



Civil Services Day
21ST APRIL, 2022



**Aspirational District
Program – Saturation
Program**

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COMPOSITION OF THE SESSION

Breakaway Session

Chair

- **Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman NITI Aayog**

Rapporteur

- **Shri Rakesh Ranjan, Senior Consultant, NITI Aayog**

Panellists

- **Shri Pradeep Kumar Jena, Development Commissioner, Odisha**
- **Shri Arun Kumar Singh, Development Commissioner, Jharkhand**
- **Mr. Shombi Sharpe, Resident Coordinator, UNDP**
- **Shri Ajay Piramal, Chairman, Piramal Group**
- **Smt. Varnali Deka, Collector, Kokrajhar**

INTRODUCTION

India is on a high growth trajectory that is expected to lift millions out of poverty. The country is bringing in transformational reforms whether it is the world’s largest vaccination drive or establishing itself as a preferred trade partner globally. While we celebrate India’s landmark achievements during “Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav”, it is pertinent to remember the goals we still need to achieve. Presently the quality of life of many of its citizens is not consistent with this growth story, a fact reflected in UNDP’s 2020 Human Development Index wherein we are ranked 131 out of 189 countries. A closer look at the data reveals high heterogeneity in the living standards in India. By uplifting the districts which have shown relatively lesser progress in achieving key social outcome, India can move ahead in the human development index.

The Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP) was launched by the Hon’ble Prime Minister, Sh. Narendra Modi in January 2018, with the objective of expediting the transformation of 112 most backward districts through the convergence of government programmes and schemes. The programme hinges on the strengths of local governments to accelerate the realisation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) aspirations for communities, households, and individuals, particularly to those at risk of falling behind. It achieves this primarily through e-monitoring the real-time data.

ADP’s theory of change rests on three pillars:

- **Convergence** between Central and State Schemes
- **Collaboration** between Centre, State, District Administration, Development Partners and Citizens
- **Competition** between Districts

Themes

The programme focusses on 5 main themes - Health & Nutrition, Education, Agriculture & Water Resources, Financial Inclusion & Skill Development, and Basic Infrastructure, which have direct bearing on the quality of life and economic productivity of citizens. 81 data-points are tracked regularly through a dashboard. The dashboard is designed, developed, and maintained by the Planning Department of the Government of Andhra Pradesh. The ranking of districts is dynamic and reflects the incremental improvement made month on month.

Table 1: Themes, weights and data points¹

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Data Points</i>
<i>Health & Nutrition</i>	30%	31
<i>Education</i>	30%	14
<i>Agriculture & Water Resources</i>	20%	12
<i>Financial Inclusion</i>	5%	6
<i>Skill Development</i>	5%	10
<i>Basic Infrastructure</i>	10%	8
Total	100%	81

Ranking

The Delta ranking method measures incremental changes in performance indicators on a monthly basis. The methodology adopted by NITI Aayog for this purpose, employs a mix of self-reported data entered by districts as well as data points validated by third party agencies also referred to as knowledge partners under the ADP. Districts are ranked on a month-on-month basis, which is displayed on the Champions of Change Dashboard dedicated solely for the purpose of monitoring data and providing districts updated information on their performance as compared to other districts. The dashboard provides sector/ theme wise ranking as well. This

¹ [Source: PIB](#)

is expected to bring in a sense of competition and accountability, as well as serve as a mechanism for identifying key development sectors that may need further handholding and support. The competitive and dynamic culture fostered by the programme has resulted in several lesser ranked districts (in baseline ranking) to perform better over the last few years.

SUCCESS STORIES

Goalpara, Assam

Inhabited mostly by tribal and minority communities, Goalpara is one of the seven aspirational districts of the state. Goalpara in Assam didn't only deal with the coronavirus crisis but also an influx of students, workers and businessmen etc., Japanese Encephalitis and devastating floods. And even with so many challenges, it has been emerging as a successful district. Goalpara won the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration in 2020 owing to several successful initiatives under each sector.

Health and Education

- 100+ Poshan Clubs mobilised volunteers in 50 Localities to improve learning outcomes of 8000 students by 15%
- Created a network of Smart Classes through untied funds, CSR and crowd funding resulting in better learning outcomes impacting 5000+ students
- 6895 Illiterate women in Rangjuli Pilot Block identified and made literate under Mission Vidyashakti: Female Literacy Enhancement Programme. The same model is being replicated in all blocks

Basic Infrastructure

- Use of green technologies in road construction of 367 kms covering 100% habitations
- 15.4 lakh saplings planted under CLEAN GOALPARA, GREEN GOALPARA, increasing the forest cover from 19% to 26%
- 100% electrification under 'Saubhagya' initiative
- Pucca Houses constructed increased from 9% to 100%

Financial Inclusion and Skill Development

- E-market linkage through website 'GoalMart' for local produce and products boosted businesses of the SHGs/producers, providing wider market reach, and reducing dependency on middlemen
- Disabled women provided training & hand holding for plastic alternatives to fructify Hon. PM's vision of plastic-free India

Governance and Technological Interventions

- Innovative mechanism of formulating data based participatory "District Transformation Roadmap" with monthly & annual goals. Qualitative & quantitative impact measurement based on monitoring and evaluation matrix and cost benefit analysis
- Launch of 'Infrastructure Snapshot App' enabled rigorous monitoring of schemes by public and officials, keeping a check on pilferage of funds, regularity of staff attendance, quick reporting & redressal of complaints
- Skill training and job cards under MGNREGA provided to returnee migrants
- Creation of new era supply chains (home delivery system) addressed two pronged challenges of livelihood loss/spoilage of produce and food needs to Goalpara and neighbouring Districts
- PMJJBY coverage through CSR to all frontline workers and *Safai Karmacharis*

Kupwara, Jammu and Kashmir

Once known for heavy militant infestation, the border district of Kupwara in north Kashmir has emerged among the top seven districts across the country for having achieved remarkable progress in various development parameters under the Aspirational Districts Programme.

Health and Education

- 100 bedded Inpatient department block building in CHC Kupwara, catering to 5 lakh population, languishing for over 10 years completed in 6 months along with Mechanized Sanitation Services
- Commencement of PM National Dialysis Programme at Kupwara and Sogam with 86 registered patients & 2358 sessions given so far
- Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) in children under 6 years has been reduced to 2.46% in comparison to 5.05%
- 100 % of 163 High / Higher Secondary Schools and Degree Colleges now have Sanitary Pad Vending Machines along with incinerators through convergence of resources under Swachh Bharat Mission, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme & Aspirational District Programme

Basic Infrastructure

- 98.7% of gram panchayats now have internet connectivity
- Common Service Centers at Gram Panchayat level have increased to 97.92% in comparison to 17.42%
- First ever Grid Electricity for Border Areas - 2 border pockets with population of over 30,000 in close vicinity of LOC, which were being supplied electricity for only 3 hours a day through DG Sets have been connected with the Northern Grid

Agriculture

- Honey Processing and Bottling Plant was set up where raw honey is now processed and marketed, doubling incomes of 500 beekeepers
- Introduction of Mushroom cultivation in 14 villages leading to additional turnover of Rs 2 crore in a short span of 2 months for 120 farming families
- Revival of traditional & nutrient rich high value Red Rice (Zug) of Tangdar by increasing the crop area by 100 Ha. Establishment of processing & marketing units are also underway

Financial Inclusion and Skill Development

- Skill up-gradation of youth for self-employment in handicrafts & handloom sectors through 11 additional Skill Centers (220 trainees) where more than 50% are girls
- Targeted approach for disbursement of Mudra Loans (₹402.50 Cr disbursed as on date against target of ₹600.00 cr. till 2022)
- 13 Mobile Skill Centres trained 200 rural girls in the traditional arts of kani shawl, krewel, sozni, ari staple and Wood Carving

Koraput, Odisha

The district is located in the Eastern Ghats and is known for its hilly terrain, rich and diverse types of mineral deposits and its tribal culture and traditions. Over the last few years, Koraput has emerged as a hub of growth and has shown significant improvements across sectors.

Health and Education

- For its performance in education sector, Koraput district of Odisha has been ranked No 1 in the Champions of Change ranking prepared by NITI Aayog

- To combat the high number of malaria-related deaths, Mission API-10 was launched in 2017 which has brought down Annual Parasite Incidence to 2 in the affected areas
- Toilets for girls are now functional in 99% of the schools. All the schools in the district also have electricity and drinking water facility

Basic Infrastructure

- 90.19% of the habitation in the district has access to All Weather Roads under the PMGSY scheme
- Koraput now has 128 water supply systems in place in addition to 353 tube-wells and 117 bore-wells
- As of date, 70.88% (1,432) of the villages have been electrified

Agriculture

- The coffee plantation drive is specially focusing on tribal farmers, enabling them to get remunerative price against coffee beans. The coffee plantation itself is benefitting 2,786 people in the district

Financial Inclusion and Skill Development

- For every 1 lakh of the population, 80,000 PM Jan Dhan Accounts have been opened
- 70,735 Kisan Credit Cards have been issued and ₹188.13 Cr of credit has been extended so far
- 800 SHG women members of 60 groups were trained for Jackfruit Chips during FY 20-21

Social Development

- In partnership with UNICEF and Action Aid India, Koraput launched the district's flagship child marriage prohibition campaign called APARAJITA in 2019
 - 204 incidences of child marriage was prevented and the children were rehabilitated
 - The campaign covered 14 Blocks, two sub-divisions, 240 Gram Panchayats and 2,049 villages, creating a chain of response and increasing accountability
 - Every Saturday is dedicated as APARAJITA day in the district. 8,718 awareness campaigns were conducted encouraging participation from school and college students, teachers, parents, anganwadi workers, health workers, etc.

Balrampur, Uttar Pradesh

Balrampur district is famously known for Balrampur Chini Mills, one of the largest sugar manufacturing industry in the country. In 2006 the Ministry of Panchayati Raj named Balrampur one of the country's 250 most backward districts (out of a total of 640). It is now one of the eight aspirational districts of UP, taking strides towards a better tomorrow.

Health and Education

- *'Padhe Balrampur, Badhe Balrampur'* campaign: District officials, teachers, parents, students were apprised of the importance of good education. As a result, around 54,000 previously out-of-school students got enrolled in schools with dramatic improvement in the attendance rates
- All the teachers are made to use Prerna app for attendance, monitoring, preparation of study plan, leaning outcomes etc. under a single platform
- Quarterly & need based workshops for teachers for continuous professional development
- Full immunization increased from 57% to 81% and institutional deliveries went up from 44% to 92%

Financial Inclusion and Skill Development

- Provided ease of access to the banking system by increasing Banking outlets and strengthening the digital banking network

- Loan disbursements under PM Mudra Yojana and settlement of social security claims saw a steep rise in FY 19-20
- 25 new training centers established in three tehsils. More than 8,000 trainees participated in the training centres
- More than 40 job fairs organised at the training center level. Mega job fair organised by Hospitality Sector Skill Council, NSDC, Govt Of India, in which more than 2,000 trainees participated and about 1,000 candidates were offered job letters

Governance and Technological Interventions

- 646 smart classrooms were established in the district under Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram by installing smart projectors with pre-installed interactive learning modules
- 200 smart AI based tablets were distributed amongst the best performing teachers to equip them with the latest teaching methodology
- Solar powered pumps cum RO systems are being installed in 200 schools under CSR from IREDA leading to an increase in both the attendance ratio and enrollment ratio
- All the 1,699 Anganwadis and 66 Mukhya Sewikas have been provided with smart phones for better delivery of services and data processing

CONCLUSION

On 22 January 2022, the Hon'ble Prime Minister in an interaction with the DMs/DCs of various Districts, including Aspirational Districts, lauded the Programme for ensuring holistic development. The Hon'ble Prime Minister said Aspirational Districts are eliminating the barriers to progress of the country. They are becoming an accelerator instead of an obstacle. He noted that convergence is a major reason for the country's success in the Aspirational Districts. All the resources are the same, the government machinery is the same, the officials are the same, but the results are different.

ADP is a laboratory of various cutting-edge governance reforms. The programme has shifted focus away from inputs and budgets to outcomes and impacts. The programme has also developed a lean data infrastructure that smartly exploits complementary strengths of administrative and survey data. This data has created a robust treasury of statistics which can be used by policy and decision makers. It has also encouraged government officials to deliver results and actively partner with philanthropies and civil society to create better impact using the same amount of budgetary spends. The programme was launched with the objective of reducing inter and intra-state disparities and it is on track of achieving it. The unique features of introducing competition, handholding support from the centre and state and collaboration with various agencies is proving successful in realising the vision of holistic development. Some of the initiatives undertaken in this programme are so efficient in achieving their goals that they can be scaled not just in aspirational but other districts as well.

While it is evident that the ADP has positively impacted the development targets, it should be noted that there are still some challenges that need to be addressed. One of the challenges is data and monitoring. There is a need to reduce focus on the competitive approach which is likely to encourage misreporting of data. The programme can further emphasise on collaborating and replicating best practices across districts and follow a more knowledge-sharing approach. The programme can also explore bringing in additional sectors revolving around key issues of gender and environment. While service delivery may be the focus, models of good governance can be brought under the spotlight to truly strengthen the local governance in the country. While

the progress so far is commendable and transformation in the districts is evident, greater efforts are needed to bring these districts up to pace with India's growth story.

The United Nations Development Program recently lauded India's Aspirational Districts Programme for significant improvements in health, nutrition, and education outcomes since its inception. It happens to be the world's largest initiative in results-based governance, reaching more than 250 million people in 112 aspirational districts across India.

The programme marks a paradigm shift from just pursuing economic growth towards reducing deep spatial inequalities. The initiative pivots on the Government's motto of '*Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, and Sabka Prayas*', which mirrors the principle of 'Leaving No One Behind' to achieve the Agenda 2030.

