Executive Summary

Background
The status of water supply & sanitation service delivery in the state of Assam is encompassed with lower level of coverage in terms of house service connection and lower level of operation and maintenance. Assam has around 6.8% of house service connection in the rural areas. The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MoDWS- GoI) and the World Bank have jointly developed the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project for Low Income States (RWSS-LIS) with an objective to ‘improve piped water supply and sanitation services for selected rural communities in the target States through decentralized delivery systems’. The Project will be implemented in identified Districts of the four Project States namely Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh through a District wide approach.

Neer Nirmal Pariyojana in Assam
In Assam Rural Water Supply & Sanitation Project for Low Income States is taken in seven Districts of Assam in two batches during the period 2013 – 2020. The project will cover 5041 habitations of 1275 villages in 173 GP’s of 16 Development Block. Total number of population to be benefited by the project is 12, 27,341 (2011 base) at an estimated cost of Rs. 1474.03 crores. All these seven schemes are formulated primarily for quality and sustainability which is approached to address the issues and challenges of institutional, infrastructure and service delivery system in rural water supply and sanitation sector. The Project Implementation Period is 8 years – Construction Period is 3 Years, Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Period is 5 Years.

In Batch- I, three projects in Hailakandi, Jorhat and Kamrup District are to be implemented with a total project cost of Rs. 659.68 Crore. More than 6.11 Lakh of population in 63 GPs of 7 Development Blocks will be benefited from these three projects. In Batch II, four nos. of MVS project in Morigaon, Bongaigaon, Sonitpur and Sivasagar District are to be taken up with the tentative estimated cost is Rs.822.67 Crore covering 110 nos. of GP and 9 nos. of Development Block which will benefit 682183 nos. of population. The basic objective of the project is to provide 24X7 water supply to the rural households through house service connection @70LPCD.
Need for Tribal Development Plan
The tribal population of Assam - 38,84,371, is 12.4% of the total population of the state and 3.72% of total tribal population of the country. The State has registered 17.4% decadal growth of tribal population in 2001-2011 which is slightly higher than the overall decadal growth for the state. The tribal population in Assam is predominantly rural with 94.4% residing in rural areas. The overall sex ratio among tribal people is 984, which is marginally less than the national average of 990. Seven districts of Assam have ST population of more than 25%. These districts are: Dima Hasao, Karbi Anglong, Dhemaji, Baksa, Chirang, Udalguri, Kokrajhar and together, they account for 53.3% of the tribal population of the State. Inter district variation of ST population in other districts is however quite large – as low as 0.1% in Halakandi district to as high as 23% in Goalpara and 23.9% in Lakhimpur district. Major tribes of Assam are: Bodo (35.1%), Mishing (17.52%), Karbi (11.1%), Rabha (7.6%), Sonowal Kachari (6.5%), Lalung (5.2%), Garo (4.2%), and Dimasa tribes (3.2%). They constitute ninety per cent ST population of the state. The other tribal people in Assam are Deori, Hajong, Thengal Kachari, Khasi, Jaintia, Mech, Chakma, Mizo, Hmar, Kuki tribes, Naga tribes, Barmans (in Cachar), Man (Tai speaking), Khampti and Singhpho tribes. The spatial distribution of tribal population in Assam could be broadly classified under two groups: Hill tribes and Plain tribes.

The literacy rate among tribal in Assam is 72.1%, which broadly mirrors the overall literacy rate of the state; and is well above the national average. However, the gap between the male and female literacy rate (79% & 65% respectively) highlights that tribal women are still lagging behind on educational attainment. In order to protect the interests of the tribal population, provision of Sixth Schedule is enshrined in the Constitution under Articles 244(2) and 275(1) to enable autonomous administration of the tribal areas of Assam. Six tribal districts of Assam: Karbi Anglong, Dima Hasao, Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa & Udalguri have been declared as the Scheduled Areas. The project area does not have significant tribal population apart from Dimoria block in Kamrup (M) district which has around 32.85% of tribal population. Dimoria block has 11 GPs within it. Overall for the project districts in Batch –I the percentage of tribal population to the total population is around 11.03%.

It has also been ascertained that the tribal people do have a collective attachment to their traditional customs and habitat; and because of this, issues related to them require special measures to ensure that tribal peoples are included in and benefit from the Neer Nirmal Pariyojana project as appropriate. However, given the enquiries revealed the presence of significant tribal population in some of the blocks World Bank's Operational Policy on Indigenous Peoples (OP 4.10) is applicable. OP 4.10 aims at providing a voice to the indigenous peoples (Scheduled Tribe or Tribals in India) in design and implementation of the project; and to ensure that intended project benefits are culturally appropriate that foster full respect for their dignity and human rights. Also the policies of both Government of India and the State Government attribute high priority to ensuring that the benefits of development get equitably distributed to the tribal people as well. Towards preparation of a Tribal Development Plan, a Social Assessment (SA) study was carried out to understand and address social development issues, and ensure accomplishing the outcomes in terms of inclusion, cohesion, equity, security and accountability. The specific objectives of the study were: a) Mapping of project stakeholders and conducting detailed stakeholder consultations; b) assessing the social impacts of the proposed project interventions; c) review and suggest, as
appropriate, the legal, policy and institutional aspects to enable accomplish the principles underpinning the approach; d) developing measures to enhance positive impacts and mitigate negative impacts, if any.

The initial scoping and preliminary assessments made during the project preparation has established that the profiles project beneficiaries are diverse, comprising of a number of societal and ethnic sub-groups and other regional features. There are substantial tribal people in some of the project GPs and they do have a collective attachment to the project interventions and outcomes. It is evident that the project intervention will not affect the tribal people adversely but, they do require special attention from the view point of ensuring inclusion and equity.

Legal and Institutional Framework

According to Article 342 of the Constitution, Scheduled Tribes (STs) are the tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within these tribes and tribal communities which have been declared as such by the President through a public notification. The constitutional safeguards related to tribals are: (i) Article 14, related to Equal rights and opportunities; (ii) Article 15, prohibits discrimination on grounds of sex, religion, race, caste etc.; (iii) Article 15 (4), enjoins upon state to make special provisions for the tribal; (iv) Article 16 (3), empowers state to make special provisions for reservation in appointments or posts in favor of Scheduled Tribes; (v) Article 46, enjoins upon State to promote with special care educational and economic interests of tribal people, protection from social injustice and exploitation; (vi) Article 243D related to the reservation of seats for Scheduled Tribes in Panchayats & Municipalities.

To further provide regional autonomy, protect the interests of the Scheduled tribes and improve their status, certain areas of Assam have been declared as the Scheduled Areas; these areas are usually populated by a predominant Scheduled Tribe. The Sixth Schedule under Article 244 (2) of the Constitution provides for establishment of Autonomous councils to substantially administer tribal districts of Assam. These districts are Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao Districts; and the four Bodoland Territorial Autonomous Districts (BTAD) of Kokrajhar, Baksa, Chirang and Udalguri. These Autonomous Councils of Scheduled Areas are endowed with legislative, judicial executive and financial powers for the benefit tribal people. There are acts, rules and policies which provide the legal framework for ensuring dedicated attention to Scheduled Tribes. These are: The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006; Assam land and Revenue Regulation (Amendment) Act, 1947. Also applicable is World Bank (Operational Policy) OP 4.10 that aims at ensuring that the development process fosters full respect for the dignity, human rights and cultures of indigenous peoples, thereby contributing to the Bank's mission of poverty reduction and sustainable development.

Key government machinery shouldering responsibility for tribal development in the state are: Department of Welfare of Plain Tribes and Backward Classes (WPT&BC) and Office of the Development Commissioner for Hill Areas of Assam.

Stakeholder Mapping and Consultation

A series of consultation, workshops were held with the primary stakeholders, GPWSCs and MVWSCs in the project districts of Kamrup (M), Hailakandi and Jorhat. Public consultations were also conducted with the tribal population in the project GPs in the Batch – I districts, where there are significant tribal population exist. Dimoria and Chandapur Block in Kamrup(M) district have substantial tribal population. They consist of Karbis, Bodos, Sonowal-Kocharis, Nepalis, Tea-tribe, etc. The purpose of these citizen
consultation was to: increase the awareness level of the people about the NNP(RWSSP-LIS); share the expected benefit out of the NNP(RWSSP-LIS); enhance the level of participation of the tribal population in the Project implementation stage; ensure project benefit to all tribal inhabitants; and understand roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders during various stages of the project implementation, O&M phase.

Participants were briefed about the project scope, intended benefit from the project etc.; and encouraged to raise questions during the consultation process about the project activities and outcomes. Focus group discussions were also held with the tribal groups of the project GPs. Key issues that emerged were: the project GPs in the identified districts for Batch – I project does not fall under the scheduled area. The concentration of tribal people in the project GPs is less apart from 16 GPs in 2 Blocks in the Kamrup District; very few people have access to treated water source. Most of the people depend on either open well or hand pump for their daily water need. Hence incidence of water borne disease is prevalent in these areas. In terms of hygiene practice, presence of open defecation is still practised in these areas. People need to be educated on this behavioural change along with provision of toilet infrastructure in their houses. In terms of the water and hygiene infrastructure there is not much difference between the tribal and non-tribal population in the project GPs. However, none of the project areas fall under any Autonomous council area or any of the scheduled area.

The primary stakeholders have welcomed the initiatives under Neer Nirmal Pariyojana, RWSSPLIS, Assam. The project will largely benefit the population in terms of provision of potable water supply system and improvement in hygiene practise including solid and liquid waste management in the project GPs. The stakeholders felt, need of more awareness generation meeting, IEC activities at the GP level, ward level and habitation level to enhance participation during implementation and operation maintenance phase of the project. The tribal households need more awareness generation as expressed during the consultation process. The GPWSCs and MVWSCs need more strengthening and training to take over the schemes for the operation and maintenance phase. The GPWSCs and MVWSCs are also need to be training on their roles and responsibilities during the scheme cycle. The stakeholders are willing to pay the community contribution and monthly user charge for a better water supply service. However the community felt requirement of more awareness generation regarding the project benefit. For the hygiene and sanitation part, people need more training and IEC activities on technology options for SLWM.

**Tribal Development Plan**

The objectives of the Tribal Development Plan are to ensure that (i) the tribal populations are by the project are adequately and fully consulted; (ii) participation of tribals in the entire process of preparation, implementation and O&M of the project;(iii) project benefits are equally accessible to the tribals living in the project area; (iv) developing an institutional and implementation arrangements as well as capacity building measures for the implementation of the TDP, associated disclosure mechanisms and addressing any grievances; and (v) ensure representation of tribals in the GPWSC and MVWSC.

Key actions include: i) The members of the MVWSC also include members from Anchalik Panchayat and Gaon Panchayat from the project blocks and GPs. The members will thus ensure inclusion and participation of STs from their respective project blocks and GPs; ii) in constituting the Multi Village Water and Sanitation Committee (MVWSC) at district level, 10% of the total members and selected members from Gaon Panchayat, Anchalik Panchayat and Zilla Parishad as well as representatives from NGO/SHG/youth groups shall belong to SC/ST community. Also, 1/3rd of members in Gaon Panchayat Water and Sanitation Committee (GPWSC) shall belong to SC/ST community; iii) Payment Linked Key
Deliverables (PLKD): PLKD may be followed to ensure result based project management. Coverage of Tribals should be a condition of the engagement of the Community Mobilizers. All tribal households must be included in the project; iv) Beneficiary contributions: For SC/ST households, the amount has been subsidized to be Rs 225 as one time collection; v) Information, Education and Communication Campaigns to be implemented to create demand for improved water and sanitation services and to facilitate trust building amongst tribals, including tribal communities/folk arts. Cultural practices of tribals in respect of sanitation, hygiene and drinking water must be researched and included in the IEC campaigns; vi) Lead Training Agency (LTA) must also make an IEC plan specially for tribals. vii) Capacity Building of Primary and secondary stakeholders will be targeted through multi stage and multi Level training programmes/workshops that will inform on behavioural, technical, financial and managerial dimensions of the projects and the changes from the current status. Special emphasis will be given to include ST members from GPWSC and CBOs; viii) n M&E strategy may be developed so that formal feedback can be received from tribal populations; ix) Project recognizes that convergence with on-going programs will be a key development strategy of tribal development for mobilizing resources such as: national Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), National Health Mission (NHM), Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA), Social Welfare Department and Tribal Development Board. Modalities for this will be developed during implementation.

The Grievance Redress mechanisms include: paper based complaints at the SPMU/DPMU level; Online feedback system is already provided in the NNP website at the state level. During O&M phase a toll free number will be operated at the district level to redress the grievances. Periodic monitoring and evaluation will be done on the performance of the grievance redressal system.

As per under the Disclosure requirement, the Tribal Development Plan was been discussed with and disclosed to the key stakeholders. Further, this Tribal Development Plan was disclosed to the public on the project web-site of Government of Assam; and printed copies of the plan will be placed in government offices and other public locations for easy access by the tribal population.

Based on the devised strategy a budget has been prepared for execution of the Tribal development Plan at INR 49.0 lakhs.