



"SWAYAMSIDDHA" AN EMPOWERING PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

"Swayamsiddha is the flagship programme of Ministry of Women & Child Development for holistic empowerment of women". The scheme for the empowerment of women was launched in 2001- women empowerment year. Its an Integrated women Empowerment Programme (IWEP). Swayamsiddha was launched in February 2001 in 650 blocks including the 238 IMY blocks in 35 states / UTs with total budget of Rs. 116.30 crores. Goa and the UTs of Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Chandigarh did not show any progress in the scheme and therefore the Scheme was withdrawn from them and the blocks were re allocated to Rajasthan, Bihar and Sikkim. Although the scheme will end in March 2008, the expenditure till 2006 is Rs. 71.76 crores (61.70 %). The Scheme is implemented through the ICDS set up in most of the states with no additional manpower for project implementation and monitoring in most of the states. The State functionaries do not get any extra remuneration / incentive for the additional responsibilities of swayam-siddha that they have to perform. As a result, it took two years for the states to initiate project activities at the field level. The Nodal officers and Master Trainers selected by the state Governments were Govt. officers who were transferred very often resulting serious disruptions in project implementation. By the end of the Scheme all women participating in the scheme will be part of strong, self-reliant and functional SHGs, clusters and federations. The project will be 10 years duration commencing on 1st April 2007, the end date of swayamsiddha phase-I.

Keywords: Swayamsiddha, Ministry of Women & Child Development, Mahila samriddhi Yojana.

INTRODUCTION

"Swayamsiddha is the flagship programme of Ministry of Women & Child Development for holistic empowerment of women". The scheme for the empowerment of women was launched in 2001- women empowerment year. Its an Integrated women Empowerment Programme (IWEP) .The Scheme was evolved from an earlier scheme Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY) .The first self help group (shg) based women's empowerment programme of Minsitry of WCD. Indira Mahila Yojana was launched in 1995-96 in 238 blocks in the country and Rs. 12.20 crores was released to states under the scheme for formation of Self Help Groups, Clusters and Block Federations and related training programmes. About 40000 SHGs were formed under IMY and the expenditure was Rs. 7.20 crores. The Scheme was not a success because it had no structured training programmes and there was no provision for monitoring, administrative expenses etc.

An improved version of SHG based women's empowerment program, namely swayamsidha was launched in February, 2001 in 650 blocks including the

238 IMY blocks in 35 states / UTS with total budget of Rs. 116.30 Crores.

This scheme formed by re-casting of IMY and its merging with Mahila samriddhi Yojana, seeks to empower women through awareness generation, achivement of economic strength through micro-level income generating activities and establish convergence of various service such as literacy, health, rural development etc. It also aims at organizing women into self-help groups to form a strong institutional base.

RESPONSES OF STATE GOVT

Gender development and mainstreaming requires gender responsive policy interventions. Govt. recognized that women are equal players in economy whether they participate directly as workers or indirectly as numbers of care economy.

State Govt. gives very high priorities to women related issues. State focus is not only restricted to coventional

issues like education, health but it also involves other areas of public expenditure, revenue and policy with a gender perspective. The Govt. intends to make women

self-reliant and every walk of life. The state govt. has demonstrated its efforts towards empowerment of women through various initiatives.

Department of women and child development is running this mainly beneficiary oriented scheme. These schemes indirectly support the employment of women as in the nutrition programme, which provide business to self help groups. Vocational and professional training under various schemes also help women and adolescent girls in starting self employment ventures.

Swayam-Sidha Yojana has been started to empower women and make them financially independent.

OBJECTIVES

Its long term objective is all round empowerment of women especially socially and economically, by ensuring them direct access to and control over, resources through a sustained process of mobilization and convergence of all the on-going sectoral programmes, the immediate objectives are as below -

- Establishment of self reliant women's self - help groups (SHGs),
- Creation of confidence and awareness among members of SHGs regarding women's status, health, nutrition, education, sanitation and hygiene, legal rights, economics upliftment and other social economic and political issues.
- Strengthening and institutionalizing the savings habit in rural women and their control over economic resources.
- Improving access of women to micro credit.
- Involvement of women in local level planning. and
- Convergence of services of DWCD and other departments.

FEATURES

- Women will be encouraged to form groups according to their socio- economic status and felt needs, after which they will network with other groups.
- Association of Govt. and panchayat officials/office bearers as participants/ facilitators.
- Both government departments/agencies and NGOs, as also district/ intermediary level panchayat institutions, will be eligible to implement the project at the block level.
- Office bearers of IWEP societies will be elected from amongst the women members, including ex-officio women members,

- In addition to empowering SHG members per se, by federating and networking strong pressure groups for women's empowerment/ right will be formed,
- A subsidy free approach to women's empowerment will be inculcated and
- Convergence of different agencies for women's empowerment and integrated projects accessing delivery of different schemes from a single window.

PHASING

By the very nature of the project, it will have the following natural phases-

- Phase1 - Formation of self help groups.
- Phase2 - Group stabilization and Growth.
- Phase3 - Sustainability and self-reliance

SELECTION OF BLOCKS

While all the 238 blocks of IMY will be retained the new 212+200= 412 blocks will be selected keeping in view the following-

- Preference will be given to areas where similar schemes do not exist and there is no group movement.
- Social indicators are unfavorable to women's development and
- State Govt., committing additional resources and linkage for women's development, and
- Priority will be given to blocks having a large number of populations below the poverty line and high proportion of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population.

This scheme will be implemented by the state governments through the identified Nodal Departments, state level and implementing agencies at the Block level (PIAs-Project implementing Agency). A PIA may be any appropriate Govt. or Nongovernmental including district/ intermediary level Panchayat institutions, Govt. departments / organizations. The PIAs will prepare block specific projects, which would projects for 4-5 years incorporating the following four elements-

- Group formation/ mobilization activities.
- Community oriented innovative interventions.
- Other schemes of DWCD namely NORAD, STEP, SEP and AGP and other schemes, too, if the need for the same and
- Schemes of other departments whether converged under GOI directions or state government

DWCD- Department of women and child Development.

SEP- Socio-economic programme.

NORAD-

AGP- Awareness Generation programme.

STEP- Support to training and employment programme.

Table 1: Physical Progress under Swayamsiddha scheme till 31st March 2008.

S.NO.	Activities	Target	Achievement
1.	Self help Groups formation	65000	69803
2.	Women are covered under the scheme	11.37 Lakhs	10.02 Lakhs
3.	No of SHGs which are trained in all basic subjects	65000	65889
4.	No of SHGs which are trained in social issues	65000	63731
5.	SHGs involved in saving activities	65000	68220
6.	Savings Amount of SHGs	--	168.82 Cr.
7.	No of SHGs have been giving loan to each other	65000	63740
8.	No of SHGs have been taken loan from banks	65000	36574
9.	Loan Amount	-	167.61 Cr
10.	No of SHGs have been deposited in banks and open bank a/c	65000	66369
11.	No of SHGs which are trained in production activities	65000	55639
12.	SHGs which are benefiting from convergence with other Govt Schemes	65000	42386
13.	No of community Assets	650	5424
14.	Clusters of SHGs have been formed	6500	9090
15.	Block level federations of SHGs have been formed	650	602

Source: Annual Report 2008-09

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- Various training programme initiated in all states.
- Basic training programmes completed in most states.
- Creation of community assets is in progress in most of the states.
- 13 Quarterly meeting of state Nodal offices held.

Table 2: State wise number of Districts, Block covered & SHGs formed under Swayasiddha till 31st march 2008.

S.No	States	No. of Districts	No. of Blocks	No. of SHGs formed
1.	Andhra Pradesh	23	38	3874
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	6	6	600
3.	Assam	20	24	2400
4.	Bihar	19	63	6340
5.	Chattisgarh	16	17	1620
6.	Gujrat	20	27	2772
7.	Himachal Pradesh	7	8	969
8.	Haryana	6	13	1300
9.	Jammu& kashmir	13	13	1300
10.	Jharkhand	11	24	2427
11.	Karnataka	12	20	2992
12.	Kerala	7	18	2246
13.	Madhya Pradesh	13	36	3667
14.	Maharashtra	20	36	3922
15.	Manipur	3	3	300
16.	Meghalaya	5	5	534
17.	Mizoram	3	3	300
18.	Nagaland	5	6	600
19.	Orissa	9	36	3600
20.	Punjab	8	15	2059
21.	Rajasthan	26	30	3000
22.	Sikkim	4	5	576
23.	Tamilnadu	5	44	5452

24.	Tripura	3	3	327
25.	Uttar Pradesh	54	94	9268
26.	Uttaranchal	5	11	1100
27.	West Bengal	4	39	5184
28.	Aldaman & Nikobar Islands	3	3	225
29.	Delhi	3	4	276
30.	Lakshadweep	1	3	273
31.	Pondicherry	1	3	300
	TOTAL	335	650	69803

Source: Annual Report 2007-08

Swayamsiddha is the flagship programme of Ministry of Women and child Development for holistic empowerment of women through SHGs. Phase-1 of the scheme will end on 31st March 2008. This Ministry proposes to launch swayamsiddha Phase- II during 2008-09.

Swayamsiddha was launched in February 2001 in 650 blocks including the 238 IMY blocks in 35 states / UTs with total budget of Rs. 116.30 crores. Goa and the UTs of Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Chandigarh did not show any progress in the scheme and therefore the Scheme was withdrawn from them and the blocks were re allocated to Rajasthan, Bihar and Sikkim. Although the scheme will end in March 2008, the expenditure till 2006 is Rs. 71.76 crores (61.70 %).

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Swayam siddha Phase-I launched in 2001 was scheduled to end in March 2007 was extended by one year on account of non completion of physical and financial targets. The following are the main reasons for slow progress of the Scheme-

- Swayamsiddha implementation is additional responsibility for state government staff rendering project implementation and monitoring weak.
- Swayamsiddha is thinly spread (only one or two blocks per district are covered), making Project implementation and monitoring ineffective.
- The cost per SHG/ Block under Swayamsiddha was low because of compromising on quality of inputs to SHGs.

- Under swayamsiddha fund transfer is through state finance department to the Project Implementing Agency (PIA) which has been slow due to resource crunch faced by most states and lengthy financial procedures mandated.

Because of above reasons Ministry of women and child development proposes to launch swayasiddha Phase- II during 2008-09.

Under Swayam siddha Phase-II, this Ministry proposes to cover all districts/blocks in the country. For the purpose a concept note has been prepared. All states are requested to kindly offer views and suggestions on the concept note so that the same could be kept in view while preparing the project document.

Based on the recommendation of planning commissions and the world Bank and the experience of this ministry it is proposed to continue swayamsiddha into phase- 2 . The following strategy is proposed for swayam siddha phase 2 :-

- The scheme will cover the entire block in the country.
- The scheme will be 10 years duration
- Formation of SHGs, clusters and federations income generating activities etc will be undertaken in the first 5 years.
- Strengthening of clusters, federations, group income generation activities etc will be undertaken in the next 5 years.
- New SHGs will be formed wherever required.
- Effects will be made to take women's SHGs formed under other schemes of Govt. NGOs, Private companies; Banks, individuals etc under swayamsiddha fold for formation of clusters and block federations.
- Strengthening of such SHGs will be undertaken.
- By the end of the Scheme all women participating in the scheme will be part of strong, self-reliant and functional SHGs, clusters and federations.

The project will be 10 years duration commencing on 1st April 2007, the end date of swayamsiddha phase-I.

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