

**Government of West Bengal  
Department of Panchayats & Rural Development  
63, N.S. Road (1<sup>st</sup> floor), Kolkata-1**

**No. 5415(37) -RD(SGSY)/20M-13/2005**

**Kolkata, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2007**

**From:** Dr. M.N.Roy, IAS

Principal Secretary to the Government of West Bengal

**To:** 1) The Sabhadhipati,

Zilla Parishad/Mahakuma Parishad

2) The District Magistrate

3) The Principal Secretary, Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council

**Sub: Role of Gram Panchayat in implementation of SGSY and other SHG based programs and the duties of G.P. resource persons**

Sir,

You are well aware that the State Government has taken the strategy of organizing the poor in Self Help groups (SHGs) under SGSY or similar programs and empowering the SHGs for reaching benefits of various social and economic development programs to their members.. The State Government has also decided that the Panchayats should be the main force behind organizing and empowering the SHGs. The strategy also demands strong convergence between the Panchayats and the SHGs. Holding monthly review meeting with SHGs and maintenance of SHG data are two major responsibilities of Gram Panchayats apart from promoting SHGs and regular nurturing of SHGs. It has also been observed that formation of SHG organizations at different levels of panchayats has had tremendous impact upon lives of poor women. This is being successfully implemented in fifteen selected blocks of the state and based on that experience it has been decided that all the SHGs within each Gram Sansad should be organized in sub clusters (upasangha) and all sub-clusters within each G.P. should be organized into clusters (sangha). P & RD Department has already issued guidelines in Bengali for formation of sub clusters and clusters vide memo no. 2284(37)-RD/ SGSY/20M-13/2005 dated 28th March 2007. The clusters, with the support of the Gram Panchayats will be responsible for formation of new SHGs and upasanghas ( sub-clusters), organizing their trainings and monitoring their progress. But building up capacities of clusters to perform

these tasks will require tremendous facilitation at all levels and it will take some time to form functional clusters in all G.P.s. Till date, we have 833 numbers of clusters throughout the state. As Gram Panchayats will ultimately be responsible for promotion and monitoring of SHGs and SHG based higher organizations, they need some assistance for better delivery of SHG related services. Thus it has been decided that two resource persons per G.P. should be identified who will assist G.P.s for SHG related works and will act as SHG facilitators at G.P.level. In those G.P.s where clusters are already in place, there is no need to select G.P. resource persons as G.P.s can entrust the clusters to perform the duties of the resource persons.

Following guidelines are issued clarifying the roles of G.P.s and the resource persons and other agencies connected with SHG facilitation:-

1. At each G.P., there will be 2-3 resource persons who will be member of SHGs, preferably group leaders who are competent. Resource persons will act as SHG facilitators at G.P.level  
Their main duties will be i) monitoring ii) promoting SHGs (optional) &SHG sub-clusters (upasangha) iii) maintenance of SHG data iv) organizing G.P.level SHG training
2. In every month, G.P. resource persons will hold meeting with group leaders at Gram Sansad level and collect data regarding cash credit utilization, skill training needs of group members etc. She will prepare a report prior to the G.P.level monthly meeting on SHGs on 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday and on the basis of this report G.P. Pradhan will review monthly progress of the groups in presence of group leaders. This practice will be continued till upasangha is formed at Gram Sansad level. After formation of upasangha, President and secretary of upasangha will take the responsibility of monitoring its member SHGs and they will represent all SHGs within the gram sansad in monthly review meeting at G.P.level. . Hence, initiatives should be taken for early formation of upasangha for better management and monitoring of groups.
3. Resource person will regularly update SHG register in the prescribed format maintained by G.P. DRDCs will circulate standardized format developed at state level to all G.P.s.
4. District resource persons who received training at state level and obtained qualifying marks will impart training to G.P. resource persons as per training module developed at state level. Initially, they may need support of external facilitators (DTA/ experienced NGOs) in some districts. Care must be taken to ensure that proper training materials are given to the trainees at the time of training.

5. G.P. will be responsible for promotion and monitoring of SHGs. Executive Assistant will be the nodal officer at G.P.level. G.P. will get fund directly from DRDC for SHG promotion, SHG monitoring and training of SHGs as per scale fixed by P & RD Department. G.P. will give remuneration to group promoters, resource persons and trainers on the basis of services rendered by them and as per prescribed rates.
6. WDOs/Gram sevikas will be the block nodal officer for SHG related works. They should be properly oriented before taking up this job.
7. After receiving information from G.P. that upasanghas ( sub-clusters) have been formed within G.P., block nodal officer will proceed for formation of G.P. level sangha ( cluster).The detailed guidelines about formation of clusters have already been issued by P & R.D. Department.
8. In each month BDO/ Joint BDO should review progress of SHG works. They will hold monthly meeting with Executive Assistants and cluster leaders/resource persons. It will be better to go for fixed day meeting (preferably 3rd Friday). After getting reports from G.P.s in the prescribed format, block nodal officer will compile the reports and B.D.O.s will send it to the Project Directors of DRDCs within 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.
9. DRDCs will hold fixed day monthly meeting (preferably 4<sup>th</sup> Friday) with block nodal officers of SGSY and WDOs and Gramsevikas. Lead Bank Manager may remain present in this meeting for effective and fruitful discussion.
10. Training of district resource persons has been completed. DRDCs should take steps for training of G.P. resource persons and for formation of upasangha at G.S.level and sangha at G.P.level. The process of formation of upasanghas and sanghas should be completed within the next 12 months for which action plan must be prepared by DRDCs.
11. Capacity building of Sanghas and upasanghas are most vital components of this process. Hence close monitoring and organizing training of office bearers of sub clusters and executive committee members of clusters are very important for formation of functional clusters. Moreover, developing SHG trainers at district and G.P.level is not a one-time exercise and this continuous process should be properly looked into.
12. Preparation of capacity building plan of each district is a must considering all types of trainings at district, block and G.P. levels.
13. Thrust is to be given to ensure functional and effective cluster organizations as this will pave the way for successful SHG movement in the state.

You are requested to circulate this instruction to all the Gram Panhayats, Panchayat Samities, Standing Committee members concerned of the Zilla Parishads, the Block Development Officers and Sub Divisional Officers, District level officers associated with SHG based programs so that they play their roles appropriately in smoothening SHG movement in the district. Model format for SHG register and revised format for G.P.level monthly review meeting are enclosed.

Yours faithfully ,



(M.N.Roy)

Principal Secretary to  
the Government of West Bengal

**No. 5415(37)/19 -RD(SGSY)/20M-13/2005**

**Kolkata, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2007**

**Copy forwarded for information and necessary action to:**

1-19) The Project Director, DRD Cell,  
Jalpaiguri / Coochbehar / Hooghly / Howrah / Burdwan / Birbhum / Paschim Medinipur  
/PurbaMedinipur / Bankura / DakshinDinajpur / Malda / Murshidabad /Nadia/  
North24Parganas / Purulia / South24Parganas / UttarDinajpur Zilla Parishad / Siliguri  
Mahakuma Parishad and Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council.

(Saswati Banerjee)

State Coordinator (WD) &  
OSD & Ex-Officio Deputy Secretary  
to the Government of West Bengal