

## **Sub-Theme : Inclusive and Equitable Water Governance**

### **Topic: Institutional Reforms and strengthening**

#### Background:

India faces complex and multi-faceted water challenges, thus requiring governance, institutional capacity, and long-term planning for achieving water security. Government of India has undertaken comprehensive institutional strengthening and reforms across the entire water value chain—spanning groundwater regulation, participatory irrigation governance, floodplain zoning, dam safety, river basin planning, urban water reuse, digitalization, research and innovation, and community participation. Various State Government have also enacted many laws for water security. It has resulted in a decisive shift from fragmented, supply-centric approach towards integrated, risk-informed, participatory, and data-driven approach, leading to resilience, equity, and sustainable economic growth through water management.

#### Objective:

- Showcase India's journey of institutional strengthening and reforms in the water sector, including a few success stories;
- Highlight success of governance, regulatory, digital, and participatory reforms;
- Facilitate dialogue on scaling institutional best practices across various sectors and agencies.
- Highlight new ideas for institutional reform for water security for Nation by 2047.

#### Suggested Sub-Topics:

- Showcase how Governments' initiatives reshaped India's approach to integrated and equitable water governance, including future strategies.
- Role of participatory irrigation management towards equity, efficiency, and accountability.
- Demonstrate role of dam safety, sedimentation management and river governance framework towards long-term water security and climate resilience.
- Role of Digitalization and data-driven governance towards better water management.
- Role of IEC frameworks, community participation, and incentive mechanisms in making water governance inclusive and people-centric.
- Bottlenecks in more aggressive participation of private sector in water management.

#### Expected outcome:

- Understanding impact of institutional reforms and role of strong institutions, apart from infrastructure, on water security, equity and resilience.
- Identification of scalable best practices in groundwater regulation, participatory irrigation, flood management, and digital governance;
- Way forward for various stakeholders for inclusive and equitable water governance.

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