.

**Objectives of Nirmal Gram Puraskar:**

- To bring the topic of sanitation to the forefront of social and political development discourse in rural India.
- To develop open defecation free and clean villages which will act as models for others to emulate.
- To give incentive to PRIs to sustain the initiatives taken by them to eliminate the practice of open defecation from their respective geographical area by way of full sanitation coverage.
- To increase social mobilization in TSC implementation, by recognizing the catalytic role played by organizations in attaining universal sanitation coverage

### PRIs awarded Nirmal Gram Puraskar since inception

	GPs	BPs	ZPs
2005	38	2	
2006	760	9	--
2007	4945	14	
2008	12276	112	8
2009	4556	28	2

The Department of Drinking Water Supply, Ministry of Rural Development has been engaging external-monitoring agencies to verify the applications submitted by the PRIs for Nirmal Gram Puraskar. The VAs were provided a detailed terms of reference clearly specifying the methodology and reporting formats to be followed for the verification process. The agencies were submitting the reports to DDWS directly and after a due scrutiny process, the final list of awardees was declared every year.

### Issues and Changes made in NGP 2009 processes

Many issues/concerns were raised regarding the eligibility criterion and the verification process after which the DDWS decided to make few changes/improvements in the system. During 2009 following changes were made in the eligibility criteria for NGP.

1. Community toilet complex should have one latrine seat for everyone to a maximum of three such households.
2. Toilets and urinals should be available separately for boys and girls in adequate proportion, one urinal for every 20 to 40 and one lavatory for every 80-120 students enrolled in the school.
3. Complete elimination of open defecation within the boundaries of the PRI. Nobody, including floating population, defecates in the open and child faeces are disposed of in toilets.

4. The applicant Gram Panchayat/ all Gram Panchayats in applicant PRI jurisdiction should adopt a resolution in the Gram Sabha to ban open defecation within their jurisdiction
5. There should be a reduction in the number of diarrheal cases and diarrheal deaths in the PRI jurisdiction according to the statistics maintained by the concerned ANM/PHU/PHC.
6. Project objectives as per TSC should have been completed by 31.03.09.

Following new provisions were also added for better participation of the States in the NGP process.

1. Districts to confirm the status of GP before filling the application on line.
2. State to allot work to the verifying agencies nominated by the GOI.
3. Verifying agencies to submit hard copies of report to SLSC.
4. Scrutiny by State Level Scrutiny Committee headed by the State Secretary along with other members.
5. Re-verification of the 30% applications by team of other State nominated officials by GOI.

### **NGP 2009 - Results**

During the year 2009, 13956 Gram Panchayats, 108 Block Panchayats and 22 Zilla Panchayats had initially applied for the Nirmal Gram Puraskar. Some of these applications were later withdrawn by the States and the States allocated 12923 Gram Panchayat applications to 39 Verification Agencies (VAs) for verification. On receipt of finally recommended cases from the State Level Scrutiny Committees (SLSC), the Central Level Selection Committees (CLSC) selected 4556 Gram Panchayats, 28 Block Panchayats and 2 Zilla Panchayats for the Nirmal Gram Puraskar.

## Issues for discussion before NGP 2010

- A. The data collected in the verification process has brought out certain staggering facts on the status of applicant GPs, which if is to be believed raises serious questions on the process of approving the applications by the districts. It is important to identify and ensure all necessary steps so as to ensure that only deserving PRIs are allowed to apply thereby reducing the proportion of rejected cases and saving on the cost of verification in the future.
- B. It was noticed that many VAs did not follow the requisite provisions for reporting on many of the new criterion added in 2009 and thus the same could not be followed in total on deciding on the recommendation by them. Many States also did not consider some of these provisions while scrutinizing the VA reports and in the process recommended cases to GoI, which did not meet the above criterion. It is imperative now to consider the feasibility of these criterion and develop necessary provisions in the reporting system to ensure that all the criterion finally decided are effectively taken into consideration before deciding on recommending a PRI for the award.
- C. The new provisions regarding better involvement of States have resulted in a very pro-active role of the states however many issues have come up due to these changes which also require attention and need to be resolved for this year's NGP process:
- Many States failed to meet the time limits in assigning GPs to the VAs thereby resulting in delays in the complete process of selection.
  - Many VAs also failed to submit the hardcopies of the reports to the States on time.
  - Some SLSCs did not do the scrutiny of the reports properly and in the end many VA reports were found not in order at the time of scrutiny at GoI/CLSC levels.

- VAs have also reported on problems being faced by them in getting their payments released from the states.
- Many States have complained about the processes and style of functioning of the VAs however most of these issues were raised only after the VAs had completed and submitted their reports.
- Issues have also been raised by the States about the re-verification teams who visited their GPs.

It is necessary to discuss and finalize a clear set of instructions in terms of conduct, process and time lines to ensure smooth and fair verification process.

In addition, following points may also be discussed:

- Revisit School Toilet criteria for NGP-10
- Revisit the selection process for NGP-10
- More objective definition of General Cleanliness of village