

## **The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation – (MDWS)**

The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India, formerly under the Ministry of Rural Development as Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, is presently headed by the Minister for Rural Development. The Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) was the first major intervention in the water sector that started in 1972-1973. To accelerate coverage, a Technology Mission on Drinking Water was launched in 1986. In 1991-92, this mission was renamed Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission, and in 1999, the Department of Drinking Water Supply (DDWS) was formed under Ministry of Rural Development, for focused attention on drinking water and sanitation. The first major sector reform project (SRP) was started in the same year. Later was renamed as Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation in 2010 and in 2011, it was conferred the Ministry status, keeping in view the extreme importance given to the sector by the ruling government. The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation is the nodal department for the overall policy, planning, funding and coordination of programmes of drinking water and sanitation in the country.

### **Vision**

Safe drinking water and improved sanitation for all, at all times, in rural India.

### **Mission**

To ensure all rural households have access to and use safe and sustainable drinking water and improved sanitation facilities by providing support to States in their endeavor to provide these basic facilities and services.

### **Objectives**

*In rural areas of the country,*

- Ensure all households have access to and use of safe drinking water and sanitation facilities.
- Ensure communities monitor and keep surveillance on their drinking water sources;
- Ensure all government schools and anganwadis have functional toilets, urinals and access to safe drinking water;
- Provide an enabling environment and support to Panchayat Raj Institutions and local communities to manage their own drinking water sources and systems and sanitation in their villages;
- Provide access to information through online reporting mechanism with information placed in public domain to bring in transparency and informed decision making;

### **Functions:**

- Planning, implementation and monitoring of centrally sponsored programmes and

schemes for safe drinking water and sanitation in rural areas;

- Support R&D initiatives, IEC and HRD activities for all stakeholders in drinking water and sanitation sector;
- Building partnerships and synergizing efforts with other sector partners, organizations, UN and bilateral agencies, NGOs, R&D institutions and civil society
- Assist States in resource mobilization from multilateral and bilateral agencies through Government of India;
- Technical support to States through seminars, interactions, documentation of best practices and innovations;
- Provide inputs to other Departments/ Ministries for formulation of policies impacting water and sanitation issues;
- Recognizing and awarding panchayats and organizations for excellent work in rural sanitation.