



JDA, Prakasam district interacting with MANAGE resource persons – Prakasam district

- Q Should thrift money be circulated within the group or can it be circulated outside the group also?
- A The thrift money is meant for revolving within the group to its members and not outside. This will develop management and entrepreneurial skills among the group members.
- Q The RMG shall be able to purchase the register, passbook, etc. if the initial grant of Rs. 2,500 per group is given to them soon.
- A This initial grant will be released immediately after formation of groups and opening of bank account. Out of the above amount registers, individual passbooks, etc. may be purchased as being done by SHG.
- Q Should MPEO / AEO / MAO recommend to the bank to open an account and should they countersign?

Resource Persons

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A MPEO / AEO / MAO may facilitate the above process of opening the bank account. However counter signature is not to be done. The convener and co-convener should approach the bank after passing the resolution in the group meeting.

E) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Q What is the role to be played by MPDO / MAO / MPEO / AEO for withdrawal of RMG funds?
- A There is no role to be played by them for this purpose. This is to be attended to by RMG convener and co-convener through transparent and democratic discussion in their monthly meetings.

F) OTHER ISSUES

- Q Will buildings be provided for meetings of RMGs?
- A No, there is no such provision.

PARTICIPANTS VIEWS

- Issues which were not clear to us have been clarified
- We are fully satisfied with the explanations given
- MANAGE may arrange video conferencing at storming stage of the Rythu Mitra Groups.
- MPEOs / AEOs were given clear-cut answers which created confidence in them.

SUGGESTIONS MADE BY PARTICIPANTS

- If a member is enrolled based on his residence and not where his lands are located, this will create problems while taking loans from bankers. This may be looked into.
- This type of exposure should be replicated at convener and co-convener and mandal level.
- G.O. Ms. 192 specifies that MAO / MPEOs / AEOs will be under the administrative control of MPDO. This requires reconsideration.
- 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.

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Orientation on Rythu Mitra Groups

Prakasam and Guntur Districts

MANAGE orients Officers, Conveners and Co-conveners in Prakasam and Guntur through mobile video conferencing facility

In Prakasam District officers and staff members at different levels (Joint Director Agriculture to MPEO) were oriented on 5-6, August 2003 at Prakasam and Markapur. About 53 senior officers, 750 extension officers and 20 conveners as well as co-conveners of RMGs attended the above session. After the initial introduction, the participants were briefed about the operational modality for organization of RMGs. Besides the above, JDA Prakasam suggested to also focus on issues which help in sustaining the groups.

Participants from Guntur district, including 51 senior officers, 780 MPEOs / AEOs and 16 conveners / co-conveners of RMGs were oriented on 7-8 August.

Officers from Commissionerate of Agriculture at the state level and faculty members from MANAGE as well as DRDA (Ranga Reddy) were the resource persons for the above orientation programme. The extension officers especially the grass-root level workers came up with a lot of doubts which were clarified by the resource persons.



Shri. Konda Reddy, MLA Markapur observed the orientation programme at Markapur. He briefly interacted and emphasized that big farmers should also be organized to act as a conduit in the process of knowledge, training and transfer of technology as well as to liaise with financial institutions and market agencies.



MANAGE resource persons orienting the staff – Prakasam district

A) FORMATION OF RYTHU MITRA GROUPS

Q The instructions are that one family will be represented by one member only, but in certain cases farmers are coming and saying that they are independent. How can this be verified?

A If they have a separate patta passbook then it is simple. However it is not necessary to insist on the same. If their kitchens are separate they are eligible to be enrolled as members in RMGs. This may be verified in the Gram Sabha.



Extension worker raising doubts for clarifications - Prakasam district

Q If two members of the family want to be in the same group, why should it not be done?

A The present thinking of the department is to organize as many numbers of RMGs as the number of eligible Rythu families (i.e. those who belong to SF, MF and tenant category). Hence it is essential to encourage only one member of the family (men or women) to get organized in RMG.

Q What are the documents to be verified for enrolling members?

A No specific documents are to be verified. It should be enquired in the open gram sabha to know his/her eligibility.

Q If an agricultural labourer is doing tenancy, can he be taken as an RMG member?

A Yes, tenants are eligible to become RMG members.

Q According to the instructions only 15 members should be organized in RMG. If there are less or more members, what is to be done?

A The optimum number of members in a group is 15. It could however vary between 10 and 19.

- Forming** • When the group members enroll themselves and conduct 1-2 initial meetings.
- Storming** • When the group members start discussing and reacting to the various issues / conflicts
- Norming** • When the groups start framing norms to run it successfully
- Performing** • When the group starts performing by lending money and collecting it back

Q Is there any limitation for number of groups with each MPEO / AEO?

A Yes, it has to be kept as per the target fixed by concerned JDA.

Q Please elaborate important stages in organisation of sustainable groups and the social principles involved.

A Broadly there are four stages in organization of groups as indicated below.

Q Is there any need to submit a group photograph or individual member's photographs to the bank for opening of account?

A This may be done as advised by the bank and as being done in case of existing SHGs. Submission of photographs of the convener and co-convener is very essential.

Q What are the broad steps to be taken for formation of groups?

- Orient community about RMG scheme in gram sabha
- Identify unorganized members of Rythu families belonging to SF, MF and tenant category
- Organize new RMGs with the help of community organizers
- Release initial grant of Rs. 2500 per group into their bank account. The breakup is as follows:

S. No.	Activity / sub-activity	No. of days	Cost per day per member/group (Rs.)	Total cost per group (Rs.)
1.	<u>Capacity building</u>			
	• Orientation of convener and co-convener	12	100	1200
	• Monthly meeting of community organizer	12	25	300
	Sub - total			1500
2.	Exposure visits	2	400	800
3.	Registers/Passbooks, etc.	1 set	200 / set	200
	Total cost (Rs.)			2500

- Adopt democratic and transparent methods for identification of eligible / mature RMGs
- Use the following criteria for identification of mature RMG
 - Regularity in meeting
 - Good attendance (> 80%)
 - Good recovery (> 90%)
 - Proper records and account
 - Fine for absentees, late comers or those who delay in payment of dues
- Involve RMG for development of agriculture

Q What are the procedures for identification of RMGs out of existing SHGs?

A As per the latest views of the Department of Agriculture,

new RMGs shall be organized with only unorganized Rythu families belonging to SF, MF and tenant category. Hence identification of RMGs out of existing SHGs may be taken up later on for the purpose of developing their agriculture.

Q SC farmers want to organize themselves into RMGs but they do not have patta passbooks. Can they be enrolled?

A Yes, if they are SF / MF / Tenant farmers, verification of patta passbook is not necessary. Their eligibility can be verified in the Gram Sabha.



Convener of the group from Guntur district asking questions

Q What are the types of registers to be maintained by RMGs?

A The following registers are to be maintained:

- i. Minutes books
- ii. Bank passbook
- iii. Financial register including ledger for different members
- iv. Individual passbook for each member

 These registers are to be maintained on the pattern of DRDA / VELUGU for organization of SHGs.

Q What does it mean by a mature group?

A Those groups can be considered as mature which function properly and are self-reliant. The criteria for assessing the maturity are given earlier.

B) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Q Are tenant farmers eligible? Tenancy is on oral basis. Can this be considered?

A Yes, this can be verified in the Grama Sabha and Tenant farmers are eligible

Q Are big farmers eligible to become members?

A Only SF / MF / tenant farmers are eligible for the RMG scheme.

Q Can small farmer cum employee be enrolled or not?

A If he is residing in the same village and is a practicing farmer, the group can decide to enroll him.

Q Can the Rythu Club (RC) convener become a member?

A Yes, if he/she is a SF / MF / Tenant farmer.

C) MANAGEMENT OF RYTHU MITRA GROUPS

Q Are the savings to be continued after release of revolving fund (RF)? Can RF be distributed equally?

A The savings are to be continued after matching grant is released. This should be continued till the group sustains.

Matching grant should not be distributed equally. It should be given to only a few members at a time so that internal group pressure for its recovery is high.

Q Can 15 members take loan at a time from their own common fund?

A This is for the group to decide. It may be better to give loan only to 2-3 most needy members at a time so that internal group pressure is maintained.

Q Can new members join after a member withdraws?

A Yes, he should remit all the monthly thrifts in lieu of the outgoing member and then join.

Q If the bank loan is overdue by one member then bankers are objecting to opening an account for Rythu Mitra Group (RMG).

A Opening of bank account is for the RMG and not the individual loanee. If the bank refuses to open the account in the name of such RMG, this may be brought to the notice of the district committee for clarification to the banks.

Q After the loan is taken by a member, can he remit it at harvest time (as loan installment as well as thrift will become too heavy before that time).

A This is to be decided by the group at norming stage.

D) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Q The G.O. Ms. 167 dated 25.06.2003 issued is silent on Rs.10,000/- subsidy to each group whereas the original guidelines indicated that there will be subsidy of Rs. 10,000/- per RMG?

A The government instructions vide GO Ms. 167 dated 25.06.2003 are final and there is no subsidy of Rs. 10,000 /- for RMG envisaged now. The earlier guidelines in this regard may be ignored.

Q The revolving fund is only Rs. 15,000. The group wants to take a loan of Rs. 50,000 /- to take up income generating activity. Is it agreeable?

A This decision is to be taken by the concerned group depending upon the available common fund. A big amount of loan to 1-2 members may not be given at early stages. Instead smaller amounts may be given to the members so that its recovery could be faster and then it could be shared with other members. If needed, a large amount to any individual may be given later on after taking loan from the bank.

Q What rate of interest is to be charged and who has to recover it?

A The group has to decide the rate of interest to be charged and it will be the responsibility of convener and co-convener to recover loans from its members.

Q From where should the honorarium be paid to animators / community organizers?

A This is to be paid from the initial grant of Rs.2500 per RMG @ Rs. 25 per monthly meeting to the animator / community organizers.

Q Should revolving fund be paid back to the government?

A The Revolving fund need not be returned to government till the group sustains.