

**PROGRAM-FOR-RESULTS INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID)
APPRAISAL STAGE**

Report No.: 113211

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Country	India
Sector(s)	Water
Lending Instrument	Program for Results
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I. Country Context

1. India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world, and its achievements in improving several dimensions of human development are impressive. Between 2005 and 2010, India's share of global gross domestic product (GDP) increased from 1.8 to 2.7% and by 2014-15, it reached 7.3%. Based on Government of India official poverty line, 137 million people were lifted out of poverty between 2004/05 and 2011/12. However, the country continues to face daunting development challenges. In 2011/12, 270 million people still lived in poverty. Although India's ranking on the United Nations Human Development Index has improved, it still lags behind a large part of the world, at 130 out of 188 countries in 2015.

2. Water security is key for India's continued economic growth and poverty reduction. India has 18% of the world's population, but only 4% of global renewable water resources within its territory. Parts of India are already considered water scarce. Increased competition over fragile and finite resources poses risks to economic development, food and energy security, and livelihoods. Extremes of floods and droughts routinely strike the country with disastrous consequences. Pressures on the water resource base and the frequency and intensity of extreme events are expected to be exacerbated with climate change.

3. The Government of India (GoI) is increasingly placing water security at the forefront of its development agenda. GoI's Economic Survey 2016-17 acknowledges that maintaining growth will require greater focus on the management of water resources in order to support efforts to eradicate poverty, ensure food security and enhance resilience of agriculture. India's Water Policy of 2012 promotes an integrated water resources management approach that treats in a holistic fashion surface and groundwater, quantity and quality, and issues that cut across multiple jurisdictions and sectors.

II. Sectoral (or multi-sectoral) and Institutional Context

4. India has extensive groundwater resources, estimated at 30-40% of its annual utilizable renewable water resources. Groundwater has been critical to supporting India's socioeconomic development, helping to spur the Green Revolution. The last few decades have seen exponential growth in the exploitation of groundwater through the construction of millions of private wells. Between 1950 and 2010 the number of drilled tube wells increased from 1 million to nearly 30 million. This allowed the area irrigated by groundwater to increase from approximately 3 million hectare to more than 35 million hectares. Groundwater currently provides approximately 60% of irrigation water. Over 80% of the rural and urban domestic water supplies in India are served by groundwater. Approximately 245 billion cubic meter (BCM) of groundwater is abstracted in India each year. This represents 25% of global groundwater withdrawals and makes India the world's largest user of groundwater.

5. India's groundwater resources are under threat from overexploitation. Intensive and unregulated groundwater pumping in many areas has caused rapid and widespread groundwater decline. Pollution from poor sanitation, mining, industry and agriculture, together with naturally occurring contaminants (especially arsenic and fluoride) are degrading groundwater quality. Groundwater overexploitation can lead to increased spread to geogenic pollutants. More than half of the districts show signs of groundwater depletion or contamination. If the current trends persist, 60% of districts are likely to reach critical level of groundwater depletion within two decades.

6. The causes of the dramatic increase in largely uncontrolled and unplanned groundwater abstraction are many. New pump technologies meant that even farmers and households with very modest incomes could afford to sink and operate their own tubewells. Cheap subsidized electricity has shielded farmers from the full cost of pumping. Poor service delivery from public (surface water) water supply systems has prompted many farmers and households farmer to drill private wells. While groundwater resource availability is determined by the physical environment, the dynamics of groundwater use are determined by socio economic factors (economic growth, patterns of population density, societal norms) and the institutional environment (legal, administrative, and political factors).

7. The rapidly falling groundwater tables in many parts of India present serious and immediate human development and economic challenges. A recent assessment by Sekhari S. (*Wells, Water, and Welfare: The Impact of Access to Groundwater on Rural Poverty and Conflict; American Economic Journal: Applied Economics 2014, 6(3): 76–102*) finds that poverty rates are 9-10% higher in districts where groundwater tables are below 8 meters. Climate change will likely exacerbate current pressures on groundwater resources, particularly if users increasingly turn to this relatively more shielded resource with changes in the reliability of surface water supplies. On the other hand, groundwater can offer significant drought resilience and climate adaptation opportunities. If groundwater is managed carefully and utilized conjunctively with surface water, the immense natural storage can be used to play an important 'stabilization role' in coping with mid-season dry-spells, a 'buffering role' during a monsoon failure and a role as 'carry-over storage' during multi-year droughts.

8. A number of recent droughts has reinforced the GoI's resolve to improve groundwater management. In addition, there is a growing recognition that improved groundwater management will be critical to mitigating the impacts of future climate shocks. India's recent announcement at

the Conference of Parties (COP 21) to build climate resilience through improved groundwater management underscores its intention to tackle groundwater challenges for the country's growth and prosperity.

9. Management interventions to halt overexploitation fall into three categories: (i) demand-side measures to reduce consumptive groundwater use; (ii) conjunctive use; and (iii) supply-side groundwater recharge enhancement. The prevailing political economy has resulted in an over-emphasis on supply-side measures. Various diagnostics and assessments state that energy and agricultural policy reform will be needed to substantially reduce groundwater use and reverse declining groundwater levels. For instance, pricing measures, could act as incentives to conservation, provided they address concerns of equity and affordability. Dis-incentivizing pumping through energy pricing could also help to allocate water resources more efficiently and lead to more rational conjunctive use of all water sources, with users choosing to use less groundwater and opting for more sustainable surface water sources.

10. Major causes of groundwater depletion thus lie outside the water sector, and addressing them will be challenging and will take time. The urgent priority is thus to make tangible progress and create a momentum for deeper reform. A gradual approach taking advantage of feasible entry points as a first step towards more profound reform is necessary given the prevailing political economy. Good monitoring systems, a strong information base, and bottom-up and participatory approaches are key entry points that will facilitate the use of economic instruments and other more fundamental reforms in the longer run.

11. In recent years, some promising experience in participatory groundwater management is emerging. This includes the Andhra Pradesh Farmer Managed Groundwater System (APFAMGS), Managed Aquifer Recharge through Village-level Intervention (MARVI) in Rajasthan and Gujarat, and a large-scale community-led initiative implemented by Gujarat's Water Supply and Sanitation Management Organization (WASMO). These pilot initiatives showed how demand for groundwater can be reduced if timely information on groundwater conditions is made available, multiple agencies work together, and communities are engaged in the planning process. The pilots resulted in customized participatory approaches that meet the different needs of alluvial areas and hard-rock aquifers. These approaches have now been tested as at-scale pilots and are ready to be replicated and scaled up. Evidenced-based planning for groundwater management, will have to be underpinned by an investment in data collection, sharing and use. Effective groundwater management requires not only sound legislation but also the administrative capacity to monitor and enforce rules.

12. The GoI has approached the World Bank for support to enhance its management of groundwater resources. The proposed National Groundwater Management Improvement Program (NGMIP) responds to this request by supporting the roll out pragmatic measures that can be effectively implemented on the ground, largely within the existing institutional framework. Such measures can help demonstrate success at local level and build stakeholder support for gradual and realistic institutional improvements at higher levels.

13. NGMIP will incentivize selected States to apply improved planning and implementation of investments and groundwater management actions to arrest the decline of groundwater levels and to strengthen groundwater institutions at all levels. The Program aims to incentivize demand-side measures and improved groundwater data availability, sharing, and use. It is anchored in community-led planning and groundwater management. Reversing groundwater over-

exploitation and degradation is in the hands of the hundreds of millions of individuals and communities— they need the right incentives, information, support and resources to move to a more sustainable development and management of groundwater resources.

III. Program Scope

A. Government program

14. Since 2013, the Union Government has been supporting groundwater management through the Groundwater Management and Regulation (GWMR) Scheme. The GWMR Scheme includes a National Program on Aquifer Mapping and Management (NAQUIM) and participatory groundwater management through the piloting of Aquifer Management Plans (AMPs). The 12th FYP (2012-17) allocates US\$493 million to the GWMR Scheme and the GOI intends to provide additional support in the following years. Several other initiatives at the Center and State levels relating to groundwater management include the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) and Farmers Welfare programs under the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (MGNREGA) and the Integrated Watershed Management Program (IWMP) under the Ministry of Rural Development.

15. The National Groundwater Management Improvement Scheme (NGMIS) is an expansion of GWMR. NGMIS aims to support "*participating States in applying alternative approaches to groundwater governance through direct engagement with groundwater users and beneficiaries.*" It will also strengthen the critical role of the Central government in, "*guiding groundwater management, providing the solid science required for groundwater management, providing training and other capacity building, and providing uniform standards and guidelines for quality assurance and coherence across States.*"

16. The NGMIS has four components: (i) decision support tools for groundwater management; (ii) state specific institutional and legal framework for sustainable groundwater management; (iii) enhance groundwater recharge and improve water use efficiency; and (iv) strengthening community based institutions to foster management. NGMIS primarily focuses on interventions to improve groundwater quantity. Interventions related to groundwater quality are restricted to monitoring of groundwater quality as a needed first step given the limited knowledge on the dynamics of groundwater pollution pathways and potential actions to halt the deterioration of groundwater quality. NGMIP consists of two Results Areas that aim to capture the Scheme's four components.

17. NGMIS covers seven States: Gujarat, Maharashtra, Haryana, Karnataka and Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh (hereinafter, the "participating States"). These States span both the hard rock aquifers of peninsular India and the alluvial aquifers of the Indo-Gangetic plains. They were selected according to a number of criteria, including degree of groundwater exploitation and degradation, established legal and regulatory instruments, institutional readiness, and experience in implementing initiatives related to groundwater management. Bundelkhand Region, a highly vulnerable and drought prone area straddling the States of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh is included in the Program.

18. All participating States have experience in developing district irrigation schemes and working closely with WUAs to implement irrigation management programs. All the participating

States implemented the Integrated Watershed Management Program (IWMP) under the Ministry of Rural Development. The intensity and quality of groundwater monitoring varies across States.

B. PforR Program Scope

19. The NGMIP will support GoI's ongoing groundwater program by providing incentives for sustainable groundwater management to selected States. The boundary of NGMIP is identical to that of NGMIS. As noted above, NGMIP's Results Areas incorporate all components of NGMIS and the envisioned activities to achieve results are the same under both programs. The duration of both programs is six years. All seven States under NGMIS are included in NGMIP. Geographically, both programs focus on: (i) over-exploited, critical and semi-critical Blocks within the seven States. These categories are defined by the Central Groundwater Board (CGWB) based on a number of criteria including extent of groundwater depletion, cropping patterns, and drought risk; and (ii) Blocks that exhibit a trend towards overexploitation. Like NGMIS, the Program will focus on contiguous clusters of the above two types of stressed Blocks to ensure that impacts are visible and measureable at the aquifer level. All Blocks covered under the Program are referred to as 'selected' Blocks. The selected areas cover nearly 75 Districts, 250 Blocks, and over 15 million people.

20. NGMIP will strengthen enabling institutions and build the required information base for bottom-up, participatory planning and implementation of appropriate interventions in groundwater management and use. The Program focuses on groundwater quantity, with quality issues addressed strictly through a strengthened information base (improving monitoring of groundwater quality and public access to data) and improved planning of groundwater interventions.

21. The beneficiaries of the NGMIP are the economies, livelihoods and societies that rely on sustainable groundwater resources for prosperity and health. Institutions at the Central, State and District levels will benefit from capacity building that strengthens decision-making and improves skills for sound groundwater management.

22. ***Results Area 1 - Improved planning and implementation of groundwater management interventions.*** Activities under Results Area 1 will focus on: (i) introducing bottom-up planning of groundwater interventions through community-led Water Security Plans (WSPs); (ii) improving government spending through the planning process; and (iii) implementing participatory groundwater management measures and demand-side groundwater management measures.

23. The Program will support the roll-out of a standardized bottom-up groundwater planning process. This process will be anchored in the preparation of multi-year WSPs at the Gram Panchayat (GP) level that includes a water budget and is based on community participation. WSPs are multi-year plans (5-6 years) that specify the interventions required to sustainably meet groundwater demands and to improve groundwater conditions. Communities in the GPs will be responsible for preparing WSPs. They will be supported by Support Organizations. GP level WSPs will be vetted and consolidated at the district level by the District Program Implementation Unit (DPIU). Aggregated District level WSPs will then be vetted and consolidated at the State level by the State Program Implementation Agency (PIA), supported by the Technical Support Agency.

24. A second series of activities supported under results area 1 is the implementation of the Water Security Plans. Program proceeds can be used for all activities included in WSPs. The Program will incentivize the implementation of a sub-set of interventions from the WSPs focused on moderating the demand for groundwater including participatory groundwater management and measures to reduce groundwater consumption. A cornerstone of participatory groundwater management is established and functional Water Users Associations (WUAs) or other village level committees with similar functions that can effectively engage in planning and implementation, including regular updates of WSPs. NGMIP will also focus on measures to reduce water consumption, including through improved irrigation (introducing micro-irrigation systems) and crop management (shifting from high to low water-intensive crops, as well as improving crop cultivation practices, such as delayed sowing of monsoon paddy). Finally, the Program incentivizes the convergence of government programs and schemes that relate to groundwater management.

25. ***Results Area 2 – Strengthened institutional framework and effective groundwater data monitoring and disclosure.*** Results Area 2 focuses on building institutional capacity at all levels, including improving groundwater information and making it publically accessible. Activities will include building institutional capacity at Central and State levels by ensuring staff are adequately trained to effectively manage groundwater resources. Capacity improvement will cover social and environmental specialists, economists, and experts in community engagement, communications and information systems, in addition to engineers. Linkages between the various agencies involved in groundwater management will be strengthened through the establishment of inter-agency Steering Committees at the national and State levels. At the local level, GPs will be trained in matters related to participatory groundwater management. Special attention will be given to ensuring that GPs receive adequate technical assistance to develop and implement their WSPs from support organizations.

26. Support to monitoring, sharing, and using groundwater data will include the acquisition of equipment (e.g., advanced groundwater quality monitoring systems, automated piezometers, and computers), software, as well as technical support so that various entities can fulfill their mandates. The Program will also support the sharing and public disclosure of the additional groundwater data that will be collected.

27. Results Area 2 will strengthen the results-based culture for groundwater management within GoI by improving output and outcome monitoring and evaluation and establishing a credible independent verification system. Activities will also support improved Program management, more broadly, including ensuring a technical support, fiduciary capacity improvement, and oversight of social and environmental safeguards through the employment of technical support agencies at Central and State level and support organizations.

28. Some potential investment categories will be excluded from NGMIP. These include: (i) construction of major dams and new large scale irrigation systems; and (ii) major industrial wastewater collection, treatment and recharge systems through injection.

IV. Program Development Objective(s)

29. The development objective for the Operation (PDO) is to improve the management of groundwater resources in the selected States.

30. The PDO captures the objectives of NGMIS, which include: (i) enhancing recharge of aquifers and introducing water conservation practices; (ii) promoting activities relating to water harvesting, water management and crop alignment; (iii) creating an institutional structure for sustainable groundwater management; and (iv) incentivizing communities and stakeholders to sustainably manage groundwater.

31. PDO indicators include: Arrest in the decline of groundwater levels (number of Blocks); Community-led Water Security Plans prepared (number); Direct Program beneficiaries (number), of which women (percentage); Adoption of Participatory Groundwater Management (number of GPs); Area with reduction in water consumption (hectares); and Improved groundwater monitoring and disclosure of groundwater data (number of States).

V. Environmental and Social Effects

32. The Environmental and Social Systems Assessment (ESSA) examined the scope, context and potential impacts of the Program from an environmental and social perspective. The ESSA was disclosed in-country on September 29, 2016 and on the Bank's external website on October 13, 2016.

33. The assessment concludes that while the legislative framework at both the national and state level is strong, the implementation setup to address environmental challenges of NGMIP need to be strengthened. The investments proposed under the Program generally do not require any environmental clearances either from the State Environmental Impact Assessment Authorities or national Ministry of Environment and Forests. Although environmental management systems are present, capacity needs to be built at the State level, where weaknesses exists in environmental screening of water security related physical investments, environmental compliance during the construction activities, and ongoing maintenance of investments.

34. The Program benefits the natural environment by mitigating some of the ongoing impacts associated with excessive groundwater withdrawal (e.g. potentially through increase of base flows into the streams and associated ecosystem). Investments in improved water use efficiency through micro irrigation will promote a shift towards agricultural practices that require lesser amounts of fertilizer and pesticides. Potential environmental risks may nonetheless include the following, with respect to supply-side measures to increase the groundwater recharge: (i) construction related impacts may affect surface water quality and occupational health and safety; (ii) groundwater recharge systems, particularly those which directly inject surface water into wells, may pollute groundwater by conveying fertilizer and pesticide laden storm water runoff from agricultural fields; (iii) during high rainfall years, the fields and houses near the recharge structures may experience water seepage and water logging; and (iv) cumulative impacts of recharge structures within a single larger watershed, in combination with existing and planned major irrigation projects, may reduce the downstream hydrological flows. Environmental impacts associated with demand-side measures to increase water use efficiency are very few compared to the supply-side measures. Impacts from demand-side measures may include impacts from minor civil works, disposal of drip pipes after completion of their useful life, and general health and safety risks.

35. From a social perspective, the legislative framework and necessary institutions are in place to facilitate participation of the community in groundwater management and regulation. Favorable national level acts for local governance, accountability and transparency, and

grievance redressal are in place, along with corresponding State level acts and policies. The challenges are largely in terms of ensuring the operationalization and enforcement of these regulations as well as bridging institutional gaps and capacities at all levels. Particularly, Gram Panchayats require clear mandates and capacity support to deliver the responsibility of effective groundwater management. In addition, measures are included in the interim Program Guidelines to institutionalize the following: (i) inclusion of vulnerable groups (small and medium farmers and women) while preparing and implementing Water Security Plans; and (ii) capacity development on gender, participatory processes, and conflict management, etc. The Program Action Plan (PAP) includes strengthening of grievance management system for tracking and resolving complaints and establishing systems for citizen feedback, both for direct and indirect beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

36. Measures to improve the environmental systems include (i) developing screening procedures for siting and selection of proposed investments and monitoring of impacts; (ii) undertaking a study to assess cumulative impacts of the overall investments on the downstream hydrological flows; and (iii) strengthening of implementing agencies with the environmental staff. The processes and procedures for implementation of these action plans are detailed in the Interim Program Guidelines.

37. Some of the Program activities relate to tributaries or watersheds of the Indus River and Ganges River (in Haryana and Rajasthan); and some of the activities also relate to tributaries of rivers flowing into the Rann of Kutch and the Indus River Plain Aquifer (AS78). All of these are international waterways and the World Bank's Operational Policy 7.50 Projects on International Waterways applies to the Program. Notifications have been issued to all riparian countries in conformance with OP 7.50.

VI. Financing (in US\$ Million)

Total Program Cost	1,000	Total Bank Financing	500
Total Co-financing	500	Financing Gap	-
Financing Source			Amount
Borrower/Recipient			500
IBRD/IDA			500
Total			1,000

VII. Program Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

38. The Program will be coordinated at the national level. The vast majority of Program implementation will be the responsibility of State, District, and Block governments, Gram Panchayats and communities. Implementation arrangements are designed to promote the use of existing structures at all levels and to promote coordination between various agencies and tiers of government.

39. The Program places emphasis on strengthening institutional coordination across departments and agencies, building the Central – State – District linkages. This includes: (i) the

establishment of national and State level inter-agency Steering Committees to improve coordination across various departments and agencies related to groundwater management; (ii) the disbursement of funds directly to the States based on achievement; (iii) Technical Support Agencies at national and State levels to build capacity and strengthen reach to District level implementing agencies; (iv) the provision of Support Organizations to build capacity at the village level and strengthen linkages with District level offices and (v) an integrated Management Information System which increases the flow of information and eases the implementation of standardized Program procedures.

40. At the Central level, an Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee will oversee Program implementation and resolve any coordination issues across agencies or tiers of government which cannot be resolved by the implementing agency alone. A central level Program Management Unit (PMU) has been established in MoWR, RD&GR. It will be responsible for overall Program planning and coordination across the various State implementing agencies; FM and procurement of central government activities; monitoring safeguard compliance; M&E; and communications. MoWR RD&GR is proposing to transfer the PMU to a Special Purpose Vehicle Status (SPV). A decision on the SPV will be made as part of the approval of Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) memo by the Ministry of Finance. Whenever established, the SPV will take over the PMU (technical, financial management, procurement, social and environmental specialists, monitoring and evaluation) which is already working on the preparation of NGMIP in the MoWR, RD&GR.

41. At the State level, State-level Steering Committees for Groundwater Management will be established in each of the seven participating States to oversee implementation of State and local level implementation of NGMIP and coordinate between various State agencies. . Each State has assigned a nodal agency for NGMIP. The State Water Resources Department has been assigned as the nodal agency in four States (Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh). In Haryana, the State Department of Irrigation has been assigned to be the nodal agency, in Rajasthan the Public Health Engineering Department is the nodal agency, while the Groundwater Surveys and Development Agency is the nodal agency in Maharashtra. State-level Program Implementation Agencies (PIAs) in the nodal agency have already been established to implement the Program. The institutional set-up of the PIAs varies depending on the existing institutional structure. In most cases, the PIA has been constituted as a separate Program unit in the designated nodal agency. In Karnataka and Gujarat, existing SPVs have been designated as the PIA.

42. The PIA will be responsible for the technical, environmental and social, financial management, procurement, and administrative aspects of Program implementation and monitoring at the State level. The roles and responsibilities of each of the PIAs, including delegation of financial powers for carrying out procurement and financial transactions, have been defined in the Interim Program Guidelines. The PIA will be staffed by a team of experts in all of these areas. State SAs will be hired to support the State PIAs in implementing the Program, including providing support at the District level.

43. At the District level, existing District, Block and Gram Panchayat government institutions will be responsible for implementing the Program at their own levels. Implementation responsibilities include the preparation of Water Security Plans and the implementation of District and community-level interventions from the Water Security Plans. Nodal agencies are already present in all program Districts through their Divisional Level Units

(DPIUs). Support Organizations will be hired to provide technical support to the Gram Panchayats. SOs will work hand-in-hand with DPIUs to ensure that Gram Panchayats and Water Users Associations or other village-level committees build their knowledge and capacity over time on participatory management practices, including preparing Water Security Plans and implementing community-level interventions.

44. Interim Program Guidelines have been developed to guide Program implementation, including coordination between the national, State and lower levels. A separate Program Fiduciary Manual will describe the respective fiduciary arrangements in each State. The development of the Interim Program Guidelines by MoWR, RD&GR in close collaboration with representatives of participating States has provided an opportunity to advance various dimensions on how the Program will be implemented, as well as the preparation of critical documents for early Program implementation.

45. A Management Information System (MIS) is being developed to operationalize and standardize Program implementation across the participating States. An advanced draft of the MIS, including inbuilt special-purpose data analytics, is available and will be finalized during the first months of project implementation. The MIS will be used to operationalize and standardize the preparation of Water Security Plans, water budgeting, monitoring of groundwater levels and quality, and reporting on the progress in implementation of WSPs. The MIS will be extensively used by implementing agencies and will provide access to information for beneficiary communities to plan and implement interventions.

VIII. Contact point

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