

**PHYSICAL VERIFICATION REPORT**  
(Conducted by Dy. Director, Planning on 19-01-2012)

1. Name of Project: Ranbir Canal Command Area Devl. Project.
2. Funding Agency: GOI(Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme) & StatePlan(Agriculture Production Department)
3. Executing Agency: Directorate of Command Area, Jammu.
4. Year of Start: 2007-08
5. Year of Completion: 2013-14
6. Financial Status of Work:

(Rs. in Lakhs)

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Sanctioned Cost (original)              | 9280.90  |
| Sanctioned Cost (Revised)               | 11837.37 |
| Expenditure Incurred<br>(up to 12/2011) | 3459.184 |
| % Expdt.                                | 29%      |

(Rs in Lakhs)

| S. No. | Item-wise Detail              | Target   | Ach.    | % Ach. |
|--------|-------------------------------|----------|---------|--------|
| 1      | Establishment cost            | 904.63   | 53.75   | 6%     |
| 2      | Survey, Planning & Designing  | 343.85   | 49.93   | 15%    |
| 3      | Const. of Field Channels      | 8421.76  | 2956.61 | 35%    |
| 4      | Const. of Field Drains        | 1600.04  | 366.48  | 23%    |
| 5      | Institutional support to WUAs | 386.00   | 0.00    | 0%     |
| 6      | Wara bandi                    | 115.59   | 3.644   | 3%     |
| 7      | Demonstrations/Trainings/M&E  | 65.50    | 28.77   | 44%    |
|        | Total                         | 11837.37 | 3459.18 | 29%    |

7. Physical Status of Work:

| S. No. | Particulars                   | Unit | Target   | Ach.  | % Ach. |
|--------|-------------------------------|------|----------|-------|--------|
| 1      | Survey, Planning & Designing  | Ha   | 38600    | 16430 | 43%    |
| 2      | Const. of Field Channels      | Ha   | 38600    | 16395 | 42%    |
| 3      | Const. of Field Drains        | Ha   | 32000    | 8123  | 25%    |
| 4      | Institutional support to WUAs | Ha   | 38600    | 0     | 0%     |
| 5      | Wara bandi                    | Ha   | 38600    | 1285  | 3%     |
| 6      | Demonstrations                | Nos  | Lump sum | 1671  | --     |
| 7      | Trainings                     | Nos  | Lump sum | 129   | --     |

8. Necessity:-

The need for developing the command area of Ranbir Canal was felt when it was observed that the irrigation potential of the canal was not being optimally tapped/ utilized. Problem of water logging was prominent in the fields lying close to the irrigation canal network and in the low lying areas while-as the fields at the tail-end did not receive water at all due to excessive seepage in the field channels which were katchha. This was adversely affecting the agricultural production in the command area of Ranbir Canal. Thus, the project was taken up with the objective of bridging the gap between the irrigation potential created by the canal and the potential actually utilized.

#### 9. Field Observations:

The Ranbir Canal which takes off from the left bank of River Chenab at Akhnoor and flows through the district of Jammu, Samba and Kathua has its Command Area between the State/ National Highway-1A from Akhnoor to Dyalachak and the international border of the State with Pakistan.

The R.S.Pura and Bishnah blocks of Jammu/Samba districts is renowned for cultivation of world famous Basmati Rice and, as such, were chosen for field visit.

The two important components of the project on which maximum expenditure have been incurred and seemed important for inspection are: -

- a) Pacca field channels constructed in place of Kachhha field channels.
- b) Field drains dug to drain out water from the low-lying/water-logged fields.

12 field channels varying in length from 500 metres to 2 Kms constructed across 10 villages and 01 field drain of about 2 Kms length dug through low-lying fields in village Badyal Qazian was inspected. Due to rainfall on a couple of days prior to the day of inspection, the low lying fields in village Badyal Qazian were wet and sticky but were not water-logged. It was found that the new drain dug through the fields of this village had served its purpose. The wheat crop cultivated in the fields adjoining the drain was intact which otherwise would have got damaged due to flooding of the fields after the rains.

The villages in which the field channels were inspected are Kullian, Narhi, Kotli- Shah-Daula, Khamb, Chauala Kotha, Dablehar, Laswada, Kotli Charkan, Tinda and Nau-Gran. Most of the field channels that were inspected had been constructed during the current year. Almost entire length of 8 to 9 field channel and certain stretches of 3-4 field channels were tracked and inspected. At no spot was any of the field channels found un-satisfactorily constructed or damaged. The field channel in village Narhi looked damp and on enquiring, the officers/villagers informed that it had

been recently constructed and had not yet dried completely. Another thing noticed while inspecting the channels was that none of these were straight/perpendicular. The channels had a number of twists and turns which meant coverage of less aerial distance viz a viz the actual length of channels. The officers informed that constructing straight/perpendicular channels was not possible without re-distribution of certain patches of land among the farmers and would have led to quarrels/ disputes. Most of the channels had to be constructed as per the track of old Kachha channels which were curved/ twisted. As such it was decided to alter the alignment of the katcha channels, which was based on land records and mutual consent among the land owners, to the minimum required extent.

In village Tinda prints of tractor tyres were observed across the pacca filed channel and the channel was found intact. On enquiring from the farmers about the precautions they had taken to prevent damage of constructed filed channel, the farmers told that either they placed wooden planks across the channel or filled the channel with cement sacks containing sand upto surface level so that the tractor could cross from one field to another over the channel without damaging it.

Further, on enquiring about the brand of cement that is being used in constructing the channels it was learnt that different brands of cement had been used at different locations. Some of the brands that were reported to have been used are ACC, Ambuja, Ultra-tech and Khyber. The officers of the department informed that until last year when the works were being executed by the department, ACC or Ambuja cement procured from SICOP had been used for constructing field channels. However from the current year, as per the directions of the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture, the works are being executed through the adhoc Water Usage Associations (WUAs) constituted in the villages. These associations, which comprise farmers of the area, unanimously nominate one person among themselves or engage a local contractor who executes the work and produces bills to the department. The officers of the department clear the payment after they conduct necessary inspection and are fully satisfied with the quality of works executed. Ever since the work is being executed through public participation the choice of selecting the brand of cement is with the farmer/ contractor.

Another reason for using different brands of cement is that lower grades of Ultra-Tech and Khyber cement are cheaper in the open market in comparison to ACC or Ambuja. In this context another important aspect which Deputy Director Command Area brought to light was that the rate of cement approved under the project was only Rs 295 per 50 Kg bag which is much lower than the market rate of any good quality high grade cement. This single factor lures the farmers/contractors to purchase low quality cheaper cement rather than the best.

It was also informed that under the project approved cost of constructing field channel is Rs 22,000 per hectare. But when an assessment of actual cost of construction was made by officers of the

department after taking into account the hike in the rates of cement, the cost of construction was worked out to about Rs 35,000 per hectare. It was informed that this fact has also been brought to the notice of a team of officers from GOI who recently visited the state to inspect the works that had been executed under the project.

The condition of the distributaries and the minors of the Ranbir Canal from which the newly constructed field channels tapped irrigation water were not good. A lot of silt had accumulated in these and house hold/ farm waste had also been dumped in stretches of distributaries/minors along the residential and market areas. The lining of the distributaries/minors was also found damaged along most of the stretches and repair work do not seem to have been carried out by the irrigation department for past several years or may be ever since these were constructed.

#### Benefits of the Scheme: -

A number of beneficiaries and local public representatives were questioned about the benefits of constructing the field channels/drains under the project. The beneficiaries were extremely satisfied with the implementation of the scheme and informed that the benefits of the scheme were not just economic but social as well.

#### The economic benefits reported by the villagers are: -

- a) Fields at the tail end which remained un-irrigated are now fully irrigated.
- b) It took hardly 10 minutes for the water to reach the tail end. Earlier it took more than an hour and at times the water never reached the tail ends due to seepage and exhaustion of their time slot of receiving water under the warabandi system of irrigation.
- c) Low lying fields which remained water logged due to excessive irrigation or after a shower do not retain water now. The low-lying fields have become cultivable as the excess water gets drained through the newly dug field drains.
- d) The farmers who had to spend a lot of time in the fields waiting for their turn to irrigate fields can now complete their work quickly and spend the saved time for other farming/house hold activities.
- e) Farmers have the option of cultivating cash crops or vegetables and even go for multiple-cropping in the fields at the tail ends which can be irrigated now.

The social benefit of the project is that the social bondage among the farming families within a village as well as between villages who earlier remained at loggerheads due to dis-proportionate sharing of irrigation water has strengthened. In the past when the channels were Kachha there were numerous quarrels among the farmers in sharing water and

incidences of advertent breaches of field channels by farmers to gain more water for irrigating his/her fields was common. After development of pacca channels water reaches tail ends more quickly and without any seepage as a result of which fields even at the tail end receive proportionate share of irrigation water.

10. Problem Areas/ Suggestions:-

- a. Need for enhancing the scope of the project: Prior to the field visit, while discussing the details of the project with Director, Command Area, Jammu it was learnt that under the Ranbir Canal Command Area Project there is provision for converting just 20% of katchha field channels in to pacca field channels. The Director opined that there is need to enhance the scope of the project by way of increasing the percentage of pacca field channels from the targeted 20% to 40%, 60%,... subsequently, in phases, so that there is no un-irrigated field left at the tail-ends. During the field visit it was observed that the project under execution has a considerable impact on the farming community. While interacting with the beneficiaries and local public representatives it was found that they were extremely happy with the implementation of the scheme. The farmers are demanding for constructing more number of field drains and pacca field channels. In fact, the Command Area Development Project is yet another project which could be included in the list of popular projects/ schemes, such as PMGSY, PMRP, which are having mass appeal among the rural folk. As such, the governments at the centre as well as the state need to consider examining the public demand for enhancing the scope of the project over the years.
- b. Passing/ Implementing Participatory Irrigation Management Act: The Deputy Director, Command Area, Jammu was of the view that the field channels that had been constructed would long for more than 10 years as special emphasis is being laid by the Department in monitoring the execution of works in order to maintain quality. However, he also endorsed the fact that there is need to manage and maintain the field channels on regular basis so that silt does not get accumulated in the channels or the structure do not get damaged when necessary precautions are not taken while moving farming machinery/ tractors through the fields. As on date there is no separate provision of funds to manage and maintain the field channels constructed under the project.

Project Manager, Command Area, Jammu suggested that the Government in Agriculture Production Department needs to seriously examine the draft paper of "Participatory Irrigation Management Act" and pass it in the State Assembly without further delay. It was intimated that, under the said act; there is provision for registration of 'Water Usage Association' (WUA) of local farmers for each 'minor distributory' of the Irrigation Canal which would manage and maintain the field channels, drains and warabandi by utilizing one time assistance (@ Rs 1000/ hectare) to be provided by the government and the irrigation tax to be collected by the WUA from the farmers.

The Director, Command Area, Jammu apprised that registration of the WUAs under the said Act is also mandatory as per the guidelines of the said scheme. Although adhoc WUAs have been formed, but these cannot be adequately empowered unless they are registered under PIM Act. The draft of the Act has been submitted by Director, Command Area, Jammu to the Agriculture Production Department way back in 2004 and a revised version in 2008.

The Government in Agriculture Production Department and Irrigation Departments need to vigorously process the papers pertaining to the Act which have remained pending with them since long without further delay so that draft of the Act is finalized and passed in the State Legislature. After formation of Panchayats, formation/registration of WUAs under the PIM Act would be yet another step by the Government in involving the masses in the process of development/ nation building. These local democratic bodies need to be adequately empowered so that they can manage and maintain the infrastructure developed for their welfare.

- c. Additional support to the project under State Sector: The project is a centrally sponsored one and has to be implemented strictly as per the guidelines of GoI. However, during the field visit Sarpanch of village Nau-Gaon informed that there was public demand for construction of a pacca drain of about 1 km length at a particular location in his village and Sarpanch of village Narhi informed that he had requested for constructing a sloping field channel (a water fall of about 4 metre height) at one spot so that the low-lying fields ahead of the spot could also be irrigated. But such works had not been taken up by the Department as the guidelines did not permit construction of these structures. The relaxation of guidelines framed by GoI which are to be uniformly implemented across the country under such projects seems difficult and any violation on our part could adversely affect the central funding. As such, in order to address certain location specific problems or demands of the farmers, especially when these are linked with taming/ training of field channels/ drains more funds need to be provided out of state plan in addition to the normal states' share. The P&DD/ APD may also think over starting a new scheme under State Plan in case such isolated/ specific works cannot be taken under existing schemes.
- d. Proportionate and timely release of State Share: The project under reference is a centrally sponsored one and is being funded by the Central Government and the State Government on 50:50 basis. The project began in 2007-08 but was not adequately funded during initial years under the state plan due to which the progress remained slow in the beginning. However, after a MoU was signed by the Department with GoI assuring to provide proportionate funding out of State Plan, the

project cost was revised and central funding that had stopped was re-started. The Planning & Development Department and the Agriculture Production Department need to ensure that proportionate state share is released regularly until the completion of the project in 2013-14. Since the central share is provided through the Irrigation Department by the Union Government, the State Government too could explore the possibility of providing state share through Irrigation Department in case adequate funds are not available with APD. The feed-back of the farming community about implementation of the project is encouraging and any hitch on the part of the State Government in timely funding could not only put the project in jeopardy, but would also adversely affect the States' economy which is primarily agriculture based.

- e. Revising cost of construction of field channel from Rs 22,000 per hectare to Rs 35,000 per hectare: Increase in market price of cement had led to escalation in cost of construction of field channels. Against the approved amount of Rs 22,000 per hectare the actual cost worked out by the officers of implementing agency is about Rs 35,000 per hectare. The project is to be implemented for another three years and taking into account the present trend of inflation there is possibility of further rise in market price of cement. The APD needs to vigorously take up the issue with GOI so that the cost of the project is accordingly revised. The approved rates are meagre and are forcing the people to purchase cheaper cement of lower grade instead of best one which could affect the quality of work in the subsequent years, if not today.
- f. Bad Condition of Distributories 9 and 10 of Ranbir Canal: During the field visit it was observed that the condition of distributaries/ minors of the Ranbir Canal in and around R.S.Pura and Bishnah areas were bad. It looks as if the Irrigation Department has not bothered to repair/ maintain these ever since these were constructed. Similar observation was also recorded in the Physical Verification Report of New Partap Canal which was inspected by the Chief Minister's Monitoring Cell last year. Irrigation Department need to provide funds for modernization/ repair/ de-silting of the entire distribution network of irrigation canals proportionately instead of emphasizing only upon the main canal.

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