

Brief for the meeting to discuss issue of strengthening ICT support at district/sub-district level on 24.3.09 at 3.00 pm

Issues raised by DG NIC:

NIC district level staff is expected to provide technical support beyond district headquarter and actively manage technical issues faced by sub-district level offices engaged in implementation of the rural programmes such as NREGS, IGNOAPS, SGSY, IAY, NLRMP, Watershed Development, etc. **With the present strength of NIC staff at district level, it becomes difficult for NIC district staff** which is at most two officials posted at district level to handle such a task. Therefore, there is need **to work out a mechanism for strengthening ICT support at district/sub-district level** for implementation and management of development programmes at rural level.

Related matters and facilities available

Successful implementation of RD programmes depend on the establishment and operationalisation of Computer based MIS through an ICT network connecting all the villages, blocks, districts, states, and GOI. Out of the total of 6458 blocks, 4777 block offices have computer facility and 3250 block offices have internet connectivity.

Under NREGA, 4% of the total cost of expenditure, which includes both Central and State share, can be incurred for administrative expenses. One of the activities permissible under the administrative expenses is that Management Information System of NREGP. Ministry of Rural Development has written to the States that expenditure on computers, IT Professionals, data connectivity and training of personnel using MIS at block and district level could be charged to NREGP.

E-Governance for PRI is one of the approved Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) under the National e-governance plan. It aims to support the state governments and panchayats to make effective use of Information Technology in providing services by PRIs to citizens, Government Departments and business entities. An enabling environment is to be created by providing ICT infrastructure and other facilities at the Panchayat level for creating databases as per the requirement of user Ministries. It would include capacity building of functionaries, building District/sub-District and citizen databases and preparation of developmental plans. A service procurement model has been proposed for the scheme.

Department of Telecommunications and the Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF) – established under the Indian Telegraph Act, have decided to support the **development of broadband connectivity** network to provide extensive coverage in rural areas, which will meet the needs and requirements of the Departments, NGOs, other agencies and individuals.

The **CSCs** are intended to serve as a front-end delivery points for government, private and social sector services to rural citizens of India. This Scheme aims at establishing about 1 lakh CSCs across the country, approximately 16 per Block. About 33,000 CSCs have already been established. The CSCs are designed as ICT-enabled kiosks having a PC along with basic support equipments like printer, scanner and UPS.

Besides DG(NIC), JS(SGSY), JS(NREGS) and JS(IAY) have been invited for the meeting.