

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
Self-Help Group & Self Employment Department
EAST INDIA HOUSE (1st Floor), 20B, Abdul Hamid Street,
Kolkata-700 069

Workshop on Marketing of the products of the Self-help Groups and self-employed youth

1. Date: 18 February 2020

Venue: Biswa Bangla Convention
Center, New Town, Rajarhat

2. Objective

The Workshop is designed to explore the avenue for expansion of marketing avenues for the SHG products and the product of self-employed individuals

3. Background

3.1 In West Bengal there are close to 9.5 lakh self-help groups promoted by several departments of the state government. Majority of the groups are mobilized by the Department of Panchayats & Rural Development through its Anandadhara programme, which is implemented by the West Bengal State Rural Livelihood Mission (WBSRLM) under the overall guidance of the Deendayal Antodaya Yojana- National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM). The urban counterpart of the NRLM, known as the National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM) is implemented by the State Urban Development Agency (SUDA) in the Department of Urban Development & Municipal Affairs (UDMA). The Department of Cooperation nurtures SHGs through its Directorate. The Department of Minority Affairs & Madrasah Education (MA&ME) mobilizes SHGs through West Bengal Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (WBMDFC). Tribal Development Department of the State Government has a mandate for development of SHGs involving tribal men and women.

3.2 The numbers are huge. Remarkable social capital could be generated as the SHG members mostly women could be federated at different platforms and are active on

the social and economic fronts. Thrift is one of the major activities of the groups and the savings generated by the groups could make the groups bankable. WBSRLM contributed revolving fund, SHG&SE Department started adding annual grants to the groups, interest subventions are provided by the NRLM and SHG&SE Department. With bank loan, the groups have expanded economic activities. Some are engaged in the production sector- mostly agriculture-allied, animal resources, handicrafts etc. Quite a few of the SHGs are involved in the service sector like cooking of mid-day meal in the schools, running canteens at the health centers etc.

3.3 Despite such a growth in the SHG sector, there still exist systemic gaps in expanding market base for the SHG products. Productions are often not planned on assessment of marketing potential; there is little effort in developing production clusters; product mapping, product standardization have not received the focus it should have received; product catalogues are sporadically prepared; improvement in packaging have not been done at the desired level; the aggregators have not been linked to the producers; the opportunities in online marketing of products at this digital age has not been explored to its potential. All these hold true in respect of the self-employed individuals as well.

3.4 The Department of SHG&SE is mandated to expand marketing opportunities for the products of the SHGs and SE individuals. There is a Corporation- West Bengal Swarojgar Corporation Limited (WBSCL) - under the Department of SHG&SE, which is mandated to work for marketing of SHG&SE products, among other functions.

3.5 To **develop some common grounds on marketing of SHG and SE products** this one-day workshop is convened by the Department of SHG&SE with active support of the WBSCL.

4. Workshop themes

The **workshop proposes to discuss several issues pertaining to marketing of the products** of the target group including, but not restricted to the following:

- Mapping of product availability and marketable surplus through preparation of product inventory
- Understanding demand of the SHG & SE products, especially the niche products
- Preparing norms and standards for marketing
- Identifying role of CSR in promotion of marketing of SHG & SE products
- Working with aggregators
- Improving access to the digital marketing arena etc.

5. Session Plan

5.1 Inaugural Session (40 minutes)

1. Welcome address
Shri Anoop Kumar Agrawal, Principal Secretary, Self Help Group & Self Employment Department
2. Brief on West Bengal Swarajgar Corporation Limited and its role on marketing SHG&SE products
Shri Pulak Roy, Chairman, WBSCL
3. Inaugural address
Shri Sadhan Pande, MIC SHG&SE Department and Consumer Affairs Department
4. Vote of thanks
Shri Narayan Sarkar, MD, WBSCL

5.2 Presenting the perspectives and expectations and formation of thematic groups (20 minutes)

Dibyendu Sarkar, Secretary, SHG&SE Department

[In this session, the objectives, structure and organization of the workshop will be discussed. Specific areas of concern in respect of marketing of SHG & SE products will

be delineated. There will be discussions on the expectation of the Department and the WBSCL from the workshop so as to enable the Department and the Corporation firm up policies, set standards and benchmarks and prepare action plan to enhance marketing opportunities for the products.

The workshop is organized around 5 thematic areas. At the end of this presentation, the participants, based on the background and interest, will be divided into five thematic groups for small group discussions on the specific theme assigned.]

5.3 Small group discussions on the thematic areas followed by preparation of respective presentation (60 minutes)

Each group will discuss on the assigned theme, individuals in the group will offer their views and recommendations. The groups will have a rapporteur who will be responsible for preparing a consolidated presentation covering the salient points emanating, the issues emerging and the recommendations.

Post group discussion, presentations will be theme-based and there will be panels on each theme. First task will be presentation of the group report and thereafter the panelists will supplement. The larger group will ask questions and the answers are to be given by the panelists.

5.4 Thematic Panel-I (40 minutes)

- **Mapping of marketable surplus generated by the SHGs and self-employed individuals**
 - i. CEO, WBSRLM
 - ii. Register of Cooperative Societies
 - iii. Director, SUDA
 - iv. Director, MSME
 - v. MD, WBTDC
 - vi. MD, WBMDFC

[The presentation of the small group discussion will be followed by inputs from the panel and question-answer session]

5.3 Thematic Panel -II (40 minutes)

- **Government in Marketplace**

- i. MD, Tantuja
- ii. MD, Manjusha
- iii. MD, Paschhim Banga Agri-marketing Corporation
- iv. MD, Biswa Bangla
- v. Halo Heritage (working for market promotion for the Tribal Development department)

[The presentation of the small group discussion will be followed by inputs from the panel and question-answer session]

5.4 Thematic Panel -III (40 minutes)

- **The aggregator model for product marketing**

- i. **IIM innovation Park**
- ii. **Big Bazar**
- iii. **Spencers**
- iv. **Excel Infocom**

[The presentation of the small group discussion will be followed by inputs from the panel and question-answer session]

Lunch break: (60 minutes)

5.5 Thematic Panel -IV (40 minutes)

- **Corporate Social Responsibility and expanding market linkage**

- i. IOCL
- ii. ITC

- iii. ONGC

[The presentation of the small group discussion will be followed by inputs from the panel and question-answer session]

5.6 Thematic Panel -V (40 minutes)

- **E-marketing of SHG products**
 - i. Excel Infocom
 - ii. Amazon (TBC)
 - iii. Flipkart (TBC)

[The presentation of the small group discussion will be followed by inputs from the panel and question-answer session]

5.8 Concluding Session

Wrap of and way forward (30 minutes)

In the concluding session we would make an endeavor to stitch the loose ends to arrive at certain actionable points, short term, medium term and long-term. In the session, the recommendations from the groups and the panels will be consolidated and there will be effort to define the way forward with timelines

6. Participants

We are expecting around 80 participants involving the SHG mobilizing departments, government marketing entities, District SHG&SE Officers from all 23 districts, corporates, Chambers of Commerce, Online Marketing Giants, aggregators, innovators and startup entrepreneurs.

Briefs for SGD

Group-1: Mapping of marketable surplus generated by the SHGs and self-employed individuals

Tasks assigned to the group

The group is to discuss about the SHG product universe as well as the universe of the products generated by the self-employed persons. There should be efforts to capture the product range, production clusters, marketable surplus and related issues.

Following are the questions placed before the group for seeking answers and sharing in the plenary.

1. What might be a rough list of products generated by this sector?
2. Is there any state-wide catalogue of SHG products? If not, which are the districts which have such catalogues?
3. What are the clusters where certain marketable products are generated in bulk? What are the specific products generated in such clusters?
4. Do we have any arrangements for quality packaging? If yes, what are the arrangements?
5. What are the presently available marketing channels for the SHG and SE products?
6. What are your suggestions?

The rapporteurs for the group will prepare a presentation for the group after obtaining inputs from the group embers and concurrence. The presentation will be shared with the large-group in the plenary on this theme, where there will be panel for the panelists to add value and respond to questions, clarify doubts etc.

Briefs for SGD

Group-2: Government in Marketplace

Tasks assigned to the group

The group is expected to discuss the present government marketing universe for the farm and non-farm sectors, especially relevant to the target group; the opportunities for marketing of products through government sales counters, sale promotional activities; basic standards of the products acceptable to the agencies; packaging requirements and support; payment mechanism etc.

Following are the questions placed before the group for seeking answers and sharing in the plenary.

1. Which are the Government agencies responsible for marketing of SHG products as well as the products of micro-entrepreneurs?
2. What are the products marketed by individual government agencies?
3. What are the basic requirements for enlistment of products for marketing through the agencies?
 - a. Quality standard?
 - b. Packaging?
 - c. Timeliness?
 - d. Quantity?
4. What are the supports available from the agencies?
5. What are your suggestions?

The rapporteurs for the group will prepare a presentation for the group after obtaining inputs from the group embers and concurrence. The presentation will be shared with the large-group in the plenary on this theme, where there will be panel for the panelists to add value and respond to questions, clarify doubts etc.

Briefs for SGD

Group-3: The aggregator model for product marketing

Tasks assigned to the group

In this group, we propose to listen from the aggregators, the innovators, the start-up entrepreneurs on the infinite possibilities of the products on demand, including niche products where the aggregators usually take the responsibility of marketing after taking delivery from the doorsteps of the producers, or at least from the nearest aggregation points. What are the available mechanisms for aggregation, what are the requirements of standards will be elaborated by the achievers in course of the group discussion, which will then be placed in the larger group for further deliberation.

Following are the questions placed before the group:

1. What is the tentative universe of private aggregators (offline) operating in the State?
2. How can those aggregators be mapped?
3. What are the products preferred by the aggregators?
4. What will be the minimum assured quantity that will attract private aggregators?
5. What are the quality checks that need to be taken at the SHG Federation level to ensure steady intake of products by the aggregators?
6. What kind of arrangements in this model may add further value and make it more attractive for both the producers and the aggregators?

The rapporteurs for the group will prepare a presentation for the group after obtaining inputs from the group embers and concurrence. The presentation will be shared with the large-group in the plenary on this theme, where there will be panel for the panelists to add value and respond to questions, clarify doubts etc.

Briefs for SGD

Group-4: Corporate Social Responsibility and expanding market linkage

Tasks assigned to the group

As part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the Corporates embark upon several social welfare/ social development activities including promotion of livelihood for the poor. In this group, steered by some of the corporate CSR representatives, we propose to understand how CSR activities can contribute/ are contributing to market promotion for the products of the micro entrepreneurs including the SHGs.

Following are the questions placed before the group:

1. What are the corporates that are active for product promotion for the SHG/ SE products?
2. How can those CSR activities in this sector be mapped?
3. What are the institutional structures preferred by the Corporates?
4. What kind of marketing avenues that the Corporates can create for our products as part of CSR?
 - a. Fixed assets, like sales centers?
 - b. Facilitating participation in fairs?
 - c. Improving product quality for standardization?
5. What are the promotional activities that the corporates will be ready to fund?
 - a. Print documents
 - b. AV documents
 - c. Exhibitions and fairs
6. What are your suggestions?

The rapporteurs for the group will prepare a presentation for the group after obtaining inputs from the group members and concurrence. The presentation will be shared with the large-group in the plenary on this theme, where there will be panel for the panelists to add value and respond to questions, clarify doubts etc.

Briefs for SGD

Group-5: e-Marketing of SHG products

Tasks assigned to the group

In the expanding digital age it might be unwise to remain blind to the opportunities coming up through the online e-marketing platforms. There are e-marketing giants like Amazon, Flipkart, Myantra. There are relatively smaller players specifically catering to our target population. The group is expected to discuss the benefits, opportunities and constraints of online marketing platforms vis-à-vis the SHG women and micro entrepreneurs.

Following are the questions placed before the group:

1. What are the online marketing platforms that the SHGs and self-employed individuals can access to?
2. What are the criteria for enlistment and what are the pre-requisites for supply to these agencies?
3. What about warehousing?
4. What about the return policy and how does it affect the producers?
5. What are the usual constraints for long term association with the online platforms? Why such experiments usually do not last?
6. How can the Government act as intermediary to protect the interests of the small producers?
7. What about developing the Corporation's own platform for online marketing? Why do we? Why do we not? If we do, how to go about it?

The rapporteurs for the group will prepare a presentation for the group after obtaining inputs from the group members and concurrence. The presentation will be shared with the large-group in the plenary on this theme, where there will be panel for the panelists to add value and respond to questions, clarify doubts etc.