

Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana (AGEY)**Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana (AGEY)**

The Government of India has decided to launch a new sub-scheme named “Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana (AGEY)” as part of the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM). The Self Help Groups under DAY-NRLM will operate road transport service in backward areas. This will help to provide safe, affordable and community monitored rural transport services to connect remote villages with key services and amenities (such as access to markets, education and health) for the overall economic development of backward rural areas. This will also provide an additional avenue of livelihood for SHGs. The basic outline of AGEY was discussed in a meeting of State Transport Ministers of 13 States held in June 2016 at Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh and all the Transport Ministers had expressed their appreciation of this initiative.

The Community Investment Fund (CIF) provided to Community Based Organization (CBOs) under DAY-NRLM will be utilized to support the SHG members in this new livelihoods initiative. The beneficiary SHG member will be provided an interest free loan by the CBO from its Community Investment Fund upto Rs.6.50 lakh for purchase of the vehicle. Alternative, CBO will own the vehicle and lease it to an SHG member to operate the vehicle and pay lease rental to the CBO

AGEY will be initially implemented in 250 Blocks in the country on pilot basis with each Block provided upto 6 vehicles to operate the transport services. During the current year implementation of the scheme has been so far approved for 52 Blocks in 8 States namely Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttarakhand and West Bengal with a total provision of Rs.16.06 Crore of which the Government of India share would be Rs.10.16 Crore. The balance funding would be provided by the respective States.

The Blocks will be selected by States from among the Blocks where NRLM is being implemented intensively and where mature CBOs are already functioning. Backwardness, lack of transportation links and sustainability of service would be the guiding factors in the selection of Blocks and routes.

The State Rural Livelihood Missions (SRLMs) will do a feasibility study and traffic survey

in the selected blocks to identify the routes and the number and capacity of vehicles which can be operated on sustainable basis. The study will be conducted by technically sound organizations with expertise in transport network planning. The choice of vehicle could be either e-riksha, 3 wheeler or 4 wheeler within a cost ceiling of Rs.6.50 lakh.

The SRLMs will be co-ordinating with State Transport Department for issue of permit for the vehicle. The SHG member operating the vehicle shall ensure that all necessary legal and statutory requirement such as valid permit, road tax permit, valid insurance policy etc. are met.

The SHG member shall run the vehicle on approved routes at pre-determined frequency as jointly agreed between the CBO and the SHG operator based on financial viability and the need for transport link.

All vehicles under the scheme shall have a defined colour code and carry AGEY branding to ensure their identity and avoid diversion to other routes.

The State Rural Livelihood Mission will arrange capacity building for their staff at State, District and Block levels for operating the Scheme. The members of the CBO and the beneficiary SHG member shall also be provided adequate training in the Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) and other partner organizations.

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