



MPEO from Kotbagudam clarifying doubts

Resource Persons

National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE)

Dr. B. Renuka Rani,
Research Associate

Dr. K. Sai Maheshwari,
Research Associate

Shri. Venkat Rao,
Research Associate

Dr. B. Sreenivas,
Consultant (Freelance)

Shri. S.M. Hassan,
Consultant (Doc)

Sh. B. Chakradhar Rao
EDP Assistant

Sh. V. Sanjeev
Technical Assistant

Department of Agriculture, Government of Andhra Pradesh

Shri. G. Mohan Reddy
Deputy Director Agriculture (Extension)
O/o Commissioner and Director Agriculture office

Shri. Venkateshwara Sharma
Deputy Director Agriculture (PP)
O/o Commissioner and Director Agriculture office

Shri. G. Krishna Reddy,
Assistant Director Agriculture (Extension)
O/o Commissioner and Director Agriculture office

District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Ranga Reddy district

Ms. Amalakumari,
Assistant Project Officer, RR district.

About the Bulletin

The purpose of this Bulletin is to document events during the orientation sessions and also the issues and questions raised by the participants and the response from the resource persons. We hope that this Bulletin will be useful for all those who are involved in the formation of Rythu Mitra Groups.

F) OTHER ISSUES

Q Whose basic responsibility is it to form RMGs and who will activate them?

A MPEOs / AEOs are responsible for formation, constant activation and proper functioning of RMGs till they become mature.

Q DRDA in Krishna district is adopting 1978 figures. Shall we adopt the same?

A Yes, norms adopted by DRDA in the concerned districts may be followed.

OPINION OF PARTICIPANTS

- A number of issues and instructions on implementation of the RMG scheme were understood clearly.
- The orientation programme clarified doubts of field level staff on formation of RMGs

SUGGESTIONS MADE BY PARTICIPANTS

- RMG group members may also be involved in the video conference. This will be more effective.
- Technical dissemination of information to farmers may be taken up through video conferencing.
- Target for formation of RMGs may also be given month-wise instead of at one go.
- Lead bank managers may also be invited to participate in this programme
- Power Point presentation may be made in Telugu for better understanding of field level staff.

RMG BULLETIN is published by
The National Institute of Agricultural
Extension Management (MANAGE)
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad.
Tel: +91-40-24016702 - 706; Fax: +91-40-24015388
Website: www.manage.gov.in

AND
The Department of Agriculture,
Government of Andhra Pradesh.

Chief Editors

Shri. A.K. Goel

Director General, MANAGE

Shri Sutirtha Bhattacharya

Commissioner & Director, Agriculture
Govt. of Andhra Pradesh.

Series Editor

Shri. S.M. Hassan

Consultant, MANAGE

Co-ordinating Editor

Lakshmi Murthy



RMG BULLETIN

Vol. 1 No.5 September 2003



Department of Agriculture
Government of Andhra Pradesh

Orientation on Rythu Mitra Groups Khammam and Krishna Districts



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri. N.Chandrababu Naidu at Ibrahimpatnam, Krishna district addressing DW/CRA groups, school children & public on 16th August 2003 (relayed through MANAGE mobile video conferencing facility)

MANAGE has so far organized 12 programmes for 12 districts in Andhra Pradesh; and oriented about 6349 participants as per the details given below.

• JDA to AOs	=	741
• MPEOs / AEOs	=	5508
• Conveners / co-conveners	=	100

The orientations for Khammam and Krishna districts were conducted from 11-14 August 2003. During the first two days, the programme for Khammam district staff was taken up for 29 senior officers, 354 MPEOs/AEOs and 40 conveners and co-conveners of RMG. It was organized at Khammam and Bhadrachalam respectively. The next programme was arranged for Krishna district during 13-14 August

at Vijayawada and Machilipatnam where 61 senior officers, 484 MPEOs/AEOs and 4 conveners and co-conveners of RMG were oriented. At the end of each topic, the question and answer session was taken up.

VIPs observe orientation through mobile video conferencing facility at MANAGE

Dr. Ayaz Rasool Nazki, Registrar (SKUAST), Jammu alongwith Shri. Sanjeev Sharma, Public Relations Officer observed the programme and briefly interacted with participants.

Shri. Amar Prasad, Chief Executive Officer from Grameena Vikas Trust, New Delhi observed the orientation on 11.08.2003 and appreciated the efforts of MANAGE in this programme.



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SESSION

A) FORMATION OF RYTHU MITRA GROUPS

Q If a farmer is having lands in another district / mandal also and resides in the local mandal; where should he be organized?

A The farmer must be organized in the village where he actually resides - keeping in mind the imperative logistics, compatibility, socio-economic homogeneity, etc. This will keep the group intact.

Q How many farmers shall be there in a group and can 2-3 members of the same family join the RMG?

A The optimum member of farmers in a group is fifteen. Each family is to be represented in the RMG by one member only.

Q On what basis should we select tenant farmers and what are the documents to be verified?

A The tenant farmers should be selected after ascertaining in the gram sabha, and no documents need to be verified.

Q Among tenant farmers should we take only SF/ MF or can all tenant farmers be organized?

A The tenant farmers who belong to SF/MF and landless families may be considered eligible for the RMG scheme.

Q Is the membership of Rs. 20 per head and Rs. 50 per month per member thrift fixed or can we change it?

A The membership fee of Rs. 20 per member is fixed. It may not be changed. The minimum thrift targeted is Rs. 50 per head per month; it can be increased as decided by the RMG.

Q Will the RC continue separately after formation of RMGs?

A Yes, RC will continue independently. It should not be dismantled. However if they follow norms of the RMG scheme, they can be converted into RMGs.

B) MANAGEMENT OF RYTHU MITRA GROUPS

Q Should the RMGs meet once in a month or each fortnight regularly?

A As per G.O. Ms. 167 dated 25.06.2003, the RMG should meet fortnightly at a place of members' choice with fixed agenda. These RMGs may however carry out credit and thrift activity in alternate meetings (i.e. once in month). These meetings may be facilitated by the identified community organizer. The other alternate meetings may

be used for discussing matters related to development of agriculture and allied enterprises.

Q Can the RMGs discuss issues other than agricultural items?

A Yes, the groups can discuss social issues also during their regular meetings. However till the RMG is mature, it may focus on activities related to group strengthening including credit and thrift activity /agriculture activity.

Q Will the extension programmes be taken up through these RMGs?

A Yes, it is envisaged to converge extension programmes through these RMGs for the purpose of synergy and sustainability.

Q What type of activities can be taken up by these RMGs? Can they take up other financial programmes?

A The RMGs can take up activities like soil based farming; balanced use of fertilizers, organic health improvement, seed production; preparation of bio-fertilizers, vermicompost, etc. RMGs can also take up other financially sustainable group activities besides meeting the member's micro-credit requirement.



MPEO from Vijaywada (Krishna district) seeking answers to questions

Q Who has to nominate contact farmers for each RMG? Can the MPEO take it up?

A Each RMG will have a progressive farmer as a contact farmer and only the group will identify him, not the MPEO / AEO.

Q Is there any plan to train conveners & co-conveners and other members

A Yes, the Department of Agriculture will carry out training of conveners & co-conveners and other members from time to time on matters related to strengthening of RMGs

and also various technological aspects / schemes. Instructions to that effect have already been issued by Commissioner and Director Agriculture. For this purpose the required financial provision for meeting the cost of travel and related incidental charges has been made for 12 meetings in the first year (in the initial grant of Rs. 2500 per group).

C) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Q How long should the RMGs adopt thrift or should it be over after the group matures?

A The thrift is perpetual and has to continue till the group sustains. Further decision on this aspect may be taken by the concerned group but after a few years of functioning.

Q It is explained that Rs. 2500 will be released to each RMG. Will it be a grant or does it have to be refunded to the government?

A An amount of Rs. 2500 will be released on formation of each eligible RMG which is an initial grant for capacity building, maintenance of registers and exposure visits.

Q Is Rs. 15,000 a revolving fund or a matching grant? Is it refundable to the government?

A As per G.O. Ms. No. 167, dated 25.06.2003 an amount upto Rs. 15,000 will be released as a matching grant after 6-9 months depending upon their thrift amount and also maturity in group performance. This amount is not refundable to government till the group sustains.

Q Can the bank account be opened in any bank including cooperative bank?

A The bank accounts can be opened in any bank including cooperative bank.

Q Is there any committee formed at district level to monitor the programme?

A Yes, as per G.O. Ms. 167 dated 25.06.2003 a district committee headed by District Collector with JDA (Agriculture), Joint Director (Animal Husbandry), Project Director (DPAP, Project Director (DRDA), Project Coordinator (VELUGU) Lead Bank Manager, Deputy Manager (NABARD), Asst. Director (Horticulture), Asst. Director (Marketing), Asst. Director (Fisheries) as members will monitor the programme at district level.

D) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Q What is the role to be played by MPDO in this scheme?

A As per G.O. Ms. No. 167 dated 25.06.2003, MPDO will be the supervising officer in respect of the mandal be-

sides the ADA concerned. Further, as per G.O. Ms. 192, dated 26.07.2003 the MPDO will provide guidance in maintenance of accounts and the MAO, MPEOs / AEOs will work under the overall control of MPDO with regard to the formation and development of RMG.

E) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Q As per G.O. Ms. No. 167 only SF / MF / Tenant farmers are eligible. How about poultry farmers, fishermen, sheep farmers, etc.?

A As per G.O. Ms. No. 167 dated 25.06.2003 only SF / MF / Tenant farmers are to be enrolled. Other farmers viz. poultry farmers, fishermen, and sheep farmers, etc. shall also be considered under the RMG scheme if the holding size of these members is in the category of small and marginal.

Q Are the agricultural labourers eligible to become members?

A Only those Agricultural labourers are eligible to become members in the RMG who are also owning land (SF and MF) or who are taking land on lease.

Q What are the limits of land to be a SF / MF?

A Each district is following norms under DRDA schemes; the same may be adopted.

Q If a tenant farmer after taking loan disbands tenancy will he continue as an RMG member?

A His eligibility is to be seen at the time of enrollment and this has to be assessed in the gram sabha. Once enrolled he will continue to be a member subject to norms.



Chairman, AMC Kothagudam (Khammam district) seeking clarifications

Q Can the farmers of assigned lands be taken as RMG members. Are they eligible?

A Yes, the farmers of assigned lands are eligible to be enrolled as members.

Q Whether 18 years of age is compulsory?

A Yes, it is advisable to have only adult members in the RMG.