



Union Minister for Rural Development reviews progress of WDC-PMKSY; Stresses on accelerating watershed development towards 'Drought-Free India'

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Union Minister for Rural Development Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan today reviewed the progress of Watershed Development Component (WDC-PMKSY) of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana and called upon the States to ensure speedy implementation of projects and clear and measurable outcomes at the grassroot level. He mentioned watershed development as an important tool towards realizing the goal of "Drought-Free India for Developed India".

Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan said, "Watershed development is not just a program to build water bodies; its real objective is to bring water to the field, increase the productivity of the land, and improve the income and livelihood of the farmer. Our goal is that every drop of water should be used optimally and its benefits should reach the farmer."

Under the WDC-PMKSY 2.0 scheme, 1,220 projects covering an area of 52.93 lakh hectares have been sanctioned so far. The total sanctioned cost of these projects is ₹12,404 crore, with ₹8,134 crore being the central share. Out of the central share, ₹6,955.75 (85%) crore has been released.

Emphasizing on the farmer-centric outcomes in particular, Union Minister of Rural Development Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan said, "The biggest proof of the success of the watershed project is that as a result of watershed interventions, in an area of about 1.40 lakh hectares where earlier one crop was barely grown, farmers are taking two crops and in many places three crops." Horticulture, vegetable production and high-value crops have expanded which has brought prosperity in the lives of farmers. This transformation is the real success of our schemes. "

Under the programme, 1.24 lakh water harvesting structures have been constructed and rejuvenated. These include check dams, nullahs, percolation tanks, village/farm ponds, bunds, trenches, reservoirs and other rainwater harvesting and ground water recharge structures. These structures have significantly helped in local harvesting, harvesting and recharge of ground water and increasing the availability of water for agriculture.

These efforts have resulted in protective irrigation in an additional area of 3.08 lakh hectares, helping farmers in rainfed areas to save crops in the event of deficient rainfall or drought. So far, 28.50 lakh farmers have been benefitted from the programme. In addition, afforestation, horticulture and plantation have been carried out in an area of 1.45 lakh hectares and 2.85 crore man-days employment has been generated.

Shri Chouhan urged the States to work in a transparent, tech-enabled, performance-based and people-centric manner and complete the projects in a time-bound manner. He said that watershed projects should be evaluated not only on the basis of expenditure but also on the basis of land reclamation, water availability, irrigation, crop intensity, land productivity and actual improvement in farmers' livelihood.

Shri Chouhan said, "We have made watershed development a mass movement through 'Watershed Yatra' and 'Watershed Festival'. Now our goal is to take watershed development forward not just as a scheme, but as a national campaign for water and land security, agricultural security and rural prosperity. our resolution must be to ensure faster implementation, better results and more impact."

During the review meeting, the States and implementing agencies wer called to work in a coordinatedmanner to ensure that the benefits of watershed development reach the overall farmers and rural households.

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