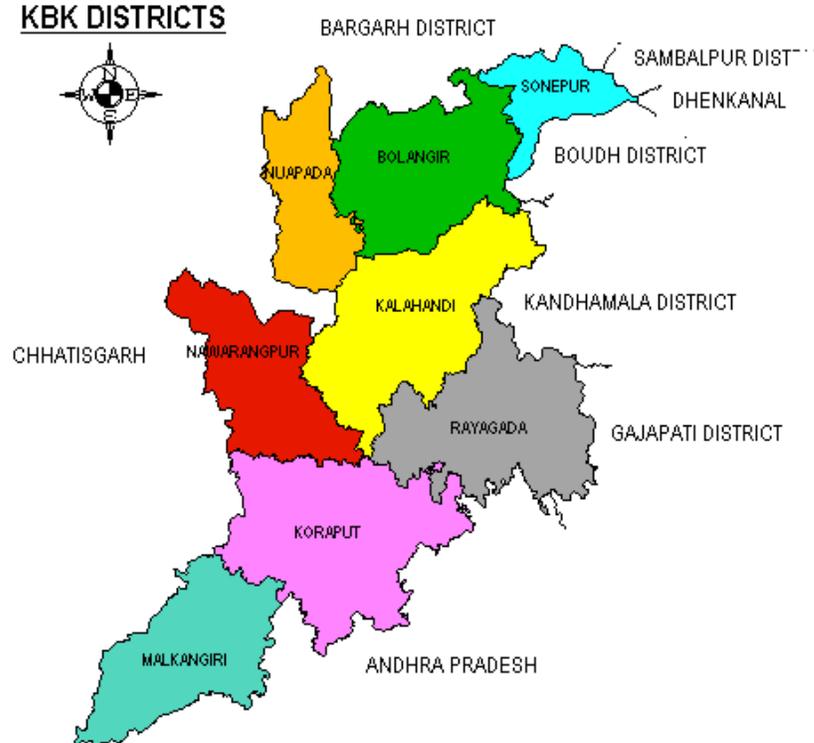


## **KBK Districts: A unique approach towards development**

The old districts of Koraput, Balangir and Kalahandi (popularly known as KBK districts) have since 1992-93 been divided into eight districts: Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Rayagada, Balangir, Subarnapur, Kalahandi and Nuapada. These eight districts comprise of 14 Sub-divisions, 80 Tahsils, and as many Community Development Blocks. The total number of revenue villages forming part of KBK region is 12,293. Geographical and administrative divisions of these districts are summarized below:



### **Geographical and Administrative Units of the KBK Districts**

Sl No.	District	Area (Sq.Km)	Number of				
			Sub-divn.	Tahsils	Blocks	TSP Blocks	Villages
1	Koraput	8807	2	14	14	14	2028
2	Malkangiri	5791	1	7	7	7	1045
3	Nabarangpur	5291	1	10	10	10	901
4	Rayagada	7073	2	11	11	11	2667
5	Balangir	6575	3	14	14	-	1794
6	Subarnapur	2337	2	6	6	-	959
7	Kalahandi	7920	2	13	13	2	2236
8	Nuapada	3852	1	5	5	-	663
	<b>Total KBK</b>	<b>47,646</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>12,293</b>

The KBK region possesses a varied topography: extensive ranges of hills covered with forests, rolling uplands, and extensive drainage systems. It is endowed with very diverse ecological habitats and is rich in flora and fauna. The four tribal dominated districts of Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur and Rayagada along with Kalahandi form part of Eastern Ghats, and are hilly, forested and criss-crossed with several rivers and nalahs. Balangir, Nuapada and Subarnapur districts are mainly part of Central Table lands, which have varied topography including plain agricultural lands, hills and rolling uplands. Some of the areas are also covered with forests and watercourses. KBK districts are also rich in mineral resources such as bauxite, chromite, lime iron and manganese.



The KBK region manifests a pair of opposites in the field of Agriculture. While cultivation practices in the command areas of Potteru (Malkangiri), Upper Kolab (Koraput), Indravati (Kalahandi), Mahanadi (Subarnpur) and in the command areas of other various medium/minor irrigation projects in KBK districts are quite advanced, commercial crops like maize and cotton are popular in large tracts, a majority of tribal communities continue to depend upon subsistence agriculture including shifting cultivation. Agricultural production fluctuates from year to year under the impact of natural calamities: droughts and floods, which frequent this region. A large proportion of

the rural poor and tribals in particular face severe food insecurity and depend on forests for their livelihood and subsistence. Forests are subjected to degradation of varying degrees on account of severe biotic pressure, intensive use, shifting cultivation, mining, diversion for developmental projects, and lack of adequate investment for their sustainable management. Weak agro-climatic conditions, poor connectivity and infrastructure, physical isolation, and low social capabilities among tribals characterize this region, which suffers from multiple deprivations and backwardness: (i) tribal backwardness, (ii) hill area backwardness, and (iii) backwardness due to severe natural calamities.



### **SPECIAL AREA DEVELOPMENT APPROACH**

Removal of regional disparities has been one of the important planks of the development strategies adopted by Government of India as well as the State Government during successive Five Year Plans. However, due to several economic, social and institutional obstacles, this region in Odisha has not shared gains of development in an equitable manner and continues to languish. Persistence of heavy poverty in this region has been a cause of concern for the State Government as well as

Government of India. Therefore, in consultation with the Government of India, State Government has adopted a special area development approach for this region with a view to focusing attention on it and accelerating its development. A Long Term Action Plan (LTAP) for the KBK districts was formulated in consultation with the Government of India for a period of seven years from 1995-96 to 2001-02 and was formally launched by the then Prime Minister on 18.08.1995. LTAP was formulated with two principal objectives in view: (i) drought proofing, (ii) poverty alleviation and development saturation. However, only a meager allocation of Rs. 20.49 crore was received as additional assistance during the first three years from 1995-96 to 1997-98. Therefore, LTAP; 1995-2002 did not take off due to non-availability of sufficient funds.

A Revised Long Term Action Plan (RLTAP) for the KBK districts was submitted to Government of India in 1998 on their advice. This project envisaged an integrated approach for speeding up the socio-economic development of the KBK region by synergizing effectively various developmental activities and schemes under implementation both in Central as well as State sectors. Government of India used to provide Additional Central Assistance (ACA)/Special Central Assistance (SCA) under RLTAP with a view to bridging up the critical gaps in the development efforts as well as dearth of resources.

The objectives of the RLTAP were

- ✓ Drought proofing,
- ✓ Poverty alleviation and development saturation, and
- ✓ Improved quality of life for local people.

Beginning from 1998-99, the Revised Long Term Action Plan (RLTAP) has been implemented in the KBK districts. Under this programme, a sum of Rs. 1963.95 crore in shape of ACA/SCA has been received from Government of India during 1998-99 to 2010-11 and an expenditure of Rs. 1962.69 crore has been incurred till March, 2011. Utilisation Certificates to the extent of the amount sanctioned till 2009-10 have been furnished to the Planning Commission.

With the passage of time, the allocations for development of KBK districts under various plan and non-plan schemes of the Central and State Governments increased entailing visibility of development interventions on the ground. The specially targetted schemes to address the development deficits such as RLTAP, BRGF (Backward Region Grant Fund), IAP (Integrated Action Plan) and Biju KBK started making visible impact by addressing the critical gaps in the field of infrastructure.

## **STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION**

The State Government have taken several initiatives to improve governance and to monitor the implementation of RLTA in the KBK districts. Some such initiatives are summarized as follows:

**(i) Better Delivery and Governance: Strengthening the Office of the Chief Administrator :**

A very senior IAS Officer has been posted as the Chief Administrator, Special Area Development (KBK) Project with headquarters at Koraput. He is responsible for effective monitoring and supervising the implementation of various programmes. In addition, Revenue Divisional Commissioners, Southern and Northern Divisions have been made ex-officio Deputy Chief Administrators, KBK to strengthen the office of the Chief Administrator, KBK. State Government have delegated higher administrative and financial powers to these officers with a view to avoiding procedural delays and to further improving programme implementation.

- The Chief Administrator and the Deputy Chief Administrators, KBK, will visit and inspect or cause to be inspected any office at the divisional, district or subordinate level under the jurisdiction in KBK districts relating to schemes/ programmes and projects under Special Plan (RLTA) for KBK districts.
- The Chief Administrator (KBK) and Deputy Chief Administrators, KBK have been authorized to act as Co-reporting Officers along with the existing Reporting Officers as regards recording the PAR of any office up to the rank of Head of Department (HOD) and Divisional Level Officers respectively.
- As per Notification No. 18256/F dated 28.04.2006 of Finance Department, the Chief Administrator (KBK) and Deputy Chief Administrators (KBK) have been delegated with higher financial powers to accord administrative approval for infrastructure projects under Special Plan (RLTA) for KBK districts up to Rs. 50 crore and Rs. 10 crore respectively. The KBK Collectors have been vested with higher financial powers to accord administrative approvals for projects up to Rs. 2 crore in each case.
- The KBK Collectors have also been made responsible for effective implementation of Special Plan (RLTA) for KBK districts. Achieving financial and physical targets under RLTA has been made as one of the indicators to assess their performance.

- For each KBK district, a District Level Committee (DLC) under the chairmanship of the concerned Revenue Divisional Commissioner and ex-officio Deputy Chief Administrator, KBK has been constituted to formulate Action Plans for the district as well to review and monitor the implementation of Special Plan (RLTAP) for KBK districts schemes/programmes at the district level. District Level Committees have been reconstituted with the nomination of all MPs, MLAs and Chairpersons of Zilla Parishads representing each of the KBK districts to the DLC as members and under chairmanship of the Minister chairing the District Planning Committee.
- An MIS format has been prescribed for better monitoring of implementation of various schemes that will be followed in case of monitoring of implementation of schemes under Special Plan (RLTAP) for KBK districts.

(ii) **Transparency and Consultations with Local People:**

State Government have taken a number of steps to increase transparency in programme implementation in consultations with local people. These steps include :

- ❖ All implementing Departments, their field agencies, all KBK Collectors, and Deputy Chief Administrators (KBK) have been requested to ensure that wide publicity is given as regards projects implemented under Special Plan (RLTAP) for KBK districts. Key parameters of relevant projects including funds utilized will be displayed at prominent places. This is expected to increase transparency and accountability in programme implementation.
- ❖ The Chief Administrator, KBK, Deputy Chief Administrators, KBK and all senior officers have been requested to hold public hearings in the KBK districts, hear grievances of local people and help redress their grievances including irregularities, if any, committed in programme implementation.
- ❖ With a view to increasing direct interaction with local people at Gram Panchayat and Block levels, Gramsat pilot project has been launched in the KBK districts. This initiative has also helped video-conferencing with rural people of the region. Hon'ble Prime Minister and the Hon'ble Chief Minister have also participated in video-conferences. Chief Secretary, Odisha and the Development Commissioner-cum-Additional

Chief Secretary have been organizing Video-conferences with KBK Collectors and Deputy Chief Administrators from time to time.

**MONITORING OF GENERAL AND SPECIAL SCHEMES IN K.B.K. DISTRICTS.**

Various schemes and projects supported by Central as well as State Governments through Plan and Non Plan initiatives are implemented in KBK districts through the Line Departments of State Government. These schemes and projects are closely monitored by Chief Administrator, KBK during his extensive field visits and review meetings. Monthly and quarterly mile stones are prescribed during reviews against the annual targets, and achievements are reviewed at regular intervals i.e. once in two months. Each project costing Rs. 30.00 lakh or above is monitored visually/through latest photographs to find out the actual progress during the period under review. The presentations made during the 'review meetings' indicating the status of each project are uploaded to the KBK Web-site to maintain transparency and to enhance accountability of field functionaries. As a result of photo-monitoring of projects, implementation of schemes and projects have improved in terms of quality as well as quantity. As such, a large number of projects which had been languishing due to inadequate attention for years together have either been completed or are nearing completion.