



T. Vijay Kumar
Joint Secretary
Tel. No. 23382313
Fax No. 23387536

Email: yjthallam@gmail.com, tvijay.kumar@nic.in

ग्रामीण विकास मंत्रालय
ग्रामीण विकास विभाग
भारत सरकार

कृषि भवन, नई दिल्ली - 110 001
Ministry of Rural Development
Deptt. of Rural Development
Government of India
Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi - 110 001

D.O. No. J.11011/01/2010-SGSY-I
Date: 8th November, 2010

Dear Shri

As you are aware the Hon'ble Finance Minister in his last Budget Speech announced Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP) as a sub - component of the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) to meet the specific needs of women farmers and achieve socio-economic and technical empowerment of the rural women farmers, predominantly small and marginal farmers. The Ministry of Rural Development has been allocated Rs. 100 crore for implementing MKSP.

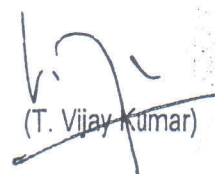
In order to operationalize MKSP, draft guidelines have been prepared after consultation with the experts working in this area. The draft guidelines are enclosed with my letter. The guideline may also be accessed on the website of this Ministry (www.rural.nic.in). This Ministry proposes to discuss the draft guidelines with the states in a workshop scheduled to be held at NIRD, Hyderabad from 18th November - 19th November, 2010. I request you to furnish comments on the draft guidelines to enable us to discuss the same in the proposed workshop at Hyderabad. I also request you to nominate an officer well versed with the subject from your Department along with the two resource persons for the said workshop. The resource persons selected should be either from Non Government Organization (NGO) working in the area of agriculture based livelihood centred around women or they could be from financial institutions involved in the projects of similar nature such as NABARD. The nominations along with their contact numbers can be communicated by e-mail at sudhir.s@nic.in. The comments on the draft guidelines can also be communicated at the same e-mail id.

The Guidelines on MKSP is expected to be circulated among the states by 1st December, 2010. I request the states to circulate the guidelines to all DRDAs, other government institutions executing similar projects, NGOs working in the area of agriculture based livelihood with focus on women and other appropriate agencies in order to give it wide publicity. Subsequently, we expect the states to start submitting their proposals by 20th December, 2010 under MKSP. This Ministry would make an effort to sanction the projects within one and half months after submission of proposals under MKSP.

With regards,

Yours sincerely

The Secretary
Department of Rural Development
All States / UTs


(T. Vijay Kumar)

Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)

Rural women form the most productive work force in the economy of majority of the developing nations including India. Agriculture, the single largest production endeavour in India, contributing to 16% of the GDP is increasingly becoming a female activity. Agriculture sector employs 80% of all economically active women; they comprise 33% of the agricultural labour force and 48% of self employed farmers. About 18% of the farm families in India, according to NSSO Reports are reported to be headed by women. Beyond the conventional market – oriented, narrower definition of ‘productive workers’, almost all women in rural India can be considered as ‘farmers’ in some sense, working as agricultural labourers, unpaid workers in the family farm enterprises or combination of the two.

Women in Agriculture are generally not able to access extension services and production assets like seed, water, credit, subsidy etc. As most of them are not recognized as farmers for want of ownership of land, they are not considered as beneficiaries of various government programmes / services. The wage differentials between men and women being adverse to them, the situation is further aggravated. Some of the tasks performed by the women are not valued adequately and considered less important economically.

Further, due to multiple roles that a woman has to perform within the family and the farm, her access to knowledge and information, is constrained and therefore her opportunities get limited.

To improve the present status of women in Agriculture, and to enhance the opportunities for her empowerment, Government of India has announced “**Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana**” (MKSP), as **a sub component of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)**

and decided to provide support to the tune of Rs. 100 crore during 2010-11 budget.

2. Objectives of MKSP

The primary objective of the MKSP is to empower women in agriculture by making systematic investments to enhance their participation and productivity, as also create and sustain agriculture based livelihoods of rural women. By establishing efficient local resource based agriculture, wherein women in agriculture gain more control over the production resources and manage the support systems, the scheme seeks to enable them to gain better access to the inputs and services provided by the government and other agencies. Once the production capacities of women in agriculture improve, food security ensues for their families and communities.

Specific objectives of MKSP are as under:

- To enhance the participation and productivity of women in agriculture
- To create sustainable agricultural livelihood opportunities for women in agriculture
- To improve the skills and capabilities of women in agriculture to support farm and non-farm-based activities
- To ensure food and nutrition security at the household and the community level.
- To enable women to have better access to inputs and services of the government and other agencies

3. Expected Outcomes

- (a)** Net increase in the incomes of women in agriculture on a sustainable basis.
- (b)** Improvement in food and nutritional security of women in agriculture and their families

- (c) Increase in area under cultivation and food production by women
- (d) Increased levels of skills and performance by women in agriculture
- (e) Increased access of women in agriculture to productive land, inputs, credit, technology and information
- (f) Drudgery reduction for women in agriculture through use of gender friendly tools / technologies
- (g) Improved market access for women's produce/products
- (h) Increased soil health and fertility to sustain agriculture based livelihoods
- (i) Increased visibility of women in agriculture as an interest group in agricultural policy

An indicative list of expected outcomes and their corresponding indicators is attached as **Annexure- I**.

4. Approach:

MKSP recognizes the centrality of women in the processes of sustainable agriculture and therefore aims to provide direct and indirect support to enable them to achieve higher agriculture production and productivity. It will initiate a learning cycle by which women are enabled to learn and adopt new technologies and farming systems. MKSP will be implemented as a sub-component of NRLM through specially formulated projects.

5. Strategy:

The Project Implementing Agency (PIA) under MKSP is expected to follow the below mentioned strategy:

- Use of locally adopted, resource conserving, knowledge-centric, farmer-led and environment-friendly technologies.

- Coordinated action by communities and community based institutions such as the women self help groups, their federations, NGOs and farmer groups, farm schools, farmer field schools and others.
- Inculcating community mobilization skills among women in agriculture thereby demonstrating and articulating the benefits of the sustainable agricultural methods to them.
- The MKSP will enhance the skill base of the women in Agriculture to enable them to pursue their livelihoods on a sustainable basis. Capacity building of women and skill up-gradation through handholding, formal and vocational courses will be emphasized.
- The MKSP will strategize in a manner to target the Poorest of the Poor and most vulnerable women such as SC/ST, minorities, and the landless.
- Participatory approaches and bottom up planning will constitute the core values of the MKSP.

6. Funding

MoRD would provide funding support of up to 75% (90% for North East and hill states) to the project submitted by the state governments under MKSP. Balance is to be contributed by the respective state governments or any other donor agencies, national and international. Monetization of the PIA's contributions to the project in the form of manpower, infrastructure provision will be permissible and such contribution would be deemed as contribution in kind.

7. Processes under the MKSP:

- (i) Identification of the project areas

Availability of active women groups and/or NGOs / CSOs or, the potential for formation of such women groups will form the basis for identification of the project area.

(ii) Implementing Agency:

PIAs may pose projects in partnership with women centric NGOs, CSO, CBOs, SHG Federations, Women Organizations active in agriculture activities, Panchayati Raj Institutions or Women Development Corporations, other Government organizations under MKSP. A consortium of the PIAs may be allowed for bringing about synergies of scale and resources. The details of the PIA which are to be submitted with the project is attached as **Annexure II.**

(iii) Approval of Special Projects under MKSP

The Special Projects pre-appraised and recommended by State Governments will be submitted to the SGSY Division of the Ministry of Rural Development for consideration. The Division will get the project appraised by an identified agency prior to placing them before the PSC and the PAC.

a) Project Screening Committee

The Projects submitted would be examined and considered by the Project Screening Committee (PSC) before they are submitted to the Project Approval Committee with its recommendation. The composition of the Project Screening Committee would be as under:

Joint Secretary (SGSY), D/o Rural Development	Chairman
Joint Secretary (Extension) / RKVY, DAC or his/her nominee not below the rank of DS/ Director	Member
Director/Dy. Adviser (RD), Planning Commission	Member
Director/Deputy Secretary (IFD), D/o Rural Development	Member
Representatives from the Appraising Agencies Special Invitee/Expert (Two)	Member

Representative from the MW&CD	Member
Director/Deputy Secretary/Joint Director dealing	Member-Convener

with the Subject

The Committee would on the basis of predefined criteria would identify and refer the screened project to be placed before the Project Approval Committee (PAC) for final approval after which the project will be sanctioned.

b) Project Approval Committee

The composition of the Project Approval Committee (PAC) would be as under:

Secretary, M/o Rural Development	
Chairman	
Adviser (RD), Planning Commission	Member
AS&FA, M/o Rural Development	Member
DG – CAPART (or his nominee)	Member
DG, NIRD (or his nominee)	Member
Joint Secretary (Extension)/(RKVY), M/o Agriculture	Member
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development	Member
Special Invitee (Expert)	Member
Joint Secretary (SGSY)	Member-Convener

(iv) Role of the State Rural Development Department:

State specific Special Project Proposals would have to be routed through the Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Department. The State Department will process the project proposals, organize pre-appraisals and commit State's share wherever applicable, and recommend them to the Ministry of Rural Development. The Department may also monitor the projects and review the progress.

(v) Project Period:

Ordinarily, the projects are to be implemented within three years' time.

(vi) Release of Funds:**1st Installment:**

The first instalment (i.e. 25% of the total Project cost) will be released after the approval of the project by PAC and upon executing the MoU. The funds may be channelled through the Identified Agency.

2nd Installment

The 2nd installment of 50 % of central share will be released upon the following:

- (a) Submission of a Utilization certificate along with an expenditure statement for at least 60% of the released 1st installment funds and achievement of corresponding physical target.
- (b) Submission of year-wise audit reports of the funds utilized;
- (d) Quarterly reporting of progress in the prescribed formats
- (e) A certificate from the Implementing/Coordinating Agency that the project is being implemented as per the approved project proposal.

3rd Installment

The 3rd and final installment of 25% of central share will be released upon the following:

- (a) Utilization of 75% of the total available funds and achievement of corresponding physical targets.
- (b) Submission of year-wise audit reports of the funds utilized;
- (c) Regular reporting of progress in the prescribed format;
- (d) A certificate from the Implementing/Coordinating Agency that the project is being implemented as per the approved project proposal.
- (f) Before the release of the 3rd and final installment, it will be open to MoRD to have verification of the progress of the project by a third party / independent agency.

(vii) Utilization of Interest earned on central release (s):

The interest amount accrued on Government releases, if any, shall be adjusted against the Government share of the Project cost at the time of release of the third and final instalment.

(viii) Releasing of Matching Share:

The State Government is required to release its corresponding matching share within a month of receipt of the respective installment of the central share.

(ix) Submission of progress reports:

a. The implementing agency/coordinating agency shall submit the progress report of the project by 15th of the month succeeding every quarter in the format prescribed by the Ministry. Failure to furnish the progress report would make implementing/coordinating agency liable to refund the Central funds released for the Project along with interest.

b. It shall be open to the Ministry of Rural Development to prescribe such conditions, as it deems fit, from time to time to ensure proper execution of the project.

(x) Monitoring and review of the Project:

Monitoring and review of the Projects sanctioned and implemented will be done at two levels i.e. at the Central level by a designated agency and at the State level by the RD department. 1.5% of the central share in a project will be given to agencies identified at central level for appraisal, fund routing, monitoring and co-ordination.

(a) State Level:

For monitoring and periodic review of the sanctioned project, a Committee at the State level, headed by the Secretary (RD) of the State is to be constituted who will be responsible for reviewing and monitoring the Project/s. The State Committee shall have participation from Agriculture and Women and Child Development Departments. The

Committee shall undertake quarterly reviews with the PIAs and members of the consortia as the case may be. The State governments may also constitute a State Level Technical Support Group to assist the PIAs in the implementation of the Projects.

(b) Central Level:

At the Central Level, the PSC will periodically review and monitor the special projects sanctioned under the scheme. PSC will brief the PAC about the progress of the ongoing projects periodically.

(xi) Audit:

(i) The Ministry of Rural Development retains the right to carry out internal audit of funds and financial implications of the project, if deemed necessary.

(ii) Financial audit is to be carried out by the Chartered Accountant of the Project Implementing Agency or any other authority appointed by the State Government. The audit report together with action taken on the auditor's observations and physical progress under the project shall be furnished at the time of release of 2nd / 3rd instalment of the Central funds.

8. Formulation of Projects under MKSP

I. About the Project

- (i) As the objective of the scheme is to empower women to sustain and improve agriculture based livelihoods by establishing efficient local resource based agriculture, with women in agriculture gaining more control over the production resources and managing support systems, the project objectives should be explicitly stated and formulated accordingly.

- (ii) The Projects should be conceived in a manner so as to provide end to end solutions. Provision of a complete package of 'end-to-end' services through linking up women farmers with the community based organizations providing access to a complete package of options from credit, insurance and inputs, to procurement, value addition and marketing of produce should be made in the project in order to make it a holistic project. To the extent possible, there should not be any gaps in the project and the loop must be closed.
- (iii) The scaling up strategy with the help of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) should be clearly mentioned in the project. How Community Resource Persons (CRPs) and Best Practicing Farmers (BPFs) can drive the Project needs to be outlined clearly under the project.
- (iv) Collaboration strategy in partnering with CBOs, NGOs, Research Institutes, and Private Sector etc. should be mentioned in the project. A consortium of agencies coming together to formulate and implement the project would be permissible.
- (v) Proposed State, district, blocks where the MKSP project is to be implemented should be specified along with details of coverage.
- (vi) Project period needs to be specified.
- (vii) Project should lead to substantial tangible and intangible socio-economic benefits.

- (viii) Project should have a well defined internal monitoring systems to track the progress ie., physical and financial achievements along with the social progress.
- (ix) There should be a sound information dissemination strategy using the Information Technology and extensive use of videos for effective communication.

II. The components under the project:

- a)** The organization and mobilization of women in agriculture into groups (SHGs/ Federations / Women Farmer organizations) should be a critical element in the project. A logical corollary to this activity is the capacity building of women in Agriculture in order to enable them to manage and sustain their activities.
- b)** The project may follow the Group Approach for the delivery of services.
- c)** Enhanced access to assets (leasing of water bodies and land etc.), for the benefit of women in Agriculture as also creation of productive assets should be given due importance.
- d)** Under the knowledge dissemination strategy, training / demonstrations, farmer-scientist interactions, exposure visits etc. of women in Agriculture may be included in order to impart them with necessary farming skills and techniques. Establishing institutional mechanisms for knowledge building, management and dissemination by women could be another element of this component. Knowledge, particularly relating to markets, post harvest practices and village level value addition should be included for the dissemination strategy.

- e) Agriculture related productivity enhancement techniques/ measures should be given due importance.
- f) The agriculture strategy adopted under the Project should revolve around local natural resource based sustainable agriculture.
- g) The activities of the project may blend Agriculture and Allied sector activities as also the post harvest processing activities that add value to the agricultural produce. Likewise, management of cattle essentially considered as women's domain should be given due weightage under the scheme.
- h) Improving market access to women in agriculture should be a key element under the project.
- i) Drudgery reduction through effective use of gender-friendly tools and transfer of technologies to women in agriculture should also be made a key feature of the scheme.
- j) In order to optimize the benefits from the project under MKSP, a well defined convergence strategy should be mentioned at central, state, district and block levels in order to leverage schemes of various Ministries /Departments such as MGNREGA, ATMA RKVY, Watershed Development Programme, National Food Security Mission of India (NFSM) etc. and similar schemes aiming at empowerment of women in Agriculture under the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- k) The projects under MKSP should also incorporate planting of trees and fodder availability in order to derive maximum benefits out of the agricultural activities under the project.
- l) Livestock activities can be included wherever there is genuine integration with agriculture activities.

- m) Food and Nutrition security of the women in agriculture at household and community level should be made an integral part of the project. Institutional mechanisms for ensuring household and community level food security systems may be clearly mentioned.

III. Eligible Items of Expenditure:

Component-wise expenditure likely to be incurred for the project, like beneficiary mobilization, cost of training and capacity building, input costs, monitoring fees, tracking, administrative expenditure etc. must be mentioned in the project document. Matching share of 25% by the State Government / Project Implementing Agency may be mentioned.

The project should incorporate expenditure on various components indicated under MKSP to arrive at the project cost. The administrative expenses for managing the project shall not exceed 5% with the condition that savings if any in the administrative component may be used for furthering the activities of the Project but not vice versa. Purchase of vehicles is not admissible in the projects. No cost escalation shall be borne by the Government of India.

At the end of the project period, the ownership and management rights of the infrastructure and assets created if any, under the project, shall remain with the participating women groups/organizations.

Reallocation of funds not exceeding to 5% of the total project cost among different project activities will be permissible to accommodate any innovation within the project. However,

reallocation on account of administrative expenditure shall not be permitted.

IV. Any Additional Information that may be relevant to the Project Proposal may be mentioned in the Project Document.

9. Appraisal of the Projects

The PIAs may submit their projects to the Government of India or to the State Governments. Once the projects are pre-appraised by the department(s) concerned, the project will be sent to the Designated Agency by the MoRD for appraisal and making recommendations as the case may be, after duly examining their financial status, experience in implementing such projects, infrastructure facilities and other indicators before consideration of the proposal by PAC. An indicative set of appraisal criteria is attached as **Annexure-III**.

Necessary conditions for project approval

- PIA's past record and experience of at least 3 years, especially in agriculture extension and women empowerment.
- Recommendation by the identified Appraising Agency.
- Commitment of 25% of the Project Cost by State Govt. / PIA.
- The central thematic livelihood component of the Project shall be anchored in dominant concerns such as Climate Change, Millets production and processing, Drudgery reduction, Bio-diversity, Food and Nutritional Security, Conservation and improved access to natural resources, Pasture and Wasteland Development, etc.

- Exit and Scaling up strategy
- Predominant focus on vulnerable communities (ST/SC, Minorities and women headed households)
- Innovative projects in vulnerable areas (ecologically fragile, rain-fed, drought and flood prone areas, etc.)
- Comprehensive project design – concept to completion

10. Project Completion

Documentation is an essential requirement of the project along with video recording for important project milestones, giving the status of the project participants before and after. It should cover the details of deliverables as indicated in the project and achievements made against these deliverables. The completion report of the project should be made available by the PIA to MoRD/Designated Agency within three months from the date of project completion along with final utilization certificate and audit reports and funds that remained unspent, if any.

Annexure-I

Matrix of Outcome and Measurement

Outcome	Indicators
Net increase in the income of women in agriculture on sustainable basis	Income, livelihoods diversification (having a multiple livelihood option)
Increase in total cultivated area	Cropping intensity, gross cropped area, reduction in fallow area
Increase in the food production	Total production, productivity, farm related activities (integrated farming systems)
Increase in benefit and reduction in cost	Monetary and non-Monetary indicators
Soil health and Fertility (environment)	Soil organic matter, microbial biomass carbon, Nitrogen mineralization potential
Increased visibility of women in agriculture as an interest group in agricultural policy	Who takes decision in the household, membership in group, increased demand for extension services, increased demand for drudgery reduction tools and technology used in Agriculture.
Increase in the skill performance levels of women in agriculture	Training, study tour, exposure visits, demonstration, participating in action research, technology they are using, (deskilling)
Drudgery reduction for women in agriculture under the Project area through use of gender friendly tools/technologies	Tools and techniques developed to reduced drudgery
Increased access to input and services	Inputs, markets, credit, information, technology

Profile of the Project Implementing Agency (PIA)

- (a) Basic information: Name of the Organization, its full postal address, email ids and telephone number
- (b) Profile of Project Proposer- names of the head of the Organization and project-co-ordinator, their background, academic qualifications, experience, previous responsibilities held, duration in present organization and nature of duties handled
- (c) If the organization is a part of or sister concern of a larger entity, details may be given
- (d) Details of specialization of the organization, its primary activities, projects handled and duration of exposure to the subject. The total project size handled so far may be given.
- (e) Similar work handled in the past along with its size should be clearly mentioned.

Indicative Appraisal Criteria:

- (1) Increase net incomes of women farmers through adoption of low-cost production protocols.
- (2) Production protocols that address nutritional security of women/child.
- (3) Production protocols and strategies that enhance biodiversity and enhances natural resource base.
- (4) Address soil-health and environmental issues.
- (5) Promote only those agro-practices that eliminate threats to health of women/child.
- (6) Production technology should reduce drudgery for women farmers.
- (7) Generate a large pool of 'bare-foot experts' for knowledge dissemination of farm skills.
- (8) Cost effectiveness of the project. High benefit -cost ratio is a desirable feature of the project under MKSP.