

No. W-11042/ 21/ 2009-Water  
Government of India  
Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation  
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9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Paryavaran Bhawan  
CGO Complex, Lodhi Road  
New Delhi - 110 003

Dated: 1.5.2012

To

Principal Secretaries/ Secretaries  
in-charge of Rural Water Supply  
in all the States -


Subject: Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Complaint Redressal and setting up of  
Complaint Cell in every State

Sir/ Madam,

The Government of India, Ministry of Rural Development has set up a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for redressal of complaints received with respect to implementation of various rural development programmes. This SOP is also applicable for the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

2. A copy of the SOP for Complaint Redressal is being forwarded for information and compliance.
3. You are requested to create Complaint Cells under the charge of Secretary of the Department. The Cell should be suitably staffed. The SOP provides that the Secretary in-charge of the Drinking Water Supply Department of the State shall get complaints received by him enquired into within one month and shall forward a copy of the enquiry report to this Ministry. In case, the enquiry report is not received within the prescribed time limit, an institutional National Level Monitor (NLM) may be deputed by the Ministry for enquiry into the allegations.
4. Intimation regarding the setting up of the Complaint Cell may be communicated to this Ministry.

Yours faithfully,

  
[Sujoy Mojumdar]  
Director

No. Q-11018/10/2012-NLM  
Government of India  
Ministry of Rural Development  
Monitoring Division

Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi  
Dated the 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2012

To  
The Secretary(RD)  
All States

Subject : Standard Operating Procedure for Complaint Redressal.

Sir,

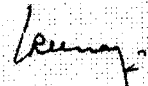
The Ministry of Rural Development has evolved a Standard Operating Procedure for redressal of complaints received in the Ministry from Members of Parliament, other VIPs/public representatives and the public regarding violation of Guidelines for implementation of the various programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development and the Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation by the Implementing Agencies at district/sub-district level. A copy of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Complaint Redressal is enclosed for your information and compliance.

2. The SOP requires creation of a Complaint Cell in every State, under the direct charge of the Secretary, Rural Development in the State. The Complaint Cell is to be suitably staffed and operated with officers/staff working in the concerned Programme Implementing Departments at the State level.

3. It is requested that the creation of the Complaint Cell may please be intimated to this Ministry at the earliest.

4. This issues with the approval of the Union Minister of Rural Development and Minister of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

Yours faithfully,



(C.R.K. Nair)  
Adviser (Stat.)

Encl.: as above

### **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Complaint Redressal.**

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The Ministry of Rural Development receive many complaints from Members of Parliament, other VIPs/ public representatives and the public regarding violation of Guidelines for implementation of the various programmes of the Ministry by the Implementing Agencies at district/sub-district levels. In order to ensure that the benefits of these Programmes reach the targeted people, particularly the rural poor, in the intended manner, it is essential to address these complaints seriously and effectively. Involvement of the State Governments and other stakeholders in such a complaint redressal mechanism is of utmost importance. Keeping this in view, the Ministry of Rural Development has evolved the following Standard Operating Procedure for addressing complaints received in the Ministry:

- (i) The Programme Divisions, upon receipt of a complaint, will categorise the complaint into 'Serious'/'Others'/'Trivial'. 'Other' cases are those where it is not possible to straightaway classify it as 'trivial'. While the 'trivial' cases may be disposed off straightaway, the Programme Division will request the concerned State Government, preferably through electronic means, to enquire into the complaints falling in 'serious' and 'others' category within such period as may be specified, not exceeding 3 months. Where prima facie, in any 'serious' case the facts alleged are so serious, and where time is of the essence for purposes of verification, Institutional National Level Monitors (NLMs) may be deputed for enquiring into the matter. The Programme Divisions will forward such 'serious' complaints which need to be investigated by NLMs, to the NLM Cell in electronic form along with a gist of the specific issues needing investigation.
- (ii) The State Governments may create a Complaint Cell, under the direct charge of the Secretary, Rural Development in the State, for looking into all the complaints regarding implementation of the programmes of the

Ministry of Rural Development. The Secretary, Rural Development in the State shall cause the complaints received by him to be enquired into through the Complaint Cell within one month, and shall forward a copy of the enquiry report to the concerned Programme Division in the Ministry. The enquiry reports received from the State Government will be considered by the Programme Divisions in the Ministry for appropriate follow-up action or/and closure of the complaint.

- (iii) If an enquiry report is not received from the State Government within one month (or such reasonable time stipulated by the Ministry depending on the nature of the case) or the concerned Programme Division considers the enquiry report not satisfactory, an Institutional National Level Monitor (NLM) or a team of such Institutional NLMs may be deputed by the Ministry for enquiring into the allegation(s) and submitting a report to the Ministry within a period of one month.
- (iv) All complaints requiring enquiry by NLM will be entered in a Common Register to be maintained in the NLM Cell. The gist of the complaints enquired into by NLMs, along with the status of actions on those complaints will be uploaded and up-dated on the website of the Ministry by the NLM Cell.
- (v) The State Government may initiate remedial action immediately upon receipt of an enquiry report without waiting for a direction from the Ministry. However, in case the Ministry, after examining the enquiry report, suggests a course of action to the State Government, the State Government shall, unless it decides to adopt another course of action for reasons to be intimated, take action keeping in view the advice of the Ministry.

- (vi) The Complaint Cell may be appropriately staffed and operated with officers/staff working in the concerned Programme Implementing Departments at the State level.
  - (vii) In all cases where NLMs are deputed, the State Government will be informed, and requested to make available all the data (if any) gathered by them to the NLM, for facilitating the enquiry by the NLM.
  - (viii) Whether an NLM is to be deputed for enquiry in a specific case will be decided by the Secretary of the concerned Department in the Ministry of Rural Development.
  - (ix) The report of the NLM will be shared with the State Government, who will normally be expected to take action on the basis of the NLM report. The provisions of (v) above shall apply mutatis-mutandis to all such cases.
2. This Standard Operating Procedure will apply to the complaints received in the Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation also. The Secretary, Drinking Water & Sanitation will decide the need for deputing NLM in such cases.
  3. A flow chart indicating the various actions and their levels is enclosed.
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