

Points for discussion to prepare guidelines for the utilization of Pooled Fund under *SCP/TSP*

1. Introduction

1.1 Government of India introduced Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) for the scheduled tribes in 1974 and a Special Component Plan (SCP) for the scheduled castes in 1979, by channelizing the flow of outlays and benefits from general development sectors to these sub plans, at least in proportion to their population, to bridge the wide gap in the socio economic development of these sections compared to other sections of the society. The concerned departments have been issuing and fine tuning the detailed guidelines relating to the SCP and TSP from time to time to make its implementation more focused and effective. In the true spirit of the efforts of the Central Government and Planning Commission, Special Component Plan was prepared for the first time in the State during 1979-80 and each Department would have to earmark a certain percentage of its plan outlay for programmes benefiting Scheduled castes. The Schemes were decided at the State level by the concerned Departments and most of the schemes were routine stereotyped schemes of the department without giving proper consideration to the local potential and conditions and needs of the targeted group. This practice continued till 1982-83.

1.2 The State Government reviewed this practice and in 1983-84 introduced a Decentralized procedure for the formulation and implementation of Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub Plan. A District Level Working Group was constituted under the Chairmanship of the District Collector with District Planning Officer as convener for coordinating, formulating and approving schemes under this system. The District level Officers of SC & ST and all development depts. were Members of this Committee. The Planning Department released District -wise and Sector wise outlays of SCP and TSP every year with the help of the State Planning Board. Only a small portion of the amount was retained as headquarters provision. This system of formulation of SCP / TSP was in vogue till 1996-97.

1.3 Consequent to the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution and especially after the enactment of Kerala Panchayat Raj Act and Kerala Municipality Act of 1994, the three tier system of Local Self Government Institutions (LSGIs) were accorded a major role in the Socio Economic transition of the people in general and of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in particular, statutorily allowing them to democratically identify and implement beneficiary oriented projects, which they think are the most suitable for their development. As part of Decentralization the PEOPLES' PLAN CAMPAIGN was introduced in the year 1997-98 and about 30 percent of the State Plan outlay was devolved to the LSGs. About 70% of the plan funds under SCP and about 50% of the funds under TSP were devolved to LSGs.

1.4 At present the flow of funds to SCP and TSP is calculated according to the percentage SCs and STs to total population. Of the total State Plan outlay 9.81 % is earmarked to SCP and 2% to TSP. These amounts allotted to SCP and TSP were being divided into three categories and distributed to LSGs as mentioned above, the SC/ST department and other development departments till last year.

2. Why Pooled fund?

2.1 It is a fact that $\frac{2}{3}$ ^d of the SCP and half of the TSP amount have been invariably allotted to the LSGs and nearly 12-15% of the SCP have been allotted to other departments as notional flow. The amount distributed to other departments was considered as Notional flow and it was presumed that they would utilize this portion of their plan outlay exclusively for schemes benefiting SC/ST population. Though the idea was to get direct benefits to SC/ST from different development department with the help of notional flow it was observed that this has not happened in real sense. Taken in to account the seriousness of this problem, the Planning Board as well the Planning Department had instructed the development departments to furnish project proposals for such projects and the SC/ST department was supposed to monitor it. But this also did not fetch the desired results

2.2 In this context it was decided to stop the concept of notional flow and keep this fund as POOLED FUND under SCP and TSP by creating new head of accounts

under the SC/ST department from the Annual Plan 2009-10 onwards. The funds will be released to various departments on the basis of feasible projects under SCP & TSP benefiting SCs and STs respectively.

3. Need for Pooled fund

3.1 The Special Component Plan/Tribal Sub Plan was introduced observing that the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes are not able to get benefits from various programmes on par with other sections of the Society due to their socio economic backwardness and therefore the thrust was given in the Plans is for improving Socio-economic status of the target group. The SC/ST Development Department is taking care to improve the educational status and also to provide basic amenities like water supply, housing, road, electricity etc. The LSGs also take up schemes to provide basic amenities like water supply, housing, electricity etc. But it is to be noticed that the economic development has either not been given due weightage or did not generate demand from the poor category as the individual beneficiary oriented social sector has influenced the target group in general. Accepting the fact that social development plays a major part in development as a whole, it is to be accepted that economic development as well as employment generation is equally important for the sustainable development of the society, especially for the very existence of the poor and backward people. Therefore development projects which can directly generate employment and scope for income generation are very essential. Of course, the same can accrue the indirect social benefits also. Therefore an amount is earmarked under SCP and TSP for such projects from various sectors which can benefit the SC/ST population.

4. Need for the Guidelines

4.1 As it is a new initiative to help the poor SC/ST population, a set of guidelines is very essential. This would not only help the departments/agency who are really interested to avail the facility but also make a clarity in the whole process. Moreover proper implementation and monitoring shall be made easier. Therefore the following items and points are placed for the discussion.

1. Any departments /Institutions which require allotment from pooled fund under SCP/TSP shall submit detailed projects to the State Planning Board clearly indicating objectives, physical and financial targets, period of implementation, source' of funds, rate of subsidy, benefits to the SCs / STs etc ..
2. Mere replications of ongoing projects of the departments concerned is not intended under pooled fund. The projects should address the needs of the SC/ST population and the rate of assistance should be decided judiciously so as to make the project successful and sustainable. Wherever a higher rate of subsidy/assistance is required that can be proposed after giving details justifying higher rates.
3. Only those projects which ensure direct benefits to group/ groups of families belonging to Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes shall be included group under pooled fund ofSCP/TSP
4. Creation of productive assets in favour of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to sustain the growth likely to accrue through development efforts.
5. **In** the case of Scheduled Tribes priority shall be given for providing basic minimum services like primary education, health, drinking, water, nutrition, rural housing, rural electrification and rural link roads and the ST Development department can suggest a package schemes for the comprehensive development of ST habitats .
6. Schemes to develop agriculture and allied activities like animal husbandry, dairy development etc that provide a source of livelihood to the SC and ST population can be proposed by the concerned Development department.
7. After a preliminary vetting of these projects by the State Planning Board on its feasibility and admissibility and after necessary rectification by the department concerned it will be handed over to the SC/ST department for placing it in the working group / special working group as the case may be. The Development department concerned may also be invited to the meeting of the WG.
8. SC/ST department feels that implementation of a particular project under sectors like Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Industries, Water Supply, Power, Housing etc is very beneficial to SCs/STs which require

professional as well as technical skill they can prepare projects with the help of the department concerned and propose it under pooled fund. The implementation of the projects can be done either through the department concerned or under their technical supervision.

9. For road, water supply, electric line extension schemes more than 50% of the beneficiary families should be SCs / STs.
10. The projects shall be implemented by the *departments/* institutions concerned and the funds may be provided by SC/ST department.
11. The nodal department should ensure timely release of funds to the concerned development departments who in turn should ensure immediate release of funds soon after the receipts of funds from nodal department to their field level implementing agencies. Any lapse on the part of field level implementing agencies in timely utilization of funds and proper implementation of the schemes may be viewed seriously.

5 Project proposals

The project proposals shall mainly include the following aspects.

- Introduction, Need and Scope
- Objectives
- Basic information
Location, Activity, Eligible group etc.
- Financial assessments
- Time schedule
- Anticipated direct benefits (Income generation, Employment generation etc)
- Indirect benefits (Social, environmental natural resources etc.)
- Implementing agency, Mode of implementation, Role and Responsibility.
- Institutional support to be established for the sustainability of the project which includes back up support .
- Linkages
- Skill development
- Managerial capacity development and necessary support mechanism.

The proposals shall be from any development sectors preferably intended towards income and employment generation. Similarly preference shall be given to group activities/area development activities/ecotourism/innovative projects/water supply/Total housing programme for SC/STs etc. Such projects can include group farming , lease land farming, watershed development, horticulture development, traditional activities, and other innovative projects.

6. Monitoring

It is suggested to constitute a state level committee to monitor the implementation of the projects. The committee shall be headed by the member in charge of DP division under the overall supervision of the Hon'ble VC, State Planning Board. The Principal Secretary SC/ST Department, Secretary Planning and Secretary Finances shall be members. Chief DPD shall be the convener of the committee. The committee shall meet periodically (to be decided) to review the programme.

The draft guide lines will be prepared based on the suggestions and recommendations of this meeting.