

National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA)

The Union Government constituted a National Rainfed Area Authority on 3.11.2006 to give focused attention to the problem of the rainfed areas of the country. The Authority is an advisory, policy making and monitoring body charged with the role of examining guidelines in various existing schemes and in the formulation of new schemes including all externally aided projects in this area. Its mandate is to address all aspects of sustainable and holistic development of rainfed areas, including appropriate farming and livelihood system approaches. It would also focus on issues pertaining to landless and marginal farmers, since they constitute the large majority of inhabitants of rainfed areas.

National Rainfed Area Authority has a two tier structure. The first tier is the Governing Board that provides necessary leadership and appropriate coordination in implementation of programmes. The Governing Board is chaired by the Union Agriculture Minister and co-chaired by the Union Rural Development Minister. The second tier is the Executive Committee consisting of technical experts and representatives from stakeholder Ministries. The Executive Committee is headed by the Chief Executive Officer and have five other full time technical experts.

NRAA has published the Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects with a fresh framework for the next generation watershed programmes. The Guidelines coupled with the flexibilities inherent in them would provide an enabling framework for the planning, design, management and implementation of all watershed development projects in the country. New watershed projects will be implemented in accordance with these Common Guidelines with effect from 1st April 2008.